

**“Not a Bastion of Unbelief”:
Dutch Calvinist and Roman Catholic Scientists
About Science-Religion Issues
in the Early Twentieth Century**

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Introduction and central question

Central question: How did the Dutch Calvinists and Roman Catholics deal with the sciences during the period 1900-1950?

Outline:

- I. Initial impetus to change; social and organizational developments in the Netherlands
- II. Case studies: the Calvinist physicist G.J. Sizoo (c. 1930); the Catholic biologist A.C.J. van Goor (c. 1918)
- III. Concluding remarks

I. Social developments in the Netherlands in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century:

- Calvinists and Catholics in the nineteenth century and their attitude to the sciences
- The initial impetus to change: the foundation of confessional organizations

Confessional scientific organizations and their objectives:

- 1880: the Calvinist *Free University*: science based ‘only on the foundation of the Calvinist principles’
- 1896: the Calvinist *Christian Society for Physicists and Physicians*: science ‘by the light of the Word of God’
- 1904: The *Society for the Advancement of Science among Catholics in the Netherlands*: ‘promoting the sciences among the Dutch Catholics’
- 1923: *Roman Catholic University*: science with ‘as the highest authority God’s revealed truth, of which the R.C. Church is acknowledged the bearer’

General remarks:

- Similarities between Calvinists and Catholics
- ‘Pillarization’ (*verzuiling*) in Dutch society in the early twentieth century

II. Two case studies:

- G.J. Sizoo, the Calvinist Science Faculty and the question of the age of the earth (c. 1930)
- A.C.J. van Goor, the Society for the Advancement of Science among Catholics in the Netherlands, and the discussion about the theory of evolution (c. 1918)

III. Concluding remarks

- Striving for emancipation
- A new synthesis between science and religion?
- Increasing professionalization of the sciences
- ‘Pillarization’ and the spread of knowledge