Summary

Title and subtitle:
COVENANTING WITH GOD
Reformed Piety relations between Scotland and the Netherlands in the seventeenth century, in particular in the period after the Restoration (1660-1700)

1. Problem definition

This thesis is a result of research on Pietist contacts in the seventeenth century between Scotland and the Republic of the Seven United Provinces. These contacts mainly focus on the period from 1660 (the Restoration) until 1700, when a number of Scottish Pietists moved to the Dutch Republic.

The research question is: In what way(s) did ‘Scottish Puritanism’ exert influence on analogous piety movements (Reformed Pietism and the Further Reformation) in the Netherlands in the seventeenth century?

2. Introduction

In the past few decades, the theme of Reformed Pietism has been the subject of research within the wider network of the various types of contacts between Great Britain and the European continent that there were in the early modern period. Particular attention has heretofore been paid to the influence of English Puritanism. Scottish Puritanism, which assumed a subordinate position and was considered an appendix to the English piety movement, due to its political and linguistic connections with the latter, has remained underexposed to this day. This attitude has changed in recent years. Recent studies show that the influence of the Scottish church on England in the seventeenth century was not insignificant. This also applies to Pietistic contacts between Scotland and the Dutch Republic.

A number of Presbyterian Scots were exiled or had to flee to the Dutch Republic. They joined existing migrant churches, most of which had been formed by English and Scottish merchants earlier in the sev-
enteenth century. Scottish Presbyterian churches were founded in Rotterdam and Veere (Campvere). The number of exiles increased after 1660, when King Charles II returned from exile; this event is referred to as the Restoration.

It appears that Scottish exiles in the Republic came into contact with major representatives of the Further Reformation. This study analyses the points at which they had similarities and the influences which they had from the Scots. The study also clarifies what the boundaries were of Scottish influence, since it becomes clear which views and practices of the Scots were not at all or hardly adopted by the Dutch.

The following definitions are of primary importance in this study:

– **Reformed Pietism**
  A Post-Reformation movement in established churches with a Reformed confession, involving a response to the prevailing substandard spirituality in the practice of ecclesiastical and religious life.

– **English Puritanism**
  The Pietist movement in England, which had not only nonconformist representatives but also members of the Church of England or Episcopalians. The framework for this movement is the aforementioned definition of Reformed Pietism.

– **Scottish Puritanism**
  The name ‘Scottish Puritanism’ applies to the Presbyterian supporters of Reformed Pietism in Scotland.

– **Covenant Piety**
  The name ‘Covenant Piety’ is the designation of a key characteristic of Scottish Puritanism. It describes the phenomenon of the type of piety that focused on the Scottish National Covenant.

– **Second Reformation**
  The period between the year 1638, in which the National Covenant was ratified, and 1651, in which Scotland was ruled by the Covenanters, is referred to as Second Reformation. In a theological sense, this period covers the years 1638 to 1660.

– **Further Reformation (Nadere Reformatie)**
  Within Dutch Reformed Pietism, the movement of the Further Reformation (Nadere Reformatie) was active in the Netherlands. Whereas Pietism focused primarily on personal piety, the Further Reformation also intended to achieve the effect of piety in church and state.
3. Results of the research

Roots of Scottish and Dutch piety movements
Chapter 2 gives an overview of the roots of the piety movements in Scotland and in the Netherlands. These are placed in the historical context of both nations at a European level. A comparison is made between political and ecclesiastical developments in both countries during the reformation process.

Pietism, which emerged in the second half of the century of the Reformation, aimed to give practical expression to this powerful renewal. It accentuated and defined themes such as regeneration, justification and sanctification. This movement followed the Reformation, which entailed a radical reform of the prevailing doctrine (dogma) and of the existing ecclesiastical structure. Nevertheless, the innovative, spiritual power endorsed by this movement was not adopted by the mass of adherents of the national Protestant churches.

In the countries with a Calvinist confession, the Pietist movement is referred to as Reformed Pietism. English and Scottish Reformed Pietism, as was also the case with analogous Pietist movements on the European mainland, were underpinned by both theoretical and practical theological principles. The name ‘Scottish Puritanism’ applies to the effect of Reformed Pietism in the Scottish nation. This name was chosen because of common ground with English Puritanism. Factors such as shared language and political events play an important role in this nomenclature.

Scottish Reformed Pietism developed after 1590, approximately at the same time as English Puritanism. One of the first piety writings was published in Edinburgh in 1589: it is the book by James Melville (1556-1614) entitled *A Spirituall Propine of a Pastour to his People*. We also find traces of early Pietism among contemporaries of Melville’s, such as Robert Bruce (c. 1554-1631) and Robert Rollock (1555-1599).

In addition to Reformed Pietism, Scottish Puritanism was marked by ‘Covenant Piety’. In the late sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, the idea developed in Scotland of what was called a national covenant. The ideology of a national theocratic covenant was an important frame of reference for Scottish Puritanism.

Dutch Reformed Pietism began to emerge at the end of the sixteenth century. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, it was above all translations of English-language Puritan works – both from England
and from Scotland – that came onto the Dutch Pietist market. For example, the early stages of Reformed Pietism in the Netherlands were largely determined by receptions of foreign devotional writings.

From around 1610, within the bounds of Reformed Pietism, the movement of the Further Reformation developed within the United Republic. Analogous to English and Scottish Puritanism, this movement sought a further reformation of church and nation in the Republic. Detailed programmes were drawn up, indicating which matters in church, politics, society and family should be reformed. These were intended to be submitted as reform proposals to political and religious authorities.

**Contacts up to 1660**

Chapter 3 discusses the contacts between Scotland and the Netherlands in the seventeenth century until the Restoration in 1660. This includes different types of contacts, such as by means of books and migrant congregations in particular.

Book production was of great importance for the spread of Puritanism, with devotional literature constituting the greatest part of it. The distribution of this reading matter took place not only in the Anglophone world but also by means of translations, thereby disseminating Puritan ideology through Western Europe. The most important contact points between the Further Reformation and the Scottish piety movement are the translations of Scottish piety literature that were published from 1600 onwards. In addition, there was also influence exerted through personal contacts, namely by English-speaking churches that were founded on the Continent, including by Scots migrants.

The Scots migrant community in the United Provinces was part of a network that extended to other European countries. Scottish-Dutch contacts were broadened by the arrival of Presbyterian Scots who had been exiled from their country. The policy of King James VI, who wanted to subject the established church to his will, was unacceptable to them. The king was seeking to reinforce his influence through the royal appointment of bishops. John Forbes of Alford (1568-1634) in particular, who served several of the migrant congregations, built up a network in the Netherlands. He maintained contacts with representatives of the Further Reformation. Specifically Scots churches were founded in Veere in 1614 and in Rotterdam in 1643. The latter city attracted the most refugees from the motherland.
The Scots Church in Rotterdam was founded despite the existence of the English Church in this city, to express Scottish identity. Its first minister was Alexander Petrie (c. 1594-1662). The Dutch Reformed pastor Jacobus Borstius (1612-1680), an advocate of the Further Reformation, was on good terms with Petrie. The Scots Church in Veere had contacts with Zeeland ministers who were committed to the principles of the Further Reformation.

Of the English-language Pietist writings that were published in Dutch, those originating from Scotland are by far the minority. Around twenty translations were printed in the period from 1600 to 1650.

The author’s ecclesiastical position did not play any role in the selection of the translations to be made from a few Scottish Episcopalian writers. Rather, Pietist content was the criterion. After the Restoration, it was exclusively translations of Presbyterian Scots that were published in the Netherlands: due to the forced imposition of episcopacy and the suppression of the Presbyterians, Episcopalian authors were no longer particularly valued in the United Republic.

Contacts after 1660

Chapter 4 deals with individual contacts between Scottish exiles and the United Republic following the events that led to the Restoration in 1660.

Owing to the persecution of the Scottish Presbyterians under the reigns of Charles II and his succeeding brother James VII, many of them fled to countries on the European continent, including the Netherlands. In view of their unshakeable commitment to the National Covenants, they were also called Covenanters. In the motherland, armed resistance sometimes arose between them and Charles II’s armies. Arrests and executions were made in increasing numbers over the period between the Restoration and the Glorious Revolution in 1688.

The Scottish pastors John Brown of Wamphray (1610-1679) and Robert MacWard (c. 1625-1681), who had fled to Rotterdam, maintained contacts with prominent Dutch theologians, such as Gisbertus Voetius (1589-1676). During temporary stays in Utrecht, MacWard sat with these theologians in the lecture hall. These Scots also had good relationships with other theologians and pastors, such as Jacobus Borstius, Jacobus Koelman (1631-1695) and Wilhelmus à Brakel (1635-1711).

The attitude of Borstius and Koelman towards the Scottish refugees is mainly expressed in three writings. What particularly appealed to them
about the Scottish exiles and their supporters was their endeavour to give shape to the theocratic ideal in ecclesiastical and popular life.

The influence of Scottish pastors in the Republic is also evident in the ‘Sabbath struggle’ between the Voetians (*voetianen*) and Cocceians (*coccejanen*). Brown’s Latin publications on this issue mainly influenced the Voetian Koelman. In his polemic works to defend the continuity of the Sabbath rest commandment, he made keen use of the works of Brown and of other Scottish writers.

For Koelman, the Scottish exiles were an important reference point in his controversy around ecclesiastical festival days and liturgical formularies. The Scottish preachers had difficulty with this tradition and also with the way in which discipline was practised in the Dutch Reformed Church. In that respect, Koelman felt abandoned by his Dutch brethren.

Chapter 5 deals with the concentration of contacts with Dutch fellow thinkers that ran through the Scottish émigré community in Rotterdam. It portrays the religious distinctives of the Scots Church in that city during the Restoration period, in the contours seen in the United Republic.

The Scots Church in Rotterdam played a central role in the Scottish community in the Republic. In particular, the Scots merchant Andrew Russell (c. 1629-1697) ensured the intensification of social contacts with the local population of Rotterdam.

In addition to the aforementioned Brown of Wamphray and MacWard, Scottish pastors in Rotterdam included John Livingstone (1603-1672), Robert Traill senior (1603-1678), James Gardiner (c. 1637–?), John Nevay (c. 1606-1672) and James Simpson (or Simson) (1621-1666), who were involved in ecclesiastical and political events in the Republic. For instance, they followed with great interest the course of the war that broke out in the Dutch ‘disaster year’ of 1672. They were also involved in the theological conflict with the French Reformed separatist Jean de Labadie (1610-1674) that troubled the Dutch Reformed Church.

The Scots enjoyed the support of representatives of the Further Reformation in their doctrine of the relationship between church and state. In both national churches, there was ongoing conflict over the proper authority of government in ecclesiastical affairs. Brown, in particular, followed the struggle raging in the Dutch Republic and gave valuable advice. He supported Koelman when the latter was exiled from his living in Sluis as a result of a conflict with the government.
Chapter 6 deals with individual contacts in Utrecht and other locations in the United Republic.

In Utrecht, a centre of the Further Reformation, Scottish students at the university came into contact with Voetian professors. They, and other Scots, were introduced here to the Further Reformation in practice. The systematic teaching given by these professors influenced the education of Scottish students. The use of the Latin manuals of Johannes à Marck (1656-1731) and Petrus van Mastricht (1630-1706) at Scottish after the Revolution was partly due to the experience of the lectures by these professors that these Scots attended.

An event profiling the spiritual relationship between the Further Reformation and Scottish Puritanism was the dispute given by the Scottish student James Hog of Carnock (1658-1734). A few disputations by other Scottish students given in the years shortly thereafter have been preserved.

James Hog’s journals show that he was troubled by the spiritual climate at the university. In them, he touched on what he regarded as the endless reasoning about matters of the doctrine of God. He assessed the students as lacking in awe at God’s virtues and majesty, an awe which must arise from a tender piety of the heart. Hog did not criticise the scholastic method of the Voetians, but he did sense a lack of balance between learning and piety among them.

The relationship between the two movements in piety experience and practice is also apparent from correspondence between Scottish and Dutch pious individuals. Elder/merchant Andrew Russell, to give one notable example, corresponded with pious people in various parts of the Republic.

Scottish Pietist piety and Covenant Piety

Chapter 7 deals with Scottish Pietist piety and Covenant piety and their influence in the United Republic.

Scottish Puritanism consists of two concentric circles: the inner circle is the sphere of personal Pietist piety, the outer circle is that of Covenant piety. There is a harmony between the two movements. Involvement in the National Covenants was accompanied by a deep Pietist experience of piety.

In the Scottish Puritan tradition of the seventeenth century, some specific means for promoting piety were accorded an important place: family worship, home societies, and Communion seasons.
Home societies are an inseparable aspect of the Scottish Puritan tradition. They already existed as home circles in the time of the reformer John Knox. A striking feature of many seventeenth-century autobiographies is the attention paid in them to personal covenant-making. Often, this covenantal content was written as a testimony to the individual’s promise made to God to serve Him. Sometimes, this was emphasised by means of practical expressions of commitment.

In practice, the Scottish National Covenants and Covenant Piety did not serve as a blueprint for the Further Reformation. Within the Further Reformation, Koelman was the Dutchman who most sympathised with Covenant Piety. In Zeeland, where the covenant idea became part of reformation programmes, it was not adopted by the entire church, and certainly not by the provincial government.

Reception of Scottish Pietist writings after 1660
Chapter 8 discusses the Dutch translations of Scottish piety writings from 1660 onwards.

‘Scottish’ translations as a proportion of the total range of translations by English-language Pietist authors remained small in this period, as it was in the period before the Restoration. For the seventeenth century as a whole, we have to do with about 40 Scottish writings translated into Dutch, set against a total of approximately 400 first editions of originally English-language books.

During the Restoration period, Borstius and Koelman were the most important translators of Scottish pietistic writings. The former has three translations to his name, the latter ten. These translators were especially urged by the Rotterdam Scottish pastors Brown of Wamphray and MacWard to make writings from the time of the Second Reformation accessible to the Dutch public.

The oeuvre of Koelman’s translations contains both Scottish and English piety writings. The themes of both sets of translations largely concur. This selection indicates his great appreciation for the way in which the writings in question pay attention to the practice of godliness. From 1669 until his death in 1695, it was mainly Scottish writings which he translated.

Koelman’s preference for Scottish writers has to do with a reorientation regarding a number of points that he considered important for the development of a healthy and balanced life of faith. The introductions he wrote to his first ‘Scottish’ translations – those of William Guthrie (1620-
1665), Samuel Rutherford (1600-1661) and John Brown of Wamphray – clearly show the influence of Scottish Puritanism on Koelman. He was so inspired by it that his own later piety writings bear witness to the fact.

Scottish covenant doctrine

Chapter 9 concerns Scottish covenant doctrine and its influence on Koelman, not to be confused with Covenant Piety. This is not the issue of the National Covenants, but of those covenants that have to do with personal salvation.

Covenant, or federal, theology developed within Reformed theology from the Reformation onwards. It is a major doctrine that found a prominent place within both Reformed Pietism and the Further Reformation.

The Scot Robert Rollock (c. 1555-1599) was one of the first theologians to apply the two-covenant scheme to the order of salvation (ordo salutis): that scheme holds that there is a covenant of works and a covenant of grace. Rollock assigned this scheme a place in the doctrinal relationship between Law and Gospel. The Law is the source of human misery; the Gospel is the means of redemption.

Scottish covenant doctrine developed and deepened mainly among authors of the Further Reformation. For them, the covenant of grace not only forms the heart of the preached Word, but also, through proclamation, provides stability to the life of faith of the individual as he is tossed back and forth. Scottish autobiographical material of the seventeenth century pays considerable attention to sermons in which covenant doctrine has a place.

Some of Koelman’s writings show a clear framework with regard to the relationship between Law and Gospel, and Scottish influence is noticeable here. Although Koelman gives regeneration and its characteristics a distinct place in his theology, he focuses more on saving faith. This study identifies Natuur en gronden des geloofs (The nature and grounds of faith), which was reprinted several times, as the first book in which this is expressed.

The strength of Scottish covenant doctrine is that in it, believers may draw strength and comfort from their relationship with the unshakable covenant of a faithful God. The covenant promises have a clear function in the practice of piety. In Scottish theology, the inheritance from the Reformation as regards the doctrine of salvation is visible in the development of covenant doctrine and the related doctrine of faith.

For Koelman, Scottish covenant doctrine offered positive tools for
use in preaching and pastoral care. However, he was almost the only minister in the United Republic to see it so. Moreover, we find hardly any influence exerted by other aspects of Scottish theology. In other words, the influence of Scottish theology in the Netherlands appears to be limited.

Break with radical Covenanters

The question discussed in Chapter 10 is to what extent the Scottish émigrés who belonged to the so-called United Societies (the Cameronians) maintained contacts in the Netherlands with representatives of the Further Reformation, on what points they agreed, and what the cause of their eventual disagreement was.

From 1679 onwards, the Cameronians, named after their first leader Richard Cameron (c. 1648-1680), formed a group of Covenanters who wished in no way to cooperate with the government as long as it refused to recognise and put into practice the National Covenants.

Robert Hamilton (1650-1701) became the faction’s spokesman in the United Republic. He settled in Leeuwarden with a number of kindred spirits, and had regular contact with Wilhelmus à Brakel. À Brakel initially championed the ideals of the Societies and the way in which Hamilton communicated their desire to respect them, although he had difficulty with their preparedness to resort to arms in their struggle.

Hamilton’s most important task in Leeuwarden was to pave the way for the theological training and ordination of James Renwick (1662-1688) and some other young men in the Netherlands. The Societies were in urgent need of ministers to officiate at the open-air meetings (conventicles) that they held in the motherland. After a short period of study at the University of Groningen, Renwick was so far advanced with his studies that he could be ordained to the ministry. His ordination to the Groningen classis (presbytery) took place on 10 May 1683.

Koelman and à Brakel felt attracted to the piety and goals of the Societies for a while, but when the radicalism in the thinking of the Cameronians took on what were to their mind extreme forms, they withdrew their support. The point that caused the breach was the way in which the Societies acted in a revolutionary way against the government by means of their armed resistance.
Chapter 11 discusses the consequences and influence of the Glorious Revolution of 1688 on Pietist relations between Scotland and the Netherlands.

The Glorious Revolution had a broader context than the British realms and the United Republic alone: it was concerned with preserving the Protestant character of Europe, as shown, for example, by some of Koelman’s writings. This placed events before and in 1688 in an apocalyptic perspective. The highlight of the Glorious Revolution was the invasion of southern England that took place under the leadership of the Dutch stadholder William III. William and his wife Mary Stuart were crowned King and Queen of Great Britain a year later.

Koelman was the Dutch spokesman of the supporters of the Glorious Revolution. In the Dutch edition of Gilbert Burnet’s (1643-1715) sermon on the matter, he wrote a translator’s preface to the reader. This preliminary report shows that Koelman was hoping for a reinstatement of the Puritan reformation, both in England and in Scotland.

Most Scottish migrants in the United Republic returned to their homeland after the year of the Glorious Revolution. The Scots Churches in Veere and Rotterdam continued to exist, and retained their identity even after 1688. The political link between the Kingdom of Scotland and the Dutch Republic that was established by the Revolution had no direct influence on the piety contacts between the two countries. Incidentally, this band lasted until 1702, when Stadholder/King William III died. Five years later, the Kingdom of Scotland entered political union with England.

The frustrations felt by the Cameronians, who saw their ideal image of a covenant nation not being fulfilled after the Revolution, were shared neither in Scotland nor in the United Republic. After the Revolution in Scotland, Covenant Piety enjoyed almost no support there. The many years of struggle to maintain and observe the National Covenants were no longer honoured. The restoration of Presbyterianism was enough for most Calvinists. Now that the ideal image had been seen not to have been achieved, the pursuit of the National Covenants was abandoned.
4. Conclusion

With regard to both the roots and the nature of Scottish and Dutch Reformed Pietism as Reformed piety movements, clear similarities can be identified.

On the basis of this research, parallels can be drawn between the Scottish Second Reformation and the Further Reformation. With regard to Covenant Piety and the felt necessity and duty of entering into a national covenant, however, the two movements part company: the Dutch movement did strive for a theocratic nation, but a national covenant was not a condition that it held had to be met.

The influence of Scottish Puritan ideas is notable within Dutch Reformed Pietism and the Further Reformation. The Dutch movement’s preference for Scottish theological emphases is especially seen in Koelman’s selection of works to translate.

Covenant Piety, which is a key element of the piety of the Scottish Presbyterians, has correlations with the Dutch Pietist doctrine of the covenants (federal theology). However, the two models of covenant thought developed independently.

Representatives of the Further Reformation felt that the Scottish migrants’ efforts to have the National Covenants enacted were too radical, and had difficulty with the armed resistance put up by the Cameronsians, even though Borstius and Koelman initially had a positive esteem for that faction.

The study’s final conclusion is that the influence of Scottish Puritan piety in the Netherlands was limited, firstly, to contacts with some representatives of the Further Reformation, and secondly, to the translation and distribution of Pietist writings, in which Koelman played a major role. Both the inner covenant relationship with God and its external reflection in national life point to the strong ties between theologians in the two countries that there were, especially in the seventeenth century.