

THE ANGLE OF INCIDENCE OF PAUL ROUX'S CATECHISM — A STUDY ON THE THEOLOGY OF A FRENCH REFUGEE AT THE CAPE¹

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ABSTRACT

With the *Belijdenis* of Paul Roux we have an indigenous document of early eighteenth century theological reflection among some French refugees of the first generations at the Cape. It provides us with useful opportunities to analyse the theology of an important part of the history of the Huguenots. In this study, attention is given to the matter of the *introductory question* of this catechism book with regard to its importance as well as its *content*. It is argued that the angle of incidence of this catechism is pointing to a shift away from the reformed heritage towards the *Aufklärung* and *Rationalism*. Whether this applies to the rest of the *Belijdenis* in its entirety is not object of this analysis, though.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

A certain French Refugee by the name of Paul Roux (1665-1723) was among some of the first Huguenot parties to arrive at the Cape on August 4, 1688 aboard the sailing vessel, the *Berg China*. He and his shipmates had set sail earlier in the same year, on March 20, from Rotterdam (Hugo 1977: 743; Le Roux 1988:60, 168, 174).³ Roux, who would become the South African patriarch of the family, was originally from Orange (an independent principedom along the river Rhône) (Le Roux 1988:60). Only a few months later he was appointed, on November 8, 1688, as “French-speaking reader

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- 3 Although Le Roux (1988:60, 168) names the *Berg China* as the vessel which transported Paul Roux and his travelling companions, his name is not among the passengers as listed by him (Le Roux 1988:174, 175).

and teacher” (“voorleser en schoolmeester in de Frans[che] taal”) (cf. Franken 1978:21).⁴

The historical work of Paul Roux at the Cape is fairly well known. With his contribution he is regarded (together with Pierre Simond) as arguably the most significant champion of the French language at the Cape (Coertzen 1976:214). Hugo (1977:743) even states that Roux’s death also meant, figuratively, the demise of the French language in South Africa.⁵ It is, however, in another context that in recent years his name has appeared in scientific publications (e.g. Coertzen 1976:214 *et seq.*; 1988:129 *et seq.*; Britz 1989:58 *et seq.*; 1990:344,354 *et seq.*; Brown 199_:48 *et seq.*; Van Zijl 199_:156 *et seq.*).⁶ This revival in studies in connection to Paul Roux, can be attributed to the fact that a certain manuscript, “Paulus Roux [,] Anno Christi 1743 den 18 Maij [:] Belijdenis des Geloofs”⁷ (Roux 1743), copied by H.C. von Wieding in 1743, has recently come to hand (Coertzen 1976: 214).⁸ In all probability this catechism book by “Paulus Roux” is consequently originally from the pen of the patriarch Roux, who had already died 20 years earlier, in 1723. According to Coertzen this is the oldest

- 4 However, it is peculiar that from 1688 up to his demise in 1723 there is no mention of “the teaching of Paul Roux” (“die onderwijs van Paul Roux”) in the official correspondence between the clergy at the Cape and the VOC (cf. Franken 1977:32, 33).
- 5 In contrast, Franken argues that on the basis of an examination of the christening register of 1694-1717 (cf. Franken 1977:158), Roux’s command of French compares unfavourably to that of rev. Pierre Simond (1977:201). The question may be asked whether Franken distinguishes sufficiently or even at all between literacy as such on the one hand and the command of French (e.g. oral, which can hardly be assessed) on the other, when he refers to the “illiterate French” of Roux (Franken 1977:201). It may well be that Roux’s written command differed starkly from his oral command, which in those days and circumstances was not necessarily uncommon, and that one cannot therefore deduct too much from documents regarding Roux’s command of the French tongue.
- 6 Neither in the case of Brown or Van Zijl the year of publication could be ascertained, only the decade.
- 7 From the copy of this document it is not quite sure whether it is written “Belijdenis” or “Belydenis”, as well as “May” or “Maij”. For the purpose of this paper the spelling “Belijdenis” and “Maij” is going to be used. (It actually does not matter in terms of the sense or the meaning of the words.)
- 8 The cooperation of Prof. P. Coertzen and the staff of the Theological Library, University of Stellenbosch, are hereby gratefully acknowledged in that they provided a copy of Roux (1743).

known written index of questions, or catechism book, at the Cape (1976: 214). That it indeed was valuable and had a definite influence can be deduced from the fact that the book was, years after Roux's death, still used by the pioneer parish of Drakenstein (cf. Britz 1990:349).

1.2 Paul Roux's "Belijdenis des Geloofs" — object of this study

In a certain sense the prehistory and origin of this catechism book is unto today in historical uncertainty. Various questions around the history of its origin have not been answered satisfactorily, or addressed sufficiently in literature. Thus it is uncertain when the original manuscript was written. In addition, in the light of Roux's ardour for the French language and the fact that he was a first generation French settler, it can arguably be accepted that the original manuscript had been in French and not in Dutch, in contrast to this single remaining copy of which we are aware. However, at present this is still largely a supposition that has not been verified by studies beyond all doubt. If the language of the original manuscript could be ascertained, it would give rise to further questions, such as whether this existent text is a translation and/or version, and whether it is a true version/copy of the original or not, and who had been responsible for the translation/version. In future it could well be that other documents will shed further light on the prominence of this catechism book in catechism classes during the first half of the eighteenth century at the Cape as well as on its continued influence and impact.

While these and similar questions should be addressed through archival and historical research, the scope and hypothesis of this study is somewhat different. The aim is, with reference and in addition to previous and other scientific analyses of this manuscript (e.g. Britz 1990; Coertzen 1988:129 *et seq.*), to theologially analyse its angle of incidence, i.e. its first question(-s) within the first part.

1.3 Limitations and scope of the examination

Due to the limitations and the scope of this study, attention will only be given to the matter of the *introductory question* with regard to the preference it enjoys in the catechism as well as with regard to its *content*.⁹

9 Besides Coertzen (1976:214 *et seq.*) who pointed out different aspects regarding Roux's *Belijdenis*, Britz (1990:354 *et seq.*) has examined the *Belijdenis* in its entirety and thereby drew some central dogmatical lines.

The first question (or first chapter for this reason) of Roux's *Belijdenis* needs to be examined not only in terms of its position in the catechism (4.2.1 below), but especially and specifically with regard to two other aspects, viz. the *contents* of the (first) question(-s) in the context of the first part (chapter) as well as its *relation* to the other questions of the catechism's first part (see 4.2.2 below). Both these aspects are naturally always positioned within a certain *historical* framework against the background of other catechisms that are or were also in use. Due to the limited scope of this study, some dogma historical lines will be illuminated, thereby contributing to the theological mapping (to borrow a geographical term) of this catechism book.

2. CATECHISM, CATECHETICS AND CATECHISM BOOKS

The complexity of catechism research should be taken in regard, when one wants to obtain a view on the contemporary theological and religious education at the Cape against the background of the broader European reformed context. This is applicable especially when one is looking for perspectives on the influence of the Huguenots regarding the nature of the founding and expansion of the reformed religion at the Cape in the first half-century after their arrival. Catechetics, after all, can be justly called one of the foundation pillars of the reformed religion, and as such there are few measures more suited to a theological analysis than specifically a catechism book. Furthermore, a catechism always intends to be a concise summary of doctrine; as such it can be regarded as a mirror of the doctrine and its development during the period of its origin (Schulze 1991:5).

During and after the Reformation, *catechetics* on the one hand and *catechisms*¹⁰ on the other hand acquired a special importance in the practice of Protestant religion, within both the Lutheran sphere of influence and in accordance with Calvin's Genevan initiatives. The impact of Luther's *Großer Katechismus* and his *Kleiner Katechismus* (1529) is universally acknowledged, as is that of Calvin's *Genevan Catechism* of 1542. In fact, the *Small Catechism* (Luther) together with the *Heidelberg Catechism* (1563) and the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* (1647) rank as the most prominent examples of catechisms, which have been widely accepted since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (cf. Weber 1996:5). However, catechisms are not limited to being

10 No further investigation is made in this study regarding the significance and historical application of the term "catechism". Cf. Van't Veer (1942:6 *et seq.*) and Surkau (1959:1179 *et seq.*) in this regard.

only Reformational or post-Reformational phenomena; already from the earliest centuries mention is made of the catechetical matter that featured in catechism classes. The entire "Katechismusüberlieferung der Reformation" (Weber 1996:7) hails back to the Middle Ages — pre-Reformational catechisms such as that of the *Bohemian Brethren (Unitas Fratrum)* had already been in circulation in the late Middle Ages (cf. Surkau 1959:1183; Weber 1968:132). Yet the history of the "catechism as a book" within a wider sphere gained notable impetus with Luther (Surkau 1959:1181).

Unlike the *Heidelberg Catechism*, not all catechisms have evolved with a view to being a *confession* simultaneously; the majority having been developed, as indicated by the name, primarily with a teaching aim, i.e. for *catechetics*. Some, like those of Luther obtained confessional status per se only a couple of decades after their origin. Nor was it implicit for a catechism to be formulated in a question-and-answer format.¹¹ Currently the question-and-answer format is widely associated with the term "catechism", a direct consequence of the impact of the above-mentioned noteworthy catechisms, of which all four mentioned last (i.e. with the exception of Luther's *Big Catechism*) were fashioned in this form. Against this background, then, it is natural that Paul Roux's catechism book, with its continuous question-and-answer format (cf. Roux 1743) is positioned within a greater context of catechism and catechetical material — it remains to be seen precisely *where*.

3. "PAULUS ROUX: BELIJDENIS DES GELOOFS"

3.1 Arrangement and structure of the catechism book

When the pages of Roux's manuscript in its entirety (Roux 1743) are numbered, the arrangement is as follows:

p. 1	Note by archivist (23.02.1973);
p. 2	Reference to author: "Paulus Roux[,] Anno Christi 1743 den 18 Maij";
p. 3	Title: "Belijdenis des Geloofs";
p. 3-5	Part 1 ("Het eerste Hoofddeel");
p. 5-10	Part 2 ("Het tweede Hoofddeel");
p. 10-14	Part 3 ("Het derde Hoofddeel");
p. 14-16	Part 4 ("Het vierde Hoofddeel");

11 Luther's *Großer Katechismus*, to name but one, proves the historical fact that there are numerous examples in the history of catechisms, which were not formulated in question-and-answer format.

- p. 16-18 Part 5 (“Het vyfde Hoofdteel”);
- p. 19-22 Part 6 (“Het sesde Hoofdteel”);
- p. 22-29 Part 7 (“Het sevende Hoofdteel”);
- p. 29-35 Part 8 (“Het achtste Hoofdteel”);
- p. 35 After the conclusion of Part 8 on p. 35 (by the word “Eynde”) there is a later entry, dated August 16, 1796 by a certain “Jacob De Villiers [,] Petrus zoon”;
- p. 36 *Notes* (barely legible);
- p. 37 “A me conscripsit [,] H.C. von Wieding [,] Anno Christi”; accompanied by a graphic depiction of numerals of the date May 18, 1743 (cf. Coertzen 1988:129).

3.2 Content of the catechism book

The main content of Roux (1743:3-35) therefore consists of eight main parts. According to the arrangement above, they can be characterised as follows:

- 1 Anthropology;
- 2 Theology — with a soteriological focus (p. 5, first question);
- 3 Theology — God as Trinity;
- 4 Predestination (*decretum aeternum*);
- 5 Works of God; Creation; Decalogue;
- 6 Sin (among which original sin); Redemption; the Redeemer;
- 7 Christology;
- 8 Faith; Doctrine of Scripture; Justification (“rechtveerdigmakinge” — 29, 30); Sanctification (“heyligmakinge” — 29; cf. 31); Elevation [of man, most probably in terms of a distinct aspect of the *ordo salutis*] (“heerlijkmakinge” — 29; cf. 31); Sacraments (Baptism and Lord’s Supper).

4. THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS¹²

4.1 General

It is possible to make various remarks of a general nature in a theological analysis of Roux’s “Belijdenis des Geloofs”.

In the first instance the question-and-answer format is a distinct feature. It involuntarily leads to the assumption that this book is meant for, and was used in catechetical teaching. While the teachers, and not the pas-

12 Further reference to the catechism book by Roux (1743) will be made — when applicable — by the page numbers only in brackets, e.g. (3) meaning Roux (1743:3).

tors, were in those days primarily responsible for catechism classes (Van der Watt 1976:67), the association of Paul Roux's name (as reader and teacher) with this book also reveals its catechetical focus. Therefore the name "catechism book" ("katkisasieboekie" — Coertzen 1976:214) is an aptly fitting description of this manuscript.

Secondly, a lofty claim is staked in the choice of the title, "Belijdenis des Geloofs" (3). In the Reformational tradition, of which the Huguenots formed an intrinsic part, the importance of the *confession* of one's *faith* was absolutely central and on the level of unnegotiability — to such an extent that it could become a matter of life or death. Has there ever been a group of refugees who experienced closer what it meant to suffer for and be persecuted for the *confession* of their *faith*, than specifically the French Huguenots (cf. Moorrees 1937:86)?

When there is mention of *confessions of faith*, the approval of the church on the level of acquiescence by a broader gathering is essential. While, so far as is known, any reference in primary sources to such a recognition by churches of Roux's *Belijdenis* is lacking, it indicates that the term "Belijdenis des Geloofs" (confession of faith) in the title of this catechism book was not intended in a technical sense as *terminus technicus*. In the light of at least two aspects it is understandable that Roux (or Von Wieding, or an unknown translator/copier) would define such a catechism book with the title "Belijdenis des Geloofs". These aspects are in the first place, the use of various other catechisms that were quite common by the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century amongst the population at the Cape (cf. a.o. Coertzen 1976:215); and, in the second place, specifically (well within a century after Dordrecht) the universality of the *Heidelberg Catechism*, not only as catechism book (in question-and-answer format), but especially, in an increasing degree as a *Confession* in the technical sense of the word. Such a title (*Confession of faith*) would, consciously or unconsciously, contribute to the authority of this catechism book and its contents.

4.2 Order of content

4.2.1 A comparison with other authoritative, well-known catechisms

The first characteristic that comes to the fore in the analysis of a catechism book, which is, like the one by Roux (1743), formulated in question-and-answer format and structured into eight chapters (parts), is that of the chronology and division of the contents, as this affords valuable light regarding the aim and theological focus of the document.

Bearing in mind the approach taken by the best-known Catechisms within the Protestant tradition, viz. Luther's *Small Catechism*, Calvin's *Catechism*, the *Heidelberg Catechism* and the *Westminster Catechism* (to name but a few landmark catechisms in chronological order), the approach taken by Roux (1743) looks like a different one. The first questions in the respective above-mentioned Catechisms are:

Luther:

[...] Thou shalt have no other gods. *What does this mean?*

Answer: We should fear and love God and trust him, above all things. (*Bekenntnisschriften*, 1930:507; cf. Schaff 1990:74.)¹³

Calvin:

Minister: What is the most important objective in the life of man?

Child: To come to knowledge of God.¹⁴

Heidelberg Catechism:

Question 1: What is thy only comfort in life and in death?

Answer: That I, with body and soul, both in life and in death, am not my own, but belong to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ ... (In: Schaff 1990:307 *et seq.*)¹⁵

Westminster:

Question 1: What is the chief end of man?

Answer: Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever. (In: Schaff 1990:676.)

Apart from the Decalogue as Luther's point of departure¹⁶ the other three catechisms (all on a Reformed basis) display remarkable similarities. Both Calvin's *Catechism* and the *Westminster Catechism*, although more than a century passed between them, display an almost *verbatim* likeness in their first questions (even though the answers differ in focus). The *Heidelberg Catechism* again has

13 [...] *Du soll(s)t nicht andere Götter haben.* Was ist das?

Antwort: Wir sollen Gott über alle Ding fürchten, lieben und vertrauen. (*Bekenntnisschriften*, 1930:507.)

14 *Le ministre.* Quelle est la principale fin de la vie humaine?

L'enfant. C'est de co[n]gnoistre Dieu. (Calvin CO 6,9.)

15 1. FRAGE: Was ist dein einiger Trost im Leben vnd im Sterben?

ANTWORT: Das[s] ich mit Leib vnd Seel, beide im leben vnd sterben nicht mein, sondern meines getrewen Heilands Jesu Christi eigen bin ... (In: Bakhuizen van den Brink 1940:148.)

16 The Decalogue is, in keeping with Luther's viewpoint, one of the three foundations on which catechetics should rest, the others being the 12 Articles and the Lord's Prayer.

its famous “*only comfort*” approach. All three Reformed Catechisms have in common that man (man himself or man's condition or the chief end of the creation of man/for the existence of man) is focused upon in their respective first questions; then, however, directly with regard to his relation with God.

By contrast, the first question in Roux's *Belijdenis* is:

What are you? (“Wat zijt ghij?”),

with the answer: “A man [human]” (“Een mensch”),

immediately followed by:

“What is a man?” (“Wat is een mensch?”), Roux 1743:3).

One notices that Roux's *Belijdenis* has a strikingly different approach from the other four mentioned above. Here the point of departure is purely anthropological, which explains why it seems as if Roux (1743) represents a shift in theological thought — regarding the sequence of the substance matter and primarily in view of the catechism's first question.

The matter is, however, not as simple as it seems — quite the contrary. An anthropological angle of incidence in confessing faith (or, rather, as point of departure in the formulation of the confession of faith) should be judged carefully. The important question is whether this *anthropological* premise is a premise *per se*, i.e. standing on its own, or how it stands in relation to God or man's knowledge of God. That means, not only the anthropological point of departure should be judged but particularly its meaning and function within its relation to faith in God and knowledge of God. It is with good reason that Calvin's *Institutes* commence with the famous sentence:

Tota fere sapientiae nostrae summa, quae vera demum ac solida sapientia censi debet, duabus partibus constat, Dei cognitione et nostri (OS III,31,6-8.).

In this regard Weber (1955:582), with reference to this guiding principle of Calvin, also warns against wrongly assuming that man has no place in theology.¹⁷

17

Gelegentlich wird ... die Ansicht ausgesprochen, die Theologie habe es mit Gott und nicht mit dem Menschen zu tun. Eine solche Ansicht wird von keinem Dogmatiker vertreten. Sie ist aber im begreiflichen Gegenschlag gegen die “anthropozentrische” Theologie, wie sie u.a. weithin im 19. Jahrhundert herrschte, vielfach geäußert worden und hat den scheinbaren Vorteil für sich, fromm und radikal zu klingen ...

Im entscheidenden Punkte wird *Calvin* mit seiner berühmt gewordenen Formulierung auf jeden Fall zuzustimmen sein: christliche Lehre von Gott und christliche Lehre vom Menschen gehören zusammen.

Of course it is not only a matter that the doctrine on God and the doctrine on man cannot be separated; also and particularly the way in which it is related to each other is of decisive significance, which becomes clear from the consecutive argumentation of Calvin in his further exposition on the Biblical relation between the *cognitio Dei* and the *cognitio nostri*.

From this thought of line, however, it is clear that one cannot judge the approach of this catechism book only on the fact that the *Belijdenis* commences with an anthropological part; the answers and the *contents* of the next questions should be taken into careful consideration in order to ascertain the *nature* of the anthropology in the first part of the *Belijdenis*.

4.2.2 A historical perspective

In addition to the complexity in the case of the order of content, the matter of the anthropology as point of departure in the *history of catechisms* is also more complicated than one would expect in the first instance.

When one accepts the authenticity of this *Belijdenis*, one can assume a time period for the date of completion of the original text, on which it is based. Taking Roux's biography into account (cf. Hugo 1977:743), this period would lie most probably somewhere between 1700 and 1723, although it can be a decade earlier of course.

Since there have been some major theological shifts in Protestantism during the seventeenth century, e.g. the orthodoxy (reformed as well as Lutheran) and the Pietism, one would expect that at least some of those leading approaches would be reflected in Roux's *Belijdenis*.

The question is rather *which* theological shifts are reflected than *whether* the *Belijdenis* would be an expression of such ideas or approaches. With regard to an apparently anthropocentric or at least an anthropological point of departure, when a catechism book starts with a first question about man, one asks oneself what the reason(-s) would be for such an angle of incidence. What are the philosophical premises that play a role? Which religious and theological framework has been constitutive in the completion of this catechism book? Is it perhaps a consequence of the *Early Aufklärung* (*Enlightenment*), which can be traced back to the seventeenth century already? Or has the *Nadere Reformatie* (Netherlands) played a part in influencing Roux to deviate from other catechisms in terms of its angle of incidence?

An interesting light is thrown on this question from a historical perspective, namely that Roux's *Belijdenis* is not the only known catechism that starts with the question "What are you?" ("Wat zijt gij?"). Actually, as Weber (1968:133) points out, there has been a type of catechism during the Reformation, which he calls "analytical" catechisms, which also is characterised by this *ad hominem*-approach.¹⁸ He mentions that there has been approximately seventy of this type of catechisms, in which the catechetical substance matter is used as a whole. First of all they commence with man and Christ ("Zuerst ist vom Menschsein und vom Christsein die Rede ..."), before the rest of the substance is unfolded. These catechisms follow more or less two catechisms of the latest part of the Middle Ages, i.e. even *before* the Reformation, viz. the catechisms of the *Bohemian Brethren* and the *Waldenses* respectively.¹⁹ Both have in common that they commence with the question "What are you".²⁰ The reformed catechisms of this type of "analytical catechisms" have commenced in a similar way (Weber 1968:132).²¹

With reference to this historical perspective by Weber, one sees how cautiously one should be in judging a catechism on the nature of only the first question (or for that matter the first part/ chapter). To really trace the roots of Roux's *Belijdenis* one rather has to dig deeper into the contents (in this instance primarily the substance matter of the first part) than to come to final conclusions on the opening question alone.

4.2.3 The content of the first questions in Roux's *Belijdenis*

The first part ("Eerste Hoofddeel") of Roux's *Belijdenis* reads as follows (3-5):

- | | |
|------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Q | What are you? ("Wat zijt ghij?") |
| A | A man [human] ("Een mensch"). |

18 The friendly help of Prof. L.F. Schulze (Potchefstroom) is hereby gratefully acknowledged in that he pointed out this perspective of Weber.

19 Unfortunately I was not able to lay my hands on these two catechisms.

20

Gemeinsam ist ... beiden spätmittelalterlichen Formen, daß sich hier die Ausgangsfrage sogleich ad hominem richtet. "Was bist du?" fragt der böhmische Katechismus in der deutschen Fassung von 1522. Und ähnlich scheint die Ausgangsfrage bei den Waldensern gelautet zu haben. Die reformatorischen Katechismen haben, soweit sie dieser Form zugehörig waren, ähnlich angesetzt. (Weber 1968: 132.)

21 Weber considers the *Heidelberg Catechism* as well as Calvin's *Genevan Catechism* (542) to be in the same group of "analytical" catechisms (1996:7).

2. Q What is a man?
 A A rational creature, existing of soul and body.
3. Q What is a rational soul?
 A A thinking being, functioning by (“werkende door”) mind (“verstand”), judgement (“oordeel”) and will (“wille”).
4. Q What does your mind do?
 A The mind knows and understands the things and truths that *present them to me* (“mij voorkomen”).
5. Q What does your judgement do?
 A With my judgement I agree what [part of] my thoughts (“dunkt”) is true and I deny what [part of] my presence is false.
6. Q What does your will do?
 A The will is inclined (“neigt zig”) to desire or to reject that which comes to my mind (“het geen aan mijn verstand voorkomen”).
7. Q What is your other part?
 A My body.
8. Q What does it exist of?
 A Of flesh, bones, veins, as well as liquids, living [organs] (“Levens-Geesten”) and blood.
9. Q Which of both, your soul or your body, is your best part?
 A My soul.
10. Q Why?
 A For two reasons: firstly because it functions rationally and mindful (“met bewustheid”) of itself; secondly because it is immortal.

One cannot emphasise all anthropological aspects in this study. One aspect, however is immediately striking in this context. It is namely quite notable how many times the concepts *mind* (questions 3 & 6), *rational* (question 2 & 3) and different words that are in the same semantic domain as the concept of *thought* (*thinking, know, understand* — questions 3 & 4; *thoughts* [“dunkt”] — question 5; or *mindful* [“met bewustheid”] — question 10) are being used in this part of *Belijdenis*.

Not only the frequency of the usage of this type of “rational” concepts is noteworthy, though, but also the place they occupy in the anthropology according to Roux’s *Belijdenis*. Man itself is described as a *rational* creature (question 2), while the most important part of man, his soul (*contra* his body) is not only defined as *rational* (question 3) but also consists of a *thinking* being. This *thinking being* of which one of three parts (actually the main

part) is the *mind*, is the main or the final gauge to judge truths and other things (question 4). Besides the Platonic view of man (cf. question 9), the rationalistic tendency in this presentation of an anthropology is quite straightforward. It even sheds another light on the question about the reasons or motives for an anthropocentric angle of incidence of this catechism book (cf. above, 4.2.2).²²

Inevitably one asks yourself where this basic rationalistic core of the anthropology of Roux (1743) originates from, since the distinctive features in comparison with other important (though earlier) catechisms are noteworthy. Is it perhaps under the influence of Hugo Grotius (i.e. De Groot 1583-1645), a man who was well known for his anthropocentric rationalism (Benrath 1988:45). In a way, by stressing the *rational* dimensions of theology, Grotius also helped to prepare the way for the *Aufklärung*. Regarding this question of influences on Roux, though, it would be necessary to look in depth into other aspects of the *Belijdenis* as well. Another possibility also comes to the surface, when one takes the immediate reformed background of this time period into account, namely the scholastic thought of the *Reformed Orthodoxy*. It had its peak in the seventeenth century but still had a big influence in the eighteenth century as well.

Although the *Reformed Orthodoxy* and someone like Hugo Grotius in his capacity as a significant representative of the *Late Humanism* have been adamant theological opponents, they had one thing in common. For both the *Late Humanism* and the *Reformed Orthodoxy* theological (i.e. Biblical) concepts in general did not serve as premises, but rather "natural, rational concepts"; they tended to "authorise" their theology by emphasising the *rationality* of it. A *rational* defence of their idea of religion and theology was a focal point in their attempts to build a logical, "scientific" system on religious truths (cf. Benrath 1988:45 and Neuser 1998:314).

The way man is defined as a *rational* creature, consisting (besides the body) of a *rational* soul (being the more important of the two) is presupposed by Roux. Furthermore Roux states that this *rational* soul is a *thinking* being, functioning *inter alia* by *mind* (as well as judgement and will), whereas the *mind* *knows* and *understands*, etc. All of this points to a fixed system of rational components, emphasising rationality *per se*, which is a significant deviation from the view of man as he is characterised in e.g. the *Heidelberg Catechism* (Sunday 1-4).

22 Britz (1990:355) therefore analyses this *Belijdenis* quite accurately, by stating that it commences with man and his cognitive ability.

5. CONCLUSION

With the *Belijdenis* of Paul Roux we have an indigenous and authentic document of early eighteenth century theological reflection among some French refugees of the first and second generation at the Cape. It provides us with useful opportunities to analyse the theology of a part of the Huguenot history, which is not so well known yet. It is clear that Paul Roux's catechism was meant for catechetics and not a *confession of faith* in the technical sense of the word. Therefore the name "catechism book" is an aptly fitting description of this manuscript.

Although the *Belijdenis* commences with an anthropological part, this fact *per se* is not sufficient for judging the theological range or doctrinal value of the document; actually, there are also some other, earlier catechisms that have the same approach regarding the first question. The contents of the first questions, however, present quite another picture, namely one of a fixed system of *rational* components, even emphasising rational concepts, which is a far way from man as he is characterised in a famous reformed catechism like the *Heidelberg Catechism*. At least regarding the angle of incidence, this catechism is a clear proof of a shift away from the reformed heritage towards the *Aufklärung* and *Rationalism*. One still has to see whether this applies in the rest to the *Belijdenis* in its entirety, though.

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D'Assonville The angle of incidence of Paul Roux's catechism

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