

A Biography of Rev. Dr. Harry Boer¹

by

Samuel O. N. G. Nwokoro

Rev. Dr. Harry R. Boer was the founding principal of the Theological College of Northern Nigeria (TCNN). He led TCNN through its first fourteen years of existence. Dr. Boer had other working experiences before he came to start TCNN. This article contains a life story of Dr. Boer with selected details that stretch across various stages of his life.

1. Birth

Hendrich Reinier Boer was born on Friday April 4th, 1913 to Jacob Boer and Anna Vijfhuizen in the municipality of Hillegom, South Holland Province of the Netherlands. Harry, as Hendrich came to be commonly known, was second of three children. His other two siblings were Willem and Elizabeth. They were named after their grandparents: Willem Boer and Elizabeth Mulder.²

Boer's parents were a normal Dutch couple. The Dutch are known for growing flowers. Jacob Boer knew how to tend a flower garden but he also worked as a bookkeeper in one of the bulb exporting companies at the time in Hillegom. Hillegom remains a center of Dutch horticulture and agriculture.

2. Childhood

In 1922, at age nine, Harry's family immigrated to America. They first moved to New York City where they spent a year before settling in Holland, Michigan. Here Harry's father started a perennial flower and strawberry nursery for his livelihood.³

Young Harry was already ten when his family settled in Michigan. In America, Harry began to encounter the various issues of a modern society. Among the many events that began to unfold as the years rolled by was the shocking news of the death of America's twenty-ninth President, Warren G. Harding, on August 2, 1929. Harry recalled other remarkable events in America that characterized the news of the day:

...the Coolidge years – boundless economic optimism, the Teapot Dome scandals, the national attention riveted on efforts to rescue Floyd Collins from a cave in Kentucky, the

¹This article is an excerpt of my master's thesis: Samuel O.N.G. Nwokoro, 'Life and Work of Harry Reinier Boer (1913-1999)' M.Th thesis, Theological College of Northern Nigeria, 2014.

²Email, Warren Boer, December 8, 2013.

³Harry Boer, 'My Pilgrimage in Mission', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 11:4 (October 1987), p.172.

Scopes trial, the Bobby Franks murder by Leopold and Loeb, the Dempsey-Tunney fight, the Lindbergh exploit, marathon dancing, gangster war, the Hoover election victory in 1928, the stock market crash in October 1929, and the descent into Depression.⁴

Thirty-seven years later, he would refer to these events when he read Frederick Lewis Allen's *Only Yesterday* and observed how America seemed to have 'come full circle' in experiencing the unfolding of economic, political and moral trends that were similar to those of four decades before.⁵

While in Michigan, Boer's family joined the Christian Reformed Church. The CRC was popular among the Dutch immigrants in Michigan. It was a small group that broke away from the Reformed Church in America because of doctrinal and ethnic concerns. It had the endorsement of the Netherlands Seceded Churches, and so many Dutch immigrants were more comfortable as CRC members.⁶ While the emerging Dutch colony in America needed to settle as a community, it was equally important to the immigrants to remain affiliated to the separated 'right-doctrine' church.

Harry Boer had thought that he would inherit his father's nursery, but somewhere along the line thoughts of politics began to cross his mind. Engaging in politics may not have been a bad idea since Abraham Kuyper had set a good example in the Netherlands. To make a political impact in America as a Dutch immigrant could have also been remarkable, but the extent to which Boer's new denomination would have endorsed his political involvement in the new American society was another question. The Dutch community in America had some identity concerns which had to do with preserving as much of their 'Dutchness' and 'Reformedness' as they could. They were not willing to be 'a pretty piece of paper upon which America can write whatever it pleased', so for some it was a call for 'deepening of piety'.⁷ There were major variations in views on Dutch-American acculturation, such that getting involved in politics was definitely going to attract mixed reactions from the Dutch community to which Boer belonged. Harry would later contemplate business too, but even that could hardly come to be without some education. He would then realize and say, 'the more I contemplated such a course the more I saw a need for a college education'.⁸ Whatever the case, Harry thought he should first get some education.

3. Education

Harry had been to high school and after his graduation in 1930, he spent four non-academic years before proceeding to Hope College in 1934. Hope College was founded to give Christian education to the children of Dutch immigrants in America. It was anticipated that this would be a viable way of propagating a healthy 'Americanization' among their young people. Albertus Van Raalte, a leading figure of the West Michigan Dutch settlement, had, through the support of the Reformed Church in America, established Hope College. He believed that it would preserve for

⁴ Harry Boer, 'This is Where I Came In', *The Reformed Journal* (November 1971), p.17.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.17, 20.

⁶ James Bratt, *Dutch Calvinism in Modern America* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), pp. 41-42.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p.39.

⁸ Harry Boer, 'My Pilgrimage in Mission', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 11:4 (October 1987), p.172.

the new-forming Dutch community a Christian posterity in America. Upon attending Hope College, Boer became engulfed in this vision.

After he concluded a two-year course of study at Hope College in 1936, Boer was all the more concerned about what his life's task would be. He found revived at this time a deep yearning for missionary work which he had had sixteen years earlier, but this passion would have to be revisited at a future time since he already proceeded to get a degree at Calvin College, from where he graduated two years later in 1938.⁹ Boer was said to be a student whose years at both Hope and Calvin Colleges were good and productive.¹⁰ Eventually, convinced he was to be a minister, Boer went on to Calvin Theological Seminary in 1939, from where he graduated in 1942.

Boer joined the US Navy as a chaplain after his graduation from Calvin Seminary. At the end of World War II in 1945, Boer did a year-long course at Westminster Seminary. Between 1946 and 1947, Boer did a short course in Missions at the Free University, Amsterdam, before he left for his maiden mission work in Africa. From 1947 to 1950, Boer was in Africa for mission work. He returned to the U.S. in 1950 and underwent another year of study at Union Theological Seminary in New York before he proceeded to teach at Calvin Seminary. Boer taught for just a year at Calvin Seminary. From 1952 to 1955 Boer did his doctoral studies at Free University, Amsterdam. From there he returned to Nigeria where he served as a missionary until his retirement.

4. Conviction and call

Like most young people, Harry Boer had his ambition spread across certain areas other than pastoral work. But by the time he had acquired college education, he commented: 'in a way and under circumstances no longer clear to me I was in 1934 wholly diverted from both business and political pursuits by a strong desire to be a minister of the gospel'.¹¹ By this, Boer was definitely expressing a turn around which came upon him with unexplicable conviction and left his heart with the certainty of a call to preach. Harry's entire life both as a Christian and a missionary hinges on this experience. He may not have penned down a dramatic conversion experience prior or sequel to this conviction but he was testified to be a man who worked with Christian conviction all his life. His faith found expression in the life of 'sterling integrity' which he led and shared with people around him.¹²

5. Ordination

Harry Boer's desire to be a minister had grown stronger than earlier conceived ambitions but yet he suffered bewilderment as to the means by which this dream would be realised. Having reiterated his conviction about the ministry, he still wondered and said: 'but sphere must express

⁹ Ibid, p.172

¹⁰ Email, Warren Boer, December 8, 2013.

¹¹ Harry Boer, 'My Pilgrimage in Mission', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 11:4 (October 1987), p.172.

¹² George Stob, 'Remembering Harry R. Boer', *Perspectives* 14:8 (October 1999), p.9.; Lewis Smedes, 'A Word of Thanks for Harry R. Boer', *Perspectives* 14:8 (October 1999), p.9.

itself in a context of task and place, in the *what* and the *where* of concrete actuality'.¹³ However, things became clearer after his ordination and patriotic service in the US Navy. He returned to his passion for mission work: a fascinating inclination that would lead the rest of his life. He was ordained in June 1942 as a full CRC minister in the US.

6. Christian Service (1942-1978)

a. US Navy Chaplaincy (1942-1945)

Harry Boer served in the US Navy during World War II. Pearl Harbor, the naval base and headquarters of the US Pacific Fleet in Hawaii, was attacked by Japan on December 7, 1941. America was drawn into fighting against Germany, Italy and its assailant, Japan. Early the following year, the Navy was willing to accept graduates from seminaries to serve in the chaplaincy. When Boer heard of this, he 'felt drawn to apply for this by a wonderful mixture of genuine calling, love for [his] adopted country, and the prospect of adventure in a military context'.¹⁴ By May 1942, Rev. Boer was a trained Navy chaplain and would after his ordination the following month be the first Christian Reformed Church ordained minister to be a Naval chaplain.¹⁵

As chaplain, Rev. Boer's 'principal purpose was to promote the spiritual, religious, moral, and personal well-being of the members of the Department of the Navy'.¹⁶ Boer often preached, taught, counselled, visited with the sick, interacted with the soldiers and mediated in moments of tension. For him, preaching and teaching were vital because 'in them,' he said, 'knowledge of the gospel is conferred, understanding of God's saving power and promises is nourished, and a basis is laid for pastoring in ways both casual and deliberate'.¹⁷

He witnessed the sea battles that began on June 15, 1944: strategic battles fiercely fought in order to take control of the nearby islands of Saipan and Tinian so as to provide 'air bases within range of B-29 bombers targeted at the Japanese home islands'.¹⁸ This offensive on the Marianas islands was successful: the Japanese fleet were forced to retreat and the islands were captured and occupied.

Rev. Boer demonstrated boldness at duty after the war. He would officiate the funeral service of deceased Marines before national press. He did so despite his colleague's hesitation, his phobia for burials and not to mention doing so while it was 'nationally publicized'.¹⁹

¹³ Boer, 'My Pilgrimage in Mission,' p.172.

¹⁴ Harry Boer, 'My Pilgrimage in Mission', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 11:4 (October 1987), p.172.

¹⁵ Email, Warren Boer, December 08, 2013.

¹⁶ 'Naval Customs, Traditions, & Etiquette – Church Pennant'.

<http://www.public.navy.mil/usff/pages/customs.aspx#churchpennant>, US Fleet Forces, United States Navy (accessed Feb. 28, 2014).

¹⁷ Harry Boer, 'Saipan-Tinian, 1944: a Chaplain's Reminiscence', *Reformed Journal* 34:7 (July 1984), p.10.

¹⁸ Barrett Tillman, 'Clash of the Carriers: The True Story of the Marianas Turkey Shoot of World War II', *United States Navy in World War II*. www.wikipedia.com (accessed February 2014).

¹⁹ George Stob, 'Remembering Harry R. Boer', *Perspectives* 14:8 (October 1999), p.8.

b. CRC Mission Station in Baissa (1948-1951)

The war had ended in 1945 and Boer lost his father that same year. While Boer was recovering from his father's demise, the new point of call that God had for him emerged.

In 1946, Boer's boardinghouse at Westminster Seminary had organized a dinner one evening. Among several others, the CRC Board of Foreign Missions president was in attendance. Rev. Boer had the pleasure of meeting him and discussing mission work in far-away places like northern Nigeria. Their chat that night ended with an invitation to join the evangelizing effort in Nigeria. Though his consideration of being a missionary hardly included outside of America, Rev. Boer however adjusted and began to make plans to leave for Nigeria.²⁰

After a year's tutoring in Missions under J.H. Bavinck in Amsterdam, he left for Nigeria. Arriving in Nigeria on July 9, 1948, Boer was assigned to the Baissa mission station which was an extension of the on-going work among the Kuteb, Jukun, Chamba, Ichen, Ngoro, and Tigin peoples. The possibility of mission work in Baissa was under serious consideration despite its distance, terrain, and thick forest, and Rev. Ed Smith had no little trouble trekking through the area.²¹

Rev. Boer lost his mother the year following his arrival in Nigeria. Despite the sad news, Boer still remained committed to spreading the gospel among the rural people within and outside Baissa. He explored east and north of the station, trekking 400 miles on foot, making fresh paths through the thick knee-level grasses with some other workers.²²

During his work at Baissa, Rev. Boer was appointed as the pioneer professor of Missions in Calvin Seminary. He returned to America for this new responsibility in 1951.

c. Calvin Theological Seminary (1951-52)

As the faculty anticipated Boer's taking up of his appointment as professor of Missions, they hoped that the position would 'give the important subject of Missions a more pronounced and proper emphasis in ... the seminary curriculum'.²³ With everything in place, the time finally came on Saturday August 23, 1951, when 'the installation services of Professor H.R. Boer as...first professor in the Missions department took place at his home church, Prospect Park, Holland, Michigan'. Apart from teaching Missions, Boer was also to assist a group of persons who needed to improve their Dutch conversational skills as requested by the Board.²⁴

Boer also joined the founding team of *The Reformed Journal* where he did most of his writings. The *Reformed Journal's* team of editors comprised of James Daane, George Stob, Henry Stob, and Henry Zylstra.²⁵ Boer and his contemporaries, who constituted a younger and progressive generation of Reformed theologians, were heard through the *Reformed Journal*,

²⁰ Harry Boer, 'My Pilgrimage in Mission', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 11:4 (October 1987), p. 172.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p.173

²² *Ibid.*, p. 173

²³ *CRC Acts of Synod*, 1951 (Grand Rapids, 1951), pp. 113-5.

²⁴ *CRC Acts of Synod*, 1952 (Grand Rapids, 1952), p. 253.

²⁵ George Stob, 'Remembering Harry R. Boer', *Perspectives* 14:8 (October 1999), p.8.

while the dissenting voice of the conservatives, on the other hand, echoed through a publication known as *Torch and Trumpet*.²⁶

Boer's appointment at Calvin Seminary was shortlived: it lasted less than a year. There was conflict among the faculty members. Ideological differences ensued along liberal and traditional lines. Such polarity had ailed the faculty for some time but things dramatically changed when some professors began to reveal what appeared to other colleagues as untenable inclinations especially regarding the Scripture and matters such as the Calvinistic doctrine of grace. Things worsened in 1951 and the CRC Synod overhauled almost the entire faculty the following year. Synod dismissed and retired some while others were strongly reprimanded.²⁷ Report on Synod proceeding for 1952 reflected that the chair of Missions was one of those dismissed.²⁸ Rev. Boer and his friend George Stob (professor of Church History) had their appointments terminated. Both Boer and Stob had been mentored by Professor Clarence Bouma who took seriously ill upon the dispute, an illness that lasted until his death a decade later.²⁹

Rev. Boer was inevitably affected by this embattlement. It was described by his colleague as 'a traumatic experience,' because Boer, 'felt that he was unfairly judged'.³⁰ By way of submerging his disappointment, however, he chose to pursue further studies at Free University of Amsterdam where he obtained a doctorate degree in February 1955.

d. Theological College of Northern Nigeria (1955-1978)

i. Boer's Secondment to Gindiri and the Emergence of TCNN

Towards the completion of his doctoral studies, Rev. Boer was asked to join in assisting with theological education in northern Nigeria. He accepted and his denomination seconded him to the CRC arm of the Sudan United Mission (SUM). He arrived in Gindiri in November 1955.

Dr. Boer traveled around various reputable seminaries in southern Nigeria making inquiries. On his return, he reported his survey to a selected number of SUM representatives. This report became a blueprint for the starting of the college. After Boer's report was considered and modified slightly, the interim board of governors deemed it fit to declare the Theological College of Northern Nigeria existing in 1957. The birth of TCNN was more in principle with much logistics still in process. Teaching life began in 1959 with a three-person faculty and a handful of students for both the main college and the women school. At the opening of the school on 14th February 1959, Boer stated that the college is 'intended to be part of a developing church in a developing country', a college growing in the knowledge of God's word and the ability to witness it in the best way possible especially in the north where it is situated.³¹ By 1961 the first set of students was graduated. In these first few years the college was based at Gindiri.

²⁶ James Bratt, *Dutch Calvinism in Modern America*, p. 192.

²⁷ James Bratt, *Dutch Calvinism in Modern America*, p. 190.

²⁸ *CRC Acts of Synod, 1953* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1953), p. 52.

²⁹ James Bratt, *Dutch Calvinism in Modern America*, p. 190.

³⁰ George Stob, 'Remembering Harry R. Boer', *Perspectives* 14:8 (October 1999), p.8.

³¹ Harry Boer, 'Address on the Occasion of the Inaugural Service for the Opening of the Theological College of Northern Nigeria on February 14, 1959'. *TCNN Research Bulletin* (February 1992), pp. 15, 18.

In 1962 TCNN moved from Gindiri to its permanent site in Bukuru. The dedication of the school on its permanent site took place on Saturday May 18, 1963. When TCNN moved to its permanent site in January 1962, Gindiri sent her off with two huge tables that still serve worship purposes in the college chapel to this day. The motherly care with which Gindiri sheltered tender TCNN remained fundamental to the existence of the college. On the permanent site, TCNN grew faster and took her own unique shape in academic and spiritual aspects. This fast growth is a result of Boer heeding one of the most important pieces of advice he had been given during his survey at Baptist Theological Seminary in Ogbomoso. He was advised that an independent environment can contribute in no small ways to the growth and sustainability of a seminary.

Under Boer's capable leadership from inception to its fourteenth year, TCNN kept developing. Rev. Dr. Dean Gilliland succeeded Dr. Boer after he had resigned in 1971. Dr. Gilliland led TCNN until 1976 when the first African principal of TCNN in the person of Rev. Dr. Musa Gotom became his successor.

ii. TCNN and the Biafra Tension

On September 28, 1966, there was tension in Jos and its environs. The Igbos were being killed by some embittered northerners. The TCNN clinic headed by Mrs Lundager was useful in treating bullet wounds and machete gashes. TCNN environs served as a temporary shelter for victims of the rioters. Dr. Boer called for police protection. He further kept over thirty victims in the safety of his house and risked his life stopping assailants from hurting them until a lorry came to convey them to safety in Jos.³²

iii. Dr. Boer as Principal, Teacher and Preacher

Boer's administration was said to have been remarkable. Harvey Kiekoover comments that he was indeed a highly respected principal of TCNN. 'TCNN,' says Kiekoover, 'was blessed to have a principal who really did have principles'.³³ Once every week, Dr. Boer held Bible studies with faculty and they also discussed issues connected to churches and academics. In chairing these discussions, Boer was said to have had a marvelous sense of humor, but always with the goal of bringing out a point to the attention of the faculty members.³⁴ Dr. Boer went on several furloughs during his work at TCNN. On such trips, he held talks, telling many in the US about the work in TCNN. He sometimes got some friends overseas who supported students with financial needs.

Boer taught with a blend of practice and theory. He prepared his teaching notes on stencils, mostly a night before his class. He taught on various subjects ranging from biblical to practical theology. His teaching method was innovative. He knew when his students were getting drowsy in class and how to quickly interject a lighter-mood story that was fit to dispel the settling snooze.³⁵ Dr. Boer's personality merged joviality with sternness: he would not hesitate to expel a recalcitrant student in hope of penitence on the student's part.³⁶

Boer was said to be an excellent preacher. He sometimes preached long sermons but they were often short and strong. He spoke some Hausa and it was said that a full audience was the

³² Email, Verlyn Verbrugge, June 2, 2013.

³³ Email, Harvey Kiekoover, June 1, 2013.

³⁴ Email, Verlyn Verbrugge, June 2, 2013.

³⁵ Interview, Linus Bulus. March 27, 2013.

³⁶ Harry Boer, 'Principal's Report', 1970, par. 3.

common expectation whenever it was his turn to preach at the monthly Bukuru community fellowship.³⁷ Dr Boer's excellence in preaching certainly extended beyond Bukuru as the Kuru Secondary School community had him preach to about 120 students on a weekly basis.³⁸

iv. Dr. Boer's Resignation (1971)

In 1971, Dr. Boer tendered his resignation as principal. He felt compelled to return to his passion of solely being a teacher of theological education. He had mentioned a similar request in 1966 but it was sharply turned down. Having reinforced his plea, this time on two foolscap pages with well laid out arguments, Dr. Boer tendered his desire to pull out of administration before the Executive Committee of the TCNN Board of Governors. His aim in coming to Nigeria, Boer argued, was not to be a principal but to teach theology. 'This aim,' he said, 'I have never relinquished'. Boer feared that before long he would become more of a principal than a teacher. Thus he strongly felt the need to 'resign both as teacher in and Principal of TCNN' with the intention to remain a visiting staff and an author of theological books that would be easily read by African students. He further argued that 'it is not too much to say that there are virtually no texts designed for the vast majority of students now in training in theological schools in Africa'.³⁹ Boer expressed a desire to devote the rest of his time to writing such texts. This request was regretfully accepted by TCNN Executives. Boer's appointment as Principal of the College, therefore, came to an end on December 31st, 1971.⁴⁰

Boer's fourteen years of service were greatly appreciated by the Board and he was asked to remain a visiting teacher in the college. This request kept Boer in touch with the TCNN community, and his relationship with the college was reported to have remained cordial.⁴¹ Following the vacuum Boer's exit had created, it was the 'unanimous' decision of the Board to make Dr. Dean S. Gilliland (of the United Methodist Church) the new principal. He was to take on his new post in January 1, 1972.⁴²

v. Dr. Boer's Steward

Throughout Dr. Boer's days in Nigeria, he had a faithful steward named Mr. Luka Kumnang. Mr Kumnang was baptized at Gindiri SUM compound in 1959. There Dr. Boer met Mr. Kumnang and employed him as a steward. He served Dr. Boer at Gindiri for three years before moving to TCNN with him in 1961. Mr. Kumnang faithfully served Dr. Boer for twenty years until Dr. Boer left Nigeria in 1978. The Kumnangs shared a close and memorable working relationship with Dr. Boer.

7. Boer's Writings

Boer wrote fifteen books and over a hundred articles, most of which are found in the *Reformed Journal*. He wrote across various subjects: mission, politics, theology, history and Islam. His PhD dissertation 'Pentecost and Missionary Witness of the Church' later shortened as *Pentecost and Missions* (Eerdmans, 1977) has remained his biggest scholarly work and is a

³⁷ Interview, Kachollom Danbong, March 28, 2013.

³⁸ Harry Boer, 'Principal's Report,' 1963, par. 9.

³⁹ Harry Boer, 'A Confidential Communication to TCNN Board of Governors', Typescript, 1971.

⁴⁰ Minutes of TCNN Executive Committee Meeting, May 27, 1971.

⁴¹ Minutes of Meeting of TCNN Board of Governors, November 23, 1972.

⁴² Minutes of Meeting of TCNN Board of Governors, November 25, 1971.

popular book in Missiology. Few of his books are still in use in some Nigerian seminaries: *A Short History of the Early Church* (Daystar Press, 1976), *A Brief History of Islam* (Daystar Press 1969), *The Book of Revelation* (Eerdmans, 1979), *The Four Gospels and Acts: a Short Introduction* (Eerdmans, 1982) and *The Minor Prophets* (Daystar, 1964).

The last two books Boer wrote before his demise were: *The Doctrine of Reprobation in the Christian Reformed Church* and *An Ember Still Glowing: Humankind as the Image of God*. Both were published by Eerdmans in 1983 and 1990 respectively. The first is a memoir of his complaint to the CRC concerning his personal reservations about the doctrine of reprobation while the second is his theology of God's saving grace.

8. Boer's Retirement

May 12, 1978 was Dr. Boer's official retirement from Nigeria. He returned to the States where he lived in a small house in the Oakdale area of Grand Rapids, 1518 Margaret Avenue, SE.⁴³ He would later move to Holland, Michigan, before moving to a nursing home in Grand Rapids where he spent his last days.

Dr. Boer had one last visit to Nigeria before passing on. That was in 1991 for the dedication of TCNN library which is named after him. Shortly after returning back to Michigan, Dr. Boer moved to a nursing home. He was later diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, and he lived with an eroding memory from then on. Boer, even in this sadly debilitating state, would still think of TCNN: he was once asked how he was doing and he responded that he was gathering books for TCNN.

9. Boer's Transition

Rev Dr H. R. Boer was called to glory on Wednesday, April 21, 1999. He was survived by his only sister Elizabeth Batema; his sister-in-law, Frances Boer; and nieces and nephews. His funeral service was held in his home church, Prospect Park Christian Reformed church, 533 Central Avenue, Holland, Michigan, at 10:30 am on Saturday, April 24, 1999. He was buried at Pilgrim Home Cemetery.⁴⁴

The TCNN community held a memorial service in honor of late Dr Boer in the college chapel on May 13, 1999 with members of TCNN Board of Governors and TEKAN⁴⁵ executives in attendance.

10. Conclusion

Dr. Boer was unmarried throughout his eighty-six years of life. He led a life of commitment, integrity, courage, ardent writing and deep missionary concern. He was a man of his own ideas.

⁴³ Email, Verlyn Verbrugge, June 02, 2013

⁴⁴ 'Harry R. Boer, 86', *The Holland Sentinel*, (April 1999), pp.1,2,4.

⁴⁵ TEKAN means Tarayyar Ekklesiyoyin Kristi a Nigeria (Fellowship of Christian Churches in Nigeria): the proprietary body of TCNN.

He was mostly vocal, argumentative and somewhat controversial in his conviction about the doctrine of reprobation.

Many of his early experiences shaped the later part of his life: his interest in mission as a very young man became his lifetime calling, indicating how certain youthful concerns could hint at one's destiny. Boer's longer period of service in TCNN drew on lessons from his brief working experience at Calvin Seminary.

Dr. Boer's resignation in 1971 for writing sake underscores the continued friction between devout scholarship and administration. While administrative positions present opportunities for transformation, many scholars would contend that it can deter commitment to astute researching.

Boer continues to be remembered for his fundamental role in the making of one of the foremost institutions of theological learning in Nigeria.