BOOK REVIEWS

Jeroen Dewulf: *Spirit of resistance, Dutch clandestine literature during the Nazi occupation*. Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2010.

Jeroen Dewulf, as readers may well know, is Queen Beatrix professor of Dutch Studies in the University of California at Berkeley. In this volume he moves to fill in a major gap in the existing histories of Dutch literature, namely the resistance output during the Nazi occupation in World War II. (We shall see reasons for this gap towards the end of the book). Yet that output was considerable; about a thousand titles were published clandestinely in this period, compared with a few hundred at most in other occupied countries. The author wishes not only to introduce us to this neglected body of work but also to enquire into why, despite the dangers of publishing it, it was so plentiful (especially poetry, which is one of his interests). One reason, he explains in his first chapter, lies in the Netherlands' long history as an independent nation and the longstanding Dutch use of their flourishing printing industry as a weapon against two oppressive occupiers: Spain and Napoleon.

The second chapter describes the considerable body of anti-Nazi literature published in the Netherlands in the 1930s. The country was the great place of publication for German exiles, even though most of them moved on to America; Emanuel Querido even ran a branch of his publishing house in Berlin for as long as he could. Dutch authors also, even some who had hitherto been "above" political comment, now began to cry out warning.

Chapter 3 covers the events of the occupation. Needless to say, the Nazis too – notoriously Goebbels – understood the importance of propaganda, and tried to spread the theory that the Dutch were really Germans, a German idea that went back to the 1830s. Even the Dutch National Socialists, however, were too patriotic to buy that. When resistance to such propaganda continued, the *Reichskommissar* (national administrator) Arthur Seyss-Inquart tried to tighten censorship, but the *Kultuurkamer* (his spelling) that he created for this purpose proved ineffective. Even a known socialist like Jef Last joined it and was able to publish two novels officially, all the while editing the resistance paper *De Vonk*. Many Dutch writers died of the occupation in one way or another, however (suicide, drowning, heart attack, or a Nazi bullet), and this persecution did not ease with time – just as the mass murder of Jews actually speeded up as Nazi defeat became more certain.

Chapter 4 surveys the birth of publishing houses and newspapers which began clandestinely. This reviewer was unaware that newspapers of such varied political stances as *Het parool*, *Vrij Nederland* and *Trouw* date from that time. There were other political journals also, such as the communist *De Waarheid*, not to mention artistic and literary ones such as *Lichting*, *De Vrije Kunstenaar* and one with the curious name of *De Schone Zakdoek.* Among those who published illegally we should mention W.F. Hermans and Gerrit Kouwenaar. The great publishing house born of the Resistance was De Bezige Bij, which produced not only anti-Nazi material but also (like A.A.M. Stols) editions of English and French literature; others produced art works, including satirical cartoons and 16th-century material from that other Resistance. These artistic publishers were perhaps the bravest of all, because the Nazis especially persecuted them.

By far the longest chapter, the fifth, presents the kind of material published. The Nazis allowed very little publishing, so there was a lot of clandestine publishing; because they wanted to make the Dutch people into Germans, many nationalist works appeared recalling the characteristic Dutch virtues. Some of the songs of resistance, *geuzenliederen*, published at this time (in anthologies in 1941, 1943 and 1945) were authentic

16th-century ones, chosen for their emphasis on freedom (the anti-Catholic ones were not used). Many major contemporary poets contributed, albeit under false names or no name.

The author distinguishes several themes in the poetry of the period. The royal family, naturally, were represented as the leaders of the resistance, and coupled with the national awareness which that theme aroused was a revival of religious belief. The Calvinist precept to obey authority clashed somewhat with the desire to resist, but the Nazis were not the true authority, and indeed one form of protest (by Martinus Nijhoff and W.A.P. Smit) was to write plays on religious themes. The Jews got less mention in Resistance literature than one might expect; the author says it is because the Dutch were less inclined to see them as different and so not everyone singled out their persecution for condemnation (though later in the book he suggests worse reasons). Some, however, said plainly what was going on, and Dewulf quotes several of their witness-bearing poems. He also quotes a number of the best-known Resistance poems, by the likes of Henk van Randwijk, Gerard de Brabander, Maurits Mok, Simon Vestdijk and Bertus Aafjes, which commemorate the movement's martyrs. Here is perhaps the emotional climax of Dewulf's story.

The poems which condemned collaborators were exactly the opposite in style: simple, blunt and set to catchy rhythms so everyone could remember them. As for the Germans, they were never forgiven for the destruction of Rotterdam, and no words were harsh enough. Only *De Vonk* is mentioned as warning against hatred.

For material reasons such as lack of paper, less prose (longer work) was published than poetry. Some novels had to wait for publication till the war was over. Those works which got published during the war range from Theun de Vries's *WA Man*, with its insight into why a Dutch lad might join the Nazis (the NSB), to Albert Helman's *Aldus sprak Zarathustra*, which is in fact a detailed unfavourable look at the German character as reflected in German literature.

As soon as the war was over there was discussion of whether literature could be committed to a cause or not, and if not, whether the output of the war years deserved the name of literature (cf. the long note 131 on p.179-180 about Anne Frank's diary). Ever since, literary critics have tended to ignore that output. The present author, naturally, disagrees with them: these works, he argues, "can still impress when read in their historical context" (167). Moreover, the new current in Dutch literature, which questioned conservative nationalism and conventional morality, began during the war and not after it.

The sixth and last chapter describes the attitudes prevailing after the Liberation. For a few years events were discouraging. Nobody wished to believe that most Dutch people had adapted to the occupation as best they could; no, said the official war historian Louis de Jong, only 1.5 percent collaborated with the Nazis, the rest were a nation of heroes. In fact, some had become anti-Nazi only in 1944, once the Germans were obviously losing. The Holocaust was barely considered; Jews who survived concentration camps, or who wanted their property or their children back, were met with delays by the bureaucracy and anti-Semitic attitudes in the press. Those who risked most in the resistance did not see their fight crowned with social progress. People welcomed the old order back and forgot everything as quickly as possible, rather than reflect on the shortcomings of their behaviour during the war. Many suspected of collaboration were investigated, few were punished, some of them wrongly.

Then there was the question of the East Indies. Some writers were as racist about the Japanese occupiers of that colony as the Nazis about other nations. Resistance writers who had campaigned for freedom at home, *Trouw* especially, could not accept that Indonesia wanted freedom from the Dutch, and approved of the murderous campaigns to put the independence movement down; others, however, such as van Randwijk, spoke out against them. Albert Helman, a Surinamese, marked his opposition to colonialism by beginning to write in his own Creole.

After a few years, however, as Dutch society started to become thoroughly liberal, the view of the war years changed again. The impact of Anne Frank's diary was that people began to think about the Holocaust, and to realize their degree of collective responsibility for the destruction of Dutch Jewry (I am echoing the English title of Jacques Presser's important book *Ondergang)*. Indeed, there was a spate of books accusing various figures hitherto regarded as heroes of the resistance of having in fact collaborated. The thinking was still *goed* vs. *fout*, however. Not till the 1980s did it begin to be felt that it was time to try and understand how people really coped with the Nazi occupation. Meanwhile, writers (notably W.F. Hermans, as early as 1949) led the way toward a more complex view of the confusion, chance and mixed motives that led people to take one side or the other, or take ambiguous positions, in the war years.

In an epilogue, the author traces the subsequent history of the relations between groups in the Netherlands. For some years memorials were erected to the war dead, to Jews, homosexuals and gypsies who fell victim to the Nazis, and a new and more mature country seemed to be in place. Alas, the children of Muslim immigrants were not brought up on these liberal ideas, and the behaviour of Israel in its conquered territories has led to anti-Semitism – and by reaction, to anti-Muslim feelings as well. But sane voices are arising to say what resistance writers like van Randwijk said all those years ago, in opposing the national self-image that the Nazis sought to impose : that the Dutch need a new self-image which can include everyone, rather than living without one.

Dewulf's book is thus also the chronicle of the changes in that self-image over the years. It is a most valuable work, a mine of information showing evidence of vast reading, with a bibliography of 34 pages; in places it gets a bit packed with names, inevitably. (I regret having to omit mention of so much interesting detail). But it reads very well, and there are very few slips Dewulf speaks of censureship when he means censorship (censure means blame), and he calls Shaw's *Pygmalion* a novel. These are minor matters. In fact, the only bad thing about this book is the price. Camden House is one of the imprints of Boydell and Brewer of Buffalo, and one hesitates to criticize a house which has set out to ensure, by vigorous mergers and acquisitions, an outlet for publications in a number of academic fields which otherwise would be neglected. It is a good-looking and well-produced book with few typos. But eighty dollars US for 287 pages?

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Enne Koops : *De dynamiek van een emigratiecultuur. De emigratie van gereformeerden, hervormden en katholieken naar Noord-Amerika in vergelijkend perspectief (1947-1963)* (Passage Reeks 36). Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2010. Pp. 416. € 36.79

During the first decades following World War II, overseas Dutch emigration, which was then at its peak, was studied almost exclusively by Dutch sociologists, and it is only during the most recent decades that Dutch historians have turned their attention to this phenomenon. The study by Koops, a doctoral dissertation written for one of the theological universities in Kampen, constitutes a major contribution to this growing body of literature on the history of Dutch emigration between the end of World War II and the early 1960s.

His study is a comparative examination of the emigration to North America, between 1947 and 1963, of members of the three major Dutch religious groupings and denominations, namely neo-Reformed,[11] Dutch Reformed (also known as Netherlands Reformed) and Catholics. Emigrants without a religious affiliation, who constituted a small minority, are not included in this study because the author found them difficult to identify and to trace in archival and other records. In 1947 Catholics made up 38.5 % of the Dutch population, Dutch Reformed 31 %, and the neo-Reformed 9.75 %, yet between 1948 and 1952 a solid 41 % of all Dutch emigrants destined for Canada and 20 % of those going to the USA were neo-Reformed. For the entire period from 1947 to 1963, neo-Reformed made up 32 % of all Dutch emigrants going to Canada and 12 % of those going to the USA, while Catholics made up 29.5 % of all Dutch emigrants heading for Canada, and Dutch Reformed 26 %. It is to the question why the neo-Reformed emigrated out of all proportion to their relative numerical strength within Dutch society that Koops devotes his study and, rather than looking for socio-economic answers, he looks for strictly religious ones. Central to his thesis is what he labels a religious emigration culture, and it is to the relative strength of this culture that he attributes the fact that the neo-Reformed emigrated, relatively speaking, in such large numbers.

Emigration culture, as conceived by Koops, consists of three distinct elements: an emigration tradition based on concrete experiences over a longer period; the formation of a positive or negative emigration image, based on accounts of earlier experiences, but also determined by preconceived cultural, as well as religious and theological, notions, visions and expectations; and the translation of the emigration tradition and image into positive action implemented with the aid of organizations specifically created for that purpose. It was amongst the members of the neo-Reformed denominations that Koops found this emigration culture, as defined by him, to be the most pronounced during the first decades following World War II, although there were also some noticeable differences between the denominations in this regard, as will be seen below.

Koops acknowledges that without what he refers to as the general prerequisites existing in the Netherlands and in North America following World War II, the development of an emigration culture could not have taken place, but he argues that these conditions cannot explain why the strength of the emigration culture varied significantly from one religious denomination to the next. Amongst the general conditions, the push factors present in the Netherlands – that prompted as much as one-third of the Dutch population to consider emigration, according to a survey conducted in 1948 – were the state of the Dutch economy, a shortage of housing, especially for young couples, fear of renewed war which was closely tied to a fear of communism, and a certain collective loss of nerve and confidence arising from the defeat and occupation by Nazi Germany as well as the loss of Indonesia. What the immigration countries, especially the United States, Canada and Australia, had to offer – the pull factors – were economic opportunities unhampered by excessive rules and regulations, wide-open spaces, and more or less open-door immigration policies for Dutch natives. The third general prerequisite for a massive emigration from the Netherlands following World War II was the active emigration policy pursued by the Dutch government, and it consisted of three elements as well: selection and processing of emigrants with the co-operation of private emigration societies and organizations; payment of passage to their overseas destination for those emigrants who qualified; and the purchase of emigrant ships that were managed for the government by private shipping firms. But these general factors do not explain why the neo-Reformed emigrated out of all proportion to their relative numerical strength within Dutch society. It is to this question that Koops devotes the bulk of his study, and it is to gain a better understanding of this phenomenon that he compares the neo-Reformed with the Dutch Reformed and the Catholics.

Beginning in the 1840s, neo-Reformed people began emigrating to the US in relatively large numbers, for both religious and economic reasons. By means of letters, visits back home, etc., they created amongst their co-religionists in the Netherlands a positive image of the US and the entire emigration experience, causing more of them to join their compatriots in the US, who welcomed and supported them upon their arrival. In this fashion, Koops argues, an emigration tradition, as well as an emigration mentality, was born amongst the neo-Reformed in the Netherlands, whereas the Dutch Reformed and Dutch Catholics did not go through a similar development so early and did not experience the emergence and growth of an emigration tradition and mentality. Starting in the 1890s, Canada also began to attract Dutch neo-Reformed immigrants, who received assistance from those in the US Consequently, Koops concludes, when the Dutch began to look for greener pastures following World War II, especially in Canada, the neo-Reformed were best prepared when it came to translating ideas and plans about emigration into action, because of the emigration tradition and mentality that had grown up amongst them and the network of co-religionists already in place in both this country and the US who welcomed and supported the new arrivals.

With respect to the cultural, ideological, religious-theological component of the emigration culture as defined by him, Koops found that the views held by the neo-Reformed in this regard were more conducive to emigration than those held by the Dutch Reformed and the Catholics, or by those without a religious affiliation. Furthermore, the members of the GKN, the largest by far of the four neo-Reformed denominations, displayed the most positive attitude towards emigration from a cultural, ideological and religious perspective. Koops attributes this to the fact that of the four neo-Reformed denominations, only the GKN subscribed to Abraham Kuyper's doctrine of common grace which, he concludes, led to a positive outward-looking cultural attitude. On account of this theological position, the members of the GKN in particular saw it as their duty "to go forth and multiply," the so-called emigration commandment. The Dutch Reformed, he argues, being members of a quasi-establishment or national church, were, in comparison with the neo-Reformed, nationalistic and inward-looking, which was detrimental to the development of a strong emigration culture amongst them. The Catholic hierarchy in the Netherlands was, initially at least, concerned about what it understood to be a predominantly Protestant and liberal society existing in Canada at that time, and they lacked the cultural-theological emigration ideology of the members of the GKN. Moreover, Cardinal Léger was opposed to the immigration of large numbers of Dutch Catholics into Canada for both demographic and religious reasons. Finally, Koops makes the point that with regard to an emigration vision and ideology, the members of the GKN were more united than were the members of the three other neo-Reformed denominations, the Dutch Reformed Church and the Catholic Church. This high degree of unity and vision within the GKN in regards to the question of emigration also made for a strong emigration culture. He briefly examines non-religious, politically-based emigration opinions and positions and concludes that the socialists were ambivalent about emigration, while the liberals and communists were opposed to it as a matter of principle.

The third factor making up the emigration culture as defined by Koops was the organizational aspect, a topic he explores in chapter five, and how the first two factors impinged on this one. He concludes that there was a positive correlation between all three. As a consequence of the emigration tradition, image and ideology/theology, of the neo-Reformed, and of the GKN in particular, they had organizational structures for emigration before World War II. In the period discussed in this book they created the most elaborate, effective, and assertive organizations both for helping the emigrants leave The Netherlands, especially the *Christelijke Emigratie Centrale* – which was a GKN body in everything but name – and for receiving and supporting them in North America, especially in Canada in the form of the Christian Reformed Church, for all practical purposes the North American counter-part

of the GKN, and its Immigration Committee. Even Dutch Catholics were known to seek advice and support from the immigration fieldmen of the Christian Reformed Church. Now comes a surprise: in spite of the supportive networks that they found upon their arrival in North America, Koops found that within ten years of their arrival, half of the neo-Reformed had ceased to be members of the Christian Reformed Church or of other, smaller, neo-Reformed denominations established by post-World War II Dutch immigrants. They had switched to other denominations, especially in Canada, or had ceased to attend church altogether.

This book constitutes an important contribution to the history of post-World War II Dutch emigration and helps to explain why the neo-Reformed emigrated out of all proportion to their relative numerical strength within Dutch society. However, it overlooks an important socio-economic reason why the Dutch Reformed made up, relatively speaking, only a small percentage of the emigrants. When examining the push factors in chapter three, Koops treats the entire Dutch population and hence all emigrants as one undifferentiated group, but there were, generally speaking, quite distinct differences between the neo-Reformed and Dutch Reformed in this regard. The neo-Reformed, although they had improved their relative status since the nineteenth century when they broke away from the Dutch Reformed Church, were still, when compared with the Dutch Reformed, *kleine luyden* – to use the nineteenth-century term – and no doubt felt the economic situation in The Netherlands following World War II more acutely than did the Dutch Reformed as a group. Compared with the neo-Reformed, the Dutch Reformed constituted the establishment from both a socio-economic and ecclesiastical perspective. Koops does draw our attention to the ecclesiastical factor as a possible explanation as to why the Dutch Reformed emigrants were relatively few in numbers and why, as he says, the neo-Reformed emigrants believed their religious future to lie in North America. However, he does not mention the related socio-economic factor of birth-rate. The birth-rate amongst neo-Reformed was rather higher than that among the Dutch Reformed, and hence the demographic pressures were greater, a factor that cannot be overlooked when searching for an explanation of the discrepancy in the emigration rates. Amongst the Catholics the demographic pressures due to a high birth-rate were similar to those experienced by neo-Reformed, and yet the Catholics emigrated at only a slightly higher rate than the Dutch Reformed. Furthermore, it can be argued that the socio-economic and ecclesiastical status of Dutch Catholics was closer akin to that of the neo-Reformed than to that of the Dutch Reformed, yet that does not appear to have stimulated the development of an emigration culture amongst Catholics. Consequently, it can be argued that Koops' thesis that the neo-Reformed emigrated out of all proportion to their relative numerical strength within Dutch society because only they developed and possessed a strong emigration culture, and his explanations for that phenomenon, are more convincing when comparing the neo-Reformed and the Catholics than when comparing the neo-Reformed and the Dutch Reformed.

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[1] We will use this term to translate *Gereformeerd*. Koops studies four neo-Reformed denominations: GKN (*Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland*), by far the largest of the four, GKV (*Gereformeerde Kerken, Vrijgemaakt*), CGK (*Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk*), and GGN (*Gereformeerde Gemeenten in Nederland*), but divides them into two groups. Together, the first two neo-Reformed denominations constitute the neo-Calvinists, drawing their inspiration from Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920), and the last two neo-Reformed denominations Koops regards as being in essence pietistic in nature, drawing their inspiration from the *Nadere Reformatie* (Further Reformation) of the 17th and the first half of the 18th century.