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# Theological research on the theologian Thomas Boston

*A Data Management Plan created using DMPonline*

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**Funder:** n.v.t.

**Template:** VU DMP template 2021 (NWO & ZonMW certified)

## **Project abstract:**

This research focuses on the theology of desire in Thomas Boston's spirituality. Boston is an influential and renowned Reformed theologian of the 18th century. His works contain one of Scotland's best-known spiritual classics: *Human Nature in its Fourfold State*.<sup>[1]</sup> This underlines the significant influence that Boston's theology had, not only in his own country but also abroad.

This research focuses on all his works, both his writings and his sermons. The spirituality of desire has ancient roots and is present in the great Christian tradition with Augustine, Bernard of Clairvaux, Calvin, John Owen, etc. The Scottish Reformed theologian Boston also had a place in this great tradition. The main question is how Boston uses desire in his theology and the consequences of his spirituality.

Although Boston is not usually seen as a theologian of desire, desire appears to have an essential place in his thinking. The word 'desire' alone appears 1733 times in his oeuvre, not counting other terms and concepts. It is an indication that it is worthwhile to consult Boston in this regard. Philip Ryken claims in his thesis that the *Fourfold State* is like a window to Boston's theology.<sup>[2]</sup> Thus it becomes clear that Boston clearly qualifies desire and treats it differently depending on the state in which the person finds himself. This is where Boston could make an essential contribution to the current Christian debate.

Therefore, the problem definition for this research is: What

place does Boston's qualification of desire have in contemporary Christian writings, and what can his contribution be?

[1] Ryken, P. *Thomas Boston (1676-1732) as Preacher of the Fourfold State*. Ph.D. (Thesis, University of Oxford, 1995), iv.

[2] Ryken, P. *Thomas Boston (1676-1732) as Preacher of the Fourfold State*. (Oxford: University, 1995), 65.

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# Theological research on the theologian Thomas Boston

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## 0. General information

### Document version & date

Version 1.0

Date: 7-12-2021

### Project title

Which is the role of desire in the theology of Thomas Boston?

### Project summary

This research focuses on the theology of desire in Thomas Boston's spirituality. Boston is an influential and renowned Reformed theologian of the 18th century. His works contain one of Scotland's best-known spiritual classics: *Human Nature in its Fourfold State*.<sup>[1]</sup> This underlines the significant influence that Boston's theology had, not only in his own country but also abroad.

This research focuses on all his works, both his writings and his sermons. The spirituality of desire has ancient roots and is present in the great Christian tradition with Augustine, Bernard of Clairvaux, Calvin, John Owen, etc. The Scottish Reformed theologian Boston also had a place in this great tradition. The main question is how Boston uses desire in his theology and the consequences of his spirituality.

[1] Ryken, P. *Thomas Boston (1676-1732) as Preacher of the Fourfold State*. Ph.D. (Thesis, University of Oxford, 1995), iv.

### Your contact details

Name: Cornelis Marinus Buijs

Role: Researcher

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Phonenumber: 06-23925686

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6962-2145>

University: Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Faculty: Theology / Religion

**Please list the other people involved in this project**

n.v.t.

**Funding organisation & grant number (if applicable)**

*Funding organisation:*

*Grant number:*

**Project code (if applicable)**

n.v.t.

**Consulted data management expert(s)**

Name: RDM Support Desk

Address: Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, VU University Library, De Boelelaan 1105, 1081 HV, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Telephone: +31 (0)59 85367

Email: rdm@vu.nl

University: Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

## **1. Data description**

**Will you collect and/or process personal data in this project?**

- No

N.v.t.

**Will you use existing data? If yes, what is their source?**

Yes. Their source is: The (Complete) Works of Thomas Boston.

**Will you collect or produce new data? If yes, please describe how.**

Collect data: All the Works of Thomas Boston.

I collect all the data from the books written by Boston himself and written about him that touch my subject. I collect a lot digitally, but if that doesn't work I buy or borrow the books. Digital is my preference so I can do easier searches for words.

URL: <http://digitalpuritan.net/thomas-boston/>

I also have these works on my bookshelf and have also downloaded the digital version so that if the website is discontinued, I still have everything digitally.

**What kinds of outputs will you produce in this project? Please describe these data assets.**

**Raw data:**

Data asset: All the works of Thomas Boston

Description: digital, harddrive, onedrive and USB-stick.

Format: pdf

**Processed data:**

Data asset: ZOTERO

Description: Here are all my notes and footnotes for my research.

Format: digital, textual

**Analyzed data:**

Data asset: Wordwebs

Description: summary of about themes by Boston for an overview

Format: pdf, textual

**Other:**

Analysis software: Raw data:

Literature analysis

Analysis of the Complete Works of Thomas Boston

Twelve volumes of 550 pages on average (520.000 KB = 0,55 GB)

**How much digital data storage will your project require?**

- 0 - 50 GB

**Will you collect physical data? If yes, please describe these.**

N.v.t.

**Will you take measures to ensure data quality? Please describe these, if applicable.**

N.v.t. by this project

## **2. Legal and ethical requirements, codes of conduct**

**What legislation applies to your research project? Please tick the relevant boxes for your project.**

- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)/ Algemene Verordening Gegevensbescherming (AVG)

I am only doing literature reviews and do not think this is applicable as I will not be processing data from individuals. All I am doing is using literature of persons who have already died and are still alive. This literature is not secret and accessible to anyone. Therefore, data protection is not needed here.

**Do you require approval of an ethical committee for this project? If yes, please indicate which ethical committee and whether you have obtained approval for this project.**

- No

**Will you work with data for which intellectual property and/ or confidentiality are an issue? If yes, please describe.**

- Yes

I will work with existing material. The copyright of All the works of Boston rests with the publishers. Thus, the research is on already published work. With proper references, my research is likely to be reproducible.

**Do you plan on generating a marketable product from your research project? if yes, please describe**

- No

### 3. Storage and back-up during the research process

**What measures will you take to secure and protect data during the research process? Please describe, for each separate data asset you described for question 1.5, how you will ensure data security, where the data assets are stored & backed up, and who has authorization to access the asset.**

**Raw data:**

Data asset: literature analysis

Storage: one-drive pdf and ZOTERO (online cloud)

Backup: USB-stick

Access: My two supervisors have access to the analysis of all the works of Thomas Boston. 1. Prof. dr. W. van Vlastuin. 2: Prof. dr. A.T.B. McGowan

Security measures: passwords: one-drive

**Is it necessary to transfer the (physical or digital) data assets to other locations or research partners? If yes, please describe how you secure the file transfer.**

- No

### 4. Data archiving and publishing

**Which data assets will be archived and which will be published?**

**Raw data:**

Data asset: Summary of my wordswebs and notes

Description: digital, harddrive, onedrive and USB-stick.

Format: pdf

**Processed data:**

Data asset: ZOTERO

Description: Here are all my notes and footnotes for my research.

Format: digital, textual, texts (onedrive, USB stick)

**Analyzed data:**

Data asset: Wordwebs

Description: summary of about themes by Boston for an overview

Format: pdf, textual

**Where will you archive your data assets?**

One-drive, Hard disk and USB-stick.  
Dataverse.nl (I made an account)

**For how long will the data be available in the archive?**

At least 10 years

**Where will you publish your data assets?**

When you are going to do a PhD at the Vrije Universiteit, you are required to make a digital version of your dissertation available to the university. You do this via Hora Finita. The University Library will then publish your digital thesis online in the VU Research Portal (Pure). Your dissertation will therefore be automatically placed in NARCIS.

**How will you ensure your data assets get a persistent identifier (e.g. a DOI-code)?**

I am awaiting feedback from the RDM Support Desk on this matter

**Will you register your datasets in an online registry other than PURE? If yes, where?**

No.

**Are there restrictions to data publishing? If yes, please specify the reasons and list the data assets you do not wish to share publicly.**

My research is on already published work and that can't just be made available. With good references in my research to the sources, it is probably reproducible. There is copyright on my sources and materials I use.

**When will you share the data? If not immediately after completion of the project, please specify the reasons.**



I share my data immediately after completion.

**Please indicate the license and/ or terms of use under which you share your data.**

This, I think, applies to me:

For the entire dissertation, it applies that you yourself are in possession of the intellectual property rights and/or copyright or that you (partly) do not possess intellectual property rights and/or copyright, but for this material you have the full permission of the copyright holder to grant the Vrije Universiteit this license.

## **5. Documentation**

**How will you document your project?**

- The VU Research Portal [PURE](#) uses the [CERIF](#) metadata standard
- I am going to register my dataset with PURE CERIF and there I will fill in my data then thereo the CERIF standard will be followed and then my documentation standard will also follow.

**What metadata and documentation will accompany the data assets?**

In my research this is not applicable because the materials I will produce myself (notes, summaries of wordwebs) are already a kind of documentation.

**What methods, software or hardware are needed to access and use your data?**

Access to The VU Research Portal [PURE](#)

## **6. Data management responsibilities and resources**

**Who will be responsible for management of the data assets during the project? Please specify their name, position, role in the project, and faculty/ institution/ group.**

Name: Kees Buijs  
Role: Phd student  
Email: cbs@vanlodenstein.nl  
Phonenumber: 0623925686  
ORCID: yes  
University: Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam  
Faculty: Theology / Religion

**Who will be responsible for management of the data assets after completion of the project (e.g. the project lead/ dedicated data manager/ department head)? Please specify their name, position, role in the project, and faculty/ institution/ group.**

Name: Kees Buijs  
Role: Data curation, Formal analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Validation, Visualization, Writing – original draft  
Email: cbs@vanlodenstein.nl  
Phonenumber: 06-23925686  
ORCID: yes  
University: Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam  
Faculty: Theology / Religion

**For data that are only available upon request, what methods will be used to handle requests for access and how will data be made available to those requesting access?**

n.v.t.

**What resources (for example financial and time) will be dedicated to research data management? Please estimate their cost.**

n.v.t.