

Takayuki Yagi

# A Gift from England

William Ames and his Polemical Discourse  
against Dutch Arminianism



# Reformed Historical Theology

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Takayuki Yagi

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## Abbreviations

- PRRD Richard A. Muller. *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy, ca. 1520 to ca.1725*. 4 vol. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003.
- DLGTT Richard A. Muller. *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms: Drawn Principally from Protestant Scholastic Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995.

## Conventions

Early modern printed texts have been quoted with their original spelling, punctuation, and capitalisation with following exceptions. The letters u/v and i/j have been modernised. Biblical quotations are my own translation based on the Latin Tremellius-Junius-Beza Bible (London, 1597).



## Chapter I: Introduction

Festus Hommius (1576–1642), a prominent Dutch Reformed theologian, wrote a piece of poetry in Latin as a commendatory prologue to *Coronis ad Collationem Hagiensem* (1618), one of William Ames’s polemical works against Arminianism:

Once illustrious Britain produced  
This arrogant teaching, whereby the great power of sin is denied,  
Spread into the very marrow of both the minds and the wills  
Of mortal men, from the evil of our first parents  
The power whereby divine light, life, and power are quenched.  
This impious teaching, whereby the efficacy of nourishing grace  
of our Redeemer God is denied,  
by which divine light, life, and power are restored.  
But in our age, this evil, long hidden among the Scholastics,  
same Britain has dragged into the light  
and consigned it to destruction  
...  
This arrogant teaching, now sprouting in Dutch churches  
once again, after all the ebbs and flows of our age:  
behold now, with his sharp pen, Ames the Briton  
plucks it out utterly from the roots  
its filaments cut to pieces.  
Britannia brought forth this evil and destroyed it.<sup>1</sup>

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1 For the Latin original, see *Image of Hommius’s Prologue*. In this prologue, there is an interesting list of Elizabethan Divines who, together with King James, all “drove out” this teaching, but that had to be omitted due to the limit of space. The list includes John Jewel (1522–1571), William Whitaker (1548–1595), John Rainolds (1549–1607), William Perkins (1558–1602), Andrew Willet (1562–1621), John Whitgift (c.1530–1604) and Matthew Hutton (1529–1606), Robert (1560–1617) and George Abbot (1562–1633). It is also worth noting that “this arrogant teaching” most probably refers to the teaching of Pelagius. However, the mention of “in our age” and this list of English theologians certainly reflects the controversy surrounding proto-Arminianism in England, which will be discussed below as part of Ames’s background.

With a variety of rich rhetorical devices, this poem vividly presents William Ames the Briton who, with his sharp pen, cut to pieces the supposedly arrogant teaching of Arminianism. It shows the appreciation which Hommius had for Ames. Hommius found in Ames a timely supporter and defender of the Reformed tradition, which was in a crisis caused by this theological controversy. This poem is a striking illustration of how much Ames's contribution, in his polemic against Arminianism for the cause of Reformed orthodoxy, was appreciated by his contemporary Dutch theologians.<sup>2</sup>

Another Dutch Reformed theologian expressed similar appreciation of Ames's contribution: "this outstanding theologian was given to us by England, the fruitful mother and nurse of many distinguished theologians."<sup>3</sup> Matthew Nethenus (1618–1686), the first biographer of Ames and a colleague of Gisbertus Voetius (1589–1676) in Utrecht, commended Ames with these words in his introductory preface to Ames's Latin works in 1658. Among Nethenus's list of distinguished English theologians, Ames stood out as "a singular ornament of his age".<sup>4</sup> Nethenus held Ames in highest esteem primarily because of his involvement with the Arminian controversy. Nethenus was prepared to call him "the enemy of falsehood and godlessness, the hammer for heresies, especially papistical, Pelagian, and Remonstrant heresies, and the hierarchy, the lucky star, as

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2 In this thesis, "the Reformed orthodox" is synonymously used with "the Contra-Remonstrants", referring to those who opposed the Remonstrants in the Arminian controversy leading up to and after the Synod of Dort. The term "Reformed orthodoxy" commonly refers to the period of institutionalisation and doctrinal codification following the Reformation, spanning from the late sixteenth century to the eighteenth century. The term originally meant "right teaching" and therefore could also mean a specific attitude towards the content of teaching and their attempt to codify and systematise their teaching within the bounds of Reformed confessions produced in the sixteenth century. Although using the term synonymously with "the Contra-Remonstrant" is perhaps not customary, it is justified on account of the doctrinal continuity between the Contra-Remonstrant position leading up to the Synod and the orthodox teaching defined in the Synod. For the general discussion of the term concerning "scholasticism", see Richard Muller, PRRD I, pp. 33–34; Willem J van Asselt, "Reformed Orthodoxy: A Short History of Research", in *A Companion to Reformed Orthodoxy*, ed. Herman Serderhuis, (Leiden: Brill, 2013), p. 11. For the idea of confessional standard providing a basis for identifying the heterodoxy of Arminius, see Richard Muller, "Arminius and the Reformed Tradition" in *Westminster Theological Journal* vol.70 no.1 (Spring 2008), pp. 19–48.

3 Matthew Nethenus, *Introductory Preface*, trans. Douglas Horton in *William Ames* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Divinity School, 1965), p. 13. This book contains an English translation of three major works on Ames: Matthias Nethenus, "Praefatio Introductoria" in Ames's *Opera* (Amsterdam, 1658); Hugo, Visscher, *Guilelmus Amesius: zijn leven en werken*. (Harlem: J. M. Stap, 1894); Karl Reuter, *Wilhelm Amesius, der führende Theologe des erwachenden reformierten Pietismus* (Neukirchen: Erziehungsverein, 1940). This work is hereafter referred to as Horton, *Ames by Nethenus* (or Visscher or Reuter).

4 Horton, *Ames by Nethenus*, p. 13 Nethenus's list includes notable English theologians such as Bradwardine, Wycliffe, Tyndale, and Perkins among others.

it were, of the Dutch Churches when they were tossed about in those devastating storms of Arminianism which endangered even the Republic itself”.<sup>5</sup>

Despite the high regard which Ames earned through his polemical writings among his contemporaries, these writings have been largely neglected by modern scholarship. This thesis aims to examine the arguments Ames put forward in the Arminian controversy. This examination results in a re-evaluation of the way Ames’s theology has been portrayed in recent scholarship. In order to appreciate why Dutch Reformed theologians so enthusiastically admired Ames, and how “Ames the Briton” got so heavily involved in the Arminian controversy in the Dutch Republic in the first place, a brief account of Ames’s life and a historical introduction to the Arminian controversy are required in order to introduce the study. This will provide a context for the detailed analysis of Ames’s arguments, which will be the subject of subsequent chapters.<sup>6</sup> Following this historical sketch of Ames and the Arminian controversy, key questions raised in recent scholarship will be introduced: whether Ames was sympathetic to Arminianism; whether, in terms of current interest in the medieval scholastic background of early modern Reformed thinkers, Ames stands closer to Thomas or Scotus. These questions will be handled in depth in later chapters, but are introduced here to set the framework for this study. The introduction concludes with signposts to the purpose, significance, and structure of this study.

## 1.1 William Ames and the Arminian Controversy

William Ames was born in 1576 in Ipswich, a major town in Suffolk in the region of East Anglia. A rich puritan culture had already developed in the county of Suffolk and in its neighbour, Norfolk. Alongside the formal structure of the Church of England, the puritan movement kept various practices of voluntary religion.<sup>7</sup> Ames’s parents, who were both committed to the puritan cause, un-

<sup>5</sup> Horton, *Ames by Nethenus*, p. 4.

<sup>6</sup> The definitive biographical account of William Ames remains Keith L. Sprunger, *The Learned Doctor William Ames: Dutch Backgrounds of English and American Puritanism* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1972), pp. 3–101. For briefer accounts, see John D. Eusden’s introduction in William Ames, *The Marrow of Theology*, trans., John D. Eusden (Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1968), pp. 3–11; Jan van Vliet, *The Rise of Reformed System: The Intellectual Heritage of William Ames* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2013), pp. 5–26.

<sup>7</sup> Historians have made various attempts to define puritanism. The polemical origin of the word as a term of abuse and the changing nature of the movement in different circumstances have made the task of providing a specific definition difficult. For example, Patrick Collison has famously defined puritans as “the hotter sort of Protestants: Patrick Collison, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, (London, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), p. 27. For a good introduction to the debate, see Peter Lake, “Defining Puritanism — Again?” in Francis J.

fortunately died when Ames was still quite young, trusting their son to his maternal uncle, Robert Schnelling, in Boxford. Schnelling's family was also closely associated with the local puritan movement. At Boxford, a local preacher, Henry Sandes (1549–1626) and a local minister, William Bird (d.1599), were both prominent members of Dedham conference which met throughout the 1580s and sought further reform in the Church of England.<sup>8</sup> So Ames grew up naturally seeing the Church of England as in need of further reform, a standpoint which he maintained throughout his whole life and which had many consequences for him including spending a major part of his life as an exile in the Dutch Republic.

In 1593 or 1594, Schnelling sent Ames to matriculate at Christ's College, Cambridge, then already a well-established centre of learning for puritanism and Reformed thought.<sup>9</sup> Ames dedicated himself to his studies there and obtained his BA degree in 1597–1598, before graduating MA in 1601, the same year he was elected a fellow in Christ's and was ordained. He worked as a fellow at Christ's until 1610.

A significant theological controversy during Ames's years in Cambridge was caused by a group surrounding Peter Baro, the Lady Margaret's Professor of Divinity, whose "arrogant teaching" was eventually driven away as described in Hommius's poem above.<sup>10</sup> This controversy began from a sermon delivered on 29 April 1595 by William Barret, a student of Baro and the chaplain of Gonville and Caius College. Barret attacked the Reformed doctrines of assurance and reprobation in this sermon (now unfortunately lost). The sermon was so controversial that, within a few days, he was brought before the consistory court. After nearly two weeks, Barret was forced to read a recantation officially in the university church, but he did this in such a way that the heads of the university found it was hardly sufficient. To make matters worse, Barret even recanted his recantation in July 1595.

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Bremer, ed., *Puritanism: Transatlantic Perspectives on a Seventeenth-Century Anglo-American Faith* (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1993), pp. 3–29. For a description of the basic characteristics of puritanism, see John Coffey and Paul C. H. Lim, "Introduction" in *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, ed. John Coffey and Paul C. H. Lim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 1–7. For a discussion of puritans' practice of voluntary religion among, see Patrick Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants: The Church in English Society 1559–1625* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), p. 247.

8 For the biographical information of these two ministers, see *Conferences and Combination Lectures in the Elizabethan Church*, pp. 189–190, pp. 247–49.

9 On notable puritan Fellows at Christ's, see H. C. Porter, *Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958), pp. 237–38.

10 The detail of the controversy is described in H. C. Porter, *Reformation and Reaction*, pp. 344–90, and more recently in Peter Lake, *Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 201–42; Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism c.1590–1640* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 29–36.

As the issue could not be resolved within the university, both sides of the debate appealed to John Whitgift, the Archbishop of Canterbury. In order to settle the dispute, the Archbishop called a conference in Lambeth at the beginning of November 1595. This conference resulted in the Lambeth Articles, a set of nine brief statements concerning the doctrine of predestination, reprobation, and assurance. The main points of these statements were: double predestination (article 1); the good pleasure of God as the cause of predestination (article 2); sin as the basis for damnation (article 4); the reality of perseverance (article 5); the reality of full assurance (article 6).<sup>11</sup> After consulting with Matthew Hutton, the Archbishop of York, to confirm his agreement with these articles, Whitgift sent this document to the Vice-Chancellor of the university, instructing that “nothing be publicly taught to the contrary”.<sup>12</sup>

Although the Articles did not bring an end to the conflict, this controversy, which foreshadows the Arminian controversy in the Dutch Republic, provides an important context for Ames’s Cambridge years. The colleges and lecture halls must have been filled with questions concerning the doctrines of predestination and assurance, and this undoubtedly must have equipped Ames for his future role as a polemicist against Arminianism.

While Ames diligently pursued his study in his classrooms and tutorial sessions, William Perkins’s lectureship at St Andrew the Great had a decisive impact on the shaping of Ames’s theology and spirituality. As John Quick put it, “while he [Ames] was eating of the tree of knowledge, the gracious providence of God brought him to feed of the tree of life”.<sup>13</sup> William Perkins had a great influence on many students in Cambridge throughout his career both as tutor at Christ’s (1584–1595) and as lecturer at St Andrew the Great (1595–1602).<sup>14</sup> Perkins and Ames overlapped only one year at Christ’s after which Perkins moved “across the street” to continue his ministry as lecturer at St Andrew the Great. The most profound impact on Ames from Perkins was his conversion experience. According to Quick’s account, it was through Perkins’s passionate preaching that

11 For a full English translation of the articles, see Porter, *Reformation and Reaction*, pp. 365–66.

12 The debate continued as Elizabeth I intervened to suspend the Articles from acquiring official status and Peter Baro publicly took issue with Lambeth Articles in his university sermon on 12 January 1596. The Cambridge heads could not force Baro to recant as they did with Barret, but they ensured that Baro was not re-elected as the Lady Margaret’s Chair of Divinity and Barret fled to the continent and joined the Roman Catholic Church. See Peter Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, pp. 227–42.

13 John Quick, “Icones Sacrae Anglicanae”, p. 3. John Quick (1636–1706), a non-conformist minister, compiled brief accounts of twenty English ministers (including Ames) in this work, which is preserved in manuscript in Dr. Williams’s Library in London.

14 A recent account of William Perkins’s life and legacy can be found in Joel R. Beeke and Derek W. H. Thomas, Biographical Preface in *The Works of William Perkins Volume 1*, ed. Joel R. Beeke and Derek W. H. Thomas (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2014), pp. xi–xxxii.



Ames was “called out of his natural estate of sin and misery, as Lazarus out of his grave by ye loud voice of His powerful ministry.”<sup>15</sup> Ames affectionately recalled Perkins’s impact on his life:

I Gladly call to mind the time, when being young, I heard worthy Master Perkins, so preach in a great Assembly of Students, that he instructed them soundly in the truth, stirred them up effectually to seeke after godlinesse, made them fit for the kigdome of God; and by his own example shewed them what things they should chiefly intend, that they might promote true Religion, in the power of it, unto God’s glory, and others salvation:<sup>16</sup>

As Ames mentioned in this passage the “example” Perkins showed to his students, Ames thought the means by which Perkins taught was not limited to his preaching ministry. As time progressed, the relationship between Perkins and Ames developed into that of mutual friendship.<sup>17</sup> Together with other likeminded puritans at Christ’s who were also under the influence of Perkins – such as Paul Baynes (c.1573–1617), Thomas Taylor (1576–1632), and Daniel Rogers (1573–1652) – Ames formed a circle of friends who were united in their pursuit of pure religion.<sup>18</sup>

During Cambridge years, Ames embraced not only puritan spirituality and Reformed orthodoxy, but also Ramism: a pedagogical system developed by Pierre de la Ramee, or Peter Ramus (1515–1570), a French philosopher and educational theorist. Ramus developed a pedagogical programme of liberal arts which attempted to teach a wider range of subjects in a shorter time than the contemporary curriculum of his day.<sup>19</sup> Practically, the main characteristics of Ramist method were definitions and divisions, which were intended for the ease of memorization. The first step in any discipline was its definition, explaining the purpose or the end of the discipline itself. This should be followed by the division of the main parts, which in turn would be defined and further subdivided. As a result, the overall structure of discipline could be displayed in a set of tables. These features are all reflected in Ames’s major work, *Medulla Theologicae*, his major work first published in 1623.

15 Quick, “Icones Sacrae Anglicanae”, p. 3. Jan van Vliet might be mistaken in dating Ames’s conversion in 1601, the same year when Ames earned MA, was elected as a fellow of Christ’s College and was ordained into the ministry. According to Quick account, Ames was ordained into the ministry at least “some years” after his conversion experience. See Jan van Vliet, *The Rise of Reformed System: The Intellectual Heritage of William Ames* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2013), p. 6, and Quick “Icones Sacrae Anglicanae”, p. 4.

16 Ames, *Conscience with the Power and Cases Thereof* (Leiden, 1639), “To the Reader.”

17 Quick, “Icones Sacrae Anglicanae”, p. 5.

18 Sprunger, *The Learned Doctor William Ames*, pp. 16–17.

19 Howard Hotson, *Commonplace Learning: Ramism and its German Ramifications, 1545–1630* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 40–45.

The most significant political event during Ames's days in Cambridge was the death of Elizabeth I and the accession of James VI of Scotland as James I of England in 1603. Initially, it provided puritans with a chance to call for further reform and resulted in a number of petitions to the king. In response to one such petition, the Millenary Petition, James called a conference in Hampton Court in order to settle his religious policy. However, James asserted at this conference, against puritans' expectations, that he was committed to episcopacy, and therefore had no intention of changing the structure of the Church of England. Significantly he also adopted Whitgift's three articles of 1583 for his policy.<sup>20</sup> This policy required all clergy to subscribe to three things: the royal supremacy; the Book of Common Prayer; the Thirty-Nine Articles.<sup>21</sup> It was this policy which ultimately led to Ames's decision to go into exile.

Because of this subscription policy adopted by the king and enforced by the newly appointed Archbishop Richard Bancroft, radical puritans including those in Cambridge were under severe attack.<sup>22</sup> Leading puritan scholars in Cambridge such as Baynes, Taylor, and Rogers, all of whom were among Ames's friends, were deprived of their academic positions and responsibilities. The situation became even more complicated when Valentine Cary, who was committed to enforcing conformity, was selected with the support of the king as master of Christ's in 1609.<sup>23</sup> The specific issue which soon broke out between Cary and Ames was a long-standing one in the history of puritanism: that of clerical dress, especially wearing the surplice. After a brief dispute on the issue, Cary judged that Ames should be expelled immediately. On 21 December 1609, when Ames preached a sermon at Great St. Mary's, he took this opportunity to attack card and dice-playing, which was customarily allowed within Cambridge colleges during

20 Tom Webster, "Early Stuart Puritanism" in *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 49.

21 John Craig, "The Growth of English puritanism", p. 41. For the full articles, see Patrick Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, pp. 244–45. The most controversial of the three was the second one as it required all clergy to subscribe to the Book of Common Prayer which "containeth in it nothing contrary to the word of God" and that they use the form prescribed in the book and "none other" when conducting public prayer and administering the sacraments.

22 Radical puritans were those who openly refused to subscribe to this subscription policy, which was meant to separate "moderates" from "radical" puritans. Kenneth Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor: The Episcopate of James I* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 213.

23 Nethenus contended that Ames also wanted to stand for the election, but the church authority was determined not to allow puritan influence within the college and Cary was selected upon strict order of the King. Samuel Ward made his comments (laments) on Cary's selection, which might show a good indication of sentiment within the puritan party in general as he was by that time already in Sydney Sussex College. See Sprunger, *The Learned Doctor William Ames*, pp. 16–17, Matthew Nethenus, *Introductory Preface*, trans. Douglas Horton in *William Ames* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Divinity School, 1965), p. 3.

Christmas season. Cary, who was already looking for a chance to get Ames into trouble, took offence and acted swiftly: Ames was suspended from all degrees and ecclesiastical duties on 22 January 1610, one month after the sermon. Although that decision was not, in theory, an outright expulsion from Cambridge (as Ames was not suspended from his fellowship), he did not have any option but to leave.

Soon after leaving Cambridge, Ames found a post as lecturer in Colchester, a town which had long-standing associations with puritanism. Lectureships provided radical puritans with the opportunity to preach free from regulations set by the church authorities.<sup>24</sup> However, George Abbot, Bishop of London, swiftly denied Ames a licence to preach in order to exclude him from this position. Left with no options in England, Ames decided to go to the Dutch Republic, a country which at the time provided refuge for many radical puritans. Accompanied by a fellow puritan, Robert Parker (1569–1614), Ames left his own country and made his way to the Low Countries where he was to remain for the rest of his life.

While Ames was still in Cambridge, William Perkins wrote a major book which deals with the issue of salvation and predestination, entitled *De predestinationis modo et ordine*. This book saw wider circulation as it was first published in 1598 in Cambridge, and then in 1599 in Basel. One of the continental readers who eagerly sought out a copy soon after publication was Jacob Arminius (1560–1609). After completing his studies both in Leiden and Geneva under the dominant influence of Reformed orthodoxy, Arminius was in the process of significant change concerning his position on the doctrine of predestination. During this time, he received a copy of Perkins's book in Amsterdam. So he read the book "with dismay".<sup>25</sup> Arminius took his pen and wrote a response, reacting strongly "not only against the supra-lapsarianism of Perkins, but also against the general implications of the Reformed doctrine of predestination".<sup>26</sup> Before Arminius could finish writing this response, Perkins died in 1602. Arminius's book, published posthumously in 1612 under the title *Examination of Perkins' Pamphlet*, is thought to be an essential document of Arminianism.<sup>27</sup> However, be-

24 The lecturer was a preacher, who might be or might not be licensed, and was hired to preach during the week as distinct from the local vicar. For Lectureships, see Christopher Hill *Society & Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England* (London; Pimlico 2003), pp. 59–99; Patrick Collinson, "Lectures by Combination: Structures and Characteristics of Church Life in 17th-Century England" in *Godly People: Essays on English Protestantism and Puritanism* (London: Hambledon Press, 1983), pp. 467–98.

25 Carl Bangs, *Arminius: A Study in the Dutch Reformation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1971), p. 209.

26 Richard Muller, "Arminius and Arminianism" in *The Dictionary of Historical Theology*, ed. Trevor A. Hart (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), p. 33.

27 Jacobus Arminius, *Examen modestum libelli, quem D. Guil. Perkinsius apprime doctus theologus, edidit ante aliquot annos de praedestinationis modo & ordine, itemque de amplitudine*

cause this book was not published immediately, the Dutch Reformed community was mostly unaware of Arminius's doctrinal development over the issue of predestination at the time when Arminius was appointed as the professor of theology at Leiden in 1602.

It was at Leiden that Arminius's theological position became a subject of fierce public debate, particularly with his chief Reformed orthodox opponent Francis Gomarus (1563–1641). Throughout the debate, which continued until Arminius's death in 1609, he insisted on his orthodoxy. *Declaration of Sentiments*, first delivered orally in 1608, was his major work to defend his position during these last years of the debate.<sup>28</sup>

After Arminius's death, his views were promoted by his followers, chief among whom were Simon Episcopius (1583–1644), Arminius's successor in the University of Leiden, and Johannes Wtenbogaert (1557–1644), a prominent preacher at The Hague. In 1610, the same year as Ames arrived in the Netherlands, a group of forty-three ministers led by Wtenbogaert assembled in Gouda and signed a document to present to the State of Holland asking for protection of their position. This document, the Remonstrance, contained five points which expressed the essence of Arminius's teaching found in *Declaration of Sentiments*; these points became the major topics of subsequent controversy between the Remonstrants and the Reformed orthodox (who are often called the Contra-Remonstrants).<sup>29</sup>

In the following year, a number of meetings were held between the Remonstrant party and the Contra-Remonstrant party. These meetings, commonly known as the Hague Conference, were initiated by the States of Holland and West-Friesland in their attempt to see if each party could tolerate the views of the other.<sup>30</sup> At this conference, they debated topics expressed in the Remonstrance of 1610, following a set pattern: each party presenting their own position and ref-

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*gratiae divinae* (Lugduni Batavorum, 1612); *Examen modestum libelli Perkinsiani in Opera Theologica* (Leiden, 1629), pp. 634–777; *The Works of James Arminius*, vol.III trans. James Nichols (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1986), pp. 249–484.

28 The work was presented orally in Dutch but later published and translated into Latin. See Jacobus Arminius, *Verclaringhe Iacobi Arminii Saliger ghedachten, in zijn leven Professor Theologiae, binnen leyden: Aengaende zyn ghevoelen* (Leiden, 1610); *Declaratio sententiae I, Arminii de praedestinatione, providentiali Dei, libero arbitrio, gratia Dei, divinitate Filii Dei, et de iustificatione hominis coram Deo*, in *Opera Theologica* (Leiden, 1629), pp. 91–133; *The Works of James Arminius*, vol.I trans. James Nichols (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1986), pp. 580–732.

29 For an English translation of this document, see Appendix 4 in Matthew Barrett, *The Grace of Godliness: An Introduction to Doctrine and Piety in the Canons of Dort* (Kitchener, Ontario: Joshua Press, 2013), pp. 143–45.

30 For a brief historical background of this conference and a list of secondary literature, see William den Boer, *God's Twofold Love: The Theology of Jacob Arminius (1559–1609)*, trans. Albert Gootjies (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010), pp. 211–17.

utation of the other in turn. The proceedings of this conference were published in 1612 in Dutch and Latin translations were made available in 1615.<sup>31</sup> Although this conference could not achieve its intended purpose of tolerating the views of each other, both parties produced detailed accounts of their own positions and their response to the opposing party. These documents became an important basis of subsequent controversy leading up to the Synod of Dort and indeed prompted Ames to write one of his polemical works against Arminianism as we will see shortly. Contrary to the States' effort to urge both parties to tolerate each other, and to regulate preachers not to deal with the issue from the pulpits, church and society grew more and more polarized. When some Reformed orthodox preachers who resisted the regulation were deprived of their positions, their followers began taking the extraordinary action of withdrawing from congregations where a Remonstrant was a preacher and forming a congregation outside the city walls or visiting a congregation in the neighbouring towns.<sup>32</sup>

When Ames arrived in the Dutch Republic in 1610, the heat of this theological controversy must have been felt in every corner of the society. After brief stays both in Rotterdam and in Leiden,<sup>33</sup> Ames found a position as a chaplain to Sir Horace Vere, who was a commander of English forces in The Hague and of the puritan persuasion. So, succeeding John Burgess (who was also a religious refugee from England for his radical puritanism), Ames worked as a spiritual counsellor to Sir Horace and his family in The Hague while being involved with the ministry among the English congregation in the town, and lived there during the years of 1611–1619. As religious and political tensions rose within the Dutch society, Ames's working environment as a chaplain provided him with plenty of

31 *Schriftelicke conferentie, gehovden in s'Gravenhaghe inden iare 1611* (The Hague, 1612); *Collatio Scripta Habita Hagae Comitit*, ed. and trans. Henricus Brandus (Middelburg, 1615). There was another Latin version, which was translated and edited by Petrus Bertius from the Remonstrant party and published as *Scripta adversaria collatioanis Haganae* (The Hague, 1615). Although the Remonstrants accepted only Bertius's version, the Synod consistently used Brandus's version as a source for the Remonstrant teachings and so did Ames in his debate with his Remonstrant opponents.

32 The controversy intensified politically when Prince Maurice openly showed his support for the Contra-Remonstrant party by refusing to worship at the Court church at The Hague where Wtenbogaert was the preacher and joined worship in the church with a Contra-Remonstrant preacher in town. The political issue at stake was how to deal with Spain: Johan van Oldenbannevelt, who took side with the Remonstrants, wanted peace with Spain whereas Prince Maurice, who supported the Contra-Remonstrants, insisted on continuing the Revolt against Spain. For a political dimension of the controversy, see Jasper van der Steen, "A Contested Past. Memory Wars during the Twelve Years Truce (1609–21)" in *Memory before Modernity: Practices of Memory in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Erika Kuijpers, Judith Pollmann, Jahonness Muller, Jasper van der Steen. (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 45–62.

33 During this brief stay in Leiden, he committed to a Congregationalism through the conversation he had with Robert Parker, Henry Jacob, and John Robinson. See Sprunger, *The Learned Doctor Willaim Ames*, pp. 29–30, pp. 39–44.

time to engage with the Arminian controversy. With the five points of Remonstrance already disseminated in 1610 and Arminius's own work against William Perkins (Ames's mentor at Cambridge) published posthumously in 1612, Ames saw the Remonstrants as a threat to the church precisely because they denied "the effectuall operation of internal grace to be necessary for the working of conversion and faith".<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, the situation did not look favourable for the Reformed orthodox in the province of Holland (where Ames lived) as the civil authorities, under the leadership of Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, increasingly put pressure on the Contra-Remonstrants. In The Hague, one Contra-Remonstrant preacher was deprived of his position. In protest, a large number of people chose to form a new congregation led by Reformed orthodox preachers by going to Ryswick, a neighbouring town.<sup>35</sup>

When John Forbes, a Scottish preacher at Middleburg, asked Ames for help in the debate with Nicolaas Grevinchoven (d. 1632)—a prominent leader among the Remonstrant party and a minister in Rotterdam—Ames readily entered into the fight and wrote a series of polemical works against Arminianism.<sup>36</sup> He wrote three books in his dispute with Grevinchoven. In 1613, Ames published *De Arminii sententia qua electionem omnem particularem, fide praevisae docet inniti, disceptatio scholastic*.<sup>37</sup> This work records the debate Ames had with Grevinchoven with their written arguments placed alongside each other. Significantly, this work was edited by Ames. Two years later, when Grevinchoven published his version of the debate that he had had with Ames, he added a critique of Ames's arguments.<sup>38</sup> In the same year, Ames responded with his *Rescriptio scholastica et brevis ad Nicolai Grevinchovii responsum illud prolixum*,<sup>39</sup> which was summarised in 1617 as *Ad respensionem Nic. Grevinchovii contracta*. These two works

34 William Ames, *Conscience with the Power and Cases Thereof*, 4:3.10.

35 Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall 1477–1806* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p. 438.

36 Grevinchoven signed the Remonstrance (1610) and attended the Hague Conference in 1611 as one of the Remonstrant leaders. Grevinchoven, together with his Utrecht colleague, Jacobus Taurinus, was described as "being especially intemperate on the Remonstrant side" See Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, p. 439.

37 The work was reprinted as *Opera* in 1658.

38 *Dissertatio theologica de duabus quaestionibus hoc tempore controversis, quarum prima est de reconciliatione per mortem Christi impetrata omnibus ac singulis hominibus: altera, de electione ex fide praevisa, sermone primum inchoate, postea vero scriptio continuata, ... Non quale mille eam edidit cum suo, quod agnoscit, auctario; sed genuine illa atque integra: cui accredit Grevinchovii responsio ad Amesii instantias* (1615). This title suggests that the debate started in their oral disputation but continued in writings and criticises heavy editing of Ames in his previous work. A Dutch translation was published in the same year.

39 This work was reprinted in 1633 (Lugdunum Batronum), 1634 (Lugdunum Batronum), 1645 (Hardervijk) and 1658 as *Opera*.

were Ames's own writing throughout but topically arranged so that they closely corresponded to the previous work of his opponent.

In addition to these works in his direct disputes with Grevinchoven, Ames published yet another anti-Arminian polemical work in 1618: *Coronis ad collationem Hagiensem, qua argumenta pastorum Hollandiae adversus remonstratum quinque articulos de divina praedestinatione, & capitibus ei annexis, producta, ab horum exceptionibus vindicantur*.<sup>40</sup> As the title states, this work was Ames's response to the objections set out by the Remonstrants against the Reformed orthodox arguments in The Hague Conference of 1611: it was intended to provide a "finishing line" (*coronis*) to that conference by vindicating the Reformed orthodox positions.<sup>41</sup> As this book was published in a timely fashion during preparation for the Synod of Dort, the Reformed orthodox theologians eagerly received it and hailed Ames as the champion of Contra-Remonstrance cause, while his Remonstrant opponents like Episcopius bitterly thought of him as an "unwelcome meddler in ... Dutch affairs".<sup>42</sup> From Nethenus's standpoint, however, this series of polemical works against the Remonstrants served Ames as the occasion of "a happy introduction" to the Reformed community in the Low Countries, which brought attention to Ames and ended his relatively obscure period in The Hague as a military chaplain.<sup>43</sup> Ames secured a position as a theological adviser to the president of the Synod of Dort, Johannes Bogerman (1576–1637).

After a long series of conflicts, the Synod of Dort, "one of the most remarkable gatherings of protestant divines ever assembled",<sup>44</sup> finally met on 13 November 1618. The main task of the Synod was to settle and judge the issues that had arisen from the five points of the Remonstrance in 1610. What made the Synod particularly remarkable was its international dimension, due to the States General's decision to invite international delegates. In addition to Dutch representatives from ten regional synods and Dutch theology professors, there were international delegates from Britain, the Rhenish Palatinate, Geneva, Switzerland,

40 This work saw a wide circulation, reprinted at least in 1630 (London), 1630 (Amsterdam), 1632 (London), 1636 (Amsterdam), 1650 (Amsterdam), and compiled in *Opera* (Amsterdam, 1658). A Dutch translation of this work appeared in 1630 (Amsterdam).

41 *Coronis* closely corresponds to *Collatio Scripta Habita Hagae Comitum*, ed. Henricus Brandus (Middleburg, 1615), the edited collection of documents submitted from both the Remonstrant and Contra-Remonstrant party in The Hague Conference.

42 Brian Richard, "Reformation while tarrying for many: The Radical Puritan Ecclesiology of William Ames" (PhD diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2010), p. 67.

43 Horton, *Ames by Nethenus*, p. 4.

44 Anthony Milton, "Introduction" in *The British Delegation and the Synod of Dort (1618–1619)*, ed. Anthony Milton (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2005), p. xvii.

Emden, Hesse, Bremen, and Nassau/Wetteravia.<sup>45</sup> These international delegates were given full membership to participate in discussions concerning the main doctrinal issues of Arminianism, and rights to vote in the decision. Although the calling for the Synod was directly prompted by a rather political battle between Maurice and Oldenbarnevelt, this can also be seen as a result of decades of effort by the Reformed communities within Europe to reach unity based on a single confession.<sup>46</sup>

The British delegates, in particular, exercised a considerable influence on the work of the Synod. England had been a close ally of the Dutch since Queen Elizabeth sent financial and military aid to support their Revolt against Spain and it was in English interests that political and social unity should be preserved against the threat of Spain. Moreover, King James, who regarded himself responsible for theological developments all over Europe, had already become involved with the dispute over the view of Conrad Vorstius.<sup>47</sup> The British delegates, carefully selected by the King, included: George Carleton, the Bishop of Llandaff; Joseph Hall, Dean at Worcester; John Davenant, Master of Queens' College, Cambridge; Samuel Ward, Master of Sidney Sussex, Cambridge; and Walter Balcanqual, who was supposed to be representing the Scottish church. Later Joseph Hall, due to illness, was replaced by Thomas Goad, a chaplain to George Abbot. Two other English men, who were not official delegates but were present at the Synod, were John Hales and Ames. Hales was a chaplain to the English ambassador Sir Dudley Carleton and attended the Synod as an observer and constantly wrote a detailed report to the ambassador.<sup>48</sup> Ames, as has already been noted, was a theological adviser to the president of the Synod.

The primary outcome of the Synod was the Canons, which were produced as the formal response to the five articles of Remonstrance (1610). They were officially read and received final approval by all delegates of the synod on 23 April 1619.<sup>49</sup>

45 The delegates from France and Brandenburg were invited but could not attend due to political problems. Anthony Milton, "Introduction" in *The British Delegation*, p. xviii, n.2.

46 The effort goes back to the middle of the sixteenth century. Particularly the French church had tried to encourage a European Reformed union since the beginning of the seventeenth century. This is reflected by the proposal Pierre du Moulin submitted to the Synod to agree on a general confession for all Reformed churches. This did not happen due to the British delegates' concern over the issue of church polity. See Graeme Murdock *Beyond Calvin: the Intellectual, Political and Cultural World of Europe's Reformed Churches* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. 15–18.

47 The political background for the English involvement is described in detail by Anthony Milton, Introduction, pp. xxii–xxvii.

48 His letters were collected later in his *Golden Remains, of the Ever Memorable Mr. John Hales, of Eton College* (1659).

49 The formation of this document was a long and highly complicated process. For a survey of this drafting process and preparatory documents, see Donald Sinnema, "The Drawing of the



The final form of the Canons had a structure corresponding to the Remonstrance (1610): five heads or chapters of doctrines (but the third and the fourth chapters were treated as one unit because the third article of the Remonstrance was considered erroneous only in the light of the fourth). Each head followed a set pattern: the synod's view presented as the Reformed orthodox doctrine, followed by the rejection of errors in Remonstrant teachings. The style of the Canons took a popular, accessible form as opposed to the scholastic form current in academic discussions. This document was intended for the general instruction of Reformed churches.<sup>50</sup>

The topics of the four main heads within the Canons correspond to the four following chapters of this thesis: the doctrine of predestination; the extent of Christ's redemption; the nature of grace working through conversion; the perseverance of the saints.

As Ames was not an official delegate, his activity during the Synod was mainly in the background and unfortunately not officially recorded. So it is difficult to assess precisely how much he was involved with the discussions and exercised influence throughout events at the Synod.<sup>51</sup> However, as theological advisor to the president of the Synod, Ames was closely working with the president behind the scenes and probably knew more of what was going on than the British delegates. Particularly, not everything was discussed openly in plenary sessions, and often decisions were made at private meetings in between public sessions. Reporting about the private meetings to the ambassador, Hales noted that "Mr Amyes will inform your Lordship more largely peradventure in some farther

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Canons of Dordt: A Preliminary Survey of Early Drafts and Related Documents" in *Revisiting the Synod of Dort (1618–1619)* ed. Aza Goudriaan and Fred van Leuburg (Leiden: Brill, 2011), pp. 291–311. For an overview of the Synod, see Herman J. Selderhuis, "Introduction to the Synod of Dordt (1618–1619)" in *Acta of the Synod of Dordt*, ed. Donald Sinnema, Christian Moser, and Herman J. Selderhuis (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015), pp. XXVI–XXX, and more briefly, W. Robert Godfrey, "Calvin and Calvinism in the Netherlands" in *John Calvin: His Influence in the Western World*, ed. W. Stanford Reid (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982), pp. 106–9.

50 For a discussion of *modus docendi* reflected in the Canons, see W. Robert Godfrey, "Popular and Catholic: The *Modus Docendi* of the Canons of Dordt" in *Revisiting the Synod of Dort (1618–1619)* ed. Aza Goudriaan and Fred van Leuburg (Leiden: Brill, 2011), pp. 243–60.

51 The only example of Ames's clear intervention was the issue usually known as "Maccovius affair". This issue began from the accusation brought against the supra-lapsarian position and use of excessively metaphysical language in Maccovius's theses by his opponent, Si-brandus Lubbertus. However, it is commonly known that the theses in question were initially drawn up by Thomas Parker. Ames wrote a document in defence of Parker, "points to be considered in the judgement of Parker's theses": see Nethenus, *Introductory Preface*, pp. 7–13; Sprunger, *Learned Doctor*, pp. 59–62; Willem J. van Asselt, "On Maccovius Affair" in *Revisiting the Synod of Dort (1618–1619)* ed. Aza Goudriaan and Fred van Leuburg (Leiden: Brill, 2011), pp. 217–241.

circumstances' and surely "he hath been much with the Praeses [Bogerman], and I imagine understands most of his intent."<sup>52</sup>

As for Ames's relationship with the British delegates, what he went through was a mixed experience aptly described as "both the joy of the closest collaboration with the Church of England and the heartache of betrayal at its hand".<sup>53</sup> His experience at the Synod symbolically displays the ambivalent relationship with the English Church which he had throughout his lifetime: a broad agreement regarding soteriology and a sharp disagreement regarding issues of worship and church polity. In the beginning, the common enemy of the Remonstrance brought Ames into a degree of collaboration and fellowship with people of the establishment from the English church, the very type of people who made him an exile from his own country. Hales, reporting the Synod's procedures to Carleton at The Hague, used Ames as a trusted messenger since Ames travelled from Dort to The Hague from time to time. On 7 December 1618, Hales wrote to Carleton: "I suppose what Errors I have committed by leaving out, misplacing, misrelating, Mr. Ames, when he come to your Honour will rectify".<sup>54</sup> For Hales, Ames was "so good a Messenger", not to be missed because he could give the ambassador a fuller report on "larger Relation".<sup>55</sup> As noted already, Bishop George Carleton was so impressed with *Coronis*, Ames's book against Arminianism, that he "not only invited Ames frequently to informal meals with him but even thanked Ames for that most accurately and solidly written *Coronis*".<sup>56</sup>

However, this cordial relationship did not last long. Ames found himself in an insecure position again when his past history of non-conformist activity came to light. In order to help Bishop Carleton to be better informed about Arminianism, Ames gave him a copy of Grevinchoven's *Dissertatio Theologica*. The problem was that this book contained quotes from Ames's preface to the Latin translation of *English Puritanisme*, where Ames vigorously attacked bishops in England. This reminded Carleton and other delegates why Ames was in the Netherlands in the first place and made them start looking at Ames with suspicion. This suspicion led them to detect Ames's close connection with the press in Leiden, which was publishing and distributing radical non-conformist books in England and Scotland.<sup>57</sup> This was such a scandal that Ames could not continue serving as a

52 Sprunger, *The Learned Doctor William Ames*, p. 56.

53 Brian Richard, "Reformation while tarrying for many", p. 67.

54 Hales, *Golden Remains*, II, p. 40.

55 Hales, *Golden Remains*, II, p. 57.

56 Horton, *Ames by Nethenus*, p. 4.

57 Ames provided prefaces to books by William Bradshaw, Paul Baynes, Robert Parker, and William Twisse by providing a preface to them. Moreover, Sprunger attested Sir Dudley's suspicions about Ames's "hand" behind many other radical books as highly likely given evidence from "libri incompecta" section of Ames's library catalogue. See *Catalogus variorum et insignium Librorum D. Guilielmi Amesii* (Amsterdam, 1634); Keith L. Sprunger,