A Gift from England:
William Ames and his Polemical Discourse against Dutch Arminianism

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own work and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, in any previous application for a degree. Except where stated otherwise by reference or acknowledgment, the work presented is entirely my own.

Takayuki Yagi
Abstract

This thesis examines a series of polemical writings in Latin which William Ames (1576-1633) produced against Arminianism during his life as an English exile in the Dutch Republic. Through these writings, Ames quickly established himself from being an obscure military chaplain to being a champion of Reformed orthodoxy who 'with his sharp pen plucks out [Remonstrant teaching] from the root' and 'its filaments cuts to pieces'. This reputation led him to be appointed as a theological advisor to the president of the Synod of Dort (1618-1619), and subsequently to be nominated for a newly established chair of practical theology at Leiden University. Indeed, Ames was perceived as 'given by England' as a precious gift, according to the Dutch Reformed theologian who compiled Ames’s Latin works.

However, Ames’s significant Latin corpus remains largely unexplored by modern scholarship, which tends to rely only on his major work, The Marrow of Theology. This results both in lack of knowledge about where Ames’s specific contributions to the Arminian controversy lie, and in the misconception that Ames was somehow sympathetic toward Arminianism. Thus, this study seeks to uncover where Ames’s theological contributions are in each of the central theological issues of the Dutch Arminian controversy. It also seeks to provide correctives to current readings of Ames’s theology by highlighting links between his neglected polemical writings and relevant passages in his better-known work, The Marrow of Theology. Apart from the Introduction, the chapters of this thesis are structured according to the main theological issues: whether the act of divine predestination is absolute (Chapter 2); whether Christ’s work of redemption is particularly intended only for the elect (Chapter 3); whether the nature of grace is irresistible (Chapter 4); whether perseverance of the saints is total and final (Chapter 5).
In the face of Remonstrant teaching which tended to compromise divine sovereignty at the cost of human freedom, Ames made serious efforts to maintain the supremacy of God in his works of predestination, redemption, conversion, and perseverance, while at the same time establishing human freedom. Through these efforts, Ames vigorously defended the Reformed tradition against common charges. To do this, he appropriated various medieval scholastic distinctions. Some of these distinctions were already established in the Reformed tradition: even when supremacy of divine will in God’s work of predestination is maintained, there is no contradiction within God as the conditional nature of the revealed will derives from his hidden will; God is not author of sin because he does not will it in the active sense but only in his permissive sense. The use of other distinctions, such as those used for explaining the compatibility between the irresistibility of grace and human freedom, appear to have been pioneered in Reformed thought by Ames. In his Latin polemical works against Arminianism, Ames not only defended his own tradition but also effectively attacked his opponents. This included offering both philosophical and theological critiques of the concept of middle knowledge, the philosophical basis of the Remonstrant teaching of predestination based on foreseen faith; and exposing a clear synergistic tendency hidden behind the often ambiguously articulated theological statements of his opponents. In all of this, Ames was not, as previous scholarship has argued, making a compromise or softening Reformed thought by finding a needed corrective in Arminianism, but rather steadfastly defended his own Reformed tradition against Arminianism without being blind to new philosophical and exegetical challenges. That was precisely why Ames could be regarded by contemporary admirers as ‘a gift from England’.
**Lay Summary**

How can divine sovereignty and human freedom be reconciled? Throughout church history, theologians and philosophers have wrestled with this question. William Ames (1576-1633), an English puritan theologian who lived as an exile in the Dutch Republic, was one of those theologians who tried to maintain divine sovereignty while defending and establishing human freedom. Ames produced a series of polemical writings in Latin against Arminianism, which tended to compromise divine sovereignty at the cost of human freedom. Through these writings, Ames quickly established himself from being an obscure military chaplain to being a champion of Reformed orthodoxy. Indeed, Ames was perceived as ‘given by England’ as a precious gift by his contemporary Dutch theologian. However, Ames’s significant Latin corpus remains largely unexplored by modern scholarship, which tends to rely only on his major work, *The Marrow of Theology*. This results both in lack of knowledge about where Ames’s specific contributions to the Arminian controversy lie and in the misconception that Ames was somehow sympathetic toward Arminianism.

Thus, this study seeks to identify Ames’s theological contributions are in each of the central theological issues of the Dutch Arminian controversy. It also seeks to provide correctives to current readings of Ames’s theology by highlighting links between his neglected polemical writings and relevant passages in his better-known work, *The Marrow of Theology*. Ames was not, as previous scholarship has argued, making a compromise or softening Reformed thought through finding a needed corrective in Arminianism, but rather steadfastly defended his own Reformed tradition against Arminianism without being blind to new philosophical and exegetical challenges. That was precisely why Ames could be regarded as a gift from England.
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Abbreviations


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).
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.¹

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 Dutch contemporary theologians.²

Similar appreciation of Ames’s contribution was expressed by another Dutch Reformed theologian for Ames’s contribution: ‘this outstanding theologian was given to us by England, the fruitful mother and nurse of many distinguished

¹ For the Latin original, see Appendix. 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.

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 toward 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 the Synod and the orthodox teaching defined in the Synod. For the general discussion of the term in relation to ‘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 Reform’d Tradition’ in Westminster Theological Journal vol.70, no.1 (Spring 2008), pp.19-48.
theologians." 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’. Netthenus 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 it were, of the Dutch Churches when they were tossed about in those devastating storms of Arminianism which endangered even the Republic itself.'

Despite the high regard Ames earned through his polemical writings among his contemporaries, these writings have been largely neglected by modern scholarship. The aim of this thesis is to examine the arguments Ames put forward in the Arminian controversy. This results in a re-evaluation of the way Ames’s theology has been portrayed in recent scholarship. In order to appreciate why Ames was so enthusiastically admired by Dutch Reformed theologians, 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

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

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. 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. Ames’s parents, who were both committed to the puritan cause,

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7 Historians have made various attempts to provide a definition of 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. Bremer, ed., *Puritanism: Transatlantic Perspectives on a Seventeenth-
unfortunately 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. 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. 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

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8 For biographical information of these two ministers, see _Conferences and Combination Lectures in the Elizabethan Church_, pp. 189-190, pp.247-49.

Hommius’s poem above. 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, Barrett even recanted his recantation in July 1595.

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). After consulting with Matthew Hutton, the Archbishop of York, to confirm his agreement with these articles, Whitgift sent this document to the Vice-

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11 For a full English translation of the articles, see Porter, *Reformation and Reaction*, pp.365-66.
Chancellor of the university, instructing that ‘nothing be publicly taught to the contrary’. 

Although the Articles did not bring an end to the conflict, this controversy, which foreshadows the Arminian controversy in the Dutch Republic, provides a significant 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’. 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).

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.

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12 The debate continued as Elizabeth I made an intervention 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.

experience. According to Quick’s account, it was through Perkins’s passionate preaching that 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.’\textsuperscript{15} 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: \textsuperscript{16}

As Ames mentioned in this passage the ‘example’ Perkins showed to his students, Ames clearly 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.\textsuperscript{17} 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.\textsuperscript{18}

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

\textsuperscript{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, \textit{The Rise of Reformed System: The Intellectual Heritage of William Ames} (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2013), p.6, and Quick ‘Icones Sacrae Anglicanae’, p.4.
\textsuperscript{16} Ames, \textit{Conscience with the Power and Cases Thereof} (Leiden, 1639), ‘To the Reader.’
\textsuperscript{17} Quick, ‘Icones Sacrae Anglicanae’, p.5.
\textsuperscript{18} Sprunger, \textit{The Learned Doctor William Ames}, pp.16-17.
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.\textsuperscript{19} 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 division of the main parts, which in turn would be defined and further subdivided. As a result, the overall structure of a discipline could be displayed in a set of tables. These features are all clearly reflected in Ames’s major work, \textit{Medulla Theologicae}, his major work first published in 1623.

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.\textsuperscript{20} This policy required all clergy to subscribe to three things: the royal

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\textsuperscript{20} Tom Webster, ‘Early Stuart Puritanism’ in \textit{The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p.49.
supremacy; the Book of Common Prayer; the Thirty-Nine Articles.\textsuperscript{21} 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 serious attack.\textsuperscript{22} 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 difficult when Valentine Cary, who was committed to enforce conformity, was selected with the support of the king as master of Christ's in 1609.\textsuperscript{23} 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 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

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\textsuperscript{21} John Craig, ‘The Growth of English puritanism’, p.41. For the full articles, see Patrick Collinson, \textit{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 administrating the sacraments.

\textsuperscript{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, \textit{Prelate as Pastor: The Episcopate of James I} (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p.213.

\textsuperscript{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, \textit{The Learned Doctor Willaim Ames}, pp.16-17, Matthew Nethenus, \textit{Introductory Preface}, trans. Dougals Horton in \textit{William Ames} (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Divinity School, 1965), p.3.
\end{flushright}
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. 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 made a decision 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 preadestinationis 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

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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.
Geneva under the dominant influence of Reformed orthodoxy, Arminius was in the process of significant change in relation to 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’. 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’. 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 a basic document of Arminianism. But because this book was not published immediately, the Dutch Reformed community was largely 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.\(^{28}\)

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).\(^{29}\)

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

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\(^{28}\) The work was presented orally in Dutch but later published and translated into Latin. See Jacobus Arminius, Verclarighe Iacobi Arminii Saliger ghedachten, in zijn leven Professor Theologiae, binnen leyden: Aengaende zyn ghevoelen (Leiden, 1610); Declaratio sententiae I, Armini de praedestinatione, providential 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.1 trans. James Nichols (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1986), pp.580-732.

\(^{29}\) For a 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.
the views of the other.\(^{30}\) At this conference, they debated topics expressed in the Remonstrance of 1610, following a set pattern: each party presenting their own position and refutation of the other in turn. The proceedings of this conference were published in 1612 in Dutch and Latin translations were made available in 1615.\(^{31}\) 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 from 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.\(^{32}\)


\(^{31}\) *Schriftelijke conferentie, gehouden in s’Gravenhaghe inden iare 1611* (The Hague, 1612); *Collatio Scripta Habita Hagae Comitis*, 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 Oldenbarnevelt, who took side with the Remonstrants, wanted peace with Spain whereas
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,\textsuperscript{33} 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 theological and political tensions rose within the Dutch society, Ames's working environment as a chaplain provided him with plenty of 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'.\textsuperscript{34} 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 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 Wards 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.

\textsuperscript{33} During this brief stay in Leiden, he committed to a Congregationalism through conversation he had with Robert Parker, Henry Jacob, and John Robinson. See Sprunger, The Learned Doctor William Ames, pp.29-30, pp.39-44.

\textsuperscript{34} William Ames, Conscience with the Power and Cases Thereof, 4:3.10.
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.35

When John Forbes, a Scottish preacher at Middleburg, asked Ames for help in 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.36 He wrote three books in his dispute with Grevinchoven. In 1613, Ames published *De Arminii sententia qua electionem omnem particularum, fide praevisae docet inniti, disceptatio scholastic.*37 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 own version of the debate that he had had with Ames, he added a critique of Ames’s arguments.38 In the same year, Ames responded with his *Rescriptio scholastica et brevis ad Nicolai Grevinchovii responsum illud prolixum,*39 which was summarized in 1617 as *Ad responsionem Nic. Grevinchovii contracta.* These two works were Ames’s own writing

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 reconciliacion 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 criticizes 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.*
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 remonstratium quinque articulos de divina praedestinatione, & capitibus ei adnexis, producta, ab horum exceptionibus vindicantur.*\(^{40}\) As the title states, this work was in fact 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.\(^{41}\) As this book was published in 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’.\(^{42}\) 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.\(^{43}\) Ames

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\(^{40}\) 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 Comitis*, ed. Henricus Brandus (Middleburg, 1615), the edited collection of documents submitted from both the Remonstrant and Contra-Remonstrant party in The Hague Conference.


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’, 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, Emden, Hesse, Bremen, and Nassau/Wetteravia. 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.

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

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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.wviii, 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.
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. 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. Ames, as has already been noted, was a theological adviser to the president of the Synod.

The major 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.

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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).
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.\(^5\)

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 over the course of events at the Synod.\(^5\) However, as

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\(^5\) 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, Sibrandus Lubbertus. However, it is commonly known that the theses in question were originally 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*
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 circumstances’ and surely ‘he hath been much with the Praeses [Bogerman], and I imagine understands most of his intent.’\footnote{of Dort (1618-1619) ed. Aza Goudriaan and Fred van Leuburg (Leiden: Brill, 2011), pp.217-241.}

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’.\footnote{Sprunger, The Learned Doctor William Ames, p.56.} 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. At 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 Carlton: ‘I suppose what Errors I have committed by leaving out,
misplacing, misrelating, Mr. Ames, when he come to your Honour will rectify’.  

For Hales, Ames was ‘so good a Messenger’, not to be missed because he could give the ambassador a fuller report on ‘larger Relation’. 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’.  

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 strongly 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. This was such a scandal that Ames could not

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54 Hales, Golden Remains, II, p.40.
55 Hales, Golden Remains, II, p.57.
56 Horton, Ames by Nethenus, p.4.
continue serving as a chaplain for Vere any more. Discharged from duty as a chaplain at The Hague, at least he could now put all his theological vigour into his role as an advisor in the Synod.

Shortly before the Synod drew to a close, Ames began to see the possibility of becoming a theology professor at Leiden University. Episcopius, the leader of Arminianism, was a professor at the University, but was likely to be removed from the position once the Synod set out a programme of purging Arminian scholars from universities in order to maintain orthodoxy throughout the Republic. Ames was so highly regarded by the Dutch Reformed orthodox that the synod of South Holland officially recommended Ames as Professor of Christian Ethics or Practical Theology and the curators of the university promised to give it a serious consideration. Yet again, the English authorities saw to it that this new opportunity for Ames was blocked. The ambassador Carleton reported that, although Ames had ‘a good reputation for learning’ because of his contribution to the Arminian controversy, he had laid a ‘block in his way’ by demanding the curators of the university ‘not to admit any of his majesty’s subjects to those public places, without foreknowledge of his majesty’s pleasure’. Within a month, the intervention of the English authorities was such that the curators reported back to the synod that the appointment was blocked.

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60 Letters from and to Sir Dudley Carleton, Knt. During his Embassy in Holland, from January 1615/16 to December 1620 (London, 1775), p.352.
'not so necessary'.\textsuperscript{61} As Sprunger has commented, a ‘more candid statement from the curators would have said less about academic necessity and more about the necessity to keep peace with the English government’. \textsuperscript{62} 

To address this situation, a number of Dutch theologians took direct actions to reverse the decision by appealing to the English authorities. Johannes Polyander, a Leiden theology professor, personally wrote to ambassador Carleton, asking him to secure a position for Ames even in the Arts faculty as Professor of logic at Leiden.\textsuperscript{63} Three Leiden theology professors – Polyander, Antonius Walaeus, and Antonius Thysius, all of whom were delegates at the Synod – together wrote a remarkable letter to George Abbot, the Archbishop of Canterbury, appealing to him to allow the university faculty to proceed with Ames’s appointment. The specific reason stated in the letter for the appeal was, of course, Ames’s polemical writings against the Remonstrants: ‘his faithful defense of sound doctrine against the Remonstrants which he has published here in various writings’. The letter went on to state that they are ‘distressed by the misfortune that he [Ames] spends his private life in poverty’ because the new opportunity in Leiden was blocked. They were asking for Abbot’s intervention ‘lest the exceptional gifts with which God has equipped him remain buried and useless to our churches’.\textsuperscript{64} When Festus Hommiss made a trip to England in 1620 (officially to present \textit{Acta Synodi Nationalis} to Kind James as a

\textsuperscript{61} Horton, \textit{Ames by Visscher}, pp.151-53.  
\textsuperscript{62} Sprunger, \textit{The Learned Doctor Willaim Ames}, p.68.  
\textsuperscript{63} This letter is not extant but got mentioned in Carleton’s letter. See \textit{Letters from and to Sir Dudley Carleton}, p.435.  
\textsuperscript{64} Albert Eekhoff, \textit{De Theologische Faculteit te Leiden in de 17de Eeuw} (Utrecht: Ruys, 1921), pp.3-6. Translation is taken from Donald Sinnema, ‘The Attempt to Establish a Chair in Practical Theology’, p.428.
gift from the States General), he also delievered this letter to Abbot and personally commended Ames for the Leiden appointment.65

Despite these efforts, Hommius received a firm rejection from Abbot: ‘Ames was not an obedient son of his mother, the Church of England. He is a rebel.’ He should never be allowed to be in such an influential position as professor of theology at Leiden.66 For the university authorities in Leiden, a cordial relationship with the English mattered more than theological contribution to the church that Ames might have made. Although these efforts by Dutch theologians to secure Ames’s appointment failed in the end, they show how firmly Ames established himself as a defender of Reformed orthodox and how much his polemical work against Arminianism was appreciated by Dutch Reformed theologians.

Unable to take the professorship at Leiden, Ames provided for his family by working as a superintendent and examiner of theological students there in the years between 1619 and 1622. During these years, Ames lived with a group of theology students and gave them lectures on systematic theology in a puritan style. On this relatively obscure period, Ames reflected: ‘I have lived as it were a prisoner, for the space of three years in patience, and silence.’67 Despite his lament, he dedicated his time and effort to teaching. The fruit of his activity was the content of his major work later to be published as Medulla Theologicae. This work was originally designed for his students here in Leiden.68

65 Sprunger, The Learned Doctor Willaim Ames, pp.69-70.
67 Sprunger, The Learned Doctor Willaim Ames, p.70.
Ames’s patience was rewarded when he received an offer to teach at the University of Franeker in the state of Friesland, a northern region in the Dutch Republic. This university, though slightly off the mainstream and less prestigious than Leiden, was nevertheless a respected institution grounded in the Reformed orthodoxy and certainly bolder in its appointment of a theology professor. Franeker was less afraid of offending the English authorities by appointing Ames. Ambassador Carleton, however, was chasing Ames throughout the Low Countries. Being informed about Ames’s appointment at Franeker, he tried to block the process of installation once again, even after the appointment was officially made. This made Ames spend at least several discouraging days after he arrived at Franeker with his family. Much needed assistance came from Edward Harwood, an English colonel, who personally appealed to Prince Maurice for political support for Ames’s instalment, to overrule the complaints from the English authorities. Due to this support from the Prince, Ames was officially installed as a professor at Franeker on 23 May 1622.

Until 1633, Ames worked as a faculty member in the University of Franeker, dedicating himself to teaching theology and reforming the Dutch church through the education of its ministers. No longer under pressure from the English authorities, and now that the heat of the Arminian controversy had died down, university life appeared to promise a life of tranquillity and peace for Ames. But soon after he began his career in Franeker, he realized this would not be the case. Lubbertus and Maccovius, Ames’s colleagues as theology professors, were still continuing their quarrel with each other even after the Synod of Dort
had settled their dispute.\textsuperscript{69} The bad behaviour of the student body seemed out of control. Ames, concerned about the well-being of the Dutch church, set about a reform plan. He called faculties and students to a godly life based on his conviction that theology is the doctrine of living to God.\textsuperscript{70}

All the while Ames was involved with teaching and reforming the spiritual state of the university, he also devoted his energy to writing. Based on the lectures he had given previously in Leiden, he published \textit{Medulla Theologicae} first in brief form in 1623 and subsequently in a fuller edition in 1627. This book, his systematic theology in the form of a compendium intended for theology students, became his magnum opus and one of the most printed books in the seventeen century, appearing at least in seventeen editions.\textsuperscript{71} Another major work Ames produced was \textit{De Conscientia, et Eius Iure, vel Casibus} in 1630.\textsuperscript{72} This work was based on the doctoral thesis in Christian ethics he had defended upon his instalment as a theology professor in Franeker. In addition to these major works, three exegetical works that Ames prepared for his teaching during these years were published posthumously by Hugh Peter in 1635:

\textit{Lectiones in CL. Psalmos Davidis}, a commentary on Psalms; \textit{Explicatio analytica}

\textsuperscript{69} After the death of Lubbertus, Ames debated with Maccovius on various issues until the end of his career in Franeker. Sprunger, \textit{The Learned Doctor Willaim Ames}, p.89.


\textsuperscript{71} For a brief history of publication of this book, See John H. Eusden, 'Introduction' in William Ames, \textit{The Marrow of Theology}; trans. and ed. John H. Eusden (Boston/Philadelphia: Pilgrim Press, 1968), pp.1-3. Out of twelve Latin editions mentioned by Eusden, I could identify at least ten editions. It was reprinted in 1629 (London), 1630 (London), 1633 (Amsterdam), 1634 (Amsterdam), 1641 (Amsterdam), 1652 (Amsterdam), 1656 (Amsterdam), 1658 as \textit{Opera} (Amsterdam), 1659 (Amsterdam), 1685 (Debrecen). This work was translated into English and published as 'The marrow of sacred divinity drawne out of the Holy Scriptures, and the Interpreters therof, and brought into method' and printed in London in 1639, 1642, and 1643. This work is hereafter referred to simply as \textit{Marrow}.

\textsuperscript{72} This work was later translated into English and published as \textit{Conscience with the Power and Cases Thereof} (Leiden, 1639).
utriusque Epistolae Divi Petri Apostoli, a commentary on the First and Second Peter; Christianae catecheseos sciagraphia, a commentary based on the Heidelberg Catechism. His philosophical works are compiled and published posthumously as Philosophemata (1643).

Moreover, Ames continued to be engaged with controversies whenever he saw it necessary. After the publication of two puritan works directed against Thomas Morton, bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, Ames also produced polemical works against the Catholic teaching of Robert Bellarmine, Bellarminus enervatus in four volumes between 1625 and 1629. Furthermore, more importantly for this thesis, he turned to the Arminian controversy again when he produced Animadversiones in Synodalia Scripta Remonstrantium in 1629. This was directly in response to Acta et Scripta Synodalia (1620), an Arminian reading of the Synod of Dort written by Johanness Wtenbogaert. The Remonstrants, judged and condemned by the Synod in 1619, were already reviving and boasting of 'their triumph over the synod' by their writings. So, Ames wrote a point-by-point refutation of their arguments in Anti-Synodalia Scripta, which was his last effort to fight against Arminianism.

After eleven years of living in Franeker, Ames had several reasons to move on: he had an on-going and disturbing quarrel with Maccovius; the bad weather of the north was causing him ill-health; his wife was not feeling at home in Franeker, distant from English communities. Most importantly, Ames received an invitation to work alongside Hugh Peter, a former colleague at Franeker, at a

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73 This work was reprinted as Anti-Synodalia Scripta in 1633 (Amsterdam), 1646 (Amsterdam), 1658 in Opera, and in 1661 (Amsterdam) and is hereafter referred as Anti-Synodalia Scripta

74 See Ames, Dedicatory Preface to Anti-Synodalia Scripta (1629).
large English congregation at Rotterdam which had been a centre of puritan activity in the Low Countries. The invitation included a teaching post at a new puritan college alongside ministry at the church. With this promising prospect for fruitful ministry, Ames and his family moved to Rotterdam in late summer or fall of 1633. Unfortunately, however, his new ministry was cut short. Only two months after their arrival, on 11 November 1633, Ames died of shock due to exposure to a flood in his house. Thus, toward the end of his life, he continued to live as an exile, never returning to his homeland because of his radical puritanism.

1.2 Ames as an Arminian?

Modern scholarship has attested the clear impact of Ames’s major work, Marrow.75 Ames has been well remembered as the author of Marrow. In Utrecht, Gisbertus Voetius instructed his students to engage in ‘repeated reading’ of Ames's Marrow and to commit its basic outline of theological topics to memory.76 In America, it was regarded as the best summary of the Reformed theology: it was used as a basic textbook in divinity in theological institutions such as Harvard or Yale well into the eighteenth century.77 In England, where ironically Ames was less influential, Ames’s major works in English translation

saw wide circulation in puritan circles. *Marrow* was highly regarded, for example, by Thomas Goodwin as the best book ‘next to the Bible’.\(^{78}\)

By contrast, Ames's work as a polemicist against Arminianism is much neglected and underestimated, if not completely ignored, compared with the attention paid to his *Marrow*. Ames the polemicist against Arminianism has been forgotten. As a result of this neglect, *Marrow* has been studied in isolation from his anti-Arminian polemical writings even in topics that are highly relevant. Thus, Ames's views expressed in *Marrow* on some theological topics, such as his concept of faith and predestination, have been understood as outside the mainstream of Reformed orthodoxy. For example, Keith L. Sprunger's biography lacks detailed analysis of theological issues involved in the Arminian controversy despite its meticulous research on historical detail.\(^{79}\) In the second part of the book, where four chapters were devoted to the survey of ‘the theology of living to God’, Sprunger examined ‘*Technometria*: prolegomena to Theology’, ‘The Marrow of Ames’s Theology’, ‘Puritan Ethics’, and ‘The Church’. Ames's contribution to the Arminian controversy was not rightly acknowledged. Rather, Sprunger tried to undermine the significance of the dispute Ames had with Grevinchoven by describing it as ‘famous for a day or two’ and was content to provide a brief summary of their debate.\(^{80}\)

A more problematic claim has been that Ames was somehow sympathetic to Arminianism or even ‘Arminian’ himself. R.T. Kendall devoted a chapter to Ames


in his controversial book, *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649*.\(^{81}\) Although this book provoked heated controversy such that Kendall’s overall thesis of ‘Calvin against Calvinism’ has been roundly refuted particularly within theological scholarship, this chapter on Ames has not been sufficiently responded to.\(^{82}\) Based on the perceived contrast between intellectualism (faith as a passive persuasion in the mind) and voluntarism (faith as an act of the will), Kendall saw Calvin as an intellectualist on the one hand, and English puritans, following Beza and Perkins, as voluntarists on the other. Within this scheme, Kendall grouped Ames together with Jacobus Arminius in a chapter entitled ‘the contribution from Holland’. According to Kendall, Ames gave ‘weighty sanction’ to a trend of voluntarism which already existed among William Perkins’s followers. Furthermore, Kendall argued that the origin of Ames’s emphasis on the will is to be found in Arminianism. In that sense, Ames could be even called ‘Arminian’.\(^{83}\) Kendall’s argument obviously presents a number of problems which will be dealt with in the subsequent chapters of this thesis but it should be highlighted here that these claims, particularly the claims concerning Ames’s ‘Arminianism’, are made without careful examinations of Ames’s polemics against Arminianism.

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\(^{82}\) Particularly, the extent of the atonement in the writings of Calvin became a major issue. For a recent discussion on the issue and references to secondary literature, see Paul Helm, “Calvin, Indefinite Language, and Definite Atonement,” in *From Heaven He Came and Sought Her: Definite Atonement in Historical, Biblical, Theological, and Pastoral Perspective*, ed. David Gibson and Jonathan Gibson (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), pp.97-120. For a recent attempt to respond to Kendall’s claim about Ames, see Joel R. Beeke and Jan van Vliet, ‘The Marrow of Theology by William Ames (1576-1633)’, pp.52-65.

Other scholars are certainly more nuanced than Kendall but Ames is still seen as somehow sympathetic to Arminianism. When John D. Eusden published a translation of Marrow, making Ames’s major work widely available in modern English, he also provided a substantial introduction to Ames's life and works. In this introduction, Eusden traced the origin of Ames's voluntarism in Arminianism. Eusden described Ames as almost the only one in the orthodox party, who found that the Remonstrant insistence on human response in the drama of salvation was 'a needed corrective' for the Reformed tradition. In terms of Ames's position on the doctrine of predestination and reprobation, Eusden saw Ames as not completely orthodox. There was a significant departure in Ames from his predecessors such as Perkins and Beza. Eusden's judgement was primarily based on the placement of the doctrine: the doctrine of predestination is a 'comfortable doctrine' and never a speculative exercise while the doctrine of reprobation is seen as 'a reluctant appendage'. This observation was apparently based on an assumption in older research that the teaching of predestination in Reformed orthodoxy is often presented as 'the warp and woof of theology' from which 'other points [are] deduced' in a dogmatic system. Ames’s polemical writing against Arminianism was not given any consideration in this assessment.

85 Eusden, ‘Introduction’ in Marrow, p.7.
86 Eusden, ‘Introduction’ to Marrow, p.27.
87 Eusden, ‘Introduction’ to Marrow, p.26. This older view has been extensively refuted by the work of Richard Muller. For detailed discussions of historiographical issues, see Richard Muller, After Calvin: Studies in the Development of a Theological Tradition (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003), pp.25-104;
Among recent attempts to overcome the weaknesses of previous scholarship, Jean van Vliet’s work stands out in its fresh approach and wide scope. While van Vliet’s study remarkably traces Ames’s influence on later development within the Reformed tradition, the actual space devoted to analysis of Ames’s thought is necessarily limited. The main topics van Vliet selected for his survey of Ames’ theology were federal theology, voluntarism, moral theology, and Ames’s exposition of the *Heidelberg Catechism*. In his discussion about the origin of Ames’s voluntarism, van Vliet largely followed Eusden and indeed Kendall in giving a credit to Arminianism, acknowledging, ‘the general sentiment of Kendall’s observation has some merit’ even if the validity of evidence used by Kendall is doubtful. Ames’s doctrine of predestination was treated only in relation to his doctrine of covenant, in a chapter entitled ‘The Legacy of William Ames in Johannes Cocceius in the Context of “Decretal Theology”’. The main concern of this chapter is to show that the perceived tension between doctrines of predestination and covenant in the older scholarship at least does not apply to Ames. Ames’s involvement with the Arminian controversy, however, is placed in the background.

Even when Ames’s anti-Arminian polemical works are studied, Ames’s position in these writings is thought to be inconsistent with the position

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expressed in his dogmatic work, *Marrow*. Thus, while Ames’s view as the polemicist in the former is held orthodox, Ames’s orthodoxy as the dogmatician in the latter is said to be in doubt. This was Karl Reuter’s interpretation. For example, Reuter found Ames’s inconsistency in his definition of faith as the resting of the heart in God: ‘the expressions of Ames himself here and there may cast doubt on the universal application of the principle.’\(^91\) Indeed, by locating the essence of faith in the will, Ames ‘separated himself from current orthodoxy.’\(^92\) In another example, Reuter judged that Ames’ thought on predestination is ‘not thoroughly unified’. Reuter continued: ‘as a polemicist he [Ames] fights always as an orthodox dogmatician; but when he follows the characteristic general conception of his dogmatics, he takes an independent way as a systematic theologian.’\(^93\) The reason for this judgement seems to be Ames’s particular placement of the doctrine within the system in *Marrow*, where the doctrine is given as ‘the principal lead for the doctrine of the appropriation of salvation’ as opposed to being tied as ‘a speculative doctrine to its dogmatic system’.\(^94\) However, the basic assumption behind Reuter’s claim that Ames lacked consistency in his writings in different contexts and genres may be questioned. 

Thus, the main problems highlighted in this review of previous Amesian study are the lack of consideration of anti-Arminian polemical writings as well as the lack of attempt to read *Marrow* in light of the wider context of Ames’s

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\(^91\) Horton, *Ames by Reuter*, p.189. This issue will be addressed in the fourth chapter of this thesis.
\(^94\) Horton, *Ames by Reuter*, p.253. This issue will be dealt with in the second chapter of this thesis.
other relevant works. Ames’s theological views presented in Marrow are read in isolation from his anti-Arminian polemical writings even though the Arminian controversy provides an important background – both chronologically and theologically – for the writing of Marrow. Even when anti-Arminian polemical writings were studied, they were seen as inconsistent with what Ames wrote in Marrow. As a result of this, Ames is somehow seen as soft or sympathetic toward his Arminian opponents despite his rigorous efforts to refute Arminianism and the high regard he earned as the ‘hammer of Arminianism’ from the Dutch Reformed theologians. In this regard, this thesis can also be seen as an attempt to provide a more accurate interpretation of Marrow by paying closer attention to its immediate context and its genre, and particularly by reading it in light of Ames’s anti-Arminian polemical writings, although the main focus is still on the latter.

In particular, there is a need to remind ourselves of the nature and the genre which were selected for writing Marrow. Ames himself described his intention of the book as ‘placing the main body of theology in a short compendium’. Against those who ‘ask for great volumes in which they establish themselves or wander about as they will’, Ames’s intention of writing Marrow is ‘for all those who have neither the ample leisure nor the great skill to hunt the partridge in mountain and forest’, and ‘their situation calls for showing them the nest itself, or the seat of what they are pursuing, without ado.’ However, this strategy of showing the nest itself means paradoxically that the task of interpreting Marrow requires considerable care and skill. Ames himself seemed to acknowledge this

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95 Ames, Marrow, p.69.
as he stated he ‘cannot but expect to be blamed for obscurity by the less technically trained’. Similarly, Ames’s style made the task of translating *Marrow* an enormous challenge: Ames (or the translator) felt obliged to comment on problems with the translation. A marginal note suggests that: ‘if any thing seeme harsh, or obscure, the Reader is desired to apply himselfe to that which is more easie in the Book, whereby he shall be sure not to read in vaine’. It is only ‘after a while’ that ‘even the hardest and harshest place, may become easie, and by due meditation very pleasant’.96 This challenge of understanding Ames’s Latin in *Marrow* is, to a greater or lesser extent, applicable also to his other works, as Visscher once observed.97 This thesis is, therefore, a humble attempt to face this challenge in order to provide a corrective to the state of Amesian research.

1.3 Thomas or Scotus?

This study should also be located as part of a wider field of early modern Reformed scholasticism, which has focused and debated recently on the nature of medieval scholastic background of the Reformed orthodox thinkers. For example, a group of scholars who contributed chapters to *Reformed Thought on Freedom* demonstrated how the Reformed orthodox, such as Franciscus Junius, Franciscus Gomarus, Gisbertus Voetius, and Francis Turretin, defended and even established human freedom by reconciling necessity and contingency.98 According to these authors, often called ‘the Utrecht school’, John Duns Scotus is


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the major formative figure behind a number of early modern Reformed orthodox thinkers. This is in large part due to their adoption of Scotus's concept of synchronic contingency: the idea that ‘for one moment of time, there is a true alternative for the state of affairs that actually occurs’. This is in contrast with diachronic contingency, according to which alternativity is explained only through temporal change. With this synchronic view of contingency, Scotus is seen to overcome deterministic tendency of diachronic understanding in Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas.

In his recent monograph, Richard Muller critically examined the thesis of the authors of Reformed Thought on Freedom. Historically, Muller tried to show that the idea of contingency formulated by Aristotle and Aquinas cannot simply be judged as deterministic or ‘statistical’. Muller also questioned the revolutionary nature of the idea of synchronic contingency and argued that a synchronic reading of contingency does not stand in radical opposition to the idea of a diachronic reading of contingency, but rather should be seen as adding a refinement to the existing notion of contingency or even they may simply be

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100 For a more detailed explanation of the concept of synchronic contingency, see RTF, pp.15-49.
101 Richard Muller, Divine Will and Human Choice: Freedom, Contingency, and Necessity in Early Modern Reformed Thought (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2017). Prior to the publication of Muller’s book, Paul Helm had offered his critique in a series of articles, focusing on the two logical issues concerning the idea of synchronic contingency: it leads to temporalization of God; the logical character of the distinctions used for arguing synchronic contingency does not constitute an ontology. Muller has set aside the first and taken up the second of Helm’s critique in his book, placing himself ‘firmly somewhere in the middle’ between the Utrecht school and Helm. For example of Helm’s article, see Paul Helm, ‘Synchronic Contingency in Reformed Scholasticism: A Note of Caution’ in Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift vol.57 (2003), pp.207-222. For a reply from the Utrecht school, see Andreas J. Beck, and Antonie Vos, ‘Conceptual Patterns Related to Reformed Scholasticism’, Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift vol.57 (2003): pp.223-33. For Muller’s review of Helm’s critique, see Muller, Divine Will and Human Choice, pp.54-63.
different ways of expressing the same contingency. Muller’s basic reason for his claim was that the language of synchronic contingency ‘is not by itself an ontology’. Furthermore, Muller tried to show that the philosophical outlook of Reformed orthodox in general was not primarily influenced by Scotus but it is more accurately described as eclectic: the Reformed orthodox drew from various philosophical sources such as Thomistic, Dominican tradition as well as Scotist, Franciscan tradition.

This wider scholarly debate about the medieval background of early modern discussion led scholars to make inquiries into Ames’s background as well. For example, when Henry A. Krop examined Ames’s Ramism as his philosophical background, Krop identified Scotus’s influence upon Ames’s basic idea of philosophy in relation to theology. For Ames, theology concerns not only right teaching but also right practices: a notion ‘Ames combined with the view of theology elaborated by the medieval theologian and philosopher Duns Scotus (1265-1308) in his [Scotus’s] rejection of Thomism’.

Muller wrote an essay in which he specifically examined Ames’s view on the divine ideas and how they relate to the divine intellect and will. This issue deals with metaphysical archetypes of the created world within God as the first and ultimate causes. Ames discussed this topic in some detail in his Marrow. Ames

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102 Richard Muller, Divine Will and Human Choice, pp.38, 133, 147-162.
103 Muller, Divine Will and Human Choice, pp.61-63, 283-310. This is why Muller argues that the doctrine of providence in general and the idea of divine concurrence in particular should be taken into account in order to assess the nature of medieval scholastic background of the Reformed.
104 Henri A. Krop, Philosophy and the Synod of Dort. Aristotelianism, Humanism, and the Case against Arminianism in Revisiting the Synod of Dort, p.71, see also p.68, n.62. In this essay, Krop draws attention to Ames’s polemical writings against Arminianism, noting that the effort to study these works, many hundred pages of difficult Latin, is ‘certainly rewarding, since it provides some insight into the philosophical commitments that made Ames oppose Arminianism’. Krop, Philosophy and the Synod of Dort’, p.72.
located his discussion of divine ideas in the chapter within ‘The decree and counsel of God’ as the conceptual foundation for the divine decree, and defined it as ‘preexisting, as the exemplary cause of all things to be done’. Müller’s conclusion was that Ames’s discussion of the divine ideas reflects a ‘fundamentally Thomistic approach’.

In the process of reaching this conclusion, Muller appears to undermine the Scotistic element whenever he found it in Ames. For example, commenting on Ames’s use of the term ‘a known being’ (esse cognitum) – the term Scotist in origin which Ames used to describe the nature of being the creature had in the knowledge of God from eternity before creation – Muller rejects the Scotist meaning in this term because ‘any sense that the esse cognitum is produced by the divine intellect’ (Scotist sense) is lacking in Ames’s account. Therefore, Muller concludes that the term has lost its distinctively Scotist meaning, either through being ‘absorbed’ by Ames or becoming ‘common fare in an expanding scholastic vocabulary’. In another example, when analysing the twofold distinction within the divine knowledge and the pivotal function attached to the divine will in this distinction, Muller does not accept that Ames’s understanding of the divine freedom necessarily reflects voluntaristic (therefore Scotistic) reading. Muller adds that this is because of Ames’s declaration, ‘this [divine] will is truly free: since whatever it wills, it does not will by a necessity of nature, but

105 Ames, Marrow, I.VII.13.
by counsel’.\textsuperscript{108} This implies the priority of an intellectional judgement over the will.\textsuperscript{109}

By contrast, Philip J. Fisk, in his recent monograph on Jonathan Edward’s thought on freedom, devoted a section to Ames’s view of divine ideas which displays a somewhat different reading from Muller. Fisk draws attention to the pivotal function which Ames attached to the divine will, and to the ontological status of the divine ideas as preexisting in the mind of God. According to Ames, the divine ideas have no ‘real being’ but are ‘preexisting, as the exemplary cause of all things to be done’. Fisk notes that Ames’s description of God in this definition of the divine ideas is ‘unlike Aquinas’ and traces the idea of the ‘neutral’ truth status of ‘things to be done’ back to Scotus.\textsuperscript{110} Thus, scholarly disagreement over the nature of the medieval background of wider early modern Reformed thought is reflected in these different assessments on Ames’s view on the divine ideas.

Since this study primarily focuses on soteriological issues arising from Ames’s polemical discourse against Arminianism, it does not directly deal with the issue of the divine ideas or any particular philosophical issues. This single study is certainly not intended to provide a comprehensive answer to the question of Ames’s medieval background. However, as a secondary aim, it seeks to highlight Ames’s medieval background at least where it is judged as relevant and important in order to address specific issues. Particularly, the question of Ames’s scholastic background will be raised when dealing with Ames’s

\textsuperscript{108} Ames, Marrow, I. VII. 34.
\textsuperscript{109} Richard A. Muller, ‘Calvinist Thomism Revisited’, p.116.
understanding of divine knowledge, Ames’s voluntarism in his concept of faith, and Ames’s idea of contingency in his effort to establish human freedom.

1.4 The Purpose, Method, and Structure of this Study

In light of the lack of detailed study of Ames’s polemical writings against Arminianism, despite the high regard in which Ames was held as a polemicist for these writings, this thesis primarily seeks to explore Ames’s arguments against Arminianism in his polemical writings and to find out where specifically Ames’s contribution to the Arminian controversy lies. It will do this by constructing a detailed exposition of Ames’s arguments against Arminianism through a close examination of Ames’s Latin polemical works. It will also seek to show how relevant sections in Marrow should be understood in light of his arguments found in the anti-Arminian polemical works in order to advance current scholarship on Ames. This will allow us to see why Ames was so effective in his polemics against Arminianism and ultimately why Ames could be seen as ‘a gift from England’ in the eyes of Ames’s contemporary admirers. In order to see how different readings of Scripture informed different articulations of theological positions in the Arminian controversy, consideration is given also to exegetical discussions surrounding this controversy. This will also show how important a role that exegesis played in the controversy and highlight how Ames used his competency as an exegete of Scripture to bolster his arguments against Arminianism.
In order to be more comprehensive in scope, a decision has been made to cover most of the major theological issues involved in the Arminian controversy rather than narrowly focusing on a single topic. The structure of the following chapters is organized according to the four topics debated in the Arminian controversy. The outline of each chapter will be as follows.

Chapter two begins the examination of Ames’s anti-Arminian polemics by focusing on the issue of predestination: whether predestination was based on foreseen faith or derives absolutely from divine will. It will uncover how Ames tried to answer the two common charges of determinism levelled against the Reformed orthodox teaching of absolute predestination: that it would contradict the Gospel promise; that it would make God the author of sin. It will also deal with the more metaphysical issues of the knowledge of God and, significantly, reveal how Ames launched the Reformed tradition of refuting the concept of middle knowledge. This concept, originally developed by Jesuit theologians and adopted by Jacobus Arminius, had become the philosophical framework for the Arminian doctrine of predestination.

Chapter three deals with an issue the extent of the atonement: whether Christ’s work of redemption was accomplished for all humanity or only for the elect. It will focus on constructing an exposition of Ames’s arguments for the definite atonement: both in terms of the logical continuity between divine work of impetration and application, and in terms of the continuity between Christ’s priestly work of oblation and intercession. It will next consider exegetical issues involved, in order to see how Ames resolved the Scriptural tension between particularistic and universalistic passages. It will then focus on the use of the
Lombardian formula – the distinction between sufficiency and efficiency – and attempt to assess the immediate impact of Ames’s arguments on discussion at the Synod.

Chapter four considers theologically the most fundamental issue of the Arminian controversy: the nature of divine grace and human freedom in the process of conversion. After examining Ames’s arguments on the way or mode of conversion and on the causes of conversion, the chapter focuses on the most debated issue in Amesian study: the emphasis on the will in his conception of faith. Given claims by modern scholars that Ames has not been consistent in his articulations in different writings, and the supposed ‘Arminian’ leaning in his emphasis, an attempt will be made to read Ames’s exposition on the role of the will in light of the arguments found in his polemical context. The chapter then considers how Ames defended human freedom by appropriating scholastic distinctions and terminologies, based on the idea of synchronic contingency.

Chapter five finally moves on to treat probably the most under-researched topic in the Arminian controversy: the issue of perseverance of the saints. Particular care is taken to consider how Ames’s argument for the Reformed orthodox position is closely connected to his arguments on the different issues examined in preceding chapters, and general patterns which are noticeable in Ames’s approach toward exegetical issues. Then the discussion will focus on the two related scholarly issues which are connected to the doctrine of perseverance: the problem of the practical syllogism and the idea of temporary faith. Consideration is given to the opinions expressed by the British delegates in the Synod in order to highlight the significance of Ames’s contribution.
These chapters will uncover where precisely Ames’s contributions are in terms of his polemical effort against Arminianism and the development of Reformed orthodoxy. They will demonstrate that Ames was not, as previous scholarship has argued, making a compromise or softening Reformed thought by finding a needed corrective in Arminianism. These findings will provide clearer explanations as to why Ames was highly regarded by his admirers as a gift from England.
Chapter II

The Supremacy of Divine Will in Predestination

Having described Ames’s life and works and surveyd the modern scholarship on Ames in the previous chapter, this chapter focuses on one of the main topics of this thesis: the doctrine of predestination as articulated by Ames when he was engaged in the Arminian controversy.

The immediate historical background which provoked the debate between Ames and Grevinchoven is found in Arminius's statement of the doctrine. The most positive and mature statement of Arminius's theology concerning predestination can be found in his later book, Declaration of Sentiments, which he presented to the State of Holland in 1608 in order to defend his view orally. His discussion of predestination occupied the first and most detailed part of the book.¹ After rejecting all the different positions within the Reformed tradition, whether supra or infra-lapsarian, Arminius described his own position in the form of four decrees, which would be the basis and starting point of debate between Ames and Grevinchoven. The first decree pronounces God’s appointment of Christ for the salvation of humanity. This decree presupposes

the divine acts of creation and of permission for the fall, indicating the infra-
lapsarian nature of his order. The second decree sets out the conditional nature
of this predestination. The object of predestination is either those who repent,
believe and persevere, or those who remain unrepentant. In other words, this
decree is about predestination of class. Yet conditional predestination is not
entirely without God's grace. Those individuals who repent, believe and
persevere to the end do so only through grace both prevenient and subsequent.
This grace is described in the third decree as the necessary means by which God
administers to them in 'a sufficient and efficacious manner'. Predestination of
individuals is then stated in the fourth decree:

To these succeeds the fourth decree, by which God decreed to save and
damn certain particular persons. This decree has its foundation in the
foreknowledge of God, by which he knew from all eternity those
individuals who would, through his preventing grace, believe, and,
through his subsequent grace would persevere, – according to the before
described administration of those means which are suitable and proper
for conversion and faith ; and, by which foreknowledge, he likewise knew
those who would not believe and persevere.²

The nature of this decree is strictly conditional. It is based on God's
foreknowledge of those who would repent, believe, and persevere to the end,
and of those who would not believe and persevere.³

The main problem Ames saw in Arminius's teaching of predestination was
its basic thesis that God's decree of predestination rests on foreseen faith, a

² Arminius, Declaration of Sentiments, p.654.
³ The issue of whether theology of Arminius is within the bound of 'Reformed', is out of scope in
this thesis. Here it is enough to point out that Arminius's position was significantly different
from most of other Reformed positions, particularly in basing predestination on foreseen faith.
For a recent summary of discussions on this issue, see Keith D. Stanglin, ‘Arminius and
Arminianism: An Overview of Current Research’ in Th. Marius Van Leeuwen, Keith D. Stanglin
view clearly expressed in the fourth decree. For Ames, the priority of divine predestination to faith was something essential. Remonstrant teaching put this priority at risk. Ames's keen awareness of this issue was captured in the main title of the very first book which Ames produced against the Remonstrants in 1613: *On the opinion of Arminius by which he teaches that all the particular election rests on the foreseen faith.* *(De Arminii Sententia qua Electionem Omnem Particularem, Fidei Praevisae docet inniti).* So, the central and the first question which Ames and Grevinchoven debated was whether predestination was ‘from faith’ *(ex fide)* or ‘to faith’ *(ad fidem).* If predestination is based on foreseen faith it is ‘from faith’ but if it absolutely derives from the divine will then it is ‘to faith’.

Another related problem Ames saw in the Remonstrant teaching was its underlying doctrine of God. Accordingly, Ames raised the question of how the Remonstrant teaching on predestination fitted with the nature of foreknowledge of God. In particular, Ames took up the theory of middle knowledge because of its problematic implication for the pivotal function of divine will.

In the light of this immediate context, the present chapter seeks to describe Ames’ position on the doctrine of predestination throughout his involvement in the controversy, and, where possible, to point out where Ames received his ideas from and where Ames’s contribution lies in terms of its impact on the development of Reformed orthodoxy. It also seeks to draw out implications for the current interpretation of Ames’s doctrine of predestination. The primary source material for the discussion in this chapter will be mainly from *De Arminii Sententia* (1613) and *Rescriptio Scholastica et Brevis* (1615) since this debate
with Grevinchoven provides deeper insight into Ames’s own thinking than his other polemical writings.

The structure of this chapter, in terms of the specific issues to be discussed in each section, will be as follows. The first three sections are devoted to the questions directly related to the doctrine of predestination. The first section deals with the central question of *ex fide* or *ad fidem*, the relationship between the decree of predestination and faith, along with the other related issues. Then, the next two sections will deal with two of the main challenges raised by Ames’s opponent. The first of these, which will be discussed in the second section, is the issue of two seemingly contradictory wills within God. While God ordains to save some people from eternity without considering their faith, he saves them in time only upon their meeting the condition of faith. Another challenge, which Ames and indeed the Reformed tradition behind him repeatedly faced, was that his teaching made God the author of sin. How Ames responded to this charge, particularly with regard to his doctrine of reprobation, is discussed in the third section. Lastly in the fourth section, attention turns to the doctrine of God proper which underlines the respective positions of predestination.

### 2.1 The decree and faith

As already noted above, the central issue, over which Ames and Grevinchoven strongly disagreed with each other, was the question of whether the decree of predestination was from faith (*ex fide*) or to faith (*ad fidem*). This issue arose out of the basic Remonstrant assertion that God’s decree of predestination rests
on foreknowledge of those who shall believe and of those who reject in unbelief.

This idea of predestination based on the foreknowledge of God provoked an initial response from Ames in his debate with Grevinchoven. Thus, the first argument Ames put forward against Grevinchoven was articulated as follows:

“If we are predestined to faith then not from faith. But we are predestined to faith. For it [faith] is a part of sanctification to which the elect is ordained secondarily, and a means of glory to which they are primarily ordained. All the part, however, is joined together with the whole and the means with the end in the decree itself. Sound people will not deny this.”

The emphasis here lies in the statement that faith is a means. It is a means by which God leads the elect to his own glory, which is the primary purpose in his act of predestination. As a means, it cannot be a source from which the decree of predestination derives, as Arminius and his followers argued. Therefore, the predestination must be *ad fidem*, not *ex fide*.

In response to this argument, Grevinchoven stated that the decree of predestination was both to faith and from faith. The decree of predestination, for Grevinchoven, is twofold: on the one hand, God decreed to produce (*ingenere*) faith in sinful people, while on the other hand God determined to give justification and salvation to particular people based on the foreknowledge of faith. The former is *ad fidem* but the latter is *ex fide*. When pressed with a

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4 'Si praeestinamur *ad fidem*, tum non *ex fide*. Sed ad fidem praeestinamur. Est enim pars sanctitatis, ad quam ordinantur Electi secundario; et medium gloriae ad quam primario sint ordinati: partem autem omnem cum toto, et medium cum fine in ipso decretoconiungi, nemo negabit sanus.' Ames, *De Arminii Sententia*, p.15.

5 In fact, Grevinchoven provided a helpful summary of Ames’s argument: ‘his [Ames’s] argument runs this way: if faith is a subordinate medium for the elect to the glory, then the election is not from faith; But it is a medium, etc. Therefore [the election is not from faith].’ (argumentum tale est: si fides est medium election ad gloriam subordinatum, Ergo election non est ex fide; sed est medium, etc. Ergo.) Ames, *De Arminii Sententia*, p.16; Grevinchoven, *Dissertatio Theologica*, p.111.
question of how they related to each other, Grevinchoven went on to explain the priority of one over the other: the decree of predestination *ex fide* is subordinate unto the decree *ad fidem*, and no election from foreseen faith exists apart from preceding election to faith.\(^6\)

To this explanation, Ames quickly pointed out that it contradicted what Arminius laid out in his order of the decrees. This was a tactic that Ames frequently deployed in his attempt to show division within the camp of his enemy. According to Arminius’s order of the decrees, no decree of election to faith precedes another election from faith: ‘for general election from faith to salvation has the second place among the decree of predestination which he [Arminius] placed, but both general and special election to faith belong to the third place.’\(^7\) It will be recalled that Arminius set out in the second decree general predestination of class: God decreed to receive into his favour ‘those who repent and believe’. According to Ames’s reading, this phrase meant that Arminius’s second decree of election was also conditional as well as the fourth decree which is about predestination of individuals. The decree of predestination from faith in Arminius’s order is prior to the decree of predestination to faith, which clearly contradicts Grevinchoven’s statement.

A more exegetically oriented discussion on the same issue is found in *Coronis* (1618), Ames’s other polemical work against the Remonstrant arguments presented at the Hague Conference in 1611. Ames devoted one


\(^7\) ‘Enim generalis electio ad salutem ex fide, secundum habet locum inter praedestinationis quae ponit decreta, electio autem ad fidem tam generalis, quam specialis ad tertium decretum pertinet, ex eius igitur sententia nulla electio ad fidem, generalem illam electionem praecedit quae est ad salutem ex fide.’ William Ames *Rescriptio Scolastica*, p.49. (The page is mistakenly paginated as p.46)
chapter to the question of whether predestination is *ex fide* or *ad fidem* and made his argument based on the examination of various passages from the New Testament, mainly from the testimony of Jesus in the Gospel of John: for example, ‘whoever the Father gives me, comes to me’ (John 6:37). Against a Remonstrant interpretation which allows the idea of foreseen faith in this verse, Ames pointed out that the ‘coming’ to Jesus here should be taken spiritually, and therefore should be the equivalent of ‘believing’. This should be the case as Jesus says previously, ‘who comes to me, ... believes in me’ (John 6:35). Therefore, faith is the fruit and consequence of that giving of the Father, and not the foundation on which predestination rests.\(^8\)

In another chapter in *Coronis*, Ames paid attention to the phrase in Ephesians 1:5, ‘according to his own purpose’ (*secundum praestitum suum*), which points to the divine action in drawing people to faith. If it was according to God’s own purpose that God showed mercy, then ‘God could surely preordain his mercy before the faith in the person is considered, although he did not show or exercise mercy except in the faithful’. \(^9\) Therefore, foreseen faith cannot be the foundation on which the decree of predestination stands.

The assumption of Ames’s first argument for predestination to faith was that faith was a means to the glory for which the elect were primarily ordained. This assertion provoked two related issues surrounding the understanding of faith. The first issue is whether faith should be considered primarily as a means for

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salvation or glory. Ames argued that faith is a means to salvation. Grevinchoven disagreed. For Grevinchoven, faith is primarily a condition, which is required by God before someone enters into glory or salvation. Grevinchoven argued:

Scripture constantly describes faith as a condition required by God. God wills their predestination prior to the glory or salvation to which God wills or destines absolutely. Thus, indeed faith is a means not simply because God would like to save, but so that he saves ... Therefore, faith is primarily both a condition required by God and a condition to be met by those who will be saved rather than a means of acquiring salvation and faith should not be something subordinated nor preordained.¹⁰

This is in contrast with Ames’s understanding that faith is a means for God to draw his people into salvation. Ames began his response by affirming the absolute sovereignty of God in his providence: ‘for God does nothing in time, which he did not decree from eternity: but in time he saves his own through faith as his means. Therefore, from eternity he willed to save through faith as a means’.¹¹ Ames reiterated this later when he stated:

since God saves through faith, not as through a condition to be fulfilled by human being (for then human would be the proper cause for salvation), but as through a means. God does not act through means which is foreign to him, therefore, [he acts] through his own.¹²

¹⁰ ‘Quod scriptura fidem perpetuo describit, ut conditionem requisitam a Deo, cuius praedestationem Deus velit prius, quam gloriam aut salutem cuiquam praecise velit, aut destinet: sic quidem ut fides medium fit, non quia salvare vult simpliciter, sed ut salvet ... sic igitur et fides prius est condicio a Deo requisita, et praestanda ab eo qui salvabitur, quam medium obtinendae salutis, eoque nec saluti subordinata sed praeordinata:’ Grevinchoven, Dissertatio Theologica, pp.111-12; Ames, De Arminii Sententia, p.16. (Emphasis added.)

¹¹ ‘Deus enim nihil in tempore facit, quod ab aeterno facere non decreverit ... sed in tempore salvat suos per fidem, tanquam per medium suum ... : Ergo ab aeterno, voluit salvare per fidem, tanquam per medium:’ Ames, De Arminii Sententia, p.19; Grevinchoven, Dissertatio Theologica, p.114.

¹² ‘cum servet Deus per fidem, non ut per conditionem ab homine praestitam, tum enim homo esset causa propria suae salutis, sed ut per medium: per media aliena non facit, ergo per suum.’ Ames, Rescriptio Scolastica, p.59.
Here Ames is stating the reason for his argument: if we are predestined from faith and faith is merely a condition to be met, then 'human would be the proper cause for salvation’. This was in fact one of the major concerns of Ames and other Reformed orthodox over Arminianism. From Ames’s perspective, which affirms God's absolute sovereignty, faith is nothing more than a means for God to bring about the salvation of the elect, his own people.

The second issue surrounding the understanding of faith is whether the decree of predestination includes the means (faith) as well as the end (glory). From the beginning of the debate, Ames argued that ‘all the part ... is joined together with the whole and the means with the end in the decree itself.’\(^\text{13}\) This inclusion of means in the decree, however, seemed ‘the source of all errors’ for Grevinchoven. In order to demonstrate that this was the case, Grevinchoven pointed out the possible contradiction between the will to save some person absolutely (praecise) and the will to save the same person through the action of faith. Grevinchoven wrote:

That includes the inevitable necessity of means for salvation, but the act of faith assumes freedom, because believing is an act of free will. Therefore, it follows that God was not able first to intend the salvation of this person in particular as an end, [and] then [to intend] faith as the means without either intending the end absolutely when the determination of the free means had not yet been foreseen, or by depriving the means itself of its own freedom and therefore overturning

\(^\text{13}\) See p.49, n.4 above.
the nature created by Himself – each of which no wise people will deny to be the foolish.\textsuperscript{14}

For Grevinchoven, faith is not something which is predetermined by God as a means for leading his people to salvation but something to be preserved for the sake of human free will in line with the conditional nature of the Gospel.

Ames, on the other hand, summarized Grevinchoven’s position drawing from ‘between the lines’ of his opponent’s arguments: ‘particular election is not to faith (\textit{ad fidem}) nor to means of salvation, but only to glory’.\textsuperscript{15} This contradicted, first of all, with Scripture which testifies that ‘it is not less to means than to the life eternal that the elect are destined’.\textsuperscript{16} For example, Acts 22:14 testifies ‘Paul was appointed or destined by God to know his will’; and for Ames, ‘knowing his will’ is the equivalent of faith. According to II Thessalonians 2:13, God chose some people ‘to salvation from the beginning through sanctification of the Spirit and faith held to the truth, to which he calls them through the Gospel’. Moreover, God is also said ‘to choose them to sanctification and predestined them to adoption’ (Ephesians 1:4,5). For Ames, the salvation to which the elect are called is inseparably connected to the means of salvation.

\textsuperscript{14} ‘illud enim includit mediiorum ad salutem inevitabilem necessitatem: actus autem fidei libertatem ponit, quia credere est actus liberae voluntatis: unde sequitur, Deum non potuisse primo salutem huius in particulari, ut finem intendere, deinde fidem ut medium, quin aut finem absolute intenderet, nondum praevisa determinatione medii liberi, aut medium ipsum sua libertate privaret, adeoque naturam a se creatam everteret: quod utrumque insipientis esse nemo sapiens negabit.’ Grevinchoven, \textit{Dissertatio Theologica}, p.132-32. (p.133 onwards is mistakenly paginated as from p.132.)

\textsuperscript{15} ‘Eius interim sententiae quam tantopere satagit confirmare, \textit{electionmem sci. particularem non esse ad fidem, nec ad ulla salutis media, sed ad gloriam solam}.’ Ames, \textit{Rescriptio Scolastica}, p.61.

\textsuperscript{16} ‘[Scriptura] Ad media ... non minus electos destinati quam ad vitam ipsum.’ Ames, \textit{Rescriptio Scolastica}, p.61.
Next, Ames went on to argue that reason (*ratio*) shows that predestination or election involves the means as well as the end in terms of the linguistic origin and the use of the terms such as ‘predestination’ and ‘election’. If predestination or election is truly concerning the end, then it should also be concerning the means because ‘he, who seriously wills the end from the right wisdom, would always will the means which tend to that end.’\(^\text{17}\) In other words, both the means and the end should inseparably attached and intended.

Finally, Ames tried to show that even Arminius himself disagreed with Grevinchoven on this point. Ames cited Arminius’s approval of the inclusion of means within predestination:

> Predestination includes the means by which the predestined are certainly and infallibly to attain to salvation [...] but those means are the remission of sins, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and His perpetual assistance even to the end ...\(^\text{18}\)

Therefore, if the divine decree of predestination includes only the end and not the means, then, that teaching contradicts Scripture, reason, and even Arminius’s teaching on the issue.\(^\text{19}\)

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18 Here Ames deliberately omitted the rest of sentence where Arminius tried to refute the supralapsarian understanding of predestination, ‘those means are necessary and communicable to none but sinners: I conclude that predestination and reprobation did not take place with reference to men to whom those means are unnecessary and incommunicable’. However, it is true that Arminius admits that predestination includes media as opposed to Grevinchoven’s argument. Jacob Arminius, *The Examination of Perkins’ Pamphlet*, p.278; Ames, *Rescriptio Scolastica*, p.62.

19 Ames’s assessment on Arminius seems to confirm the majority view of current scholarly opinion that the theology of Arminius in general is significantly different from his followers. However, in Ames’s polemical context, the assumption is that Remonstrant teaching is in accord with their Master. Ames’s intention here was to show that Grevinchoven’s position is not in agreement with his own master. That is precisely why Ames points out the inconsistency among them. The examination of the question of continuity and discontinuity between Arminius and his followers is beyond the scope of my thesis here as primary aim of
2.2 The decree and its execution

The idea of the distinction between the decree in eternity and its execution in time is already present in the previous discussion about the means of predestination: whatever God decreed in eternity, he does as its execution in time; the scope of this decree and its execution includes faith, the means of salvation. When Ames made this argument, he was using a theological framework which was already well developed within the Reformed tradition. For example, this framework had a highly significant role in Theodore Beza’s theology of predestination. Beza used it to explain the causal relationship within his decretal system: while God’s eternal decree is thought to be the prime cause or highest cause for what happens in time, God uses other causes in its execution in time such as secondary or middle causes. Moreover this framework, and the related argument that the end is decided prior to the means in the order within one’s intention, is described as ‘key’ to Beza’s defence of his supralapsarian position.20

This framework was also present in William Perkins’s theology of decree and predestination. Election, according to Perkins’s definition, ‘is God’s decree whereby of his own free-will he hath ordained certain men to salvation, to the praise of the glory of his grace’. The execution of this decree ‘is an action by which God, even as he purposeth with himself, worketh all those things effectually which he decreed for the salvation of the elect’. Perkins used this thesis is to describe Ames’s position. See Keith D. Stanglin, ‘Arminius and Arminianism: An Overview of Current Research’ in Arminius, Arminianism, and Europe, pp.16-18.

distinction, for example, in order to answer the question of how Christ can be subordinate to the decree: Christ is not subordinate to the decree itself but only to the execution of the decree.21

In the context of Ames’s debate with Grevinchoven, Ames used this distinction to meet one of the significant challenges brought forward by his opponent: the seeming contradiction within the divine will. While God ordains to save some people from eternity without considering their faith, he saves them in time only when they meet the condition of faith. What God does in time is seemingly inconsistent with what he does in eternity in his decree. Responding to this charge, Ames explained this difference based on the concept of a distinction between the decree and its execution and drew illustration from biblical examples:

You are feigning contradictory wills, which are not relating to and not according to the same thing. God wills salvation to those who do not yet believe, but he does not will to grant them salvation while they do not believe: God wills the promised land to Abraham’s descendants when they were not yet in Egypt, but he does not will to grant it to them before they were liberated from Egypt.22

In other words, these seemingly contradictory ideas within divine will are not two contradictory wills but different ways in which the same divine will is expressed in God’s decree and execution. This explanation did not satisfy Grevinchoven. From Grevinchoven’s perspective, the inconsistency in God’s will

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22 ‘Contradictorias fingis voluntates, quae non sunt ad idem et secundum idem: vult Deus salutem illi qui jam non credit, sed non vult eidem conferre dum non credit: vult Deus terram promissam Abrahami posteris nondum Aegyptum ingeressis, sed non vult eandem iis tradere antequam exinde fuerint liberati’. Grevinchoven, *Dissertatio Theologica*, p.188; Ames, *De Arminii Sententia*, p.29.
still remained. According to Grevinchoven, only when the decree of predestination is based on foreseen faith will the decree and its execution be consistent with each other.²³

That there should be a distinction between the decree and its execution, both opponents agreed. While the decree is ordained by God internally within his will in eternity and brought forth by his own wisdom, its execution is God’s external action in time and brought forth by his power. However, they disagreed with each other about to what extent the decree and its execution correspond to each other. For Grevinchoven, the decree and its execution correspond ‘in terms of its objects, the impulsive causes, the end and the order’.²⁴ Ames reacted particularly against Grevinchoven’s mention of the order. Ames came back with what might be called the classic supra-lapsarian principle: ‘what comes first in intention comes always last in execution’ (quod primum est in intentione id ultimum semper in executione). Ames explained the reason for this principle:

In execution of the work, those things, which are directed to an end, have themselves as the efficient causes actually flowing into the end as their effect. And, therefore, it is necessary that they [what is directed to an end] are prior to the end in terms of their order, for the cause is prior to its effect. But in the act of willing and the intention, it is not just so but is the other way around. For the will through the end arrives at willing those things which are directed to the end, and this end is the cause and in fact the means are caused (causata) or appointed toward the end (finita) or destined (destinata) with respect to the end. And by this account of the order, the end is prior to what is tending to the end. This is as certain as the principle is prior to what is principled.²⁵

²³ Grevinchoven, Dissertatio Theologica, pp.190-94.
²⁴ Grevinchoven, Dissertatio Theologica, p.190.
²⁵ ‘in executione operis, ea quae sunt ad finem habent se ut causae efficientes actu influentes in finem ut effectum, atque adeo necesse est ut ordine priora sint fine suo, causa enim est prior effecto: sed in voluntatis actu et intentione, non ita se res habet, sed e converso, nam voluntas per finem devenit ad volendum ea quae sunt ad finem, et finis hic est causa, media vero sunt
This principle was consistent with Ames’s discussion on the means of salvation as we saw earlier: while salvation is the end of predestination, faith is a means which God appoints to lead his people to that end.\footnote{See section 2.1 in pp.51-55 above.\textit{This principle is so important for Ames that it was reiterated when explaining the order within divine volition in Marrow: ‘He wills the end before the means to the end because he works according to the most perfect reason. Among means, he wills first those which come nearest to the end; that which is first in order of execution is last in order of intention and vice versa.’ Ames, \textit{Marrow}, I, VII, 51. According to the opinion of Ames’s contemporary, John Davenant (1572-1641), this principle was used by the Reformed to show the connection between the eternal order in divine intention and the temporary order of execution. Davenant showed that this principle derives from Scotus’s idea of instants of nature, the idea which Scotus used to analyze the process of divine knowing and willing within eternity. See John Davenant, \textit{Dissertationes Duae: Prima De Morte Christi, ... Altera De Predestinatione et Reprobatione.} (Cambridge, 1650), p.111. Davenant was in fact highly critical of the use of this principle since he regarded it is a short step away from making the real distinction of priority and posteriority within divine willing, which is contrary to orthodoxy. For a helpful discussion of the later development in the English context, see Simon Burton, J.G. \textit{The Hallowing of Logic: The Trinitarian Method of Richard Baxter’s \textit{Methodus Theologiae}} (Leiden:Brill, 2012), pp.285-95.}}

Having established this framework, Ames went on to tackle the question of how the Gospel (the promise that you will be saved if you believe) fits within it. Ames had to deal with this question because Grevinchoven charged Ames with turning the truth of the Gospel upside down with his view of predestination.

According to Grevinchoven, if predestination is to faith, salvation would only be the result of the decree. Then the promise of the gospel, ‘if you believe, you will be saved’, would be radically changed and reduced to a simple statement, ‘if you are predestined to life, you will believe’.\footnote{Ames, \textit{De Arminii Sententiap.27; Grevinchoven, Dissertatio Theologica}, p.171.} However, Ames insisted that the Gospel is still a part of the decree even if the decree of predestination is to faith. His explanation for this was based on another distinction within the will of God.
which had been developed in the Reformed Tradition: the distinction between hidden and revealed will of God (voluntas arcana et revelata).  

In order to show that he was not alone in using this distinction, Ames inserted a lengthy quote from work of Jerome Zanchi (1516-1590), an Italian protestant divine of the previous generation, whose remarkable learning was (according to Ames) ‘celebrated throughout the Christian world by his own merit’. Zanchi had insisted that the hidden will and the revealed will are neither two different wills nor contrary to each other but one and the same. The reason for this assertion is that the revealed will is a part of the hidden will: what God willed to happen in the elect with his hidden will was revealed in the form of the gospel (the revealed will). Zanchi continued:

For, when the revealed will is fulfilled, (which will surely be the case in all the elect) it is necessarily the same with the hidden will, because those things, which the Lord wills to happen with his hidden will, will surely happen. With his law, (he means the gospel by this) God teaches us the elect not only what our duty is and gives a command of that we should supply, but also signifies and reveals what He decreed altogether and what he willed simply and absolutely to be done by us, or rather what he himself willed to work in us.

According to Zanchi, what God willed ‘to be done by us’ (the revealed will) is perfectly compatible with what God himself willed ‘to work in us’ (the hidden

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28 The distinction is based on the series of biblical text such as Deuteronomy 29:29 and Romans 11:33-34, where what is hidden is distinguished from what is revealed. God’s revelation is ‘sign and testimony’ of the decree which remains hidden in the absence of manifestation. See Richard Muller, PRRD III, pp.461-63.

29 Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, p.97.

Therefore, the conditional nature of the Gospel promise is compatible with the absolute nature of predestination. When Ames appealed to this distinction to support his argument, he was not inventing a novel idea but employing a tool, which was already well-established in the Reformed tradition.

Furthermore, Ames tried to make the same point – that the Gospel is a part of the eternal decree – by means of highly sophisticated propositional analysis, which can be summarized as follows. The conditional statement of promise in the Gospel, ‘if you believe, then you will be saved’, does not properly belong to the will of God. For the will of God does not contain something which ‘hangs on a condition’ as in this conditional statement, but only what God wills in definite ways. Therefore, in order to examine the relationship between the will of God and the Gospel, this conditional proposition should be turned into a general statement: ‘all who believe will be saved’. Now this general statement does not properly exist in the will of God either. Although the idea of general comes prior symbolically (symbolice) or theoretically (notionaliter), the idea of singular

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31 Ames gave a warning to the reader about the difficulty of understanding this analysis in the middle of his discussion: ‘what is it then? how should the order or the cause of this be received? I will say briefly what I believe as true, and let the careful readers understand.’ (Quid igitur est? quis harum rerum ordo aut ratio est concipienda? Dicam ego breviter quod verum credo, et assidentes discernant.) At the end of this section, Ames concluded that ‘I was thinking this should be set forth briefly, so that perhaps some more skilful people would have the opportunity of explaining some things which are less clear so far. However, I have made clear that there is no contradiction between the word of the Gospel and the decree of election.’ (Haec proponenda putabam breviter, ut ansam inde forte peritior quispiam habeat enucleandi nonnulla quae minus adhuc manifesta. Manifestum tamen utcunque feci, nullam esse repugnantiam inter Evangelii verbum et electionis decretum.) Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, pp.99-100, 101. (Emphasis added.)
comes prior ontologically or existentially (*existentia*). God understands and wills the singular first and then proceeds to deal with the general.\(^{32}\)

Based on this priority of the singular to the general, Ames then went on to argue that all general propositions follow this singular decree. That is the case whether the general proposition is expressed as a general statement, ‘all who believe will be saved’, or as a conditional statement, ‘if you believe you will be saved’, or in a form of command, ‘believe and you will be saved’. They follow from the singular decree because they are ‘contained’ in it, and they are contained in it because ‘faith there and salvation are connected to each other by a certain inseparable connection’.\(^{33}\) This connection between faith and salvation in the divine decree is so inseparable that it can also be expressed in many different forms of the divine will: either as promise or general statement or command.\(^{34}\)

Having identified the revealed will of the Gospel as a part of the hidden will both theologically and philosophically, Ames returned to Grevinchoven’s original charge and denied that the decree of predestination to faith turns the Gospel promise upside down. Ames rather insisted that the contrary is the case, namely, predestination to faith stabilizes the Gospel. For ‘that promise of the Gospel is partly brought about by moral persuasion and is revealed in an

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\(^{32}\) Ames explained the reason for this priority of the singular to the universal or general ‘because the universal as such deals with or bear nothing, it does not move as the end nor is chosen as the means’. (*quia universal qua tale nihil agit aut patitur, non movet ut finis aut eligitur ut medium.*) The reference to Italian natural philosopher, Giacomo Zabarella (1533-1589), *De ordine Intelligendi*, Chapter 5, is made to support this claim. Ames then contrasts the reverse order in Arminius’s order of decree where the priority is put on the general rather than the singular. *Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica*, p.99.

\(^{33}\) ‘*fides ibi et salus inter sese conectuntur individuo quodam nexu*’ *Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica*, p.100.

\(^{34}\) *Ames Rescriptio Scholastica*, p.100.
indescribable way to the believing conscience by its application as far as it concerns itself.\textsuperscript{35} Here, Ames assumes that there is a distinction between the way of ‘moral persuasion’ and the way of special application through ‘physical premotion’ and that both of them are involved in the process of conversion.\textsuperscript{36} Although the way in which the latter works is indescribable and unintelligible, the former is clearly intelligible and knowable for the intellect.

\section*{2.3 The decree of reprobation}

The Reformed orthodox doctrine of reprobation was another area which drew repeated criticism from the Remonstrants: it made God the author of sin who delights in sending some people to hell without any consideration of their beliefs and practices.\textsuperscript{37} This critique also formed an important part of Grevinchoven’s debate with Ames. Grevinchoven repeatedly challenged Ames by directing and applying Ames's argument about election to reprobation, in an attempt to show how tyrannical Ames makes God by his argument. For example, in the middle of their discussion on the relationship between the decree of predestination and faith, Grevinchoven attacked Ames's position by drawing a number of inferences from it and applied them to the decree of reprobation. If

\textsuperscript{35} ‘Quia perusasione morali ex parte sic perficitur et indicibili modo per applicationem revelatur conscientiae credentis, quatenus ad ipsum attingit.’ Ames, \textit{Rescriptio Scholastica}, pp.100-101.

\textsuperscript{36} The issue of the way of conversion will be discussed in the fourth chapter of this thesis.

\textsuperscript{37} This was Arminius's main concern as he reacted strongly against Gomarus and Perkins. His basic criticism was that, if the creation and the fall are taken as means for the end and included within divine decree, then it would make God the author of sin. Therefore, the permission of the fall and the decree of reprobation are the most controversial points in their debate. In fact, this charge has been repeatedly made throughout the second half of sixteenth century and the use of scholastic distinctions were increased in part as a result of these repeated controversies. For a helpful survey of the various debates on this issue, see William den Boer, \textit{God’s Twofold Love: The Theology of Jacob Arminius (1559-1609)}, trans. Albert Gootjes (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010), pp.294-324.
the election is to faith and faith is the subordinate means to the end, then
reprobation to damnation is prior to unbelief and unbelief is only the means and
the effect of the decree of reprobation. This invites inevitable conclusions:
it follows that 1. God is the author of sin. 2. God is commanding the
wrong thing when commanding the reprobate to believe. 3. God is
hypocritical when calling those to faith and giving hope of salvation
under the condition of faith to those who will never be given with faith,
and then rejects them completely from all the hope of faith and salvation
into all eternity. Finally, God inflicts eternal punishments on those
miserable people on account of that [unbelief] itself, to which they are
destined by the divine, inevitable, and all-powerful decree of God ... What
is not tyranny if this is not?\textsuperscript{38}

Interestingly, Ames's response to these repeated charges showed signs of
reluctance. Even when responding to such a strong charge as shown above,
Ames only made a comment in passing that the cause or reason (\textit{ratio}) for
reprobation and election is not the same, and that the idea that God in an active
sense destines some people to unbelief is a caricature.\textsuperscript{39}

Why is this reluctance? It is important to ask, not only because it is a natural
question that arises when reading Ames’s text, but also because it could be
claimed that a weakening of the doctrine of reprobation has occurred and that
this doctrine is a ‘reluctant appendage’ for Ames.\textsuperscript{40} While Ames’s reluctance
seems to support this claim, it could also be explained as his strategy to focus on

\textsuperscript{38} ‘unde sequitur, 1. Deum autorem esse peccati. 2. Deum iubendo reprobis ut credant, falsum
iubere. 3. Deum iubendo reprobis ut credant, falsum iubere. 3. Hypocritam agree, vocando eos
ad fidem, et sub condicione fidei spem salutis faciundo iis, quos nunquam fide donatos, ab
omni fidei ac salutis spe in omnem aeter nitatem peremtorie reject: Denique in hosce miser os,
ob illam ipsam, cui divinitus eoque inevitabiliter omnipotente Dei decreto destin ati sunt,
incredilitatem, aeternis supplicis saevire ... quid est tyrannum agere, si hoc non est?’
Grevinchoven, \textit{Dissertatio Theologica}, p.170. See also for similar arguments, Grevinchoven,

\textsuperscript{39} Ames, \textit{Rescriptio Scholastica}, p.175.

\textsuperscript{40} Eusden Introduction in \textit{Marrow}, pp.28-29.
the question of predestination, by which he can show more effectively the problems associated with the Remonstrant teaching of predestination based on foreseen faith.

If Ames indeed had a strategy of focusing on the problem of foreseen faith, this explains why it was only after the Synod of Dort that Ames started to discuss reprobation more openly in his works. Moreover, Ames’s almost complete silence before the Synod makes it possible that Ames might have been influenced by the process of the formation of Canons in the Synod. Article 1.15 states the divine act of reprobation quite cautiously in negative terms. Thus, concerning those people who ‘have not been chosen or who have been passed by in God’s eternal election’, God’s decree of reprobation was ‘to leave them in the common misery … not to grant them saving faith and the grace of conversion’. Only later it mentions God’s act ‘to condemn and eternally punish them’, yet, this is only ‘in order to display his justice’. The immediate cause of their misery was made clear: it was ‘by their own fault, they have plunged themselves’ into it. Therefore, Dort’s ruling clearly avoided making God the author of sin.41

A decade after the Synod, Ames wrote ‘Anti-Synodalia Scripta’, the last of his polemical books against Arminianism. This book contains an extensive discussion on the topic of reprobation as a part of its attempt to provide a point-by-point refutation of arguments put forward by Johanness Wtenbogaert, a prominent Remonstrant minister in The Hague. Wtenbogaert’s criticism against

41 Appendix 7 in Matthew Barrett, The Grace of Godliness, pp.163-64.
the Reformed orthodox teaching on reprobation – similar to Grevinchoven’s – is summarized by Ames:

The chief point of the whole matter lies in this: that Contra-Remonstrant teach that God, from his only, simple and absolute pleasure which precedes all other causes, without all preceding unrepentance, unbelief and actual godlessness as meritorious cause, reprobated the biggest part of human race and indeed of those who were called through the Gospel, and destined them to eternal damnation.\(^{42}\)

The main point of this criticism was that there was no consideration of human response as the meritorious cause prior to the decree of reprobation. The meritorious cause can be understood as an instrumental cause for the divine decree: the cause which makes the effect worthy (meritorious) of taking place.\(^{43}\)

In response to this criticism, Ames made a series of brief comments leading to a carefully-worded conclusion which is most illuminating:

Our opinion is this: that God did not choose some people (just as he chose others) but decreed to permit that they would remain in their own sins and on account of their sins come under the punishment of just damnation: no cause of this decree is found in non-elect, which is not found similarly in the elect. The truth of this opinion was sufficiently acknowledged by the event itself and experience.\(^{44}\)

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\(^{43}\) Muller, ‘causa meritoria’, *DLGTT*, p.63.

\(^{44}\) ‘Nostra sententia est, Deum quosdam homines non elegisse (sicut alios elegit.) sed decrevisse permittere ut in peccatis suis manerent, et propter illa peccata iustae damnationis poenam subirent; huiusque decreti nullam causam in non electis reperiri, quae non similiter in electis reperitur. Cuius sententiae veritas ipso eventu et experientia satis comprobatur.’ Ames, *Anti-Synodalia Scripta*, p.119.
Four main features are discernible in this paragraph as to where exactly Ames stood in his teaching on reprobation. First, Ames presented this summary of teaching as ‘our opinion’, that is, not only his own but that of the Reformed orthodox. This way of addressing his response as a common shared opinion is a notable feature throughout ‘Anti-Synodalia Scripta’. He did admit that there were diverse expressions of the doctrine but still he was seeking to express a broad consensus.45

Secondly, commenting on the meritorious cause for reprobation and election, Ames emphasizes that it is not found in the elect or the reprobate. The kind of cause at stake here is something which is prior to God’s decree, a kind of cause or reason which motivates God to ordain certain people to salvation or damnation. Such a cause, Ames meant, cannot be found in the non-elect or the elect. So, where does the true cause of reprobation lie? In order to find Ames’s answer to this question, it is helpful to look at another statement he made:

We do not exclude a meritorious cause from reprobation, as far as the end or the ordained damnation is concerned but only so far as the act of ordaining is concerned. They odiously say, we teach that God destined people to damnation, as if God’s ordination is the cause for damnation and damnation is the end which was set out by God, since sins are the only cause and the glory of God’s justice is the end. 46

Behind this paragraph lies an assumption – common in Reformed thought – of a distinction between the decree or act of reprobation and that of damnation.

45 See for other examples, Ames, Anti-Synodalia Scripta, pp.117, 120.
46 ‘Non excludimus meritoriam causam a reprobatione, quoad terminum, vel damnationem ordinatam, sed tantum quoad actum ordinandi. Odiose dicitur, Deum (ex sententia nostra) addixisse homines damnationi, quasi Dei ordinatio esset causa damnationis et damnatio finis Deo propositus; quum peccata sola sint causa, et gloria iustitiae Dei sit finis.’ Ames, Anti-Synodalia Scripta, pp.118-19. (Emphasis added.)
While reprobation refers to the decree which is ordained by God from eternity past, damnation is usually taken in a temporal sense, the execution of punishment to reprobates at the end of history. The difference between these two concepts corresponds to the distinction between the decree of election and its execution as discussed in the previous section. This distinction allowed Reformed theologians to argue that there were different causes for reprobation and for damnation. While the cause for reprobation lies in God’s will or his good pleasure, the cause for damnation is restricted to the sinfulness of humanity.  

In the text quoted above, Ames is largely sharing this common assumption. The divine act of ordaining reprobation is made distinct from the ordained damnation itself. The only cause for damnation is sin and the ultimate end of reprobation is the glory of God’s justice. By contrast, the meritorious cause for the act of ordaining reprobation is left implicit. So there is no meritorious cause for the act of reprobation. Is there any other kind of cause for this act? It is possible to assume that the decree of reprobation ultimately derives from the will of God but this is not made explicit here probably because the meritorious cause was not the main issue of discussion.

Thirdly, the language of permission is used in Ames’s brief statement: ‘God ... decreed to permit that they would remain ...’. This language, when describing God’s action of reprobation, was also commonly used in the Reformed tradition

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47 In fact, the origin of this distinction goes back to medieval scholasticism. For example, Gregory of Rimini distinguished the act of reprobation from eternal punishment. While the cause of reprobation lies in God’s good pleasure, the case of the eternal punishment lies only in sin. Sinnema, ‘The Issue of Reprobation at the Synod of Dort (1618-1619)’, pp.33-34, 69-70.

48 In Marrow, Ames indicated God’s will as a cause of reprobation in some sense: ‘God has willed that some should not have the eternal life’. Ames, Marrow, p.156.
since the time of Beza and Zanchi onwards.\textsuperscript{49} Still, the use of this language raises the question of how permission of evil in general and of the fall in particular can be reconciled with the goodness of God. How can a good God permit such an evil event as the fall? Ames did not give a detailed response to this question but only made a brief comment: ‘the will of God is surely an efficient cause (\textit{causa efficiens}) for all the good and permitting and an ordaining cause (\textit{causa permittens et ordinans}) for all the bad. However, [God decrees] nothing in a way which imposes necessity on people, in which case it contradicts with liberty.’\textsuperscript{50} Ames used the subtle distinction between the efficient cause and the permitting or ordaining cause in order to explain how evil can be permitted in the will of God. Even when using that distinction between the efficient and permitting cause, there is still an indirect causal relationship between the divine will and evil. However, it would be equally problematic if one excluded any causal relationship between evil and the divine will. So, as Ames stated in another place, ‘permission of sin and hardening in that sin, on account of which someone is condemned, is either ordained by God from eternity to appoint this or that object of condemnation, or exists by chance and accident.’\textsuperscript{51} If the permission is not ordained by God, then those evil things occur only by chance and accident. Therefore, God would not be in total control.

\textsuperscript{49} Muller states, ‘The concept of divine \textit{permission} was denied by Calvin but accepted by virtually all later Reformed theologians, including Beza and Zanchi, as a means of explaining the origin of sin and the continuing instances of sin in the course of human history.’ Richard A. Muller, ‘permission’, \textit{DLGTT}, p.222.

\textsuperscript{50} ‘Dei voluntas est \textit{causa certo efficiens omne bonum}, \textit{permittens et ordinans omne malum}; nullam tamen \textit{necessitatem hominibus imponens, quae ipsorum libertati repugnant.’ Ames, \textit{Anti-Synodalia Scripta}, p.130.

\textsuperscript{51} ‘Permissio illius peccati, propter quod quis condemnatur, et induratio in illo peccato, vel ordinantur a Deo, idque ab aeterno, ad constituendum hoc aut illud objectum condemnationis; vel casu ac fortuito existunt.’ Ames, \textit{Anti-Synodalia Scripta}, p.115.
Fourthly, Ames uses the negative language of ‘not choosing’ to describe the divine act of reprobation. This is based on the distinction between positive or affirmative reprobation and negative reprobation. While positive reprobation is expressed as God willing to ‘condemn [them] directly’\textit{(immediate velle condemnare)}, the act of negative reprobation is described as ‘passing by’\textit{(praeterire)} or ‘leaving’\textit{(relinquere)}. This distinction was first developed in the late medieval period, in an attempt to harmonize different positions, and then gradually became accepted among Reformed theologians. The negative language, in particular, was used by infra-lapsarians to avoid the difficulty created by the supra-lapsarian position.

The precise nature of the causal relationship between the evil and divine will became an issue when Ames dealt with the question of how evil can be decreed and foreknown by God. As will be discussed in the next section, Ames argues that the foreknowledge is caused by the divine will, based on the pivotal function he attaches to the divine will. In response to Ames’s argument, Grevinchoven brought his charge that, if foreknowledge was caused by the divine will then it ‘introduces the first and foremost necessity of sin from the

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{52} Sinnema, ‘The Issue of Reprobation at the Synod of Dort (1618-1619)’, p.40.
\textsuperscript{53} The lapsarian question relates to the status of human object in the divine decree of predestination: whether they are considered as not yet created nor fallen, or already created and fallen. Supra-lapsarians argue that they are not yet created nor fallen and the decree of predestination is placed logically prior to the decree of creation and fall (supra lapsum). The decree of creation and fall is a means to an end. Infralapsarians, on the other hand, place decree of predestination after creation and fall (infra lapsum), making sure that the human object of predestination is already created and fallen. It is fair to say that the majority of the reformed orthodox were infralapsarian in the post-reformation period in general. But the advocates of supra-lapsarian included such notable figures as Theodore Beza, William Perkins, and amongst Ames’s contemporary, Franciscus Gomarus, William Twisse. See Richard A. Muller, ‘predestinatio’, \textit{DLGTT}, pp.233-35.
\end{flushleft}
will of God and also makes the will of God the first and foremost cause of sin’. 54

Ames answered Grevinchoven’s charge as follows:

I say however that the sins themselves are known in the decree of God, which, absolutely defining the whole thing, consists in the good things and the permission of sin itself. Therefore, sin itself is preordained by God although not as sin. Indeed it certainly seems as such in the preordination itself and it can be called in some way as a consequence of that decree but in no way as an effect. God wills good actions both as the actions and as the good things; but the bad actions he wills as the actions but not as the bad things. 55

The key to Ames’s answer seems to lie in the distinction between the divine will in the active, positive sense and the divine will in the negative, permissive sense – a similar distinction that Ames employed when articulating the doctrine of reprobation. The reason or cause of good things and bad things in the future are, according to Ames, not the same: ’The good things exist on account of the positive power (virtute positiva) which always flow from the efficacious will of God with their effects, but the bad things are born out of defects and as such they are not dependent on any efficacious decree’. 56 The causal relationship between the evil and the divine will then is not directly related such that the occurrence of bad things as such does not have its origin in God but only in the

54 ‘inducit enim ex Dei voluntate peccatorum primam et summam necessitatem, eoque statuit voluntatem Dei primam ac summam peccatorum causam.’ Grevinchoven, Dissertatio Theologica, p.346.

55 ‘Dico tamen ipsa peccata cognosci in decreto Dei, absolute definitiis totum illud, quod iis inest boni, et ipsius peccati permissionem. Ipsum igitur peccatum, quamvis non qua peccatum, a Deo praefinitur; in ipsa etiam praefinitione, qua tale, certo videtur, et aliquo modo dici potest decreti illius consequens, effectus autem nullo modo; vult Deus actus bonos, et qua actus, et qua bonos: malos etiam actus vult qua actus, non qua malos.’ Grevinchoven, Dissertatio Theologica, p.348.

56 ‘bona enim sunt ex virtute positiva, quae semper cum suis effectis, ab efficaci Dei voluntate fluit sed mala ex defectu sunt oriunda, atque adeo qua talia non pendent ab efficaci aliquo decreto’ Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, pp.205-6.
sinful agent. The evil is known in the will of God only as the lack of good things and as a means of permission.

Ames’s use of subtle distinctions and infra-lapsarian language in particular might suggest that Ames himself was an infra-lapsarian. But a passing comment in another place shows his ambiguity with regard to this issue. Responding to the charge that God’s decree in Reformed orthodox teaching is ‘simple’, he wrote: ‘we do not understand why they call this decree simple unless God is said to decree the damnation of people directly, whether they were sinners or not. This is caricatured too simply.’ In fact, Ames refused to acknowledge that categorical differences existed among the Reformed orthodox over the lapsarian question. This was in response to the charge that there were many different opinions concerning the object of election and reprobation, in conflict with each other. In Ames explained:

We can explain this very simple yet infinite matter only imperfectly and with various concepts. Therefore, that entire priority or posteriority which is ascribed to the divine decree, is defined and completed in the effects themselves and in our way of understanding. Because there is properly one single act in God, by which he wills everything simultaneously, although he would will there to be one thing after and on account of another. However, there can and could be various concepts of this kind without any real difference of opinion.

57 'cur simplex appellent hoc decretum, non intelligimus, nisi velint Deum (ex nostra sententia) immediate decrevisse damnationem hominum, sive peccatores fuerint, sive non; quod est minis simpliciter calumniari.' (Emphasis added.) Ames, Anti-Synodalia Scripta, p.119.

58 Acta et Scripta Dordracena ministrorum Remonstrantium (1620), p.5

59 'non posse nos rem unam simplicissimam et infinitam, nisi imperfecte, et variis conceptibus explicare, atque adeo prioritatem et posterioritatem illam totam quae divinis Decretis tribuitur, terminari et compleveri in ipsis effectis, et in nostro modo intelligendi: quia in Deo proprie est unicus actus, quo vult simul omnia quae vult, quamvis velit unum post et propter aliud esse. Istiusmodi autem conceptus varii possunt ac solent esse, sine ulla sententiae variatione reali.' Ames, Anti-Synodalia Scripta, p.27. See also Horton, Ames by Visscher, p.92. Ames is carefully safeguarding the use of the decrees to express the process of divine willing against the criticism that it will lead to real distinctions within divine willing. The divine
So, at least in *Anti-Synodalia Scripta*, Ames did not explicitly state his own position and remained deliberately ambiguous on the lapsarian question, in order to represent the common teaching shared among the Reformed.

However, a certain supra-lapsarian tendency can be found in Ames’s earlier work. This is evident in Ames’s use of the decree-execution framework, coupled with his use of the classic supra-lapsarian dictum that ‘what comes first in intention comes always last in execution’ (*quod primum est in intentione, id ultimum semper in executione*), as already shown above.\(^6^0\) When this is applied to the decree of predestination, the ultimate end is the glory of God manifest through his mercy in the salvation of the elect and through his justice in condemnation of the reprobate. Everything else including creation and fall would be a means to this end. This decree-execution framework is reflected in the definition and the order of reprobation (and equally in the definition and order of election) set out in twenty fifth chapter of *Marrow*:

Reprobation is the predestination of certain men so that the glory of God’s justice may be shown in them. ... The first act is to will the setting forth of justice. ... The second act is to designate men in whom this justice of God may be made manifest. ... The third act of reprobation is the intention to use means by which justice may be manifested in the reprobate. These means, most accurately speaking, are permission to sin and abandonment to sin.\(^6^1\)

Although the decree of creation and fall is not explicitly mentioned here as the means in the third act, it is nevertheless possible to say that the basic supra-

\(^{60}\) See pp.58-59 above.

lapsarian structure is maintained in light of the decree-execution framework. The ambiguity on this question which we saw earlier in Ames’s Anti-Synodalia Scripta should not be taken as inconsistency but as his attempt to represent a broader consensus within Reformed orthodoxy, particularly given the division over the lapsarian question among the Reformed. It is likely that his own supra-lapsarian sympathies are more clearly reflected in Marrow.

Having described Ames’s position on the doctrine of predestination and reprobation, it would be appropriate here to ask what its implications might be in terms of our current interpretation of Ames’s doctrine of predestination. There has been a problem with the interpretation of Ames’s doctrine of predestination which is mainly due to lack of attention to Ames’s anti-Arminian polemical discourse. Ames’s major work, Marrow has been read in isolation from these works. This has particularly affected interpretation of Ames’s relationship with his predecessors. For example, according to Kendall, Ames was determined to have nothing to do with the teaching of temporary faith in the reprobate, which he calls ‘the embarrassment, if not the scandal, of English Calvinism’. In that regard, Ames’s doctrine of predestination was described negatively as his attempt to remain sound by not abandoning Perkins’s teaching on predestination. By contrast, Ames has been regarded as making a ‘radical departure’ from predecessors such as Beza and Perkins; Eusden has observed a ‘weakening’ of the doctrine of predestination in Ames, who tended toward

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62 Kendall, Calvin and English Calvinism, p.156.
advocating that teaching of reprobation is unnecessary.\textsuperscript{63} Eusden’s claims were based mainly on the placement of the doctrine within the system Ames set out in \textit{Marrow}: as a bridge between the redemption achieved by Christ and the redemption applied to his elect.

However, in the light of what we have found in Ames’s polemical writings against Arminianism, both the claims of Kendall and Eusden seem to be unfounded. With regard to Ames’s attitude toward the Reformed heritage he received, Ames was certainly not embarrassed about teaching temporary faith,\textsuperscript{64} and it is clear that Ames did not make his arguments against Arminianism just for the sake of remaining ‘sound’. As for Eusden’s claims, arguments based on the placement of the doctrine become irrelevant when dealing with polemical writings. Moreover, nothing in the polemical writings suggests a weakening of predestination. Ames’s reluctance to discuss the doctrine of reprobation can be explained as his strategy to focus on the problematic elements he saw in Remonstrant teaching and to avoid exposing different opinions within the Reformed orthodox on the lapsarian question. His supra-lapsarian tendency, apparent from his use of the decree-execution framework, indicates a basic continuity with his predecessors and there is no softening or weakening of the doctrine.

There has been another problem with the interpretation of Ames’s doctrine of predestination: Reuter’s claim that there is inconsistency in Ames between

\begin{footnotes}
\item[63] Eusden, Introduction in \textit{Marrow}, pp.28-29.
\item[64] Ames used the idea of the temporary faith as a part of his main argument in his debate with Grevinchoven. See Ames, \textit{De Arminii Sententia}, p.20; Grevinchoven, \textit{Dissertatio Theologica}, pp.133-34.
\end{footnotes}
his polemical writings and his systematic work, *Marrow*. Reuter did not make clear where exactly the inconsistency lies, but he mentioned the placement of the doctrine of predestination within *Marrow* as a reason for his claim. However, it is important to remind ourselves that the placement of the doctrine of predestination within one’s work of systematic theology has very little to do with the content of that doctrine: this is one of the important findings resulting from recent research on Reformed scholasticism over the last few decades.

Moreover, Ames’s placement of the doctrine at the beginning of the application of Christ has an important precedent: the *Loci Communes* of Peter Martry Vermigli (1500–1562). The effect of this arrangement in Vermigli’s case has been described as emphasizing ‘the relation ... between Christology and election’ and manifesting ‘as entirely gracious the relationship of believers to Christ’. This effect, which is surely not at all inconsistent with Ames’s position in his polemical discourse, can also be applied to Ames’s presentation in his *Marrow*.

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65 ‘But the thought of Ames on the subject of predestination is not thoroughly unified. As a polemicist he fights always as an orthodox dogmatician; but when he follows the characteristic general conception of his dogmatics, he takes an independent way as a systematic theologian.’ Horton, *Ames by Reuter*, p.252.


68 Richard A. Muller, *Christ and the Decree: Christology and Predestination in Reformed Theology from Calvin to Perkins* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), p.57. This is not a comment on the controversial issue of precise nature and background for Vermigli’s doctrine of predestination but only on the effect of placement of this doctrine.
What we see here in Ames’s polemical discourse is his concern to show the supreme priority of the divine decree, not only of predestination but also of the universal order in God’s work of providence. The scope of divine will is comprehensive: it includes not only the end but also the means of salvation, the faith of individuals. In order to support this argument, the main framework which Ames used (as discussed earlier) was that of decree and execution, coupled with the dictum that what comes first in intention comes last in execution. This suggests his indebtedness to and his continuity with Beza as well as Perkins in terms of his basic supra-lapsarian framework. His placement of the doctrine within Marrow can be explained by its pedagogical setting and its genre of the text. The effect of the placement was to connect the believer to the redemptive work of Christ and its application; and to rest this relationship on the divine eternal plan. This does not imply any inconsistency between Ames’s systematic exposition in Marrow and his argument in his polemical context.

2.4. The problem of middle knowledge
The debate between Ames and Grevinchoven was not confined to a soteriological discussion but extended to the underlying theology proper. Particularly, the question of the foreknowledge of God was extensively discussed. For Arminius and his followers, including Grevinchoven, predestination is based on foreseen faith: divine foreknowledge comes prior to the decree of predestination. For Ames, divine foreknowledge is never dependent on what is outside God’s will and his being, but rather solely rooted
in his will. Thus, the nature of foreknowledge and its relationship with the divine will became an important issue in their debate.

The basic framework from which Ames approached the knowledge of God is provided in his major work, Marrow. There, Ames made a classic distinction between the knowledge of simple understanding (scientia simplicit intelligentia) and the knowledge of vision (scientia visio). His definitions of both are as follows:

The knowledge of simple understanding refers to all possible things, i.e. all things universal and particular which may be [and may not be] brought into being through the most perfect knowledge of God. The knowledge of vision (scientia visio) is the knowledge of all future things, whether they are necessary in their own nature, or free, or contingent.69

The knowledge of simple understanding is also called necessary knowledge (scientia necessaria) since it is a knowledge which God necessarily has because of his omniscience. The knowledge of vision is also called free knowledge (scientia libera): this knowledge is ‘free’ because it derives from the freedom of God to will and to actualize certain possibilities and not others.70 The difference between these two kinds of knowledge was further explained by Ames in relation to God’s sufficiency and efficiency:

the things which God knows through the knowledge of simple understanding he knows by his all sufficiency, but those things he knows through the knowledge of vision he knows by his efficiency or by the decree of his own will.71

The knowledge of vision is brought about, as Ames notes here, by ‘the decree of his own will’. Thus, the decisive role is assigned to the decree of divine will to

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69 Ames, Marrow, I.VII. 25, 26.
70 Richard Muller, PRRD III, pp.411-14.
71 Ames, Marrow, I.VII. 27.
choose all future things (the objects of the knowledge of vision) from all possibilities (the objects of the knowledge of simple understanding), as will be clear from the debate Ames engaged with Grevinchoven.

Based on this framework, the starting point of Ames and Grevinchoven’s discussion about the divine foreknowledge was Ames’s statement: ‘God did not foreknow the future agreement of faith, for example in Peter or John, unless he willed that that would be the case’. As indicated in this statement, the point Ames emphasized throughout his discussion on this issue was that divine foreknowledge was derived from the decree of God’s will. Therefore, future contingency, such as whether or not Peter will believe, cannot be the proper object of foreknowledge unless it is decreed by his will. Ames continued to explain his reason for arguing this causal relationship in terms of truth-value and entity:

I said future contingents cannot be known in any other certain and infallible way apart from the divine will. That this is indeed very true is clear for example from this: because they have no determinate truth-value before the decree of the divine will nor do they have even entity. It is so far from the case that it should be a fit object of knowledge, since nothing is such unless [it is] in some way necessary.

Thus, the divine will functions as the cause of divine foreknowledge. Unless the divine will determines to attach the truth-value of an object, it will not be future to be foreknown by God. Grevinchoven found it unacceptable:

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73 ‘Contingentia futura non posse dixi, alio aliquo certo et infallibili modo cognosci, nisi ex voluntate divina: quod quidem verissimum esse velinde patet; quia nulلام habent determinatam veritatem ante decretum divinae voluntatis; imo nec entitatem; tantum abest, ut sit idoneum objectum scientiae; cum nihil sit, nisi aliquot modo necessarium.’ Grevinchoven, *Dissertatio Theologica*, pp.347-48.
I deny, however, that the foreknowledge itself is, properly speaking, caused by the will, because the will only produces or determines to produce or to permit an effect, which must be known by God on account of the infiniteness of divine knowledge. God knows this effect not by the act of volition which causes it, but only by producing and permitting the effect, which is the object of His knowledge and cognition. 74

For Grevinchoven, the divine will cannot be the cause of future things as it only produces or permits effects, which will be the object of divine foreknowledge. This foreknowledge is supposed to exist prior to and outside of the decree. The foreknowledge is not based on the divine decree but on the infiniteness of divine knowledge.

In response to this criticism from Grevinchoven, Ames further elaborated his argument for the causal relationship between the divine will and foreknowledge:

That proposition, Peter believes, did not have determined truth-value before that decree of divine will, by which the faith of Peter was preordained. For the thing itself (res ipsa) did not have the ground (ratio) of the future being and therefore of truth. For truth and being are connected. Moreover, there is no determined truth-value from the nature of thing or from internal causes, because there is no necessary connection between these ends, ‘Peter’ and ‘faith’. Nor from external, secondary causes because they are indifferent, neither determined nor determining. 75

Apart from the divine decree, there would be no ground for the entity or truth-value of future things because entity and truth-value do not come from the thing

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74 ’Nego tamen praescientiam istam a voluntate proprie loquendo causari, quia voluntas tantum producit aut statuit producere vel permettere effectum, quod non potest non a Deo cognosci, propter infinitatem scientiae divinae, non causante illam volitione; sed tantum producendo aut permittendo effectum, quod est objectum, scientiae et cognitionis.’ Grevinchoven, Dissertatio Theologica, p.350.

itself being left without internal or external causes. In other words, truth-value, entity, and necessity are the essential elements all interconnected to each other as the object of divine foreknowledge and all these elements come to exist because of being preordained by the divine decree. As will be shown, this theory, labelled as theory of neutral proposition, is a highly Scotist doctrine used in Ames's arguments, which Ames probably inherited through his Catholic contemporary, Diego Alvarez (c.1555-1635). This theory was the basis of Ames's argument against the concept of middle knowledge.

Toward the end of Ames's polemical exchange with Grevinchoven, following on from their discussion of divine foreknowledge and volition, Ames deliberately chose the concept of middle knowledge as a target of attack. In fact, his handling of the issues of foreknowledge was intended to provide a necessary introduction to this topic. As already shown above, Ames approached the subject of divine knowledge from a classic Reformed perspective: the knowledge of simple understanding and the knowledge of vision. From this perspective, every future thing is known, either as a mere possibility without certainty in the foreknowledge of simple understanding, or as a certain future actualized by the divine will in the foreknowledge of vision. There was no room, therefore, for any other kind of divine knowledge as these two kinds of knowledge cover the entire range of all knowledge.

However, the Jesuit theologians Fonseca and Molina had developed a third kind of divine knowledge, middle knowledge (scientia media), in order to

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reconcile the seeming contradiction between divine sovereignty and human freedom. By this middle knowledge, according to Molina, God knows what an individual person would do given certain circumstances prior to God’s determination by his will. This knowledge is hypothetical and human actions within this knowledge remain strictly free from determination or necessity in any sense of the term: if the individual’s action might be the opposite from what it was going to be, hypothetically speaking, then that would have been the object of middle knowledge. Yet this knowledge is more than ‘mere possibles’ because God knows with certainty just what this action would be in any given circumstances.

Fonseca and Molina appealed to biblical evidence where such divine hypothetical knowledge is implied. In 1 Sam 23:11-12, for example, when David asked God if Saul would come to the town of Keila, God told him it would be the case. Again, David asked God if people in the town of Keila would hand over David and his servants to Saul who was approaching, God told him it would also be the case. However, both of these things did not actually happen, because David and his servants left the town; when told that David was not in the town any longer, Saul decided not to go there. According to Molina, God knew by middle knowledge that David would not stay and be handed over, that is, prior to the divine decree in God’s will. This device, coupled with Molinists’ alternative view on nature of grace, resulted in two decades of ‘grace

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78 For a concise and helpful explanation of the concept, see Richard Muller, PRRD III, pp.417-20.
controversy’ within the Catholic Church. Prominent Dominican theologians such as Domingo Banez and Diego Alvarez wrote to attack Molina’s view.

This theory of middle knowledge was further employed by Arminius and his followers as the philosophical ground for their doctrine of predestination. In his debate with Grevinchoven, Ames defined the concept as follows:

This middle knowledge of conditionality is the knowledge by which God is fashioned (fingitur) to know for certainty, particularly whether Peter would consent or rather not consent to believe when that condition is posited, prior to all the decree of his own will predetermining the future consent of Peter.

Thus, by adopting the idea of middle knowledge, Arminians could locate future contingent human actions, such as agreement of faith, outside and prior to the divine will. In this way, they could preserve human freedom in their response to the Gospel within a doctrine of predestination based on foreseen faith.

Interestingly, the initial Reformed responses to the theory were not altogether hostile. Indeed, Franciscus Gomarus (1563-1641), a key theological opponent of Arminius in Leiden, and Antonius Walaeus (1573-1639), who was also prominent among the Reformed orthodox, found the concept rather useful in explaining evil human actions within the divine providence and adopted Molina’s argument at least in a limited way. So it is significant that Ames was

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81 ‘Scientia, enima haec media conditionata, illa est scientia, qua Deus fingitur, ante omne decretum suae voluntatis, praedeterminantis consensum Petri futurum, certo scire, in particulari, an Petrus fit consensurus, posita illa conditione, an potius dissensurus’ Ames, De Arminii Sententia, p.51.
82 Richard Muller, PRRD III, p.420, Heinrich Heppe, Reformed Dogmatics: Set Out and Illustrated from the Sources, revised and edited by Ernst Bizer, trans. G.T. Thomson (London: Gerge Allen
one of the earlier Reformed orthodox to attack this concept in the years prior to the Synod of Dort. The central issues addressed by Ames was whether conditional future contingents can have a determinate truth-value logically before the divine decree and whether God can have prevolitional knowledge of their truth. Ames addressed the former issue as a logical problem and the latter as theological. Addressing the former, Ames argued:

This principle establishes a connected or conditional truth, which is not necessary. That is, if Peter were placed in such indifferent disposition regarding believing or not believing, he would believe. This is not necessary because it is altogether indifferent and contingent. For Peter is not determined to faith, neither by some internal force nor by some external decree. The connection is however established as true, before all the decree of divine will, as the object of middle knowledge and the foundation of subsequent decree.83

The problem Ames points out here is the lack of necessity in future contingent matters within middle knowledge, due to their existence outside or prior to the divine decree. As shown above, Ames has argued that the very entity, truth-value, and necessity of the future all depend upon the divine decree. So, the connection assumed in the middle knowledge between Peter and faith becomes problematic by the lack of necessity due to its existence outside the divine decree. As long as future things remain outside of the divine decree, the

connection between Peter and faith cannot be established as necessary because it lacks necessity which flows only from the decree.

Against this, Grevinchoven admitted that contingent matters lack necessity. Indeed, the subject and the predicate in conditional propositions are not linked by any necessity. However, this does not mean that those links are intrinsically false: their truth-value, though it might be ‘contingent and changeable’, is nevertheless contained in those propositions. Moreover, Grevinchoven suggested that the same problem exists in Ames’s viewpoint. Even if future contingency is supposedly preordained by the divine absolute decree, Peter and faith will not have the necessary connection which Ames requires because by nature this matter is contingent. In other words, the problem still remains because contingency and necessity cannot coexist.  

Ames responded to this charge by appealing to the concept of ‘hypothetical necessity’. Even in the case of future contingent matters, a certain kind of necessity still exists. In conditional propositions, the sense of the words should always be connected not by absolute or positive necessity, but by hypothetical necessity. Here Ames referred to Julius Caesar Scaliger (1484-1558), an Italian Renaissance humanist scholar whose work, *De Causis Linguae Latinae* (1561), had become a standard Latin grammar textbook. Ames continued:

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84 Grevinchoven, *Dissertatio Theologica*, p.399.

85 In Grevinchoven’s view, contingent matters belong to entirely different category from necessary matters in terms of their relationship to the decree. If future things are decreed necessarily, these decreed things cease to be contingent. If things are decreed contingently, they are decreed either ‘concurrently’ or ‘permissively’. In both of these cases of contingent matters, the decree cease to be absolute and efficacious, and these future things cannot be the object of the foreknowledge. Grevinchoven, *Dissertatio Theologica*, pp.352-53.
This [Scaliger's book] teaches the reason and nature of its principle: for the force of conditional utterance lies not in the truth of its parts but only in the connection or the consequence. This consequence is sometimes true from false parts, and equally it is false from true parts. However, if this consequence is true, it has the force by inference (*vim illam illativam*), which necessarily concludes when the antecedent is posited.\(^86\)

The kind of necessity described by Ames here seems to correspond to the necessity of the consequence, which corresponds to the idea of hypothetical necessity. It is a necessity ‘brought about or conditioned by a previous contingent act or event so that the necessity itself arises out of contingent circumstance’.\(^87\) This necessity lies behind in a statement such as ‘if ..., then ...’. Put more precisely, the necessity does not lie in the antecedent nor in the consequent but only in ‘the implicative relation’ between the two. It is this implicative connection between two propositions or events which is necessary, and not each of propositions themselves are necessary. \(^88\) For the example of Peter and faith, the statement would be, ‘if Peter is placed in certain disposition, then he will believe’. If the consequence of this statement, ‘Peter will believe’, is taken to be true, then, it does have ‘the preordained antecedent necessity’ which is not absolute or positive, but only hypothetical.


\(^87\) Muller, *necessitas consequentiae*, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms*, p.200.

Moreover, Ames put forward the theological issue of middle knowledge: whether God can have prevolitional knowledge of conditional future contingents. Here Ames argues by painting a picture of God which is inferred from the concept of middle knowledge:

If middle knowledge is granted, then God almighty foreknew before the decree of creation future things such as numbers of angels and of human beings, if God would create a world, and what they would do if they ever existed. He could not ordain in another way [than he knows through his middle knowledge] nor was his decree about those things in any sense free. Even after one decree was posited, some other future would absolutely occur apart from the divine will. For all the conditional future is turned into the absolute future once the condition is met. Since the decree is not yet truly posited, God would have a knowledge which is merely conjectural.

According to this theory, God’s freedom in ordaining the divine decree would be lost and divine knowledge about all future contingency becomes merely conjectural. This very notion of conjectural knowledge in God is unacceptable as it implies imperfection. As the later Reformed orthodox argued, God effectively has to learn things from the world about contingent matters and his decree has to follow human determination about contingency rather than vice versa.

Commenting on the contingent matter within the divine knowledge, Ames located the contingent element within the range of the knowledge of vision: this

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90 For example, Maccovius saw the problem of the middle knowledge as the denial of the fundamental distinction between Creator and creature. See Willem J. van Asselt, ‘On the Maccovius Affair’ in *Revisiting the Synod of Dort (1618-1619)* ed. Aza Goudriaan and Fred van Leuburg (Leiden: Brill, 2011), pp.232-33.
knowledge is not directly about the absolute future but about those things
which ‘flow from the actual decree, from this or that condition being arranged’.
So, concerning a future contingency which never existed or was actualized, such
as handing David over to Saul, such things were only decreed ‘virtually’ (virtuale)
and not ‘formally’ (formale), because ‘they exist by that virtue of actual decree,
only if this or that would be placed’. Therefore, Ames concluded, ‘God had
decreed to rescue David from the hands of the Keilans and from Saul through
his flight’. The contingent proposition – ‘if David did not flee, he would be
handed over’ – would still be within the knowledge of vision, as it does ‘flow
from this actual decree’. 91

If indeed Ames’s critique of middle knowledge was to be the first expression
of long-standing Reformed critique of middle knowledge which followed, 92 what
was the source of his argument? Here, Diego Alvarez’s work, De Auxillis Divinae
Gratiae et humani arbitrii viribus et libertate. [Concerning the aids of divine
grace and the powers of human choice and freedom] (1611) is particularly
relevant and provides important background. 93 Alvarez was one of the
Dominican representatives in the last years of Grace Controversy under the
papacy of Paul V. Alvarez’s massive polemical work – almost a thousand pages
long – was designed to refute the idea of middle knowledge and other related
Molinist teachings. Alvarez dealt with the issue of middle knowledge in Book II

91 Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, p.222.
92 None of seventeen-century treatises on this issue in Richard Muller’s list precedes the Synod
of Dort and Ames’s work. Richard Muller, PRRD III, p.419, n.300.
93 This link is likely because this book was published only a few years before Ames entered into
his debate with Grevinchoven and it was on the list in Ames’s library. See Catalogus variorum
of this work. At the beginning of this book, Alvarez pointed out that the question
of metaphysical ground within the middle knowledge was the heart of the
matter:

the controversy is, whether God, prior to all the decrees of his will
predetermining the future consent of Peter absolutely or hypothetically
what would be established in such circumstances, would know with
certainty in particular whether Peter would consent or rather refuse
when that condition is posited.94

After identifying the heart of issue, Alvarez then went on to make his own
argument:

Prior to all decrees of divine will, or in that prior sign of reason (*in illo
priori signo rationis*), before the decree of this kind, determining what
would be the future and what would not be the future, is understood in
God, no proposition about the future contingent has determined truth.
Consequently, in that prior sign of reason, there is nothing knowable
about what would be determinately future, even by God, from the truth-
value of the object itself.95

Alvarez’s argument, that the propositions prior to the determination of divine
decree have no truth-value and therefore cannot be the object of divine
knowledge, is precisely the same argument which Ames used against
Grevinchoven. Moreover, it should be noted that this theory of neutral
proposition is, as noted above, a highly Scotistic teaching. Scotus used this

94 ‘Controversia ... est, utrum Deus ante omne decretum suae voluntatis praedeterminantis
consensum Petri absolute futurum, vel ex hypothesi, quod constitueretur in talibus
circumstantiis, certo sciat in particulari, an Petrus fit consensurus posita illa conditione, an
potius dissentensurus:’ Diego Alvarez. *De Auxillis Divinae Gratiae et humani arbitrii viribus et
libertate* (1611), p.61.

95 ‘Ante omne decretum divinae voluntatis, sive in illo priori signo rationis, antequam
intelligatur in Deo huismodi decretum determinans, quid fit futurum, quid non fit futurum:
nulla propositio de futuro contingenti habet determinatam veritatem, ac per consequens in
illo priori signo non est cognoscibile etiam a Deo ex ipsa veritate objecti, quid fit determinate
futurum.’ Alvarez *De Auxillis Divinae Gratiae*, p.120.
theory in order to demonstrate that God’s foreknowledge is compatible with contingent reality. By this theory, Scotus analyzed the process of divine knowing and willing through the use of ‘instants of nature’ in eternity. In this theory, the divine will has a pivotal role to determine the future through attaching truth-value to the neutral propositions presented by the divine intellect. This process can be formulated through using following three ‘instants of nature’ or ‘structural moments’ within eternity:\(^\text{96}\)

1. The divine intellect presents a neutral proposition to the divine will.
2. The divine will determines the truth-value of this proposition.
3. The divine intellect knows the proposition, its truth-value included, certainly and infallibly.

From this formulation, it is clear that the notion of ‘prior sign of reason’, which Alvarez mentioned in the quote above, closely corresponds to the first instant of this formulation based on Scotus’s theory. In light of this, the indebtedness of Alvarez (and Ames) to Scotus is clear in this particular issue of divine knowing and willing.

Moreover, the theological problem of conjectural knowledge in God appeared later in Alvarez’s work:

The controversy consists in this: whether God, before he determines in particular a future act of the created will, has conjectural knowledge because the will, having been posited or if it were placed in such

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circumstances and such an object were proposed to it, that becomes (its) volition.\textsuperscript{97}

After stating the problem this way, Alvarez went on to argue that this kind of knowledge is certainly not acceptable, just as it was for Ames: ‘For conjectural knowledge ... intrinsically includes imperfection.’ Therefore, God, who is perfect, cannot have such a conjectural knowledge.\textsuperscript{98} Although the form of argumentation is not necessarily the same with Ames, it is clear that the basic points of Alvarez's critique is the same as Ames's. Philosophically, the problem lies in the lack of metaphysical ground for middle knowledge. Theologically, the problem is that the nature of middle knowledge in God would be conjectural, which implies imperfection. The same example is used for illustration: Peter’s consent to faith. So, it is not difficult to imagine that Ames was consulting Alvarez when constructing his critique of middle knowledge.

**Conclusion**

To sum up what has been discussed in this chapter, the most problematic element which Ames identified in the teaching of Arminius and his followers was their thesis that the decree of predestination is based in foreseen faith. This looked dangerous in Ames's eyes because it implied a synergistic soteriology where human will cooperates with divine grace toward salvation. So Ames argued that the decree of predestination is to faith, rather than from faith; based

\textsuperscript{97} ‘Utrum Deus, antequam determinet in particulari actum futurum creatae voluntatis, habeat coniecturalem cognitionem, quod voluntas posita, vel si poneretur in talibus circumstantiis, et proponeretur ei tale objectum, fit illud volitura.’ Alvarez, *De Auxillis Divinae Gratiae*, p.126

\textsuperscript{98} ‘Nam coniecturalis cognitio, ... intrinsecus includit imperfectionem’ Alvarez, *De Auxillis Divinae Gratiae*, p.126.
on the understanding that the faith is a means of glory. For Ames, faith is not primarily a requirement or condition set out by God, to be fulfilled by people in order to be saved, but a means by which God leads his people to salvation. By nature, the means is included within the decree. Otherwise, it would make human response the proper cause of salvation, which would contradict Scripture, the reason, and even Arminius’s own opinion.

The framework behind all of Ames’s arguments was a distinction between the divine decree and its execution, a distinction was well-developed within the Reformed Tradition. Together with the distinction between voluntas arcana/revelata, Ames now used this framework to explain how the conditionality in the Gospel promise fits within his system. As Zanchi had argued before him, Ames contended that the revealed will of the Gospel is not contradictory with or different from the hidden will but is very much a part of it. So the apparent contradiction between the inclusion of means within the decree and the conditional nature of the Gospel promise can be explained by the theological distinction between the eternal decree and its temporal execution. More philosophically, based on the view that God’s will is about the particulars and not the general, the close connection between faith and salvation can be expressed in different forms such as condition, command, and general statement. Therefore, the conditionality of the Gospel promise can fit within this decree-execution framework.

As for the doctrine of reprobation, despite his noticeable reluctance to answer the charge put forward by Grevinchoven in the years prior to the Synod, Ames cautiously constructed this controversial doctrine in his later years, using
various concepts and distinctions inherited and adopted by the Reformed
tradition such as positive/negative reprobation and the use of language of
permission. The use of the decree-execution framework is also discernible in his
distinction between the decree of reprobation in eternity and the damnation in
temporal sense. The use of this framework points toward his supra-lapsarian
position on the lapsarian question, the tendency which is confirmed in his major
work, *Marrow*.

The significance of the position Ames articulated and defended through his
polemic against Arminianism, in terms of current scholarship, lies in Ames's
sincere concern to show the priority of the divine decree in eternity over
everything which is executed in time − the teaching which Ames inherited from
the Reformed tradition to which he belonged. He fought for this neither for the
sake of remaining ‘sound’, nor in a radical departure from his predecessors, as
Kendall and Eusden have claimed respectively.

Ames was not only prepared to defend his tradition but also to face new
challenges. Ames deliberately chose the knowledge of God as the main topic of
debate because of his concern over the concept of middle knowledge. For Ames
the foreknowledge of God is rooted in and caused by the divine decree in God’s
will. For apart from the divine decree, there would be no ground for the entity
or truth-value of future things. Everything is known by God either as mere
possibilities in his knowledge of simple understanding, or as the actualized or
true future in his knowledge of vision. From these convictions, Ames put
forward two arguments against middle knowledge, which he probably drew
from Alvarez’s refutation of Molina. In terms of logic, if middle knowledge is
allowed, future contingent matters such as Peter’s faith is established as true without any accompanying necessity. In terms of theology, Ames argued that, if future contingency is located in middle knowledge outside and prior to the divine decree, then the divine decree has to follow what is perceived in middle knowledge. This would mean God’s knowledge is only conjectural and put God’s freedom and self-sufficiency at risk.

Ames’s refutation of middle knowledge stands out as a significant contribution since the danger of this concept was not sufficiently recognized among the Reformed orthodox in the years prior to the Synod. It is possible to say that Ames, faced with the new challenge of his time from the Remonstrants, has set standard for refuting Molinist concept of middle knowledge by appropriating Dominican arguments against Molina into his own polemical context. Furthermore, the key component of Ames’s (and Alvarez’s) argument, the theory of neutral proposition together with pivotal role of the divine will, has its origin in Scotus’s attempt to show compatibility of future contingents in the divine foreknowledge. Ames adopted this theory, which was probably mediated through Alvarez. This indicates a basic Scotistic tendency behind Ames’s formulation of divine knowing and willing.

Though the doctrine of predestination was a major issue in the Arminian controversy, it was not the only issue debated. The decree of predestination was the reason behind different manifestations in the application of the redemption which Christ has achieved. Therefore, understanding on predestination was inseparably tied to the issue of redemption: specifically, the issue of the extent of the redemption of Christ, which will be discussed in the next chapter.
Chapter III

Redemption Accomplished and Applied

This chapter focuses on the issue of the extent of atonement, which created a great deal of tension even among the Reformed orthodox at the synod. When Matthias Martinius from Bremen expressed his opinion, which showed a certain Remonstrant tendency, Franciscus Gomarus, a prominent Dutch delegate in the Synod, was so infuriated that he challenged the Bremen delegate for a duel. The emotion was so high that, even after the session was concluded with prayer, Gomarus renewed the request to fight the battle. Although the duel did not actually take place, this incident indicates how much heat this issue created at the Synod. The main reason for this disruption apparently lied in Martinius's insistence that Christ is the foundation of election (Fundamentum Electionis). In order to understand why Martinius's opinion provoked such a heated response from Gomarus, and to discern where exactly Ames's contribution lies in the controversy, it is necessary to trace the immediate background to the controversy.

1 Johan Hales, *Golden Remains*, i, pp.71-73. Hales records that, by insisting that Christ was Fundamentum Electionis, Martinius was 'somewhat favourable to some tenets of the Remonstrants concerning Reprobation, the latitude of Christ's merit, the salvation of infants'. This phrase, Fundamentum Electionis, was omitted from the Canons because of its Arminian usage and implication. See Muller, 'fundamentum electionis', DLGT'T, pp.125-26.
When Arminius wrote his response to Perkins’s work on predestination, *Examination of Perkins’s Pamphlet*, Arminius quickly realized that the issue of predestination is closely bound up with the issue of redemption. Arminius was particularly concerned with the order of decree presented in Perkins’s work: the decree of predestination comes prior to the decree to send Christ to redeem the elect. For Arminius, who was convinced that Christ died for all humanity, the order of these decrees should be reversed: the decree of redemption in Christ comes prior to the decree of predestination. By arranging the order of decree this way, Arminius could maintain the universality of Christ’s redemptive work. The decree of predestination should set ‘no boundary to the universality of the price paid for all by the death of Christ’. Moreover, Arminius argued that his way of ordering the decree suggests that Christ is not only the foundation of the execution of predestination, as Perkins had argued, but also the foundation of predestination itself. Otherwise, it would imply that the decree of predestination had already been made without respect to Christ. It is only by placing the decree of redemption prior to the decree of predestination that Christ is truly seen as the foundation of predestination and thus believers are chosen in Christ. Hence, the idea of Christ as the foundation of election (*Fundamentum Electionis*) had Arminian origin and was closely associated with Arminius’s version of the order of decree.

In order to support this order of decree, Arminius put forward another argument which will be of importance to the later controversy: the separation between oblation (sacrifice) and intercession of Christ. In response to Perkins’s

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argument that the death of Christ is only for the elect based on Christ’s intercessory prayer recorded in John 17, Arminius argued that Christ’s sacrificial death and his intercession are separate works. He asserted: ‘the sacrifice is prior to the intercession ... as sacrifice has reference to merit, intercession to the application of merit ... He acquired merit by sacrifice; he intercedes for its application. He does both as Priest.’ By separating Christ’s work of sacrifice from his work of intercession, Arminius tried to maintain the universality of redemptive work while admitting that Christ made the intercessory prayer only for the faithful. This separation within Christ’s priestly work of oblation and intercession, coupled with the parallel distinction between imprecation and application, became one of the most important issues in the Arminian controversy in general and Ames’s debate with Grevinchoven in particular.

When a group of followers of Arminius issued the Remonstrance in 1610, they devoted the second article of the document to the topic of the extent of atonement. They stated:

That in agreement with this [first article] Jesus Christ the Saviour of the world died for all men and for every man, so that he merited reconciliation and forgiveness of sins for all through the death of the cross; yet so that no one actually enjoys this forgiveness of sins except for the believer.

They went on to quote John 3:16 and I John 2:2 for Scriptural support. The intention of this document was to express the views of Arminius in an acceptable manner. The main point of this second article was that Christ’s work

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achieved on the cross was not just for the elect but for all humanity. Against this, the Reformed orthodox responded in *Contra-Remonstrance* (1611), which was produced in preparation for the Hague Conference in the same year:

That to this end [salvation of the elect] He has first of all presented and given to them his only-begotten Son Jesus Christ, whom He delivered up to the death of the cross in order to save his elect, so that, although the suffering of Christ as that of the only begotten and unique Son of God is sufficient unto the atonement of the sins of all men, nevertheless the same, according to the counsel and decree of God, has its efficacy unto reconciliation and forgiveness of sins only in the elect and true believer.  

What is important to note here is that the Reformed orthodox employed the distinction between sufficiency and efficiency in order to explain both the universality and the particularity of atonement – Christ’s death was sufficient for all but efficient only for the elect. The origin of this distinction goes back to Peter Lombard’s *Sentences* in the 12th century, but various Reformed theologians used it to solve the perceived tension that exists in Scripture between the universality and the particularity of atonement.

Indeed, the Reformed theologians reiterated the need for this distinction in their discussion at the Hague Conference in 1611. They insisted that ‘the values of Christ’s suffering must be considered in two ways’, that is, with respect to both sufficiency and efficiency. With respect to the former, the extent is certainly universal but with respect to the latter, the extent is restricted to the elect. Therefore, a key question to appreciate the diversity among the Reformed orthodox is this: what was the Reformed attitude toward the classic distinction between sufficiency and efficiency? Still, the broader issue between the

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Reformed orthodox and the Remonstrants was whether the death of Christ was intended for all humanity as the Remonstrants insisted, or it was intended only for the elect as the Reformed orthodox argued.

In light of this immediate background, this chapter seeks to describe what arguments Ames used against his opponents on this issue of the extent of atonement and where Ames’s contribution lies in terms of its impact on later development, particularly on the discussions in the Synod of Dort. Also, close attention will be paid to Ames’s attitude toward the Lombardian distinction in order to locate his position within the variety of positions among the Reformed orthodox.

The structure of this chapter will be as follows. The first two sections deal with the most prominent issues which emerged in the debate between Ames and Grevinchoven: the relationship between impetration and application, and the relationship between oblation and intercession. The nature of arguments Ames employed in relation to these two issues are similar but approached from slightly different perspectives: the former might be called a logical argument, the latter a Christological argument. The third section deals with exegetical discussions. As already noted above, a certain tension exists in Scripture where some passages emphasize the universal significance of Christ’s redemptive work while others are more particularistic. This section describes how Ames wrestled to harmonize this Scriptural tension. This is followed by the fourth section, which examines Ames’s position toward the Lombardian distinction between sufficiency and efficiency in comparison with other Reformed theologians. Finally, the fifth section takes up the doctrinal discussions in the
Synod of Dort in order to locate Ames on the spectrum of opinions demonstrated in discussion at the Synod and also to seek where exactly Ames’s contribution lies.

3.1 Impetration and Application

One of the most prominent issues in the debate between Ames and Grevinchoven on the topic of the redemption was how the relationship between impetration and application should be understood: whether the work of impetration should be tied to the work of application in any way, or whether they are considered as separate acts. This issue had been already acknowledged by the delegations at the Hague Conference as the Reformed orthodox used the link between impetration and application in order to argue for the definite atonement.

Ames was following the Reformed orthodox when he insisted that these two concepts of impetration and application were not only closely related, but also organically tied to each other. The unique element in his argument was to set out the intention of God behind this unity between impetration and application: the intention to save those whom he chose in his eternal decree.

Ames expressed succinctly the unity between impetration and application, and the divine intention behind it in a syllogism at the beginning of *Arminii Sententia* (1613), his first book in debate with Grevinchoven: ‘Question: Is the death of Christ intended for all people? For whom it is intended, to those it is
applied. However, it is not applied to all. Therefore, it is not intended to all.\textsuperscript{6} In order to provide proof of this syllogism, Ames brought in the idea of divine intention: ‘the application is according to the intention of God’\textsuperscript{7}. Therefore, to all those for whom the death of Christ is intended, it is applied. The assumption behind this equation of the application and the divine intention is that all efficacy of the means of grace (such as the application of Christ’s death) must be according to the divine will; for the will of God and his council is the measuring and regulating cause of the efficacy. The biblical passages on which Ames based these arguments are Matthew 11:26, Romans 9:15, and Ephesians 1:5, 11. Moreover, Ames spelt out his reasoning behind the syllogism clearly in Marrow: application is the end of impetration and there is firm connection between them in divine willing. Otherwise, the redemption of Christ would be of ‘uncertain outcome’. Ames then continued to draw out his main underlying concerns: ‘the Father would have appointed the Son to death and the Son would have undergone it without any certainty whether any would be saved by it or not, and all the fruit of this mystery would depend upon the free will of men’\textsuperscript{8}. This shows what was really at stake behind the issue of the extent of atonement: the problematic ideas of uncertainty within divine willing, and of synergistic tendencies in soteriology.

By contrast, Grevinchoven argued from a completely different perspective. For him impetration and application should not be connected but clearly separated and independent from one another. Indeed, there are two separate

\textsuperscript{8} Ames, \textit{Marrow}, I, XXIV, 7.
divine intentions for each of them. For impetration, God’s intention was for all humanity. For application, his intention was for those who believe. When asked about the consistency of God in willing impetration even for those to whom he would not apply it, Grevinchoven responded: ‘God neither willed nor unwilled the application of reconciliation absolutely but willed it through interceding faith and unwilled it through mediating unbelief’.\(^9\) The end of impetration for Grenvenchoven, then, was not its application itself but ‘right and power of application according to his own most free pleasure by which and in the manner of which he would will.’\(^10\) In other words, the end of impetration was ‘that God can save sinners without being hindered by his own justice and that the sinner may be saved without being hindered by his own sin.’\(^11\) Therefore, the question of application did not matter to Grevinchoven as far as impetration was concerned. In the end, he boldly declared: ‘the worth, necessity and usefulness of impetration could stand abundantly even though the accomplished redemption would have been actually applied to no individual.’\(^12\) From this exchange of their ideas, Ames helpfully provided a summary of Grevinchoven’s position:

Impetration is the absolute action while application is the conditional one. Therefore, although the former relates to the latter and the latter could be called the former’s end in a certain way, it is not the proper end. For impetration by itself without any application, would still be intact

\(^9\) ‘Deum applicationem reconciliationis absolute nec voluisse nec noluisse, sed voluisse fide intercedente, noluisse mediate intercredulitate’ Ames, *De Arminii Sententia*, p.4.

\(^10\) ‘Neque enim applicatio finis impetrationis proprie fuit, sed ius et potestas applicandi pro liberrimo suo placito quibus et qualibus vellet’ Ames, *De Arminii Sententia*, p.4.

\(^11\) ‘Finis ergo impetrationis hic fuit, ut Deum non obstante iustitia sua peccatorem salvare posset, et peccator non obstante peccato salvari’ Ames, *De Arminii Sententia*, p.5.

\(^12\) ‘Impetrationis suam dignitatem, necessitatem atque utilitatem abunde constare potuisse, etiam si impetratea redemptio nulli individuo unquam actu ipso applicata fuisset.’ Ames, *De Arminii Sententia*, p.5.
This almost complete separation between impetration and application provoked not only Ames’s vehement attack but also that of subsequent generations of the Reformed orthodox against Arminianism. Through this exchange between Ames and Grevinchoven, the heart of the problem, which was not apparent in the brief statement in Remonstrance 1610, became clear in the eyes of the Reformed orthodox. Thus, a significant aspect of Ames’s contribution to the Arminian controversy on the extent of atonement lies in exposing the problematic nature of this separation between impetration and application, which is behind the universal understanding of atonement expressed in the Remonstrance (1610).

Ames’s own argument against this separation was detailed in Rescriptio Scholastica, the second book he wrote in his debate with Grevinchoven. In order to press the point that impetration is intimately connected to application, Ames put forward what might be called logical arguments, using the illustration of three concepts which are closely tied to salvation: the good, the mediation, and the ransom. First, Ames started by asking for whom the good or the benefit of salvation was intended: was it for God himself or for humanity? For Ames, the answer is obviously the latter. For to love means willing something good for someone else. Therefore, the proper end of impetration is not ‘that God could save the sinner with his own just salvation’, as Grevinchoven had argued,

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13 ‘Impetratio est actio abosluta, applicatio vero est conditionata. Quamvis igitur ad hanc illa tendit, atque adeo quodammodo haec illius dici possit finis, proprie tamen finis non est, cum impetratio per se absque ulla applicatione, fit integra, completa, et perfecta: ita ut omnibus potuisset impetrari redemptio et nullis tamen applicari.’ Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, p.2.

14 For the exegetical arguments, see below in the section 3.3, p.116ff.
because this would mean God achieving salvation for himself. The end of impetration must be for our good. So, Ames wrote: ‘if [the impetration was performed] as ours, then [it was performed] so that it would be communicated to us and received by us, which is the application and the fruition because of which it is already performed.’ Secondly, Ames reminded his readers of the mediatory nature of Christ’s work: his death was meant to mediate between God and humanity. The office of Christ as the mediator, then, cannot be performed unless his work ‘in some way is extended to humanity itself’ (aliquot modo ad hominem ipsum pertingat), that is, by being applied to them. Thirdly, Ames paid attention to the idea of ransom, which Christ had paid by his death for many, according to Matthew 20:28. Who would ever pay a ransom without knowing if the captives are really liberated or not? That ransom payment is made only when what is paid for is clearly laid out in the stipulation. After all, if God handed his own Son over to death without knowing if some people would be saved through it, or if any good would be brought about to humanity, then Christ’s death would be like a ‘die cast’ (alea iacta).

Moreover, Ames continued to argue that the Remonstrant teaching of separation between impetration and application not only contradicts the basic idea of salvation but also Arminius’s teaching – a common tactic used by Ames throughout his debate with Grevinchoven. In his oration on the priesthood of Christ, Arminius had explained the significance of Christ’s work of redemption by referring to Isaiah 53:10: ‘God “promised” that if Christ performed the work

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15 ‘si ut nostrum, tum ut nobis communicetur, et a nobis percipiatur, quod est applicatio et fruitio de qua iam agitur.’ Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, p.4.
of redemption, “he should see a seed whose days be prolonged”.\textsuperscript{16} Now Ames was quick to point out that the ‘seed whose days be prolonged’, promised to Christ, indeed refers to the many sons and daughters who are to be acquired and saved through Christ’s work of redemption. Thus, Ames concluded:

Christ, giving himself to death on account of that covenant in order that he could fulfil this condition, was dying with that proper end that the prolonged seed would be present to him through their liberation and eternal salvation. And his death was the proper means of this end. Then, by the virtue of this covenant and promise, it was necessary that, paying the agreed price, Christ would have the blessed seed: therefore, it was impossible that the impetrated redemption would not be applied to anybody.\textsuperscript{17}

In addition, Ames went on to highlight Arminius’s ordering of the decree of election, where Arminius clearly had application in view as the purpose of redemption in the first decree:

\begin{quote}
by which he [God] decreed to appoint his Son Jesus Christ for a Mediator, Redeemer, Saviour, Priest and King, who might destroy sin by his own death, might by his obedience obtain the salvation which had been lost, and might communicate it by his own virtue.\textsuperscript{18}
\end{quote}

‘Communication or application’ mentioned in this decree, Ames immediately commented, ‘is the end of impetration’. This makes it clear that Grevinchoven’s position contradicts with his master’s on this point.

After dealing with the separation between impetration and application in general, Ames took his argument one step further by paying attention

\textsuperscript{17} Christus igitur morti sese ex isthoc pacto dedens, ut conditionem hanc implere possit, eo fine proprie moriebatur; ut semen longaeum sibi comparet, per eorum liberationem et salutem aeternam. Et huius finis mors eius medium fuit proprium. Deinde huius foederis et promissionis vi, necesse fuit, ut Christus pretium solvens constitutum semen habeat benedictum: non potuit igitur impetrata redemptio non aliquibus etiam applicari. Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, p.6.
\textsuperscript{18} Arminius, Declaration of Sentiments, pp.653-54. (Emphasis added.)
specifically to the distinction between *absolute* impetration and *conditional* application. Ames assumed that application is called conditional here ‘because it is not carried out by God alone without any human intervening action’, while impetration is called absolute ‘because only God carries it out without any human intervening action or without any divinely prescribed human performance’.\(^{19}\) Ames then tried to demonstrate that this distinction between absolute and conditional is illusory by asking precisely in what way impetration is truly absolute. Suppose this distinction between absolute and conditional is true and applied to Christ’s earthly life: then it would surely be classified as conditional, because Christ’s life involved many human actions, such as Mary’s conception, Judas’s betrayal, crucifixion by the hand of Pontius Pilate etc. So, according to this classification, Christ’s death is ‘contingent, uncertain, and doubtful’.\(^{20}\) Therefore, Ames concluded, ‘the conditional action [of Christ’s life according to Grevinchoven’s terms] would be an empty name, and moreover nothing’.\(^{21}\)

In *Collatio* (1615), the record of the exchange between the Remonstrants and the Reformed orthodox in the Hague Conference (1611), the issue of the relationship between impetration and application was not as prominent as in Ames’s debate with Grevinchoven. There, the Reformed Orthodox used the close link between impetration and application to support their case but did not go so

\(^{19}\) ‘Conditionatam hanc appellat quoniam non exercetur a Deo nisi interveniente aliqua actione humana: illam absolutam quia Deus solus exercet eam nulla interveniente actione, aut functione humana divinitus praescripta.’ Ames, *Rescriptio Scholastica*, p.7.


\(^{21}\) ‘Actio igitur conditionata, inane nomen est, praeterea nihil.’ Ames, *Rescriptio Scholastica*, p.8
far as to attack their opponents’ position. For example, one of their arguments for their thesis is as follows:

For those for whom Christ died, those he loved supremely. .. but Christ does not love every single person supremely because whomsoever he supremely loves, he not only obtains for them, but also applies the salvation in fact. Whence it follows that he did not die for every single person in order to acquire reconciliation with God in fact for them.22

In response to this, the Remonstrants set out an argument based on their teaching of twofold love.23 Divine love toward humanity is twofold: the one kind precedes our conversion and faith, but the other is subsequent to it. They explained:

Scripture speaks about the twofold love of God and our Lord Jesus Christ for us. Namely, there is one which precedes our conversion, faith, and love for God, and which was shown to us when we were still his enemies. There is another subsequent one, which is shown to us by God and Christ, after we were converted and love him. 24

The Remonstrants continued to argue that the extent of each love is different: the former love is for all humanity while the extent of the latter is restricted to the faithful. On the nature of the difference between two kinds of love, the Remonstrants went on to state that it lies not in quality but in degree: ‘the

22 ‘Pro quibus Christus mortuus est, illos summe dilexit. … Atqui Christus non amat singulos homines summe, quoniam quoscunque ille summe amat, ilis non solum meretur, sed et applicat salutem reipsa. Unde sequitur, illum pro singulis hominibus non esse mortuum, ut ilis reipsa reconciliationem cum Deo impetraret.’ Collatio, pp.133-34.
23 William den Boer noted that this is an adoption of Arminius’s terminology but the meaning of the concept is changed in order to suit their case on this point: ‘just because the Remonstrants use the same terms as Arminius does not guarantee that they also took over the underlying concepts.’ William den Boer, God’s Twofold Love: The Theology of Jacob Arminius (1559-1609), trans. Albert Gootijes (Göttingen:Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010), p.234.
24 ‘Scriptura loquitur de duplici Dei et Domini nostri Iesu Christi erga nos dilectione, nempe altera, quae nostram conversionem, fidem, et dileccionem erga Deum praecedit, et nobis exhibita est, cum adhuc esses inimici: altera subsequente, quae nobis a Deo et Christo exhibetur, postquam conversi sumus, et eum diligimus.’ Collatio, p.193.
second love is nothing other than the continuation of the first one and its extension through new benefits for those who believe.\textsuperscript{25}

The debate on this issue of the relationship between impetraction and application at the Hague Conference (1611) did not go further. However, Ames attempted to ‘finish off’ the debate at the Hague Conference in his \textit{Coronis} (1618). For Ames, the real problem of this teaching lies not in the different kinds of love themselves but in the separate intentions perceived behind them:

that impetraction, which is separated from the intention and purpose of application, can indeed hardly sustain the name of love. For one does not love, unless that person wills to apply the good for somebody. For loving is wishing good things for somebody and granting for them.\textsuperscript{26}

It is clear that Ames is using exactly the same logical argument which he used in his debate with Grevinchoven and applying it to attack the Remonstrant teaching of twofold love. The basic logic is that love is all about giving and applying the good things for the loved ones. Therefore, any kind of love, which does not pertain to the application of the good, is not love in reality. Without doubt, Ames was able to perceive the significance of the Arminians’ separation of the divine intention from the application through his debate with Grevinchoven. The key concept behind Ames’s argument in \textit{Coronis} is again the same: the importance of equating the divine intention with the application. Ames was able to point out the problematic element beneath the surface of the Remonstrant teaching of twofold love, which might not have been so clear to the

\textsuperscript{25} ‘Cum enim secunda diection nihil aliud fit, quam prioris continuatio in iis, qui credunt, et eius ampliatio per nova beneficia’. \textit{Collatio}, p.194.

\textsuperscript{26} ‘impetratio illa quae ab applicationis intentione et proposito separatur, amoris nomen vix potest quidem sustinere. Non amat enim, nisi qui bonum vult alicui applicatum: amare enim \ldots est optare bona alcuic, et pro viribus conferre’. Ames, \textit{Coronis}, p.129.
eyes of the Reformed orthodox. Thus, in the more specific area of the
Remonstrant teaching of this separation between impetration and application,
Ames brought out the problematic implication. This was one of his major
contribution to the controversy on this topic.

3.2 Oblation and Intercession

A similar distinction over which Ames and Grevinchoven debated extensively
was the one between oblation and intercession. This corresponds closely to the
distinction between impetration and application, which was discussed in the
previous section, but the concepts of oblation and of intercession are derived
from the priestly work of Christ. So, this issue relates to how the priestly office
of Christ should be understood. For Grevinchoven, oblation and intercession are,
as with the relationship between impetration and application, separate acts of
Christ. Each of them has a different significance attached to it:

The first act was the voluntary oblation through slaying of his body and
shedding of his own blood in the altar of the cross, to which his death
followed. Therefore by his own death, he absolved this action – indeed as
I contend – absolved for the good of all and every human being by
acquiring the right of life which was lost through sin but was restored for
all and each one.27

The emphasis here is that this act of oblation has universal significance with
regard to the extent of it: it was for all and every human. This contrasted with
the act of intercession as Grevinchoven made clear:

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27 ‘Primus actus fuit oblatio voluntaria per mactationem corporis, et effusionem sanguinis sui in
ara crusis, quam mors insecuta est: hunc igitur actum absolvit morte sua, et, ut ego quidem
contendo, absolvit bono omnium et singulorum ommum, acqirendo ius vitae per peccatum
amissae omnibus ac singulis restituendae’. Grevinchoven, Dissertatio Theologica, pp.45-46.
Further, following this oblation of Christ, which was achieved on the earth, there is another act in heaven, which is called *intercession*. This is a constant, perpetual and uninterrupted action, whereby he sprinkles his blood to consciences of the faithful so that, being cleansed from dead works, they would serve the living God.\(^{28}\)

In contrast with the earthly act of oblation, this heavenly act of intercession is not for all humanity but only for the faithful. It was quite important for Grevinchoven to keep these concepts distinguished from each other. Otherwise, one is bound to ‘mix heaven with earth by mingling [heavenly] intercession with the oblation achieved in the cross, and what is more, impetration of reconciliation with application of what is obtained’.\(^{29}\)

For Ames, this distinction between oblation and intercession creates a similar error with the distinction between impetration and application: oblation and intercession are set as two separate acts in that ‘one of them deals with many with whom another does not’.\(^{30}\) For Ames, this contradicts the nature of Christ’s priesthood. Ames put forward a number of reasons for this assertion, largely based on exegetical grounds.

First, intercession, in its broader sense, includes oblation. Here Ames put the idea of intercession side by side with the idea of mediation in order to explain:

For, just as mediation, indeed by means of his death, Christ was laying himself in between (*interponebat*) the most righteous wrath of God and our guilt. On account of this, by his intercession or mediation, he is also

\(^{28}\) *Porro hanc Christi oblationem in terries peractam, exceptit altera in caelo, quae *intercessio* vocatur, constans actione perpetua atque non interrupta, qua sanguinem suum adspergit conscientiis fidelium, ut mundatae ab operibus mortuis serviant Deo vivo.* Grevinchoven, *Dissertatio Theologica*, p.46.

\(^{29}\) *caelum terrae misces, intercessionem confundendo cum oblatione in Cruce peracta, eoque et impetrationem reconciliationis cum applicatio eiusdem impetratae*. Grevinchoven, *Dissertatio*, p.48.

\(^{30}\) *Ita ut unus eorum ad multos pertineat, ad quos alter non pertinet.* Ames, *Rescriptio Scholastica*, p.31. (The page is mistakenly paginated as p.21.)
rightly called the intercessor just as the mediator, because his death was a means of interceding these extremes to reconciliation.\footnote{\textit{Sicut mediatio, moriendo namque Christus interponebat sese inter Dei iustissimam iram, nostrumque reatum, et ab hac sua intercessione vel mediatione, sicut mediator ita et intercessor recte dicitur, quia mors eius medium fuit inter haec extrema, ad reconciliationem intercedens.} Ames, \textit{Rescriptio Scholastica}, pp.31-32.}

Secondly, Ames argued that the distinction between intercession and oblation was not in terms of its essence but only in terms of sequence and degree. In the act of intercession, Christ is presenting himself before his Father so that, as a result, ‘oblation has eternal power and value’. This is clearly seen in Hebrews 9:12 where obtaining redemption is closely tied to entering the most holy place in heaven. Therefore, intercession and oblation are not to be distinguished from each other in essence.\footnote{Ames, \textit{Rescriptio Scholastica}, p.32.}

Thirdly, intercession in Ames’s understanding is nothing other than continuous oblation. This Ames tried to prove by making use of Grevinchoven’s own definition of intercession. Grevinchoven stated that intercession consists of the following two elements: sprinkling Christ’s blood on the consciences of the faithful and defence against Satan’s charge. With regard to the former, Ames pointed out that Grevinchoven departs from Arminius’s teaching. For Arminius clearly classified the sprinkling of Christ’s blood within the act of oblation rather than intercession.\footnote{Arminius divided the priestly actions of Christ into those of oblation and intercession. The former consists in the act of ‘the delivering of his own body unto death, and the shedding of his blood’ and in the act of ‘the presenting of himself, thus sprinkled with own blood, before the face of his Father in heaven ; and the offering of the same blood: To which we must add, the sprinkling of this blood on the consciences of believers’. \textit{The Works of James Arminius}, vol.II, pp.219-20. (Emphasis added.) Cited in Ames, \textit{Rescriptio Scholastica}, p.33.} With regard to the latter, the defence against Satan’s charge should be called continued oblation, ‘for, since Christ liberated us from the
power of Satan and future wrath through this [act of oblation], should we not say that through this we are even protected and saved from them?"³⁴

Forthly, Ames pointed out an inconsistency in Grevinchoven. On the one hand, the separation between oblation and intercession with different intension attached to each of them was the crucial part of Grevinchoven’s argument for universal redemption: oblation was intended for all humanity while intercession was only for the faithful. On the other hand, Grevinchoven stated that Christ made intercessory prayer for all the world ‘for whom he was propitiation’.³⁵ This assertion was based on John 17:21, where Jesus prays, ‘the world may believe that I am sent by you’, and on Luke 23:34, where Jesus prays for the forgiveness of those who crucified him. Apparently, there are two different kinds of intercession by Christ, one for the whole world and another only for the faithful. On this apparent inconsistency, Ames mocked Grevinchoven: ‘it ought to strike us under this new little distinction (distinctianculam) by which he teaches one part or form of intercession concerns all, and the other only the faithful, and so far I cannot foretell what kind [of intercession] there will be’.³⁶

The idea of Christ making different kinds of intercessory prayer was not in fact new on the part of the Remonstrants. At Hague Conference in 1611, the Remonstrant party had already made clear that Christ’s intercessory prayer was twofold: ‘one is universal, which is for the whole world, and the other is

³⁴ ‘Quum enim per eam liberavit nos Christus a potestate Diaboli et ira futura, non etiam per eam tueri nos, et servari ab ilis dicendus est?’ Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, p.33.
³⁵ Grevinchoven, Dissertatio Theologica, p.48; Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, p.33.
³⁶ ‘Sub distinctianculam novam cucat nobis oportet, qua partem, vel speciem intercessionis unam ad omnes pertinente doceat, et alteram ad solos fideles, quae quails fit futura non possum adhuc divinare.’ Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, p.33.
particular, which is only for the faithful’. For Ames, this twofold distinction did not stand because the Remonstrants did not clarify what exactly it is that Christ intercedes for all humanity and what Christ intercedes for the faithful alone. Just using words such as *simply, strictly, universally,* and *particularly* failed to resolve this question. Moreover, this distinction did not stand in light of Scripture. One of the passages, which Remonstrants used to show the universality of intercession, was Isaiah 53:12 where the servant made ‘intercession for the rebellious’ (*defectoribus*). By contrast, Ames argued that the reference to the rebellious in this verse should be to the same people described as ‘many’ in the previous verse, whom ‘my righteous servant will justify’; this ‘many’ should mean ‘the faithful’ according to Romans 3:26. Another passage, which the Remonstrants used as an example of Christ interceding for all humanity, was Jesus’s prayer to the Father on the cross in Luke 23:34: ‘forgive them’. Here Ames briefly commented that Jesus did not pray for all humanity but only for those who were crucifying him and sinning because of their ignorance. He confirmed this by citing Acts 3:17 where Peter urged repentance to his audience because they ‘acted in ignorance’.

The stark contrast between Ames and the Remonstrants on their understanding of the nature of Christ’s priesthood became more apparent when the Remonstrants treated oblation in isolation not only from intercession, but also from other priestly actions of Christ such as resurrection, ascension (ascending to the heaven), and session (sitting at the right hand of the Father).

37 ‘alteram universalem, quae est totius mundi, alteram particularem, quae est tantum fideliem.’ *Collatio,* p.198.
38 *Collatio,* pp.188-89; Ames, *Coronis,* p.136.
Responding to the charge that believers cannot find consolation in Christ’s death for all humanity, the Remonstrants argued that their consolation is ‘firm enough’, because their consolation ‘does not rest on Christ’s death alone, but also his resurrection and intercession, which pertain only to the faithful’. This is based on the assumption that, while Christ’s death was intended for all humanity, his resurrection and intercession was intended only for the faithful.

The Remonstrants’ position provoked a series of responses from Ames. First, he put forward an argument based on Romans 8:33-34:

> It is clear that Christ’s death, resurrection, session, and intercession (interpellatio) is joined together by the Apostle in Romans 8:34 and connected even with the election as in verse 33 as it says ‘who will bring any charges against those chosen by God?’

In the context of the passage in Romans, Paul is repeating the rhetorical question in order to assure Christian readers of their own salvation. Ames suggested a connection between the idea of election in verse 33 and Christ’s priestly work of his death, resurrection, session and intercession mentioned in verse 34: Christ performed these works as priest only for the elect.

Secondly, Ames argued against the Remonstrants by examining the consequence of the Remonstrant position: if ‘Christ sacrificed himself on the

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40 Quia consolatio fidelium non nititur sola morte Christi, sed et eius resurrectione, ac intercessione, quae pertinent ad solos fideles.’ Ames, Coronis, p.119; Collatio, p.188-89.

41 ‘Mortem, Resurrectionem, Sessionem ad dextram Dei, et Interpellationem,coniungi ab Apostolo, Rom. 8.34. et cum electione connecti etiam, ut ex vers.33. manifestum est, quis intendabit crimin adversus electos Dei?, Ames, Coronis, p.120.

42 Exactly the same argument appears as one of the potential objections in John Davenant’s dissertation against his thesis of universal remedy of Christ’s death, which is applicable to all by the ordination of God. Davenant answered this objection by drawing a line between his position and the Remonstrant position: ‘we do not contend that the death of Christ was, from the ordination of God, so applicable to each and every man, that on account of this propitiatory sacrifice, all men are at once placed in a state of grace and salvation’. John Davenant, A Dissertation on The Death of Christ, pp.372-74. For a discussion of Davenant’s ‘hypothetical universalism’, see below.
earth for some people, for whom he did not present himself before the face of the Father in heaven, ... then, some of them are still within their sins’. Here, Ames is equating this group of people, for whom Christ does not intercede in heaven, with those who deny the resurrection of Christ, which Paul described in I Cor 15:17.

From the exchange described above, it is clear that the difference between Ames and his opponents comes down to a different understanding of the nature of Christ’s priesthood. Whereas the Remonstrants understood the death of Christ in separation from other acts (resurrection, ascension, and intercession) in their attempt to preserve the universal significance in Christ’s death, Ames understood all these acts as a unified, integrated work of redemption, intended for the elect. Ames reiterated his point by referring to Hebrew 9:12 again, according to which ‘redemption itself is not obtained completely, unless our high priest entered the heavenly sanctuary with his own blood’. Therefore, Ames concluded that the Remonstrant insistence on a separation between oblation and intercession does not stand in light of the nature of Christ’s priesthood described in Scripture.

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43 ‘Pro quibusdam obtulit se in terris, pro quibus non præsentavit sese coram vultu Patris in caelo ... Tum quidam eorum sunt penitus, et omni modo in suis peccatis.’
44 ‘redemptionem ipsam non obtineri complete, nisi per ingressum Pontificis nostril summi, in sanctuarium caeleste cum sanguine suo’. Ames, *Coronis*, p.120.
3.3 Exegetical Considerations

The case for definite atonement has often been criticized as depending on logic alone, and not being grounded in Scripture.\(^{45}\) It is already apparent, however, that the exegesis of Scripture had a prominent role in discussion of the extent of atonement. Tension seems to exist between some passages, which suggest that the work of redemption is for a particular group of people, and other passages, which suggest the idea of universal redemption. Therefore, this section will focus on how these two kinds of passages are interpreted and used by both camps in the debate. John 17 is taken up first, independently, due to its prominent place in the debate; then a selection of ‘particular’ passages; finally, ‘universal’ passages are discussed.

3.3.1 John 17

John 17 records Jesus’s prayer not for the world but for those the Father has given him (v.9) and for those who will believe in him through their message (v.20). Because of its prominent role in understanding the precise nature of Christ’s priesthood and his intercessory prayer, this passage drew a lot of attention during the debate.

In the Hague Conference (1611), the Reformed orthodox argued, based on these passages in John 17, that Christ’s work of reconciliation was not intended

\(^{45}\) For example, R.T. Kendall argues that this doctrine is undoubtedly arrived by the logic alone and wonders ‘how many Christians would ever come to the view of limited atonement merely by reading the Bible’ R.T. Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649*, p.x. For other examples, see David Gibson and Joanthan Gibson, ‘Sacred Theology and the Reading of the Divine Word: Mapping the Doctrine of Definite Atonement’ in *From Heaven He Came and Sought Her: Definite Atonement in Historical, Biblical, Theological, and Pastoral Perspective* ed. David Gibson and Joanthan Gibson (Wheaton: Crossway, 2013), pp.30-31.
for all because ‘Christ was not intercessor of all and each’. However, as shown in the previous section, the Remonstrants argued that Christ’s intercessory prayer was twofold: prayer for all humanity and prayer for the faithful. The Remonstrants applied this principle also to John 17. When Jesus prayed, ‘protect them in your name so that they might be one’ and ‘protect them from evil’, Jesus was making intercession only for the faithful. But when Jesus prayed that they may all be one so that the world may believe that he is sent by the Father (John 17:21), Jesus was praying for all humanity.

After quickly dismissing this distinction between Christ’s prayer for all and Christ’s prayer only for the faithful (as shown in the previous section), Ames argued for a basic unity in Christ’s prayers recorded in John 17. For what Jesus prayed for the faithful – such as being protected in the name of the Father, being one, and being protected from the evil – are very fruits of believing, which Jesus prayed for all humanity. It is through faith that these fruits are produced. Ames emphasized the essential continuity of these two kinds of prayer when he stated, ‘indeed, he who truly and sincerely prays for faith, prays also for the fruits and effects of faith.’

Interestingly, the Remonstrants cited Musculus to support their argument, pointing out that this German Reformed theologian of the previous century, along with others, had anticipated with the Remonstrant: ‘foreseeing unbelief of

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46 For the orthodox argument and the Remonstrant counter-argument, see Collatio, pp.134-35, pp.198-99.
47 ‘Qui vero pro fide vere ac syncere orat, pro fidei fructibus et effectis etiam orat.’ Ames, Coronis, p.137. Although Ames does refute the distinction between different prayers he seems to concede that Christ did offer his intercession for all. However, he adds an important qualification, ‘if what they themselves tell would be true’ (si verum fit, quod isti narrant). This shows that Ames is only assuming that Christ did offer his intercession for all in John 17:21, without necessarily agreeing with that interpretation.
the world, Jesus did not pray for the world’. However, Ames was ready to provide Musculus’s actual comment on this chapter to support his own case against the Remonstrants:

by praying, Christ distinguishes between the elect and the reprobate, and not only just prays for the elect and does not pray for the reprobate, but also explicitly proclaims that he prays for the elect and does not pray for the world. He further calls those, who are given to him by the Father, his own and addresses the world as the reprobate and the unbelieving, who are not given to him by the Father. 49

Ames underlined his point by citing Musculus’s comment in full: the Remonstrant reading that there are two kinds of intercession could not stand.

3.3.2 Particularistic passages

In Scripture, particularly in the New Testament, there are a series of passages where the redemptive work of Christ has only particular reference, such as ‘for many’, ‘for his own sheep’, and ‘for the church’. 50 They all suggest that Jesus died for a particular group of people, i.e. the elect. The Remonstrants had to explain how these passages can be interpreted in a way that supported their position of universal redemption. Their common approach to this problem was, as Ames reported, that these passages ‘should be understood as his participation

48 ‘Quando Musculus, Aretius, et Gualterus hoc loco indicat, quod Christus ex praevisione infidelitatis mundi pro mundo non rogavit, suffragantur nostrae expositioni.’ The Remonstrants did not make clear how exactly this comment ‘agrees with their exposition’. They went on to use the same syllogism by reversing it to suit their case. They set out syllogism as follows: ‘for those Christ prayed, for them Christ died. And in verse 21 [of John 17] he prayed even for the world. Therefore, he died also for the world.’ Collatio, p.198.

49 ‘Christum orando, inter electos, et reprobos discriminare, et non solum pro electis orare, pro mundo non orare, sed et expresse pronunciare, pro illis orare se, pro mundo non orare, suos etiam vocare, a Patre sibi datos: mundum appellare reprobos, incredulos a Patre sibi non datos.’ Wolfgang Musculus, Commentarium in Evangelistam Ioannem Heptas Tertia & Postrema (1548), p.393. Cited in Ames, Coronis, p.138.

The meaning of these words are explained in the following statement: ‘all these places [of particularistic passages] cannot be understood as impetration, which is for all, but as real fruition (fruitio), which concerns only the faithful.’ Based on the Remonstrants’ understanding of the separation between impetration and application (as discussed above), these passages should be taken to refer to application rather than impetration.

Ames responded and denied this approach by paying attention to the subject of these actions:

If indeed they understand [this] as the actual fruition and application with regard to the faithful, what they assume is very mistaken. For fruition of Christ is our action. But these phrases, laying his life for his sheep, handing over himself for the church, redeeming the church, etc. are properly actions of Christ, so outside of ourselves as completed without us.

The action described in these passages cannot refer to the application simply because they are not our actions but Christ’s.

Another objection Remonstrants made against a straightforward reading of these particular passages was that the word ‘only’ is not found in these passages. When Scripture states that Christ dies ‘for many’ or ‘for his own sheep’, it does not necessarily mean that it was for them only. When the Apostle Paul testified that Christ died ‘for me’, did he mean that Christ did not die for anyone else?

Ames responded to this objection with a clear explanation:

51 ‘participatio tum eius, vel fruitio, intelligi debet.’ Ames, Coronis, p.100.
52 ‘Omnia hac loca intelligi posse non de impetratione, qua pro omnibus fit, sed de reali fruitione, qua solis fidelibus contingit.’ Ames, Coronis, p.104.
53 ‘Si vero actualem intelligent fruitionem et applicationem ad actu fideles, falsissimum est quod assumunt. Fruitione enim Christi est actio nostra: sed phrasis istae, ponendi animam pro ovibus, tradendi se pro ecclesia, redimendi ecclesiam, etc sunt Christi actiones proprie, tam extra nos, quam sine nobis perfectae.’ Ames, Coronis, p.104.
Regarding the exclusive term, *only*, I say, when difference and disjunction is held in some term, then the meaning of exclusion or restriction is no less clear than when this mark is designated. Thus, when the highest blessing is promised to the seed of Abraham, the word ‘only’ was not added but it was referred no less to the descendant of Abraham only, as it is taken by the Apostles in Romans 4 and Galatians 3, than when this word were attached with emphasis’. 54

As for the Remonstrants’ example of Christ dying for the apostle Paul, this example simply does not fit for their argument. Here Paul should be considered ‘primarily’ as the elect. Therefore, it is not that Christ died ‘only for Paul, but only for the elect’.

The third objection of the Remonstrants interestingly reveals their different understanding of the order of the divine decree of election. Their argument runs as follows:

If Christ died for his own sheep and for his own church etc. as such, then someone was Christ’s sheep and from his church earlier (in terms of its order) than Christ died for him and before Christ obtained that person with his own blood. This is absurd and false.55

However, this argument did not have any force without a shared assumption about the order of the divine decree. For the Reformed orthodox like Ames, for whom the decree of predestination is prior to the decree of redemption, there is nothing absurd or false to affirm that someone is a sheep of Christ (in terms of the order of divine decree) ‘before’ Christ died for him. Ames continued:

54 ‘Quod vero ad exclusivam illam voculam, *sols*, dico, cum differentia et disiunctio continetur in aliquo termino, tunc exclusio, vel restrictio, non minus est manifesta, quam si hac nota designaretur. Sic benedictio summa promittitur Abrahami semini, non additur *sols*, sed non minus ad solos Abrahae filios ab Apostolo refertur, Rom.4. Gal.3. quam si haec vocula cum emphasi fuisset adiecta.’ Ames, *Coronis*, p.105.

55 ‘Si Christus pro suis ovibus, pro sua ecclesia, etc. qua talibus, est mortuus, ergo alquis fuerit prius ordine ovis Christi, et de eius Ecclesia, quam Christus pro eo mortuus est, et priusquam Christus illum sanguine suo obtinuit: quod est absurdum et falsum.’ Ames, *Coronis*, pp.106-7: *Collatio*, pp.182-83.
For those sheep were given to Christ first, before they were in the hands of Christ (John 17:24) and before he was intercessor for them (John 17:7). Moreover, both the salvation of all (which is prepared in Christ for them), and the mission of Christ himself, have their fountain and origin in that giving of the Father. This is his will who sent me, that is, of the Father, that whoever he has given me, I shall lose none from it but raise that person in that last day.56

Therefore, the act of giving, the very thing which is called ‘predestination’ by the Apostle in Ephesians 1:5, logically precedes the mission of Christ as the redeemer. The arguments of Ames and the Remonstrants here reveal how their views about the order of decree affected their respective views on the extent of atonement and on how they approached relevant passages in Scripture. On the one hand, the Remonstrant position, which set Christ’s work of redemption prior to the application of the redemption, led them to prioritize universalistic passages over particularistic ones. On the other hand, the Reformed orthodox (including Ames) understood the decree to choose some people into salvation prior to the decree of the redemption, and so had no problem with a straightforward reading of these particularistic passages. It was rather a series of universalistic passages which posed an important exegetical question for Ames. To this we now turn.

3.3.3 Universalistic passages

Another group of passages seem to suggest that the work of redemption is intended for the whole world. The starting point from which Ames approached

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these passages was that ‘the world’ should not be interpreted literally as all humanity, but as all kinds of people. The classic expression of this approach was shown by Ambrosiaster, cited by Ames in his debate with Grevinchoven. Ambrosiaster commented: ‘In the elect and foreknown, distinguished from the generality of all, a certain special universality is understood, so that the whole world seems to be delivered from the whole world, and all people redeemed from all people.’

One of the most important passage which Remonstrants used to argue for the universality of the extent of atonement is John 3:16. Ames understood this classic passage to mean simply that ‘God, from his will for our salvation, sent his Son who would make us saved’. It is important to notice here that Ames replaces the concept of divine love with divine will: these two things are in effect synonyms for him. Grevinchoven attacked him on precisely this point. For Grevinchoven understood ‘that affection is something other than the final will of applying salvation’. In other words, the love by which God loved the world is distinct from and prior to the will by which God saved those who believe in his Son. These are the assumptions by which Grevinchoven read John 3:16 as supporting his argument for universal atonement. He listed two reasons for this distinction between God’s love and God’s will:

57 ‘In electis, et praescitis, et ab omni generalitate discretise, specialis quaedam censetur universitas, ut de toto mundo tothus mundus liberatus, et de omnibus hominibus omnes homines videantur redempti.’ De Vocatione Gentium, Liber Primus, Caput III. Cited in Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, pp.42-43. For Ames’s detailed argument on how the word ‘world’ can be taken as the elect in Scripture and particularly in John, see Ames, Coronis, pp.145-56.

58 ‘Deum nempe ex voluntate salutis nostrae mississe filium, qui salvos nos faceret.’ Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, p.10.

1. God wills and decides from his affection of justice at one time and of mercy at another.

2. The affection is prior to the will and the decree in terms of the order of nature, just as it is natural to God. However, the will, that is, the act of willing *ad extra* (for this is what we mean by the word, will) is free. Therefore, the will comes after the affection. For what is necessary and natural in God comes prior to that which is voluntary and free, etc.\(^{60}\)

For Grevinchoven, divine love and will belong to different categories within the divine attributes: while love is classified as a natural and necessary attribute, the will is classified as free.

However, from Ames's perspective, Grevinchoven was deviating from the well-established teaching of the Western tradition. For Thomas Aquinas had argued that the emotions such as joy and love, whether they are attributed to God or the angels or humanity, 'signify simple acts of the will which have the similar effects but without emotion'.\(^{61}\) Aquinas supported this by citing Augustine, where Augustine made the case that the angels' actions of punishment or help are not accompanied by emotions.\(^{62}\) Ames cited historical precedent here to show that Grevinchoven's position deviates from the Western tradition of Aquinas and Augustine. Therefore, Ames concluded that it is legitimate and justified to paraphrase the concept of divine love with the divine will to save in John 3:16.

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\(^{60}\) '1. quia Deu ex affectu modo Iustitiae modo misericordiae etc. Vult ac decernit. 2. Affectus naturae ordine prior est voluntate et decreto, utpote Deo naturalis: voluntas autem, h.e. actus volendi ad extra (hanc enim voluntatis nomine significamus) liber est: posterior igitur affectu: quod enim in Deo est necessarium ac naturale, id prius est eo quod voluntarium, Liberum etc.' Grevinchoven, *Dissertatio Theologica*, p.20.


A similar issue of the relationship between the affection and the will can be found in the discussion of another classic passage, I Timothy 2:4, where God ‘wants all people to be saved and come to knowledge of truth’. Here the Remonstrants developed their argument further by making a distinction between ‘the desire of salvation’ and ‘the will of redemption’. The former they called ‘incomplete’ because it is ‘antecedent’ to the redemptive work of Christ. The latter they called ‘full’ because it is ‘consequent’ to the redemptive work. By this will of redemption, ‘God, already having achieved reconciliation, wants to save all if they believe, repent and show their due obedience.’ It is the latter, this will of redemption, which is expressed in I Timothy 2:4.

However, Ames pointed to the conditionality of the will of redemption, which the Remonstrants emphasized and contrasted with the desire of salvation, and asked where the idea of conditionality is expressed in I Timothy 2:4.

However, *full* will, which the Remonstrants set up, about the salvation of all and each humanity, is merely *conditional* and it is not that [will], which is expressed in the text, by which God is said to will absolutely that people come to know the truth. For these words, ‘God wants all to come to know the truth’, cannot be taken as such that they express the same as ‘God wants to save all, if they will come to know the truth’.

Thus, the meaning of the text should be rather taken as the salvation of a particular group of people. Namely, ‘God wants to save some from all kinds and

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63 *Plenaria autem voluntas, quam Remonstr. statuunt, de omnium et singulorum salute, est conditionalis tantum, atque adeo non est illa, de qua agitur in textu, qua Deus absolute dicitur velle homines ad agnitionem veritatis pervenire. Non possunt enim haec verba, *Deus vult omnes ad agnitionem veritatis venire*, sic accipi, ut idem sonent cum ipsis: *Deus vult omnes salvare, si ad agnitionem veritatis pervenire velit.*’ Ames, Anti-Synodalia Scripta, p.165.
classes of people: and he also wills that prayers and all the other means would be directed to that end.'

Another important passage, which the Remonstrants used to support their case for universal extent of atonement, was I John 2:2. This text states that Christ's propitiation is 'not only for us but also for sins of the whole world'. Given the mention of 'the whole world', not just 'for the world' in this text, the Remonstrants insisted that this text supports their case for universal redemption. Against this objection, Ames was ready to cite I John 5:19 and Revelation 12:9, where the whole world is intended to mean the 'more evil' part of the world which is controlled by the devil. Therefore, it is clear why the same phrase could be applied to the better part of the world, as in the case of Colossians 1:6 where the gospel is said to be bearing fruits throughout 'the whole world'.

The identity of the original recipient of I John also became a prominent issue because the Reformed orthodox took the word ‘us’ in I John 2:2 as Jewish audience of this letter and ‘the whole world’ as the gentiles. Against this reading, the Remonstrants argued that the exact identification of this letter's recipients is rather uncertain. Augustine, for example, thought that this letter was sent to Parthia and the others thought that it was a catholic epistle, written to all the faithful. However, Ames argued that the case for a Jewish audience can still be maintained because Acts 2:5, 9 identifies Parthians as Jews, and in the case of letters of James and Peter, other ‘catholic’ epistles, the Jewish nature of their...

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64 ‘Deum scil. ex omni genere et ordine hominum velle aliquos servare: atque adeo velle etiam ut precaces et omnia media salutis ad illum finem dirigantur.’ Ames, Anti-Synodalia Scripta, p.165.
65 Ames, Coronis, p.156.
audience is clear. Furthermore, Ames cited Cyril of Alexandria as an example of this reading. Cyril was clear: ‘in order not to be taken as teaching that Christ is propitiation for Jews only, because John was a Jew when he said that he is propitiation for our sins, he added, for the sins of the whole world, so that it means gentiles’.66

This survey of exegetical discussion on this issue amply shows that the case for the definite atonement in the debate leading up to the Synod was not based on logic alone, as has often been claimed. Rather, careful exegesis played an important part in the debate leading up to the Synod and this is another area in which Ames played no small part.

3.4 Sufficient for All, Efficient for the Elect

So far, the discussion in the sections above has not touched on the key distinction between sufficiency and efficiency: the classic distinction introduced first by Peter Lombard for summarizing the doctrine of atonement in his Sentences. He stated that Christ offered himself on the cross ‘for all with regard to the sufficiency of the price, but only for the elect with regard to its efficacy, because he brought about salvation only for the predestined.’67 In this section, consideration is given to various attitudes toward this distinction – in the

66 ‘Johannes, ... quia natione Iudaeus erat, ne existimaretur docuisse, pro Iudaeis tantum Christum propitiationem esse quando dixit, est propitiatio propeccatis nostris, adiecit, pro totius etiam mundi peccatis, ut etiam Gentes significaret.’ Cited in Ames, Coronis, p.161. Direct source of this Latin translation could not be identified but the original source is from Cyril’s Commentary on John, Book XI, Chapter VIII, commenting on John 17:9-11. Cyril proposed this as a solution when he dealt with the possible inconcictency between Jesus’s prayer in John 17:9 and I John 2:2.

Reformed tradition in general and on Ames’s position in particular – because of the important role it had in discussion at the Synod of Dort and subsequent developments.68

Among the range of attitudes of Reformed theologians, Theodore Beza represents what might be called the strict position: basically he rejected this distinction. In his response to his Lutheran opponent, Jacob Andreae, who introduced the concept of sufficiency in his argument against the Reformed doctrine of atonement, Beza rejected this distinction all together and argued that it should be abandoned. Although Beza conceded that the Lombardian formula could be acceptable if rightly understood, he felt that the distinction should be abandoned due to its ambiguity, for the sake of theological clarity. Beza ‘felt that the particularity of God’s saving intention in Christ could be better stated without this distinction’.69

In contrast, Abraham Musculus (1534-1591), a prominent minister in Bern and a son of Wolfgang Musculus (1497-1563), represents a moderate view in terms of his favourable attitude toward this distinction. Indeed, he repeatedly appealed to the distinction between sufficiency and efficiency when accusing his opponent Huberus of following Andreae and defending himself from the charge

68 Aaron C. Denlinger argued that the use of qualifying adjectives such as ‘moderate’, ‘liberal’ and ‘rigid’ for explaining the variety of positions represented within a tradition is unhelpful (not to mention ‘Calvinist’ and ‘Arminian’) because ‘they almost invariably function to name the historical interpreter’s theological opinions rather than his or her subject’s views’. Instead of using a ‘line’ or ‘spectrum’ of opinions, he suggested to use ‘map’ of opinions to reflect more dimensional aspect of theological opinions. However, the use of spectrum of opinions should have a place here as long as it is recognized as one approach among others and qualifying adjectives can be used in order to locate Ames’s position on the spectrum. See Aaron C. Denlinger, ‘Scottish Hypothetical Universalism: Robert Baron (c.1596-1639) on God’s Love and Christ’s Death for All’ in Aaron C. Denlinger ed, Reformed Orthodoxy in Scotland: Essays on Scottish Theology, 1560-1775 (London: Bloomsbury; 2016), pp.99-101.

that he himself followed the strict position of Beza. When appealing to the
distinction between sufficiency and efficiency, Musculus even claimed that his
position represented the universal consensus of the Reformed churches. So,
although Musculus and Beza both accused Andrae and Huberus, a significant
difference between them existed regarding their attitude toward the
Lombardian distinction.\(^{70}\)

It was interestingly Musculus’s position, rather than the strict position of
Beza, which was favoured and used by the delegates present at the Hague
Conference in 1611. In particular, they used this distinction when commenting
on the Remonstrant thesis that Christ died for all the people without exception:
‘gladly we acknowledge that the passion and death of Christ was of such dignity
and value that its nature was sufficient to expiate all and each sinner’. As a basic
principle, the value of Christ’s death should be considered twofold:

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\text{either as the sufficient value and merit for taking away the sins of all the}
\text{people whereby that value is offered to the people as a whole; or as the}
\text{efficacious value of thing itself, by which he actually acquired the}
\text{forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God for his people and}
\text{restored them to the state of grace. In the prior sense, it is true that}
\text{Christ died for all. In the latter sense, Scripture teaches that Christ died}
\text{for many...}\]^{71}

In these places, the difference between sufficiency and efficiency is explained by
the terms such as ‘the value’, ‘the thing itself’ and ‘actually’. However, it is


\(^{71}\) ‘vel uti virtus et meritum sufficiens ad tollenda omnium hominum peccata, quare et illa
communiter hominibus proponitur: vel ut virtus reipsa efficax, qua ille hominibus
remissionem peccatorum, et reconciliationem cum Deo actu impetravit, et eos in statum
gratiae restituit. Priore sensu verum est illum pro omnibus mortuvm esse: altero sensu docet
Scriptura illum mortuum esse pro multis, ...’ Ames, Collatio, p.131.
important to note that these explanations fall short of a clear definition of these terms.

Robert Godfrey's assessment of Ames's position in his anti-Arminian polemical writings, against this background, is that Ames was in line with Beza's strict position. Godfrey admits that Ames did not insist on abandoning the distinction as Beza had, and that Ames provided clarification of the Lombardian formula which 'Beza would have appreciated'.72 However, Godfrey's conclusion was that Ames's opinion 'paralleled' the strict position of Beza mainly because Ames did not use this distinction whenever he expressed his own position.73

The reason for Godfrey's assessment of Ames's position was largely negative: Ames did not use and even mention this formula in his debate with Grevinchoven in *De Arminii Sententia* and *Rescriptio Scholastica* and used that formula in *Coronis* 'only because that distinction had been so much use in *Collatio*.74 It is true that Ames did not use this distinction when debating with Grevinchoven. However, a close reading of the texts where Ames mentions this distinction in *Coronis* reveals that Ames was not simply reflecting the terminology used at the Hague Conference. Therefore, it is necessary to pay close attention to all the places where Ames used this distinction to determine his intention.

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72 Godfrey, 'Tensions within International Calvinism', p.121.
73 Godfrey, 'Tensions within International Calvinism', pp.118-22. Godfrey might have been influenced by James Ussher's negative comment on Ames. Although Ussher expressed his basic agreement with Ames in the idea of continuity between the impetration and the application, Ussher judged that Ames was 'inclined too much unto the other extremes' in the heat of his disputation with Grevinchoven. James Ussher 'An Answer of the Archbishop of Armagh, to Some Exceptions taken against his aforesaid Letter' in *Works* ed. Elrington (Dublin, 1864), Vol.12, p.564. See also Godfrey, 'Tensions within International Calvinism', pp.125-29.
74 Godfrey, 'Tensions within International Calvinism', p.121.
On a closer reading, in fact, Ames’s favourable attitude toward the use of the Lombardian distinction stands out from the outset. When making an initial comment on the Remonstrant thesis that Christ died for each and every person in terms of impetration, Ames wrote:

This [statement] can be and used to be accepted either as follows, so that it means the sufficient power and value of this death, namely, capable for saving each and every person. In this sense, it is acknowledged by us. Or as follows, so that his action signifies some efficiency concerning each and every person indiscriminately, partly caused by the death of Christ and partly causing the death of Christ itself, in this way the Remonstrants here understand and oppose us.\(^75\)

It is notable that Ames is not using the classic distinction in order to reflect the Reformed orthodox argument in *Collatio*. Rather, Ames is constructing his own response to the Remonstrant thesis in the context of explaining *Status Quaestionis*. So, it cannot be maintained (as Godfrey argued) that Ames used the formula simply because it was used in *Collatio*.

In another place, the Reformed orthodox are accused of being contradictory by the Remonstrants because the Reformed orthodox stated that ‘Christ died for all’ on one hand and yet on the other hand ‘it was not the Father’s will that Christ died for all’.\(^76\) In this case, it could be said that Ames was adopting the terminology which was used in the Hague Conference. There, the Reformed orthodox had argued that, in order to reflect both the particular and universal

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\(^75\) *Hoc vel sic accipi potest et solet, ut potentiam et valorem huius mortis designet, sufficientem scilicet et idoneam, omnibus et singulis hominibus salvandis: quo sensu a nostris agnoscitur. Vel sic, ut actum eiusmod notet et efficientiam aliquam ad omnes ac singulos indifferenter spectantem, partim ex morte Christi causatam, partim mortem ipsam causantem, id quod Remonstrantes hic intelligunt, et impugnant Nostr.* Ames, *Coronis*, p.87.

\(^76\) *Collatio*, pp.170-71. It is not clear where the Remonstrant took this statement since the Reformed argument did not actually mention the will of the Father in the particular section. It might be that the argument is from inference.
languages used in Scripture, the death of Christ should be considered in a twofold manner: ‘either as the sufficient power and merit for taking away sins of all the people … or as the efficacious power of this itself.’ Christ died for all humanity in the former sense but only for the elect in the latter sense. Ames defended their use of Lombardian distinction, insisting that ‘those statements can be explained easily so that no shade of contradiction would remain.’ His explanation was as follows:

The statement, *namely that Christ died for all*, is thus Christ died so that the worth or the value of his death in itself should be said as sufficient for all. Another statement, *it was not the wisdom of the Father that he died for all*, is, to maintain the terminology in their argument, [it was not the wisdom of the Father] so that Christ would have actually obtained forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God for every and each person and would restored them in the state of grace. Therefore, the contradiction is fictitious.

From this exchange, it becomes apparent that the sharp disagreement between the Remonstrants and the Reformed orthodox lies in their idea of sufficiency in relation to the divine will. While the Remonstrants required divine will behind the idea of sufficiency, for the Reformed orthodox it was the idea of efficiency which was tied to the will of the Father. This disagreement emerged again when the Remonstrants compared the God depicted by the Reformed to a physician who has sufficient means to cure the diseases of all the people, yet does not provide medication to all the people. So they concluded: ‘the statement

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77 ‘Virtus passionis Christi est dupliciter consideranda, vel uti virtus et meritum sufficiens ad tollenda omnum hominum peccata, … : vel ut virtus re ipsa efficae ...’. (Emphasis added.) Collatio, pp.130-31.

78 ‘Christum scilicet pro omnibus esse mortuum, hoc est, sic mortuum esse Christum, ut mortis eius dignitas et valor, sufficiens pro omnibus dicenda fit in sese: non fuisse consilium Patris ut pro omnibus moreretur; id est, ut argumenti verba retineam, ut hominibus omnibus ac singulis remissionem peccatorum, et reconciliationem cum Deo actu impetraret, et eos in statum gratie restitueret. Contradictio igitur est ficta.’ Ames, Coronis, p.98.
that the death of Christ is said to be sufficient for all, cannot be maintained
unless the will of the Father would have been that it is devoted to all'.\footnote{Non potest consistere ut Christi mors omnibus dicatur sufficiens, nisi voluntas Patris fuerit ut omnibus impenderetur.' Ames, \textit{Coronis}, p.98.} To this Ames briefly answered that the action of the physician would be both true and
just if the purpose of that medication is 'to urge and inflate some loved ones to
seek after and take that medicine and accept grace' provided 'he has just
reasons for not extending that medicine to each and every person'.\footnote{Ames, \textit{Coronis}, p.98.} The assumption was, of course, he had just reasons.

More importantly, Ames pointed out the most problematic aspect of the Remonstrant criticism: the supposed link between the sufficiency of Christ's
death and the will of the Father. In their view, the idea of sufficiency is pointless
unless it is rooted in the divine will to perform that power. For Ames, it is
indeed absurd to think that 'sufficiency of some money or medicine comes from
the will of delivering or of giving'. The reason for this is that 'sufficiency is the
intrinsic power and fitness of the matter and does not flow from extrinsic act of
ordinance or distribution'.\footnote{Absurdum esse affirmo, sufficientiam alicuius pretii, vel medicamenti, putare ex voluntate solventis, aut donantis. Sufficiencia enim est intrinseca potentia et aptitudo rei, non fluit ab extrinseco ordinantis vel dirigentis actu. Ames, \textit{Coronis}, p.99.} This 'extrinsic act of ordinance or distribution' is
certainly intended by the divine will and this belongs to the category of
efficiency, rather than sufficiency. It is in this clarification of terms that Ames's
contribution lies in the Arminian controversy, as far as the extent of atonement
is concerned.

Ames's argument in another place in \textit{Anti-Synodalia Scripta} reveals how
broadly Ames understood this distinction. Ames reported how the Reformed
were criticized for using the distinction between sufficiency and efficiency in a sense which had never been used before. Particularly with the idea of efficiency, the ancient doctors ‘want nothing other than [the meaning that] not all apply salvation acquired by Christ to themselves’.82 Ames responded:

It is manifestly false to say that this distinction, in our sense, has never been used before our age. For it is clear that Augustine and all the people who agree with him (who were certainly many before our age) constantly referred the reason why some people apply the redemption and salvation to themselves rather than others to hidden wisdom of divine will, not only to human freedom.83

Significantly, Ames is equating their use of distinction, particularly the use of the term efficiency, as broadly attributing the reason for the particular application of salvation to the hidden divine will as well as human freedom. The assumption behind this is that the divine intention is only restricted to the idea of efficiency while the idea of sufficiency refers to the intrinsic worth of the divine action of redemption without divine intention. In this sense, anybody who attributes the cause for the application of salvation to the divine will would certainly endorse the use of this distinction.

Ames’s description of his own position (which Robert Godfrey used to support his case that Ames is against this distinction) is as follows:

82 ‘nihil aliud volunt, quam non omnes sibi applicare salutem a Christo partam’. Ames, Anti-Synodalía Scripta, p.179. It is difficult to see that this criticism is aimed particularly at the idea of efficiency from Ames’s summary provided in Anti-Synodalía Scripta as he writes perhaps mistakenly about sufficiency. However, clearly the critique is aimed at the use and meaning of efficiency. See, Acta et Scripta Synodalía, p.347. This makes it even doubtful whether Ames correctly responded to the criticism but the general point made here is that Ames is defending the use of Lombardian distinction, not the validity of his answer.

83 ‘Manifeste etiam falsum est, hanc distinctionem, nostro sensu, nunquam usurpatam fuisse ante seculum nostrum. Palam enim, quod Augustinus, et omnes quos ille habet assensores (qui sane multi fuerunt ante nostrum seculum,) rationem cur quidam applicant sibi redemptionem ac salute magis quam alii, referant constanter ad arcanum consilium voluntatis divinae, non tantum ad libertatem humanam.’ Ames, Anti-Synodalía Scripta, p.179.
[1.] We say that the death, resurrection, ascension, session and intercession should equally be joined together in their end and intention, and in the person of Christ they were indeed joined together. 2. We believe that the source of application consists in the eternal decree of the Father, according to which He willed to bestow Christ, and also in the will of Mediator who was obedient to that decree. 3. Not each and every person is considered in that decree and intention, but some who were chosen. 4. In redemption itself, application was the most certain before God and it is made certainly in the elect themselves, while, by the force of that intention to apply, this teaching of the Gospel is sent to those with efficacy, so that they now actually bear fruits through the work of the Spirit, and the proper faith, and the prepared reconciliation.

It is true, as Godfrey pointed out, that this summary of Ames's position was described without using the distinction between sufficiency and efficiency, and it is possible to argue that he did not endorse this distinction on that basis. However, it is important to recall that this is Ames's summary of the main points of the controversy with regard to the second article of the Remonstrance (1610). So it is more likely that Ames just found it unnecessary here to use this distinction since Ames perceived that the central issue was how the relationship between impetration and application should be understood. It is also worth noting that there is nothing against the Lombardian formula as such in Ames’s summary statement. His possible assumption was that the work of Christ is described here only in terms of efficiency, which is to be applied to the elect by the will of the Father. Therefore, it could well be that Ames found it unnecessary to bring in the idea of sufficiency.

In addition, the argument for Ames’s endorsement of the Lombardian distinction is confirmed when his major work, *Marrow*, is consulted. In a chapter entitled ‘the application of Christ’, Ames stated that application concerns only those for whom the Father intended redemption to be applied: just the same latitude which redemption achieved. However, next came the important qualification using the concept of sufficiency:

As for the intention of application, it is rightly said that Christ made satisfaction only for those whom he saved, *though in regard to the sufficiency in the mediation of Christ it may also rightly be said that Christ made satisfaction for each and all.*

The fact that Ames used the concept of sufficiency approvingly here, in the context of writing a handbook of theology, undoubtedly indicates his endorsement of this distinction. Therefore, Ames’s use of this distinction in his arguments against the Remonstrants was a reflection not only of the polemical context of the Hague Conference (as Godfrey argued), but also of his own position regarding this formula. This has significant implications when considering the impact of Ames’s position upon the discussions at the Synod of Dort.

### 3.5 Discussions at the Synod of Dort

In the previous sections, Ames’s notable contributions toward the Reformed orthodox case has been identified in two areas: exposing the nature of the problem in the Remonstrant’ insistence on the separation between impetration and application (and similarly on the separation between oblation and

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intercession); and providing clarifications for the distinction between sufficiency and efficiency. Particularly, the immediate impact of the first point can be discerned clearly by looking into the *Judicia*, a set of documents produced for expressing the opinions of each delegates in the Synod at the beginning stage in the process of producing Canons.86

On the issue of the separation between impetration and application, the *Judicia* produced by the Dutch delegates displays a clear indebtedness to the earlier debate in which Ames was engaged in part. While this issue is taken up by many of the Dutch delegations, which reflects the immediate impact of Ames's publication within the Dutch Reformed Church, two delegations particularly stand out in terms of explicit reference they give to the polemical exchange between Ames and Grevinchoven: the South Holland delegation and the Zeeland delegation. The representatives from South Holland picked up the separation between impetration and application as a prime target of attack and cited Grevinchoven's statement almost verbatim as follows: 'the worth, necessity and usefulness of impetration can stand abundantly even though the

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86 The detail of the doctrinal discussions for the formation of the Canons has not been made widely available. What we do know is that, after the expulsion of the Remonstrants, they had a new procedure to deal with the Remonstrant's doctrine. Each of the nineteen delegations was asked to draw up their opinions (*Judicia*) on the five heads of the Remonstrant doctrines. Next, a drafting committee was formed to draw up Canons and the drafts were sent to the individual delegations for evaluation and producing feedback until the Canons were finalized. The official *Acta* does not include the committee drafts and subsequent amendments but it only contains *Judicia*. We await new publication in *Acta et Documenta Synodi Nationalis* series, VoIII, which will be devoted to *The Synod of Dort: Doctrinal Deliberations and the Canons*. For a survey of relevant documents, see Donald Sinnema, ‘The Drawing of the 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.
accomplished redemption would have been applied to no individual.'

Then, it continued to state exactly Grevinchoven’s thesis, which they tried to refute:

Whatever the ordinance of imprentation is toward application, the imprentation alone could through itself and without application, can stand complete and intact (*completa et integra*) and the redemption could be accomplished for all humanity and yet is applied to no one on account of the interfering unbelief of all.  

Furthermore, the South Holland delegation identified two sources for the various errors of the Remonstrants. One of which was that ‘monstrous distinctions which have no foundation in the words of God’, namely, the distinction between imprentation and application as well as the distinction between oblation and intercession of Christ. The separation between imprentation and application was unacceptable because ‘the word imprentation ... includes and presupposes the granting of the thing which is sought’. Similarly, the idea of the separation between oblation and intercession should be rejected because various passages in Scripture connect together the death, resurrection, and session; all of these are for the people for whom the Father has sent his own. Then, it went on to point out ‘intention’ behind these separations as the root cause of all this and cited from Grevinchoven: ‘God did not will the application of reconciliation absolutely, but intended that God can save sinners without being hindered by his own justice and that the sinner may be saved without being

87 ‘Impetrationi suam dignitatem, necessitate atque utilitatem abunde constare potuisse, etiam si impretate Redemptio, nulli indiviso unquam applicate fuisse.’ *Acta Synodi Nationalis* (Lugdunum Batavorum 1620), III, p.103. See also p.102, n.12 above.  
88 ‘Quaecunque imprentationis fit ad applicationem ordinatio, solam tamen per sese, sine applicatione completam atque integram constare potuisse, et potuisse omnibus impretratam esse Redemptionem et tamen nullis eam applicari, propter intervenientem omnium incredulitatem.’ *Acta*, III, p.103.  
hindered by his own sin.’\textsuperscript{90} It is noticeable that all the basic points raised above are clear echoes of Ames’s argument against Grevinchoven which were described in the previous sections above.\textsuperscript{91}

The \textit{Judicia} produced by the delegation of Zeeland also show a detailed reference in their examination of the Remonstrant teaching. One of their rejection clauses was exactly on the separation between impetration and application and Grevinchoven’s statement that the value of the redemption can stand even without being applied to anybody was cited again.\textsuperscript{92}

These examples show the clear indebtedness of the Dutch delegations in the Synod to Ames’s assessment of the problem contained in Remonstrant teaching. In particular, the Remonstrant idea of separation between impetration and application, which was made clear through Ames’s polemical exchange with Grevinchoven, became a prominent target of attack among the Reformed orthodox in the Synod. In the end, the Canons of Dort explicitly rejected this idea in the following two rejection clauses in its second head. They rejected both those:

1. Who teach that God the Father appointed his Son to death on the cross without a fixed and definite plan to save anyone by name, so that the necessity, usefulness and worth of what Christ’s death obtained could have stood intact and altogether perfect, complete and whole, even if the redemption that was obtained had never in actual fact been applied to any individual….

\textsuperscript{90} ‘Christum aplicationem Reconciliationis omnibus et singulis pro quibus mortuus est, absolute nec voluisse nec noluisse, sed intendisse, ut Deum non obstante justitia sua peccatorem salvare posset, et peccator non obstante peccato salvari.’ \textit{Acta III}, p.105.
\textsuperscript{91} See sections above 3.1, 3.2, pp.100-15.
\textsuperscript{92} ‘Iudicamus etiam errare Remonstrantes … ut etiam ausint dicere , Impetrationi iam praestitae ac peractae , dignitatem , necessitate , atque utilitatem suam abunde constare potuisse , etiamsi impetrare Redemptio nulli individuuo unquam fuisset applicate , potuietrique omnibus impestrate esse , et tamen nulli applicari.’ \textit{Acta II}, p.115.
6. who makes use of the distinction between obtaining and applying in order to instill in the unwary and inexperienced the opinion that God, as far as he is concerned, wished to bestow equally upon all people the benefits which are gained by Christ’s death; but that the distinction by which some rather than others come to share in the forgiveness of sins and eternal life depends on their own free choice ... 93

Ames’s contribution in exposing the problematic notion of the distinction between impetration and application is undeniably clear in these clauses. This should have been particularly significant considering that the original purpose of the Synod was to express clear rejection of the Remonstrant theses rather than to produce a confessional document in a positive sense.94

Another area, which was identified above as Ames’s contribution to this topic, was clarification of the terms of sufficiency and efficiency. The reflection of this is less straightforward to attest in the discussions at the Synod. However, it was significant that Ames was in what might be called the mediating group, within the spectrum of opinions on this classic distinction, rather than the strict group as argued previously. For this means that Ames must have had a considerable role to play, as the theological advisor to the president of the Synod, in mediating between the strict and the moderate to achieve consensus. In what follows, the positions of both the strict group and the moderate group in the Synod delegation will be described and consideration will be given to how the final Canons expressed the concept of sufficiency.

The strict group is typically represented by the Genevan delegation. Their *Judicia* set out the seven brief theses, each of which are followed by citation of Scripture.\textsuperscript{95} The first thesis states that Christ is the mediator and the head of his body, the elect. The second thesis, then, asserts that it was ‘with the infinite worth of the death’ (*pretio mortis infinito*) that Christ died for the elect. The third declares that Christ is the cause and foundation of calling and adoption of the elect into his church. The fourth and the fifth thesis go on to state that the faith is the gift from God and the true condition of the new covenant. The sixth thesis warns that ‘the universal passages’ in Scripture should not be taken as every single humanity but as ‘the universality of Christ’s body’, that is, ‘all the peoples from whom Christ gathers his church’. The seventh and the eighth thesis deal with the idea of distinction between impetration and application. This distinction can be accepted as long as ‘impetration is placed as the efficacious, perpetual, infallible cause of the actual application to the elect.’ However, the distinction should be rejected if the distinction makes salvation rest on human response. Godfrey rightly described this set of theses as ‘an implicit rejection of the distinction commonly made between sufficiency and efficiency’ apart from the phrase ‘the infinite worth of the death’ in the second thesis with regard to the nature of Christ’s death.\textsuperscript{96} The is certainly the case considering the phrase ‘the infinite worth of the death’ was used only in the context of explaining Christ’s death for the elect, and not for the whole human

\textsuperscript{95} *Acta* II, pp.100–103.

\textsuperscript{96} Perhaps Godfrey overstated his case when he continued to comment that ‘the Genevans expressed no concern for the preaching and the sincere offer of the gospel’ as the sixth thesis does present Christ’s gathering of all kinds of people into his church as ‘the foundation of general preaching of the Gospel’ (*fundamentum predicationis generalis Evangelii*). See Godfrey, ‘Tensions within International Calvinism’, p.102 and *Acta* II, p.102.
race. It seems that the Genevan delegation rejected any notion of the work of redemption pertaining to the whole world.

By contrast, the moderates within the Synod insisted that the universality of the redemption and the concern for the preaching of the Gospel should be made explicit at least in some way. The representatives of this group, Martinius of Bremen, John Davenant, and Samuel Ward from the British delegation, had considerable influence during the course of doctrinal discussion at the Synod.97

Perhaps the most comprehensive defence of this position was articulated by Davenant in his treatise, A Dissertation on the Death of Christ, which was written probably not long after the Synod but published posthumously in 1631. In terms of the idea of efficiency and the redemption regarding the elect, Davenant agreed with the majority of the Reformed orthodox. He stated that ‘[t]he death of Christ ... was destined for some certain persons, whom the Scripture calls the elect, and for them alone, so as to be effectually and infallibly applied to the obtaining of eternal life’.98 He continued: ‘in predestination to faith, the application of the death of Christ was infallibly destined for some certain


98 Davenant, ‘A Dissertation on the Death of Christ’ in John Davenant, An Exposition of the Epistle of St. Paul to the Colossians’, trans. Josiah Allport (London, 1831), II, p.516. This work was originally published posthumously as a part of Dissertationes Duoae: Prima, de Morte Christi; Altera, de Praedestinatione et Elezione (Cambridge, 1650). Although it was published later, this work was written apparently not long after the Synod.
persons’, whose prerogative was that ‘according to the absolute will of God the Father and of Christ the Mediator, they are decreed and caused to be infallibly saved through the death of Christ’. This clear articulation of the effectual redemption was certainly in contrast to the Remonstrant like Grevinchoven who asserted that Christ’s death might not be applied to anybody based on the complete separation of impetration and application.

On the other hand, Davenent’s idea of sufficiency and universal remedy of Christ’s death is less straightforward and requires a careful reading. He stated his position:

The death of Christ is the universal cause of the salvation of mankind, and Christ himself is acknowledged to have died for all men sufficiently, not by reason of the mere sufficiency or of the intrinsic value, according to which the death of God is a price more than sufficient for redeeming a thousand worlds, but by reasons of the Evangelical covenant confirmed with the whole human race through the merit of this death, and of the divine ordination depending upon it, according to which, under the possible condition of faith, remission of sins and eternal life is decreed to be set before every mortal man who will believe it, on account of the merits of Christ.\(^99\)

From this proposition, it is clear that defining the sufficiency of Christ’s death for all as the intrinsic value, as Ames did and promoted, was apparently not enough for Davenant as he called it ‘mere sufficiency’.\(^100\) Indeed, Davenant expressed his lament on this notion, asserting that those who endorsed the classic Lombardian distinction with this notion of sufficiency would ‘entirely


\(^{100}\) In fact, Davenant clearly had Ames in his mind when he expressed his strong disagreement with this definition of sufficiency. This is attested in his direct citation of Ames’s *Coronis* for the definition of sufficiency as intrinsic value and a number of other places in this work. This confirms the previous point in this chapter that Ames provided the clarification of this term. See for Davenant’s definition of ‘intrinsic sufficiency’, Davenant, ‘A Dissertation on the Death of Christ’,II, p.416.
extinguish the first part [that the death of Christ was sufficient for all] of the sentence. Although he granted that Christ’s death does have such intrinsic value, he insisted that there should also be what he called ‘ordained sufficiency’, to which he explained, ‘which has the intent and act of offering joined to it and that for all; but with the conditional, and not the absolute ordination which we have expressed’.  

Davenant’s concern was that the idea of sufficiency of Christ’s death should not be a purely theoretical consideration of intrinsic worth of that action. He insisted that the idea of sufficiency must be accompanied by a certain divine intension and act of offering although that intention was not absolute but under the condition of faith.

In order to achieve consensus within the Reformed orthodox in the Synod, there was a great need of mediating these two groups with contrasting positions. Thus, it was certainly with the aim of mediating them that the article 2.3 in the Canons was carefully crafted. It affirmed the sufficiency of Christ’s death as follows: ‘This death of God’s Son is the only and entirely complete sacrifice and satisfaction for sins; it is of infinite value and worth, more than sufficient to atone for the sins of the whole world.’  

This article, though emphasizing the completeness of Christ’s sacrifice and affirming the infinite value and worth of his death, significantly does not express more than what Davenant called ‘mere’ sufficiency without any link to divine intention or ordination behind it. Despite the lack of the idea of ordained sufficiency, this article was accepted unanimously by all the delegates in the Synod including the moderates. This

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indicates that this group was not necessarily against ‘mere sufficiency’ as such. It must also have helped to meet the concern of the moderates when the Article 2.5 further touched on the universal offer of the Gospel promise and the need to announce it indiscriminately:

Moreover, it is the promise of the gospel that whosoever believes in Christ crucified shall not perish but have eternal life. This promise, together with the command to repent and believe, ought to be announced and declared without differentiation or discrimination to all nations and people, to whom God in his good pleasure sends the gospel.

On the other hand, the Article 2.8, the longest article in the second head, expressed the efficacy of Christ’s death:

For it was the entirely free plan and very gracious will and intention of God the Father that the enlivening and saving effectiveness of his Son’s costly death should work itself out in all his chosen ones, in order that he might grant justifying faith to them only and thereby lead them without fail to salvation. In other words, it was God’s will that Christ through the blood of the cross (by which he confirmed the new covenant) should effectively redeem from every people, tribe, nation and language all those and only those who were chosen from eternity to salvation and given to him by the Father ...

It was here that the efficiency of Christ’s death was explicitly linked with the divine will and intention to ‘effectively’ – or more precisely ‘effecaciously’ (efficaciter) – redeem ‘only those who were chosen’. As was already shown, the

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103 Davenant provided some explanation as to why he accepted this article when he made a distinction between stating ‘the death of Christ is sufficient ransom for all’, and stating that ‘Christ died or offered on the cross … for all sufficiently’. While the former can be acceptable based only on the mere sufficiency, the latter cannot be acceptable without admitting the ordained sufficiency in addition to the mere sufficiency. This contradicts Jonathan D. Moore who argues that this particular article in the Canons was ‘binding any subscriber neither to the view that it was only an intrinsic sufficiency … , nor to the view that it was an ordained sufficiency’, which assumes these two ideas stand opposed to each other. See Davenant, ‘A Dissertation on the Death of Christ’, II, pp.416-17; Jonathan D. Moore, ‘The Extent of the Atonement’, p.147.


moderate party was in broadly agreement with this against the Remonstrants. Indeed, it was the inclusion of the word 'effectively' (efficaciter), which allowed the moderate to subscribe to it in the end because that word limited the scope of the redemptive work to the area of efficiency. According to Jonathan Moore, ‘this leaves a door open – even if it is only a back door – for any subscriber to hold privately to an ineffectual redemptive work for the non-elect’.\(^{106}\) So, these articles explaining Christ’s death in terms of sufficiency and efficiency were results of the effort to accommodate the concerns of all the delegates by building a bridge between the strict group who rejected the Lombardian formula altogether on the one hand, and the moderate group who was not content with ‘mere sufficiency’ on the other. This effort could have been made doubtless only by the mediating group who had a clear understanding of the issue surrounding this classic formula in this context coupled with a strong motivation to achieve a consensus within the Reformed orthodox, a description which would suit Ames very well. To that extent, therefore, the achievement of unity in the Synod on the most controversial point of the extent of atonement can be attributed to the theological advisor to the president.

**Conclusion**

One of Ames’s contributions in the process of this development has been identified as exposing the Remonstrant problem of separation between impetration and application, (together with parallel distinction between oblation and intercession), which was perceived by Ames as the central issue

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\(^{106}\) Jonathan Moore, 'The Extent of Atonement', p.146.
behind the second article of Remonstrance (1610). This distinction has been subtly introduced by Arminius when he attempted to support the idea of universal redemption. At the Hague Conference in 1611, the Contra-Remonstrants had already recognized this problem of separation between impetration and application behind the Remonstrant thesis and had argued for their case based on the continuity between them. However, they did not single out the issue of separation as a prime issue to discuss or use as a target of attack. This was indeed what Ames did when he debated with Grevinchoven. By setting out a syllogism based on the singularity of divine intention and the equation of that intention with the application, Ames provoked Grevinchoven’s response which showed the almost complete separation between impetration and application. Each of these works was underlined by two different divine intentions: while the intention for impetration is for all humanity, the intention for application is only for the faithful.

Based on this separation, Grevinchoven made some of the most controversial statements, which became a prime target of attack by the Reformed orthodox later in the Synod. For example, Grevinchoven declared: ‘the worth, necessity and usefulness of impetration can stand abundantly even though the accomplished redemption would have been applied to no individual as a matter of fact’. As the application is almost completely separated from the impetration for Grevinchoven, the impetration would still be ‘intact, complete, and perfect’ (integra, completa, et perfecta) even if it would have been applied to nobody. Ames’s arguments, which might be called logical arguments, for the continuity between impetration and application mainly focused on the meaning
of the concepts surrounding salvation, such as the good, mediation, and payment of ransom. All of these concepts point to the same conclusion that the very end of the redemption, the death of Christ, lies in its application.

The impact of Ames’s contribution in this area was clearly seen in the discussions at the Synod. Particularly, the *Judicia* of the South Holland delegation and Zeeland delegation and the preliminary documents produced for the formation of the Canons, displayed a clear echo of Ames’s basic argument for the continuity between impetration and application, along with citations of Grevinchoven’s most controversial statements. Moreover, the Synod as a whole expressed their agreement with Ames’s argument by explicitly rejecting those who held the separation between impetration and application.

Another area, which has been identified as Ames’s contribution in this chapter, concerns the key distinction between sufficiency and efficiency. Contrary to Godfrey’s assessment, Ames used this distinction approvingly and, what is more, provided the clarification of terms: sufficiency as the intrinsic power and fitness of the matter; efficiency as flowing from extrinsic act of the divine will. The supposed link in the Remonstrant view between the sufficiency of Christ’s death and the will of the Father was indeed ‘absurd’ for Ames. By clarifying both terms, and linking the efficiency to the divine will, Ames provided a basic framework with which the Reformed orthodox produced the Canons at the Synod of Dort. The impact of this contribution at the Synod is less straightforward to attest. However, Ames is likely to have played an important role in the mediating group within the Synod between the strict group like the Genevan delegation who rejected the Lombardian formula all together and the
moderate group like Davenant who tried to place some divine intention behind the idea of sufficiency. This suggests that Ames was playing a considerable role when they produced the Canons, which in the end described the idea of sufficiency as intrinsic value but broadly enough to include both of two extreme groups.

The case for definite atonement has been often criticized as depending on logic alone, and not being grounded in Scripture. However, the fact is that there are tensions in Scripture between particularistic and universalistic passages. Among particularistic passages, John 17 stood out as it records Jesus's intercessory prayer for his disciples and those who believe through them. Interestingly, one of the Remonstrant objections against straightforward reading of these passages revealed the important assumption from which both side of the debate would approach relevant Scriptural passages: their respective understandings of the order of decree. While the Remonstrants would put the decree of Christ's redemption prior to the application, the Reformed orthodox generally would put the decree of election (therefore, the application) prior to the decree of redemption. That difference of order led both the Remonstrants and the Reformed to prioritize different sets of passages.

The most important issue when dealing with the universalistic passages is the meaning of 'the world'. Generally, Ames approached these passages by reading 'the world' not as all humanity but as all kinds of people. Another issue emerged in the discussion of universalistic passages was the relationship between love and will within God. While Grevinchoven separated these two, Ames treated them as synonyms. That was why Ames could paraphrase 'love' in
John 3:16 as divine will to save. This allowed him to read this verse, which the Remonstrant used as the prime evidence for their case of universal atonement, as describing nothing other than the saving will of God toward his elect. In dealing with both issues, Ames was in line with the well-established hermeneutical tradition in the West: this tradition, derived from Augustine, approached this group of universalistic passages in a way which allowed a particularistic view of redemptive work. Ames’s reliance on the tradition in hermeneutical task will be more clearly shown in the subsequent chapters.

The discussions of both the previous chapter and the current chapter have revealed a main common concern of Ames and other Reformed orthodox theologians, which made them to oppose Arminianism strongly: the Remonstrant emphasis on human free choice at the risk of undermining the divine sovereignty. The topic of next chapter, the nature of grace and conversion, will address their concern.
Chapter IV

Divine Grace and Conversion

The common underlying concern behind Ames's argument against the Remonstrants discussed in the previous two chapters has been their synergistic tendency and the emphasis placed on human free will within their system. The Remonstrant teaching on predestination makes human response the proper cause for salvation and their teaching on the universal efficacy of redemption makes all the fruit of redemption depend upon the free will of humanity.¹ This chapter deals with this most pressing issue of the relationship between divine grace and human freedom.

As with the earlier chapters in this thesis, the immediate background from which the discussion developed goes back to the Remonstrance of 1610. That document stated, in its third article, the inability of humanity to do good and have saving faith:

That man does not have saving faith of himself nor by the power of his own free will, since he, in the state of apostasy and sin, cannot of and through himself think, will or do any good which is truly good (such as is especially saving faith): but that it is necessary that he be regenerated by God, in Christ, through his Holy Spirit, and renewed in understanding, affections or will, and all powers, in order that he may rightly understand, meditate upon, will, and perform that which is truly good according to the word of Christ, John 13:5, ‘without me ye can do nothing’.²

¹ See pp. 53, 102 of this thesis.
After confirming the inability of humanity to do good freely, the Remonstrance went on to state the nature of grace in the fourth article:

That this grace of God is the commencement, progression and completion of all good, also insofar that regenerate man cannot, apart from this prevenient or assisting, awakening, consequent and cooperating grace, think, will, or do good or resist any temptations to evil; so that all good works or activities which can be conceived must be ascribed to the grace of God in Christ.3

Again, the human inability to do good apart from the work of grace is plainly acknowledged and thus far nothing seems controversial. These statements had been written in such a way that the Remonstrant position might be tolerated within the Dutch Reformed church. However, the problematic statement on the nature of grace came at the end of the fourth article in a clause which reads ‘but with respect to the mode of this grace, it is not irresistible’, citing Acts 7:51 where the Spirit is said to be resisted by many. This made the Reformed orthodox suspect that the entire statements of the third and fourth articles should be read in the light of this closing statement. As a result, the strategy for the Reformed orthodox like Ames was to expose where the Remonstrants really stood on the issue of the nature of grace and the process of conversion, in relation to this idea of grace as resistible. As will be shown, this was indeed how Ames proceeded in the debate with Grevinchoven: Ames made his argument

3 Appendix 4 in Matthew Barrett, The Grace of Godliness, p.144. The extremely careful language used in these statements is in fact a clear echo of Arminius’s opinion concerning free choice after the fall. Arminius wrote: ‘In his lapsed and sinful state, man is not capable, of and by himself, either to think, to will, or to do that which is really good; but it is necessary for him to be regenerated and renewed in his intellect, affections or will, and in all his powers, by God in Christ through the Holy Spirit, that he may be qualified rightly to understand, esteem, consider, will and perform whatever is truly good.’ Arminius, Declaration of Sentiments, pp.659-60.
from a corollary, the logical inference of what was previously stated by his opponent.

In light of this immediate context, the present chapter seeks to explore what arguments Ames used against his opponent, both in order to expose the Remonstrants’ real position on the nature of grace and conversion and to make a case for his own position. In addition, it seeks to show where Ames’s contribution lies in terms of its impact on later development, as well as where Ames might be located in the history of the Reformed orthodoxy, particularly in light of the generally accepted claim that Ames was outside the mainstream of Reformed orthodoxy.  

Apart from the obvious issue of the nature of grace (irresistible or resistible), the first specific issue in the debate between Ames and Grevinchoven was about the cause of conversion: what is the cause of conversion, is it divine grace, human will, or both? This will be dealt with in the first section. The second section then deals with the closely related issue of the way or the mode of conversion. This relates to the question of how divine grace operates in the process of conversion. One of the important implications of Ames’s argument on the way of conversion is the question of Ames’s voluntarism, which will be discussed in the third section. This relates to how Ames’s emphasis on the will in his concept of faith should be understood and where Ames’s position should be located within the larger history of Reformed orthodoxy. Finally, the fourth section deals with another important question: how human freedom is established even when the primacy of divine grace in the process of conversion

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is maintained. Ames’s detailed answer to this question is described and analyzed in this section, particularly in light of recent scholarly debate on how the Reformed orthodox understood the idea of contingency. The primary sources of information are *Arminii Sententia* (1613) and *Rescriptio Scholastica* (1615), as Ames revealed the philosophical ground for his argument more clearly in these books than others.

Before moving onto the four main sections, it is necessary to set out briefly the scholarly context of the issues which will be dealt with in this chapter. As has been shown in Chapter 1, one of the most debated issues in Amesian study is the question of Ames’s voluntarism: Ames’s emphasis on the will in the action of faith, particularly his exposition of faith in *Marrow*, has led some scholars to conclude that Ames is a voluntarist and therefore he was outside mainstream Reformed orthodoxy. Indeed, Ames’s voluntarism was one of the main reasons why he was grouped together with Arminianism. More specifically, this judgement is based on understanding that Ames emphasized the role of the will in a way which disconnects the action of faith from the intellect altogether. This simplistic understanding of Ames’s voluntarism has led some scholars to associate Ames rather strangely with the synergistic soteriology found in Arminianism. Thus, these claims concerning Ames’s voluntarism, as well as its origin, will be critically examined in the third section of this chapter, particularly in light of Ames’s arguments against Grevinchoven on the issue of the way of conversion.

This chapter also touches on a wider scholarly issue in the field of Reformed scholasticism: the precise nature and medieval scholastic background behind
the Reformed thought in general and the use of the concept of synchronic contingency by the Reformed in particular. It will be recalled that the authors who contributed chapters to *Reformed Thought on Freedom* highlighted the revolutionary character of this concept and singled out Scotus as the major formative figure behind a number of early modern Reformed orthodox thinkers. In response, Richard Muller denied the deterministic tendency of the idea of contingency formulated by Aristotle and Aquinas and argued that the medieval scholastic background of the Reformed orthodox in general was more accurately described as eclectic. The purpose of this chapter is certainly not to make an assessment of this scholarly debate as such (given the multi-layered issues involved in it). However, an attempt will be made to highlight the medieval scholastic background behind Ames' voluntarism and his formulation of contingency in order to show what light Ames's argument sheds on this scholarly issue.

### 4.1 De Causa Conversionis: Divine Grace or Human Will?

The most obvious issue regarding the nature of grace and conversion is the question of the cause of conversion: is it divine grace or human will? This issue came to the fore in the context of wider discussion about predestination. Ames started his discussion by drawing out the problematic implications from the idea that faith logically precedes predestination. Ames put forward his argument:

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5 For a more detailed explanation of the concept of synchronic contingency, see *RTF*, pp.15-49.
From the same opinion [that predestination is from faith], it necessarily follows that the efficacy of grace concerning the event or that very faith depends on the cooperation of free will as on the cause. This error, however, draws many other errors with it.  

Behind this argument, there was a shared assumption that the idea that faith depends on human cooperation was recognized as erroneous by both sides of the debate. This idea of human cooperation is not refuted by arguments but simply stated as an error. This is probably why the third and the fourth article of the Remonstrance (1610) was ambiguously articulated on this point and Grevinchoven did not simply admit that faith depends upon human cooperation. Ames’s strategy was again not so much to refute the soteriological synergism of Grevinchoven as such, but rather to expose Grevinchoven’s idea of synergism through their exchange.

Grevinchoven’s initial response to this argument was to point to the duality of causes (both divine and human) for conversion, and to the superiority of divine grace and the inferiority of human will. In that sense, the efficacy of grace does not depend on human choice, ‘for the will believes properly, not because the will through itself wants to believe, but because grace makes it want to believe’.  

Furthermore, Grevinchoven made a distinction between the idea of dependence in a ‘strict’ sense and in the ‘universal’ sense. Understood in the

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7 ‘Nec enim voluntas proprie credit, quia ipsa per se vult credere, sed quia gratia facit velle.’ Ames, De Arminii Sententia p.27. In response to this, Ames is quick to point out that the question was not whether the efficacy of grace is without the action and cooperation of the human will in general but why in terms of the second act (in actu secundo) the grace is efficacious in some rather than others. Ames, De Arminii Sententia, p.29. For the distinction between the first act and the second act, see pp.191-93 below.
former strict sense, that is, ‘the causality and the subordination of the inferior to the superior’, he certainly denied that the efficacy of grace depends on human free will. However, understood only in the latter universal sense, that is, ‘whatever necessary condition for things to take place’, he accepted that the efficacy of grace does depend on the cooperation of human choice.

Grevinchoven went on:

the effect of grace depends on the other action of some choice by the ordinary law as the preceding condition *sine qua non*, just as the effectual calling depends on the act of hearing, which is in the power of choice, although hearing itself ultimately is resolved (*resolvitur*) in the grace of God by sending him who preaches.⁸

From the example of calling and the act of hearing, what Grevinchoven means by ‘universal’ dependence seems to be something purely external to the experience of conversion. Ames immediately made this point in his response. Many external actions such as hearing, perceiving, and understanding are necessarily involved before someone is converted. They are not the matters of dispute. Ames wrote:

The cause or the reason is asked not simply why grace is efficacious, but why that grace, which is sufficient in two persons, being efficacious enough in the first act or by its own nature, has enough efficacy also in the second act such that the thing itself (*re ipsa*) produces faith in one but not in the other.⁹

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⁸ ‘affirmat effectum gratiae ordinaria lege pendere ab actu aliquot arbitrii, ut praevia conditione sine qua non, ut vocatio efficax ab auditu, qui est in arbitrii potestate, quamvis ipsum audire ultimo resolvitur in Dei gratiam mittentem eum qui praedicaret.’ Ames, *Rescriptio Scholastica*, p.101. See also Grevinchoven, *Dissertatio Theologica*, p.198.

As for the real position, upon which Grevinchoven stood on the question, Ames collected a list of Grevinchoven’s occasional statements which showed synergistic tendencies. For example, Grevinchoven stated, ‘free consensus or cooperation of the will is a required condition for this purpose that God absolutely or finally would will that his own efficacious grace has that actual or effectual efficacy in that person to whom it extends’.10 This statement, among others, clearly indicates that, for Grevinchoven, the reason why divine grace is efficacious in some people, rather than others, lies in human choice.

Another statement by Grevinchoven which sparked a detailed response from Ames was that both God and human are partial causes, the idea illustrated by a father and a son rowing the same boat. Ames summarized Grevinchoven’s position as follows:

Grace and free choice coincide as partial causes for human conversion, with partiality of cause, not of effect, but in the same simple way by which a father and a son row the one same boat: certainly as for the son, the strength of action is communicated by the father; but as for the father, he is not only as the father who gave the strength to the son, but also as the supporter, mover, and instigator of the son and also as the author to his own son of rowing this boat together with himself.11

10 ‘voluntatis liber consensus vel cooperatio, est conditio praerequisita ad hoc, ut Deus absolute aut peremptorie velit, gratiam hanc suam in illa efficaciam actualem vel effectum illum ad quem tendit, habere.’ Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, p.107.
11 ‘Gratia et arbitrium concurrunt ut causae partiales ad conversionem hominis, partialitate causae non effectus, eodem plane modo quo pater et filius unam eandemque navem trahant, et filius quidem agendi virtute sibi a patre communicata; pater autem non modo ut pater qui filio agendi virtutem dedit, sed etiam ut suor; motor atque impulsor filii, adeoque ut autus filio suo navem hanc una cum ipso trahendi.’ Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, pp.107-8. For Grevinchoven’s own illustration, See Grevinchoven, Dissertatio Theologica, pp.210-11. This illustration is probably taken from Molina. In Molina’s case, two agents work together as one universal cause and there is no real distinction or superiority admitted between two causes. See Luis Molina, De Liberis arbitrii cum gratiae donis, (1595), pp.112-13; Thomas Marschler, ‘Providence, Predestination, and Grace in Early Modern Catholic Theology’, p.97. Grevinchoven’s careful way in which the father’s strength is communicated to the son is to ensure that it is not through ‘physical premotion’ but only through ‘moral persuasion’. This issue is discussed in the section 4.2, pp165-72.
Ames went to great lengths to argue against Grevinchoven on this point. First, Ames tried to show that the real nature of the relationship between grace and free will in this illustration is not really partial causes as Grevinchoven described. This becomes apparent by adding another son to that illustration: what if the father had two sons who were equally equipped with the same resources to set sail, yet one of them rejects this opportunity and the other sets off the ship together with his father? Why does this difference bring about? Ames could not help mocking his opponent at this point: ‘who would hesitate to answer now that the proper reason lies in the cooperation of one son rather than the other, or, would he [Grevinchoven] not be fit himself who sails by some other ship all the way to Anticyra if he accuses that answer as misrepresentation?’\textsuperscript{12} In this illustration, human free will would be ‘the cause by whose strength God produces that effect’ (\textit{causa est cuius vi Deus effectum illud producit}).

Furthermore, Ames went on to point out that human free will is located prior to grace in terms of causal order, according to Grevinchoven’s explanation: human free will ‘accepts nothing from that effectual grace, for this [grace] does not first flow into the will itself, nor is its work prior in terms of the causal order’.\textsuperscript{13} Therefore, Ames concluded that in this illustration ‘the efficacy of [human] will depends on efficacious grace no more than the efficacy of grace

\textsuperscript{12} ‘qui respondere iam vereretur propriam causam esse cooperationem unius filii potius quam alterius, aut sic respondentem calumniar accusaret, annon dignus ipse foret, qui alia aliqua navi ad Anticyras protinus navigaret?’ Ames, \textit{Rescriptio Scholastica}, p.108.

\textsuperscript{13} ‘Nihil ... accepit a gratia illa efficiaci, haec enim non influit in voluntatem ipsam primo, nec est eius operatione prior ordine causalitatis, iudicio Nicolai.’ Ames, \textit{Rescriptio Scholastica}, p.109.
depends on the strength of [human] will.'\textsuperscript{14} Indeed, ‘it would necessarily follow that human choice is a greater cause than divine grace in the conversion of this person rather than that person’.\textsuperscript{15}

Exegetically, the discussion between Ames and Grevinchoven mostly hinges on the interpretation of I Corinthians 4:7, the classic Augustinian reference for arguing the priority of grace over human cooperation.\textsuperscript{16} Their lengthy exegetical discussion over this passage started when Ames made an argument from a ‘corollary’ (\textit{porismata}), against Grevinchoven’s insistence on human cooperation as the partial cause of conversion, together with divine grace. Ames argued, echoing the passage in Corinthians, that ‘by this reason the faithful separate themselves from the others and they have something about which they can boast, both of which the Apostle Paul rejects’.\textsuperscript{17}

Grevinchoven made his objection to Ames’s argument by paying attention to the original context of I Corinthians: Paul was not objecting to the separation of believers from unbelievers, but to the different status of believers (based on alleged different degrees of spiritual insight). The text does not read ‘what makes you different?’ (\textit{quid te discernit?}) but rather ‘who makes you different?’ (\textit{quis te discernit?}) This refers to those leaders with whom they identify themselves as followers, Paul or Cephas.

\textsuperscript{14} ‘voluntatis efficientia non magis pendet ab efficaci gratia, quam gratiae efficientia a voluntatis virtute.’ Ames, \textit{Rescriptio Scholastica}, p.109.

\textsuperscript{15} ‘necessario sequitur, arbitrium ipsum magis esse causam quam gratiam divinam conversionis huius hominis potius quam illius.’ Ames, \textit{Rescriptio Scholastica}, p.110.

\textsuperscript{16} This verse reads: ‘Quis enim te ab aliis discernit? quid autem habes quod non receperis? quod si etiam acceptisti, quid gloriaris quasi non acceperis?’

\textsuperscript{17} ‘hac ratione seipsum discernerent fideles ab aliis, aliquid etiam haberent, de quo gloriari possent, quae ambo negat Apostolus Paulus.’ Ames, \textit{De Arminii Sententia}, p.31.
On this particular point, Ames remarkably admitted that the separation of believer from unbeliever is beyond the scope of the original context of the passage. Ames maintained, nonetheless, that it is not ‘beyond the intention or meaning of the words themselves’. For the general principle can be applied to other things which might be, strictly speaking, different from the author’s original intention. This interpretation is in accordance with the entire Western tradition: Ames lists Chrysostom, Augustine, and the sixth Canon of the Council of Orange (529) as examples of the earlier authorities who used the passage to argue for the priority of divine grace over human choice. It is worth paying close attention here to different ways in which Augustine was used by both Ames and Grevinchoven. Ames’s citation of Augustine was taken from *Predestination of the Saints*, where Augustine repeatedly used I Corinthians 4 as the main exegetical base for his argument:

> For ‘who makes you different?’ he says, ‘surely not through these gifts which are common to all?’ Certainly, the man puffed up by his pride against others can say, ‘my faith, my righteousness, or something else, makes me different’: the good teacher says, opposing against such reasoning, ‘but what do you have which you have not received?’ And from whom except from him, who makes you different from others, to whom he did not give what he gave to you?  

Against Ames’s citation of Augustine, Grevinchoven also brought forward two passages from Augustine which, according to Grevinchoven, ‘clearly contradict’ (*aperte contradicentem*) Ames’s position. Grevinchoven cited from *The Spirit*
and the Letter, where Augustine made a point that the idea of faith as a gift from God does not exclude the function of human will in the act of receiving and possessing. For, ‘the soul cannot receive and possess these gifts ... except by yielding its consent’. Thus, although faith comes from God as a gift, the act of receiving and possessing remains within those who believe. Grevinchoven used another citation from question 68 of The Eighty-Three Questions, which was about Romans 9:20. Here, Augustine seemed to allow the believer to take some credit for the act of responding to divine calling: ‘even if someone called takes the credit for coming, he cannot take the credit for being called.’

In response to these citations, Ames pointed out that the texts selected by Grevinchoven contain ideas which Augustine himself retracted later, therefore, Grevinchoven was not representing Augustine’s ‘ultimate, mature thought’. Ames also retorted with another citation which is in fact a paraphrase from On the Gift of Perseverance. Augustine admitted his ideas had changed over time. He recalled writing some things earlier:

without preceding judgment of other considerations which the wise can find out, and from which they themselves should not be written: and in vain the objection is raised against that old book, because I began as a lay person in Rome and in Africa I developed as a bishop. If I had some doubts about those things at that time, I think nobody would be so unfair and hostile as to stop me making progress and to judge that I should remain in that state of uncertainty.

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20 'accipere enim et habere anima non potest dona ... nisi consentiendo'. Augustine, The Spirit and the Letter, Chapter 34, cited by Grevinchoven, Dissertatio Theologica, p.224 (erroneously paginated as p.212).

21 'Propterea si quisque sibi tribuit quod venit vocatus, non potest sibi tribuere quod vocatus est.' Augustine, The Eighty Three Questions, Question 68, cited by Grevinchoven, Dissertatio, p.224.

22 'sine praeiudicio aliarum causarum quas prudentes possunt investigare; ex quibus praescribendum ipsi non est: de quorum vetustate frustra ipsi praescribitur: quia laicus quaedam Romae cepit, et in Africra presbyter explicavit, quo tempore, si de rebus istic dubitavit, nemo ut opinor, est tam inustus atque invidus, qui eum proficere prohiberet, atque in hac dubitatione remanendum ipsi esse iudicare.' Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, pp.116-17.
According to Ames, Augustine himself provides an answer to the objection raised by Grevinchoven: his ideas developed from a state of uncertainty. Therefore, it is clear that Augustine explained this difference (between believers and non-believers) not on the basis of human cooperation but on the basis of the eternal and inscrutable will of God. This exegetical discussion of I Corinthians 4:7 illustrates how Ames appealed to a broader Augustinian tradition when providing an interpretation that was not strictly inherent in the original context of Scripture. This discussion also provides an example of how both sides of the debate used Augustine to make their case. The change of Augustine’s position over his life time, on the role of human choice and divine grace in conversion, seems to be the key behind their appeal to the same authority. Their different interpretation of Augustine’s change reflects an important point made by Arnoud S.Q. Visser: the Remonstrants viewed the Augustine’s later thought as an ‘addition’ to the generally accepted position while the Reformed saw it as a ‘correction of an error’.23

4.2 De Modo Conversionis: Physica or Moralis?

Another related issue which Ames brought forward during his debate with Grevinchoven was the question of how divine grace operates in the process of conversion. There are two ways of thinking about the process of conversion: one way has true, real efficacious work by its own strength, which was called ‘physical’ (physica) and which is suitable for the proper cause of conversion and

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directly affecting the human will; the other way of thinking about conversion was called ‘moral’, which, stirring up the human intellect only metaphorically (not physically), pertains to natural objects and moral human actions. These terms are taken from a previous ‘Grace Controversy’ between Dominicans and Jesuits within the Catholic Church which went on for two decades, beginning in the 1580s. During that controversy, ‘physical predetermination’ or ‘premotion’ were the concepts used by the Dominican school when arguing against the Jesuit understanding of grace as developed by Suarez and Molina.²⁴ For Ames, the process must involve both of these ways:

So as to attribute the total praise and the glory of our conversion and salvation to God, we say that God not only procures our conversion by setting out, persuading, and illuminating, but also affects the human will in itself by genuinely real efficacy, so that true faith would follow with infallible certainty by the strength of its influence and assent of the will.²⁵

It is important to note that Ames understood this process as both moral persuasion and physical promotion. God brings about conversion not only through persuading and illuminating our intellect, but also by affecting our will. By contrast, the process of conversion is described as only moral according to the Remonstrants’ teaching. Ames explains:

The intellect is indeed illumined by external means of cognition as well as the internal work of the Spirit, and even the [human] will itself is awakened by some agreeable persuasion. But nothing is efficaciously stirred up in the will, and any strength or virtue themselves are not

²⁴ For a careful analysis of the use of these concepts by Voetius, see Andreas J. Beck, ‘The Will as Master of Its Own Act: A Disputation Rediscovered of Gisbertus Voetius (1589-1676) on Freedom of Will’ in Reformed Thought on Freedom: The Concept of Free Choice in Early Modern Reformed Theology, pp.165-67.

²⁵ ‘nos ut conversionis et salutis nostrae laudem gloriamque tribuamus Deo totam, eum non proponendo suadendo et illuminando tantum conversionem nostram procurare dicimus, sed efficacia vera reali voluntate in ipsam sic afficere, ut influentiae eius vi et voluntatis assensu fides vera infallibili certitudine sequatur.’ Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, p.118.
Ames had two main reasons for rejecting the Remonstrant teaching that the way of conversion is only moral. First, it is because ‘natural or living human (homo psychikos vel animalis) does not perceive what pertains to the kingdom of heaven’. This point was based on I Corinthians 2:12, 14 where the Apostle Paul expresses the inability of the natural person (homo psychikos) to ‘accept things from the Spirit of God’. For Ames, the natural person meant those who, despite hearing the Gospel, without the Spirit reject things from the Spirit of God. Therefore, conversion cannot be brought about only through moral persuasion. Grevinchoven had an objection to this: that the words ‘natural human’, according to Beza’s annotation of the passage, meant those who were without the knowledge of the Gospel but only with natural light. For Grevinchoven, then, this particular passage did not apply to those who were already given the knowledge of the Gospel. However, Ames pointed out that Beza made reference to Jude 19 which mentions those who are ‘devoid of the Spirit’ in order to clarify the meaning of that term. According to the immediate context in Jude, these people were said to have ‘crept into the church and were

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28 When commenting on ‘natural person’, Beza wrote that ‘that is human provided with none other than light of natural mind’ but as Ames pointed out, Beza went on to comment that ‘as defined in Jude 19’. See Robertus Stephanus’s Latin Bible with Beza’s New Testament translation and annotations (1556), p.204.
converting the grace of God into wantonness’. So, they cannot have necessarily been without the calling and the knowledge of the Gospel. Mere moral suasion of the mind cannot bring about conversion.

Secondly, Ames argued that the Remonstrant teaching should be rejected because ‘it [the natural human] does not have a principle which can be stirred up to supernatural work only by persuasion’. Importantly, Ames pointed out the problematic consequence of limiting the work of conversion to the sphere of persuasion: making free will the cause of conversion. Ames did this by appealing to the nature of persuasion: the work of the orator, according to Aristotle, is not persuading as such but finding and setting out appropriate things for persuasion. Persuasion itself, however, depends on ‘the association of the mind with the oration or things proposed’ which relies on the response of human free will. Therefore, if nothing is antecedently stirred up except what the orator has set out for persuasion, the proper cause of conversion would not be that previous persuasion, but in human free will itself. This argument highlights the reason why Ames opposed Grevinchoven on this point and advocates both a moral and physical way of conversion: a merely intellectualistic, moral way of conversion makes human free will the proper cause.

Having established the reasons for rejecting the Remonstrant position that the way of conversion is only moral, Ames then went on to argue positively that

29 ‘irrepsesant enim in ecclesiam, et Dei gratiam in lasciviam transferebant’. Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, p.120. This insight was based on Jude 4.
30 ‘nec habet principium quod ad operationem supernaturalem suadendo tantum potest excitari’. Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, p.120.
31 Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, pp.119-20.
the way of conversion is not merely ‘moral’ but also ‘physical’. This point has an important implication for Ames’s understanding of faculty psychology: the relationship between the will and the intellect in the life of faith, which will be dealt with in the next section.

In order to show that the way of conversion is both moral and physical, Ames put forward a list of words which Scripture uses to describe conversion, including those of creating (creandi), transforming (immutandi), turning (inclinandi), converting (convertendi), bringing back to life (vivificandi), drawing (trahendi) and bending (flectendi). Ames insisted that the meaning of these words cannot be limited to simply the moral way of conversion but should be extended to the physical.32

Grevinchoven was not at all impressed with this list of phrases but rather denied that the meaning of these words can refer to the realm of the physical and confined the discussion within the realm of the moral. For example, Grevinchoven argued, even the term creating ‘can be taken either as strictly or through metaphor and translation: if strictly taken, I admit it means more than moral action but I judge that that signification is very far from the work of conversion.’33 Grevinchoven explained his reason for his judgement as the difference between the process, the object of creation and conversion. While creation does not presuppose an object, in contrast conversion does. Therefore, the meaning of the word ‘creating’ must be metaphorically understood.

Moreover, Grevinchoven called Ames's argument ‘imprudent, ridiculous and hypocritical’ and simply ‘impossible’ because the ideas of the moral way and physical way of conversion are contradictory to each other: while the process of the physical predetermination of the will is irresistible, the moral way of conversion is resistible. So, the process of conversion must be exclusively either by moral persuasion or by physical determination: it cannot be both.34

Ames responded to this by providing biblical examples where ‘moral actions coincide with many efficacious things, but which were not performed without the mighty hand of God’. Thus, echoing the illustration in I Corinthians 3, Ames writes, ‘he sends one man for planting and another for watering, but there is only one who can supply the power of growing’. With regard to the work of conversion, Ames wrote:

In conversion of human, suasion has its own particular effect, setting out for producing faith, giving assent and formatively concurring in the process of producing, and confirming and completing the faith produced. Therefore, as one and the same, faith is said to be infused and acquired at the same time, through [divine] omnipotence and [human] willingness, or rather (as Augustine says), through omnipotent willingness.35

It is notable in this section that the work of producing (ingeneratio) faith is strictly reserved for the physical determination of divine grace: this is consistently distinguished from the process of suasion, which is variously described as setting out, giving assent, confirming, perfecting. How exactly the moral action of suasion can be combined with the physical work of divine grace

34 Grevinchoven, Dissertatio Theologica, pp.304-5.
35 ‘In hominis conversione, effectum suum proprium habet suasio, ad fidel ingenerandum disponens, in ingeneratione consentiens et operative concurrens, et ingeneratam confirmans per omni potentiam et facilitatem, vel potius (ut Augustinus loquitur) per omnipotentem facultatem producta.’ Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, p.126.
cannot be known: just as Christ described, we do not know where the wind comes from and where it goes.\textsuperscript{36}

Furthermore, Ames pointed to the fact that Grevinchoven admitted that the illumination of the intellect and the awakening of the affections to supernatural good is through ‘physical and irresistible motion’.\textsuperscript{37} Grevinchoven’s point was that the process of illuminating the human mind and awakening affection is irresistible, while maintaining that human will still can resist the process of conversion as a whole. This is complicated as Grevinchoven was prepared to call this process within intellect and affection ‘physical’ motion. Grevinchoven opposed the irresistible, physical predetermination of human will itself but he was open to acknowledge a certain physical motion within the intellect and affections.\textsuperscript{38} Ames strategically used this for his own argument:

If this is true, then, physical irresistible motion and moral action can be applied at the same time for producing one and the same effect without hypocrisy and imprudence. For I believe he will not deny that, beside that physical motion, [moral actions such as] doctrinal instruction, refutation, exhortation and even correction are effective for illumination of the mind and stirring up the affection.\textsuperscript{39}

After making the point that the physical action of grace and the moral work of suasion can co-exist together in the process of the illumination of the mind and awakening of the affections, Ames moved his argument one step further and

\textsuperscript{36} Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, p.126.
\textsuperscript{37} Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, p.126.
\textsuperscript{38} For Grevinchoven's statement, see Grevinchoven, Dissertatio, p.292, p.300. See also Collatio, p.273.
\textsuperscript{39} ‘Hoc si verum fit, tum ... Motus physicus irresistibilis et actio moralis, adhiberi simul possunt ad unum et idem effectum producendum sine hypocrisi et imprudentia. Non negabit enim credo ad mentem illuminandam affectusque movendos, praeter motum illum physicum, eruditionem doctrinam redarguionem, exhortationem et correctionem etiam valere.’ Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, pp.126-27.
argued that ‘it is necessary that even the will itself is moved physically’. The reason is that ‘the intellect is never illumined, just as one’s affection is inflamed through the approbation [of the intellect], without the will also being carried by the same motion.’

Moreover, Ames interestingly relies on Thomistic categories in order to support his case. According to Aquinas, those affections which cannot be carried into the heavenly things, which we have in common either with nature or animals, are called natural or living appetite. The only affection which can be carried into the heavenly things is intellectual appetite, and this is nothing other than the will itself. It must be concluded then that ‘when affection is acknowledged to be stirred for supernatural good by physical and irresistible motion, thus he [Grevinchoven] grants that the will itself is bent.’ Throughout his debate with Grevinchoven, Ames argued that the process of conversion involves not only moral suasion but also physical predetermination, and his argument reflects his firm conviction about the truth of the matter.

### 4.3 The Question of Ames’s Voluntarism

The soteriological issue of the way of conversion, discussed in the previous section, has an important implication for Ames’s doctrine of faith; it relates particularly to the relationship between the intellect and the will within the life

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of faith. This link needs to be addressed here as the issue of Ames’s voluntarism has been one of the most debated topics in Amesian study.  

The reader of Marrow readily encounters Ames’s striking emphasis on the will as the locus of faith, from its opening. Ames famously set out his definition of theology: ‘theology is the doctrine of living to God’. Ames, then, stated what this living to God entails: ‘men live to God when they live according to the will of God, to the glory of God, with God inwardly working in them’. Such a life to God necessarily involves the whole person, including not only the mind in understanding but also the will in action. At the heart of this vision of theology there is the concept of faith as located in the realm of the will: ‘the prime and proper subject of theology is the will’. This is in accordance with Scripture’s emphasis on the heart (which was synonymous with the will for Ames) as the core of human being, such as in Proverbs 4.23 which states, ‘from the heart come actions of life.’ So, the idea that the essence of faith lies in the will, within the faculty of soul, is at the heart of Ames’s theological system in his attempt to integrate and never separate orthodoxy and orthopraxy.  

Ames’s emphasis on the will in the life of faith, in the opening statements as well as his exposition of faith in the third chapter of Marrow, has often been read in isolation from Ames’s other relevant writings. This has led modern

42 See pp.29-36 above.  
43 Ames, Marrow, I,1.  
44 Ames, Marrow, I,6.  
45 Ames, Marrow, I,9.  
46 Beeke and van Vliet identified covenant theology as the heart of Ames’s theological system and linked Ames’s emphasis on the will to his covenantal theology. See ‘The Marrow of Theology by William Ames (1576-1633)’, pp.57-64.
scholars to conclude that Ames was a voluntarist and therefore outside mainstream Reformed orthodoxy.\(^{47}\)

The origin of these readings of Ames's voluntarism and his relationship with the Reformed orthodox seems to go back to a theological disputation written by Gisbertus Voetius (1589-1676). Voetius was a close contemporary of Ames, known as one of the youngest delegates at the Synod of Dort. He became a professor of theology at Utrecht University later, where he actively worked as a leader of the Nadere Reformatie. According to Voetius's analysis, there are three positions among the Reformed, specifically as to where 'the subject and the formal act' of faith and its 'formal ground' \((\text{ratio formalis})\) lies.\(^{48}\) The most commonly accepted position, 'beside faith or general assent of the intellect, requires the special application and assurance \((\text{fiducia})\) of the will in faith'. The second position, less common, was held by some notable theologians including Zanchi, Beza, Piscator, Perkins, Gomarus, and Maccovius. They identified the subject and the formal act of justifying faith as the intellect. Thirdly, there were a few who attributed them to the will alone: Voetius listed Ames as the only

\(^{47}\) For example, Sprunger, \textit{The Learned Doctor}, p.146. As will be argued, this claim is based on Karl Reuter's assessment.

\(^{48}\) The concept of 'formal ground' \((\text{ratio formalis})\) could be defined as 'the cause of diversity according to species' \((\text{causa diversitatis secundum speciem})\). See Aquinas, \textit{Summa contra gentiles}, II, 80, [3]. In the context of Voetius's discussion of faith, 'ratio formalis' of faith would mean the specific character which designates it as faith. It should also be noted that Voetius's own question was somewhat more technical than this. The general overarching question he set out initially was 'whether faith would be one simple disposition or rather a composite one which is brought together from multiple elements'. As a part of this inquiry, Voetius was further asking 'whether general faith in the intellect and trust in the will and special assent in the intellect is both direct and reflexive - whether they are formally justifying faith or disposition of faith: and if they are, whether faith on this ground would be simple or composite disposition'. Gisbertus Voetius, \textit{Selectae Disputatiosnes Theologicae V}, p.288-89. (This work is hereafter referred as \textit{SDT V}). I owe this insight to Voetius’s \textit{status questionis} to Andreas Beck in his response to my paper, presented at Advanced Theological Study Fellowship, Theological University of Kampen in June 2017.
example of someone who defended this position openly. After classifying these three positions, Voetius went on to write an extensive critique of Ames’s exposition of faith in the same disputation.

Considering the impact of Voetius’s analysis upon Amesian study, it is necessary to go over at least the outline of Voetius’s argument. The core of Voetius’s repeated criticism against Ames’s definition of faith is this: it is not proved or shown that the essence of faith lies in the action of the will. For example, in response to Ames’s definition of faith as the resting of the heart (acquiescentia), Voetius wrote:

Justifying faith is not without the resting of the will in God ... But it should have been proved that the faith is the resting of the will formally (formaliter) and not the mind, by which we assent and receive that special truth set forth and testified by the Holy Spirit who works in us this way: God is your God and Christ is your saviour.50

For Voetius, faith should not be identified with resting (acquiescentia) or trust (fiducia). Rather, such actions are caused by and distinct from faith itself. Voetius continues to comment on Isaiah 10:29, ‘Lean upon (initetur) the Lord, the Holy one of Israel, in faith’, the passage which Ames had used in support for his definition of faith:

It is not taught that the resting is properly the enticed action of accepted faith. But rather, it is the enticed action of trust (fiducia), which

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49 Gisbertus Voetius, Selectae Disputatiosnes Theologicae V, p.290.
50 ‘fidem iustificantem non esse sine acquiescentia voluntatis in Deo ... sed probari debebat esse formaliter acquiescentiam voluntatis, et non mentis, qua assentimur et recipimus illam specialem veritatem a Spiritu Sancto intus nobis propositam, et testatam, hoc modo: Deus est Deus tuus, Christus est Salvator tuus.’ Voetius, SDT V, p.290.
accompanies or follows the action of faith, certain assent and precedes full assurance. (*plerophoras*)

The important point for Voetius is that the action of faith, which is primarily located in the intellect, and the action of trust, which is primarily located in the will, must be categorically distinct from each other. According to Voetius, the action of faith in the intellect precedes and in some way causes the action of trust in the will. The essence of faith lies in the former, and not in the latter.

In addition, Voetius had another problem with Ames’s use of the term ‘whole person’. Ames argued that faith is the act of choosing, and therefore, an act of the whole person. This action of faith does not fit with the intellect. In response to this argument, Voetius picked up the idea that the act of faith is the act of the whole person and turned it around against Ames: ‘the action of the whole person cannot be attributed to the will alone. Faith is the action of the whole person. Therefore [faith cannot be attributed to the will alone].’

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51 ‘Non doceri τὸ ἀνέκτιτον actum esse elicitum fidei proprie acceptae; sed poitus esse actum elicitum fiduciae, qui concomitatur aut consequitur actum fidei, certi assensus, et plerophoras praecedentis; ideque indicari, cum adiicitur, in fide, hoc est per fidem seu fidei actum elicitum.’ Voetius, *SDT V*, p.290.

52 It is also worth noting that Voetius seems to be equating resting (*acquescentia*) or trust (*fiducia*) with full assurance (*plerophoras*). The action of trust accompanies or follows the action of faith, and the action of faith is, in turn, said to precede and lead to full assurance. In other words, trust and full assurance are identified as in the same category, something which comes after the action of faith. This suggests that Voetius’s definition of resting or trust might be different from Ames’s definition. This is confirmed when Voetius defines resting or trust a little later as ‘security in danger or security from evil’ (*securitas in periculis seu malo*) and he groups them together with the other fruits of faith such as joy (*gaudium*) and tranquility of soul (*tranquilitas animi*). For such a notion of security, Ames uses the term certainty (*certitudo*) of perseverance and salvation. And this certainty is separate in meaning from resting or trust and does not belong to the essence of faith: it is ‘truly sealed for all the faithful but its perception … is not always present to all.’ So, the different range of meanings attached to the terms resting or trust might well be one of the major causes for Voetius’s concern.

53 Ames, *Marrow*, I.III.

54 ‘Posset sic retorqueri, quod est actus totius hominis, non potest soli voluntati tribui: Fides est actus totius hominis; Ergo.’ Voetius, *SDTV*, p.292.
further clarification, Voetius then continued to distinguish two ways of understanding the nature of any action:

Therefore, distinguish [these two]: discerning, believing, trusting, hoping, rejoicing, loving are actions of the whole person as principles and subjects which (quod); they are nevertheless either an action of the intellect or of the will as principles and subjects by which (quo) or formal subject. [In the former case] regarding the whole person, believing should not be exclusively attributed to the intellect only nor should trusting be attributed to the will only; [in the latter case] regarding an action of one or the other, that action should be attributed exclusively.55

Voetius is giving an instruction as to when to attribute an action exclusively and when not to. When dealing with the subject as the whole person, that attribution should not be exclusive: the assumption in this case is that both the will and the intellect are involved. When dealing with the subject of an action in essence, or with the agent of an action, the attribution should be exclusive: either one or the other should be identified as the agent. Voetius is trying to show how inappropriately Ames dealt with the issue: Ames was attributing the action of faith exclusively to the will even when dealing with the subject from the perspective of the whole person.

The outline of Voetius’s critique of Ames’s conception of faith so far gives an impression that, in Voetius’s assessment, Ames simply excluded the role of the intellect altogether from the life of faith. However, it is important to notice that this is not the case. After making a distinction between the ‘principle which’

55 ‘Distingue ergo: τὸ sapere, τὸ credere, τὸ confidere, τὸ sperare, τὸ gaudere, τὸ amare, sunt actus totius hominis, tanquam principii et subjecti quod: et sunt nihilominus intellectus aut voluntatis, tanquam principii et subjecti quo, seu formalis. Soli menti τὸ credere, aut soli voluntati confidere tribui non debe excluse ad totum hominem, aut excluse ad actum alterutrius’. Voetius, SDT V, p.292. According to Muller’s definition, principium quo ‘implies an active principle or basis for an event or effect, a causative principle, while principium quod ‘implies a passive principle that is acted on’. See Muller, ‘principium quo’ ‘principium quod’, DLGTT, p.246. 
(principium quod) and the ‘principle by which’ (principium quo), Voetius significantly went on to emphasize the inseparable nature of the relationship between the intellect and the will: ‘since the intellect necessarily and essentially has the will as an accompanying, connected consequence, and the will necessarily and essentially presupposes the intellect and the will is essentially dependent upon the intellect’.\textsuperscript{56} This shows that Voetius assumed both the intellect and the will should be involved in the life of faith in terms of principle as the whole person and that Voetius’s intention in this disputation only relates to principium quo, and not to principium quod.

This is in line with what Voetius set out as status questionis at the beginning of his disputation. Voetius stated that the majority of the Reformed agree that a special application of certainty and trust in the will should accompany general assent to the truth of Scripture in the intellect. So, the question is not about the required and connected things in the state of a truly faithful person and their conversion, nor about required action of the will for that special application of faith. The question at stake is, Voetius continued:

about the formal ground of faith in which the faith absolutely stands and about trust of the will, whether it [trust of the will] is the essence or form of faith or rather, an essential and necessary element attached just as gentleness, ability to laugh, as the intellect and the will are consecutive essentials of human being; and which precedes in terms of the order of nature, that application of the assent and the certainty of mind or the trust of will.\textsuperscript{57}

\textsuperscript{56} ‘cum ille necessario et essentialiter hunc consequentem, concomitantem, et conjunctum habeat; iste illum necessario et essentialiter praesupponat, eiusdemque dependentia ab illo fit essentialis’. Voetius, \textit{SDT V}, p.292.

\textsuperscript{57} ‘sed de ratione formali fidei in quo praeceps consistat, et de fiducia voluntatis an fit essentia seu forma fidei, an vero essentiale et necessarium adiunctum, ut docilitas, risibilitas, intellectus, voluntas sunt essentialia consecutiva hominis: Et utrum ordine naturae praecedat assensus ille applicativus et certitudo mentis, an fiducia voluntatis.’ Voetius, \textit{SDT V}, p.289.
So, Voetius’s intention was not to discuss whether the role of intellect was excluded in Ames’s concept of faith. The majority of the Reformed, including Ames, agreed that both the intellect and the will were involved in the life of faith. Rather, the purpose of Voetius’s disputation was to find out where the form or essence of faith lies and whether the intellect or the will precedes in terms of the logical order of nature.

Unfortunately, however, this highly technical disputation was not so clearly understood when later scholars read Voetius in their attempt to assess Ames’s concept of faith. Karl Reuter’s study is an example. Reuter emphasized the uniqueness of Ames’s definition of faith as the resting of the heart in God. In this definition, according to Reuter, Ames was reacting against contemporary Reformed orthodox scholars such as Zanchi, Beza, Pisacator, for whom ‘faith has become a conviction of the truth about God, to which confident trust is related only as an after-appearance’. Indeed, by locating the essence of faith in the will, Ames ‘separated himself from current orthodoxy’. Moreover, importantly for our thesis, Reuter found that Ames was not consistent in this principle throughout his writings: ‘the expressions of Ames himself here and there may cast doubt on the universal application of the principle’. Reuter went on to indicate that Ames did allow the role of the intellect in the life of faith when

Ames was engaged with polemical exchange with the Remonstrants.\footnote{Reuter refers here to Ames, Anti-Synodalia Scripta, p.301. This is where Ames argues that certainty of the subject involves ‘not only the intellectual but also attached trust’. (Certitudo subjecti non tantum est persuasiosis intellectualis, sed etiam adhaesionis fiducialis..) This is in agreement with our observation made with respect to Ames’s position on the issue of the mode of conversion earlier. See pp.166-70 above.} Clearly, the assumption was that Ames did not allow the role of intellect in the life of faith in his exposition in *Marrow*.

Reuter’s assessment of Ames’s relationship to Reformed orthodoxy described above seems to be influenced by his reading of Voetius’s critical analysis of Ames’s concept of faith. According to Reuter, Voetius could not fully understand Ames’s concept of faith because of the different presuppositions they had on faith: while Voetius ‘separates faith and living from each other’, Ames ‘desired the unity of faith and Christian life, although he had tried to reach it by strongly erasing every mark of knowing from saving faith’. This remark clearly indicates how Reuter read both figures based on the perceived contrast between intellectualistic tendencies on the part of Voetius and the strong reaction against that tendency on the part of Ames. Particularly noteworthy is the claim that Ames tried to reach the unity of faith and Christian life by ‘erasing every mark of knowing’ from the life of faith.\footnote{See Horton, *Ames by Reuter*, p.204, n.236.} Reuter further comments that: ‘the intellectual moment ... is at least banned from it by Ames at the fundamental level. So Voetius felt, above all.’ This shows that Reuter himself was inclined to think that the role of the intellect is fundamentally excluded by Ames from the life of faith, based on Voetius’s account. The highly technical nature of Voetius’s disputation and the precise nature of formal ground of faith, which Voetius was seeking, did not seem to be appreciated.
Here it is also important to examine Ames’s own statements in his exposition of faith to see that the role of intellect was not necessarily denied or banned as Reuter suggests. After identifying the essence of faith with the will, Ames significantly goes on to nuance his emphasis on the will:

Believing commonly signifies an act of the intellect, giving assent to testimony. But since the will tends to be moved consequently and to reach out to embrace the good thus demonstrated, for this reason faith also designates this act of the will suitably enough.62

Here the role of the will is described as an addition to the role of intellect, as shown clearly in the adverbs such as ‘also’ and ‘suitably enough’. Moreover, the will is described passively to ‘be moved consequently’, that is, as a consequence of something external to the will. Ames is not explicitly specifying what moves the will and demonstrates the good to the will, but in light of the wider medieval scholastic context it is natural to take it as the intellect which moves the will by demonstrating the good.63

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62 ‘credere vulgo singificat actum intellectus, assensum testimonio praebentis; sed quoniam consequenter voluntas moveri solet, et extendere sese ad amplectendum bonum ita probatum, idcirco, fides etiam hunc voluntatis actum designat satis apte:’ Ames, Marrow, I.III. 2. The Latin text is based on 1656 edition (Amsterdam) and English translation in this section of Marrow is my own.

63 Both Aquinas and Scotus thought that the good is demonstrated by the intellect and the will chooses the good demonstrated. Their difference lies in the extent which the will can control that action. For Aquinas, the freedom of action is rooted in the intellect’s ability to present different kinds of the good, whereas for Scotus the freedom is rooted in the will’s ability to determine itself to opposite acts. The root of the difference seems to lie in how the inclination of the will should be understood: Scotus saw it as ‘only a pondus or leaning toward’ goodness, while Aquinas as a fully natural act which binds the will to goodness. This results in Scotus’s claim that the will can suspend its own action of choosing the object proposed by the intellect. For a detailed discussion and comparison, see Thomas M. Osborne Jr. Human Action in Thomas Aquinas, John Duns Scotus & William Ockham (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2014), pp.5-44; Patrick Lee, ‘The Relation between Intellect and Will in Free Choice according to Aquinas and Scotus’, The Thomist 49 (1985): pp.321-42; Bernardine M. Bonansea, ‘Duns Scotus’ Voluntarism’ in John Duns Scotus, 1265-1965, ed. John K. Ryan and Bernardine M. Bonansea (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America, 1965), pp.83-121. As for Ames’s position on this issue, his pronounced emphasis on the will in Marrow and his statements about the issue in his Conscience with the Power and Cases Thereof reveal his
Shortly after this, Ames went on to press the same point: ‘Hence, faith is brought into the good, which becomes ours through faith. It is an act of choice, an act of the whole person – which in no way agree with (conveniunt) an act of the intellect.’\textsuperscript{64} Again, this phrase does not necessarily mean elimination of the role of the intellect altogether. The verb used here (conveniunt) is mainly about fitness or suitableness but not about exact identification ‘to be’ as standard translations put it.\textsuperscript{65} As Voetius seemed to be aware, the assumption behind mentioning the ‘whole person’ is that both the intellect and the will are involved in the action. Ames continued in the next section:

[T]herefore, although faith always presupposes a knowledge of the Gospel, nevertheless no saving knowledge is given to anyone ... except consequent upon the act of the will and depending upon it.\textsuperscript{66}

Once again, knowledge of the Gospel, which is certainly perceived through the intellect, is presupposed, and the action of the will is described as passively receiving knowledge in a certain way as a consequence.\textsuperscript{67} So, Ames described the relationship between the will and the intellect as inter-mutual, complementary, not contradictory or exclusive. Ames's emphasis on the will in

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\textsuperscript{64} 'fides ... est actus totius hominis, quae actui intellectus nullo modo convenient.' Ames, Marrow, I.III.3.

\textsuperscript{65} In Eusden’s translation, for example, this phrase is rendered, ‘which is by no means a mere act of the intellect’. Marrow I, III, 3.

\textsuperscript{66} ‘Quamvis igitur fides praesupponat semper notitiam Euangelii, nulla tamen datur in quovum cognitio salutifera ... nisi consequenter ad actum istum voluntatis, et ab ipso dependens.’ Ames, Marrow, I.III.3.

\textsuperscript{67} The last part of the sentence has traditionally been rendered: ‘except the knowledge which follows this act of the will and depends upon it’. This translation somewhat distorts the meaning of the sentence because the point is not that the knowledge follows the act of the will, but that the knowledge is brought or given to the will as a consequence of a previous action, which is most probably the intellect perceiving the knowledge and consequently becoming dependent on the will’s action.
the life of faith was certainly not intended to ‘erase every mark of knowing from faith’ as Reuter tended to understand it.\(^68\)

The reason behind Ames’s pronounced emphasis on the will can be discerned from the brief statement he made at the end of his exposition of faith. He mentioned ‘some’ who ‘place true faith partly in the understanding and partly in the will’ but this is not correct in Ames’s judgement. Ames continues to explain his reason for this judgement: ‘for it is a single virtue and brings forth acts of one quality throughout, not partly of knowledge and partly of the affections’.\(^69\) Although it is not clear exactly with whom Ames is disagreeing here, he seems to be disagreeing with those of what Voetius called the common opinion, who see saving faith as consisting of two composite dispositions, one in the intellect and another in the will. It was only this particular point of understanding, of faith as two composite dispositions that Ames plainly disagreed with in some contemporary opinion.\(^70\) Otherwise, Ames was broadly in agreement with the idea that both the intellect and the will were involved within the life of faith.

This reading of Ames’s exposition of faith in *Marrow* is not inconsistent with what we found in Ames’s position on the process of conversion. There, we have

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68 See p.178, n.61 above.

69 *Marrow*, I, III, 22. 1 Cor.13 was cited as Scriptural support.

70 Ames’s position could be explained more precisely based on the distinction between acts and habits. On the one hand, Ames does not deny that the act of faith involves both intellect and will as clearly shown above. On the other hand, in terms of the habit of faith, Ames opposes the view that the habit of faith consists in both will and intellect but argues that it has its seat only in the will. As an alternative view, Andreas Rivetus argued that justifying faith, ‘is not one single and absolutely simple disposition, but it is an aggregate (or combined) disposition that somehow is composed of two dispositions that form only one when they are coordinated’. Revetus’s basic reasons is because ‘two dispositions can form one virtue and two things can combine into one act.’ *Synopsis Purioris Theologiae / Synopsis of a Purer Theology: Latin Text and English Translation: Volume 2, Disputations 24-42* ed. Henk van den Belt, trans. Riemer Faber (Leiden/Bostons: Brill, 2016), p.245.
found that Ames repeatedly argued that the way of moral suasion, which works through the intellect, and the way of physical predetermination, which works through the will, are not contradictory but rather complementary to each other. For Ames, the process of conversion involves not only moral suasion but also physical predetermination. Faith is both infused by divine omnipotence and acquired by human willingness at the same time. This argument, which he put forward against the Remonstrants, should not be taken as Ames’s inconsistency with what was set out as his exposition of faith in the *Marrow*. Rather, it should be taken as a basic principle, in light of which his exposition in *Marrow* should be understood, particularly considering his deliberately terse, dense style of writing in the latter.

The important question for us to consider next is whether Ames pulled himself from the mainstream of Reformed Orthodoxy by emphasising the will in the action of faith. As we saw, many scholars including Reuter have concluded that he did. However, our nuanced reading of Ames’s exposition of faith, in light of his anti-Arminian polemical argumentation, that the process of conversion is both moral and physical suggests a different conclusion. For one thing, the judgement that Ames was outside the mainstream is partly based on a false assumption. It was not Voetius’s intention to discuss simply whether or not the role of intellect was excluded in Ames’s exposition. They were in broad agreement that both the intellect and the will are involved in the life of faith. It was probably Reuter’s inaccurate assessment that influenced subsequent modern scholars to conclude that Ames was a minority position among the Reformed. For another thing, Voetius’s list of theologians in his disputation was
surely not meant to be exhaustive. When Voetius listed Ames as an example of someone who openly defended his position, it was just that: an example. There might well have been others who agreed with Ames in placing the essence of faith in the will who were overlooked or excluded by Voetius. Among Ames’s contemporaries, Bartholomäus Keckermann (1572-1608) is such an example. In his discussion of saving faith, the Polish-born Reformed theologian stated his position on the issue quite clearly: ‘justifying faith is the trust in the elect, aroused by the Holy Spirit, firmly applying the promise of divine grace’. Although faith ‘presupposes some knowledge, but in a formal sense it is [volitional] reaching out (affectus) toward the promise of grace’. Keckermann’s example provides an important precedent to Ames’s articulation of faith within Reformed orthodoxy.

Furthermore, Ames was not without followers in his conception of his faith. Peter van Mastricht (1630-1706), Voetius’s successor in Utrecht, showed his basic agreement with Ames when he stated that faith consists originatively (radicaliter) in the intellect, formally (formaliter) in the will operatively (operative) in the remaining faculties of the soul. Although Maastricht presented his position as the middle ground between those who placed the essence in the intellect and others who placed it in the will (notably ‘many British practical theologians’ who locate faith solely in the will), it is possible to see this position as essentially the same with Ames in light of Maastricht’s

72 Peter van Mastricht, Theoretico-pratica Theologia (1698), II,1, xxii, p.55.
discussion prior to this statement. For Maastricht, faith involves the whole person and as such the intellect, the will, and the affections all have roles to play. After describing these roles, Maastricht focused on faith as an act of receiving (*receptio*), with a clear echo of the Amesian notion of faith: ‘[t]hat receiving of Christ ... rests on the consensus, namely, when *the will gives assent* to Christ offering himself in the Gospel, that agreement, so that one is received on account of the only Mediator’. Maastricht’s definition of faith primarily as receiving Christ, and of receiving Christ as an act of the will, clearly indicates his leaning toward Ames.

Taking these considerations together, it would be misleading at best to conclude that Ames was outside the mainstream of Reformed orthodoxy in his conception of faith. Rather, Ames’s pronounced emphasis on the role of the will came from his concern that the idea of faith as a single disposition would be lost if the essence of faith is somehow placed in both the intellect and the will. He was indeed in harmony with many within the Reformed tradition in articulating that both the intellect and the will are involved within the life of faith. Ames was not inconsistent, as suggested by Reuter, when he argued that God works through moral as well as physical ways during the process of conversion.

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73 ‘Consistit ... ista Christi *receptio*, in *consensus*, quando scil. Christo sese offerenti in Euangelio, ea lege, ut recipiatur pro unico Mediatore, annuit voluntas’. Peter van Mastricht, *Theoretico-pratica Theologia* (1698), II, i, xii, pp.52. (Emphasis added.)

74 Peter van Mastricht, *Theoretico-pratica Theologia* (1698), II, i, xii, p.52. For a detailed examination of Mastricht’s concept of faith and its historical context, see Adriaan C. Neele, *Petrus van Mastricht (1630-1706) Reformed orthodoxy: Method and Piety* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), pp.105-36. Neele also added Johannesc Cloppenbourg (1592-1652), and Johanness Cocceius (1603-1669) to the list of theologians who broadly followed Amesian notion of faith as defined as heartfelt trust in God.
Where did Ames find his concept of faith? This is another important question concerning Ames's voluntarism because of the claim that Ames somehow borrowed this notion from Arminianism, finding ‘corrective’ in the Remonstrant insistence on human response in salvation. Within this scholarly context, it is quite important to notice that what we have found in the discussion of the way of conversion points to the contrary of what has been argued about the origin of Ames's voluntarism. Rather than appropriating Remonstrant teaching, Ames was in fact strongly reacting against the intellectualistic tendency he found in Grevinchoven. This is clear in Grevinchoven's insistence that the process of conversion does not involve any efficacious power of divine grace working through the human will, but primarily by means of persuasion which works through the human intellect. This suggests that Ames might indeed have developed his emphasis on the will in the life of faith through his engagement with the Arminian controversy, but not positively through finding a needed corrective in the voluntarism of Grevinchoven; rather, through negatively arguing against Grevinchoven’s emphasis on the mind in the process of conversion.

This is indeed what Ames clearly indicated in his later work, *Conscience with the Power and Cases Thereof*. In this work, Ames discussed the relationship between the will and the intellect in some detail and listed a number of reasons for the priority of will over intellect, by which ‘the will can move it selfe, toward an object that is apprehended and judged good for profit or pleasure in some

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respect, though reason judge that it is not lawfull but sinfull’. One of Ames’s reasons relates to the process of conversion: ‘if the will doe necessarily follow the understanding, then in Regeneration the will it selfe neede not bee internally renewed grace: for the inlightening of the Understanding would be sufficient. But this is repugnant to faith and godlinesse.’ In other words, in order to maintain the theory of physical predetermination in the process of conversion which involves the renewal of will by divine grace, the priority must be placed in the will over the intellect. Otherwise, the illumination of intellect, as Grevinchtoven argued, would be sufficient for conversion and the renewal of will would not be necessary. This clearly shows that Ames’s pronounced emphasis on the will in the life of faith and the process of conversion can be explained as his attempt to refute, rather than borrow from, Arminianism. In light of this logic, it could even be said that Ames’s argument against Arminianism proved effective precisely because of – rather than despite of – his voluntarism. In order to be philosophically consistent with his argument for physical predetermination, Ames saw that he needed to hold firmly to the priority of the will over the intellect.

This insight – Arminianism’s close association with an intellectualistic tendency and the voluntaristic emphasis often found in Reformed orthodoxy – is not a recent discovery. It has already been recognized that an intellectualistic tendency is closely associated with Arminianism. Norman S. Fiering made this clear:

76 Ames, Conscience with the Power and Cases Thereof (Leiden, 1639), I, VII.
77 Ames, Conscience with the Power and Cases Thereof (Leiden, 1639), I, VII, 7.
It is often not recognized that Pelagianism and Arminianism are intimately related to the intellectualist theory, although there has always been a completely orthodox intellectualist tradition in reformed Protestantism, too. In fact, sometimes the reverse is thought, that voluntarism is conducive to a Pelagian potency of will, a confusion which is due to the failure to distinguish between Molinist liberty of will and the Augustinian liberty which subordinates the will to either divine or satanic influence.78

In this regard, a general trend we have noticed in Amesian study to associate Ames's voluntarism with Arminianism seems to reflect the unfortunate state of confusion mentioned by Fiering. However, the philosophical issue of the relationship between intellect and will within human soul, and the theological issue of the relationship between divine grace and human will, should never be confused. Fiering continued that, once this confusion is unscrambled, 'it becomes readily evident that intellectualism can lead rather easily to a belief in salvation by effort and endeavor, whereas the pietistic voluntarist [like Ames] can only wait on divine grace for redemption'79.

More recently, Richard Muller's study of Arminius's concept of faith highlighted Arminius's intellectualistic tendency in his understanding of faith. Arminius excluded the element of volitional trust from the definition of faith and so placed clear emphasis on the intellect in the life of faith. For Arminius, trust does not belong to the essence of faith but can only be understood as the result or consequence of faith. Therefore, there is a contrast between the Reformed definition, which included a volitional element as a fundamental aspect of faith on the one hand, and Arminius's tendency to draw the definition

79 Fiering, 'Will and Intellect', p.551.
away from the volitional element toward the intellectual element on the other.\textsuperscript{80} Based on this contrast, Muller went on to suggest a soteriological implication for each of these tendencies: ‘the contrast between Arminius’ thoroughgoing intellectualism and the soteriological voluntarism of his Reformed opponents’\textsuperscript{81}.

Muller’s suggestion coincides with Fiering’s observation and both of them confirm what we found in Ames’s polemical writings against Arminianism. Among the Reformed opponents of Arminius and the Remonstrants, Ames championed soteriological voluntarism perhaps in its most explicit form, fighting with the intellectualistic tendency of Grevinchoven, a process which must have helped Ames develop his emphasis on the will.

\textbf{4.4 Divine Grace and Human Freedom}

As has already been shown, the central question which was posed initially by the third and the fourth articles of the Remonstrance (1610) was whether divine grace can be resisted. For both the Remonstrants and the Reformed orthodox, this is linked to the issue of the way of conversion, which was discussed above. On the one hand, the Remonstrant idea of the mode of conversion by means of suasion is linked to the idea that the grace is resistible. On the other hand, the Reformed orthodox idea that the mode of conversion is through both suasion and physical determination, is linked to the idea of irresistible grace. These relations were clear, at least to Ames, when

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item \textsuperscript{80} Richard Muller, 'The Priority of the Intellect in the Soteriology of Jacob Arminius', \textit{Westminster Theological Journal} 55 (1999), p.64.
\item \textsuperscript{81} Muller, 'The Priority of Intellect', p.67.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Grevinchoven defined conversion as the moral way of suasion ‘against which human will can always resist’.\textsuperscript{82}

However, Grevinchoven tried to nuance Ames’s hostile perception of the Remonstrant position:

And we not unwillingly confess that grace is brought to the intellect physically just as the light to the eye: and that those illuminations produce [its effect] physically and efficaciously in the intellect: furthermore, perception of grace penetrates into the affection by an irresistible motion. Therefore, we do not build on moral grace such that we take away physical grace all together. However, that the will is predetermined with the same irresistible force or motion and its agreement is elicited such that no power of refusing the considered agreement is left to the will, this certainly we deny all together.\textsuperscript{83}

So Grevinchoven admitted that the operation of grace is irresistible both in the intellect and the affection, but denied the same kind of operation of grace in the will. Otherwise, it will leave no power of refusal to the will, which means as a result, in Grevinchoven’s perspective, no freedom of the will.\textsuperscript{84}

Ames strongly disagreed with Grevinchoven’s conclusion that the physical way of conversion leaves no power to resist and no freedom in the will. This led Ames to devote a lengthy discussion to the question of how the irresistible

\textsuperscript{82} Grevinchoven, \textit{Dissertatio Theologica}, p.237.

\textsuperscript{83} ‘Et nos non inviti fatemur, gratiam Physice intellectui obiici, ut lucem oculo: atque eandem illuminationes in intellectu Physice atque efficienter producere: denique et sensum gratiae irresistibili motu in affectum penetrare: Nec nos igitur moralem gratiam ita adstruimus ut Physicam omni modo tollamus: Sed eandem vi ac motione irresistibili voluntatem praeedeterminari, atque ita assensum elicere, ut non relinquatur voluntati potestas recusandi consensum deliberatum, hoc vero pernegamus.’ Grevinchoven, \textit{Dissertatio Theologica}, pp.292-93.

\textsuperscript{84} This is consistent with what we found in the previous discussion of the mode of conversion: Grevinchoven allowed physical motion within the intellect and the affection but he denied that this would be extended to the will. Ames pointed out that this is contradictory with Grevinchoven’s charge that physical motion cannot be compatible with a moral one. See, p.169, n.39 above.
nature of grace in the process of conversion of the human will can stand together with human freedom.

Ames did this initially by making a distinction between the power to resist and the action of resisting. The power to resist is not necessarily taken away by divine grace but the action of resisting or the resisting itself is:

I said this power – either of disagreeing or of resisting – is not simply taken away through the preceding absolute decree or through that action of the grace, which we attribute to God in conversion of humanity, but only the action of disagreeing or resisting itself. 85

Through his exchange with Grevinchoven, Ames further clarified and defended his position by using a series of scholastic distinctions which interestingly display Ames’s familiarity with, and heavy dependence on, scholastic terms and method. These distinctions includes the divided/composite sense (senso divido/composito), the first/second act (actu primo/secundo), simultaneity of power (simultas potentiae) and power of simultaneity (potentia simultatis), which were in the process of being utilized and accepted by the Reformed orthodox in their attempts to establish human freedom. As will be clear, through using these distinctions, Ames argued that the nature of contingency and alternatives which were held by human agent in the process of conversion is simultaneous rather than through temporal change, indicating his preference of synchronic idea of contingency over diachronic contingency.

The first distinction Ames introduced is the one between the power of cause (potentia causae) and possibility of effect (effecti possibilitatem). For,

85 ‘Hanc autem potentiam vel dissentiendi vel resistendi non simpliciter tolli dixi per decretum praevium absolutum, aut per actionem illam gratiae, quam Deo tribuimus in hominum conversione, sed actum tantum dissentienti, vel resistentiam ipsam.’ Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, p.148.
'sometimes a cause has a certain power for producing an effect, which is impossible from some supposition so as to be produced in actuality'. To illustrate this distinction, Ames mentioned the soldiers who did not break the bones of Christ. They had sufficient power to break Christ’s bones but they could not actually do it against the divine decree which was clearly prophesied beforehand. In other words, they had the power of cause but were lacking the possibility of effect.

The second distinction which Ames used to clarify his position is between the first act and the second act. Ames used this distinction when he was challenged about the incompatibility between the idea of new life as infused by God and the power to resist held by a human agent. He responded to this challenge initially by reiterating that the way of conversion is partly moral and partly physical or efficacious. The point is (as noted earlier), as far as the way of conversion is moral, there still remains the power to resist. Therefore, the process of infusion ‘does not fill up the total power, but adds a partial form, as it were, which can hold well with the power of resisting’. Then, Ames explained this in terms of the distinction between the first act and the second act:

That infused grace does not determine the will properly except in the first act such that some freedom remains as for the second act. He who pursues infallibly by the force of efficacious motion does not, however, take away all the freedom or the power to the contrary.

86 ‘Causa nonnunquam potentiam quandam habet ad effectum aliquod producendum, quod ut actu producatur est impossible ex aliqua suppositione.’ Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, p.148.
87 ‘Infusio illa non totam potentiam explet, sed partialem quasi formam addit, quacum potentia renitendi consistere bene potest.’ Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, p.150.
88 ‘Gratia illa infusa non determinat voluntatem proprie nisi in actu primo ita ut libertas quaedam remaneat ad actum secundum: qui licet infallibiliter sequitur motionis efficacis vi, libertatem omnem tamen aut potentiam ad contrarium non tollit.’ Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, pp.150-51.
This section poses a problem for the reader, with regard to the precise meaning of the distinction between the first act and the second act as used by Ames. This distinction was commonly used to explain different ways of considering the operative faculties such as the intellect and the will. The meaning of the first act commonly refers to ‘a sense in which a being or a substance endowed with operative faculties like intellect and will is actualized, or *in actu*, simply by being what it is, apart from the consideration of the operations of the faculties.’ Being abstracted from the actual consideration, it points to the capability of willing two opposite actions at the same time. The second act, by contrast, refers to ‘the condition of the actual exercise of its faculties’. Being involved in a concrete action, the will is unable to choose two opposite actions simultaneously. Ames seems to convey something different to this commonly accepted meaning of the term: while the determination of divine grace seems to be attached to the first act, the capability of alternative actions by human agent seems to be attached to the second act. Whatever the precise meaning of this distinction is intended by Ames, his point is that the power to act contrary to the action predetermined by divine grace does remain in a human agent based on this distinction.

This distinction between the first act and the second act is, in turn, linked to the third distinction: between the divided sense (*sensus dividus*) and composite sense (*sensus compositus*). This crucial distinction is also commonly employed by the Reformed to explain how two logically contradictory actions are possible. The classic example which is used to clarify the meaning of these distinctions is

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89 See Muller, ‘in actu’, *DLGTT*, pp.150-51.
the following statement: ‘Socrates sits and runs’. This statement is contradictory when understood in the composite sense that ‘it is possible that Socrates sits and runs’, since obviously it is not possible that Socrates sits and runs at the same time. However, in the divided sense, it is possible for Socrates to sit and for Socrates to run without any contradiction. Furthermore, there are two ways of understanding this statement in the divided sense, one diachronically and the other synchronically. Diachronically understood, ‘Socrates sits at T0 and it is possible that Socrates runs at T1’, where the different moments are assigned to two different actions of sitting and running. Synchronically understood, ‘Socrates sits at T0 and it is possible that Socrates runs at T0’, where the same moment is assigned to the both actions. It is this latter synchronic understanding of contingency which the authors of *Reformed Thought on Freedom* argue that the Reformed orthodox preferred and adopted from a Scotist influence.90

When this distinction is applied to the relationship between divine grace and human response in the process of conversion, the power to disagree (*potentiam repugnandi*) is taken away through efficacious grace only in the composite sense but not in the divided sense. Moreover, diachronically the power to reject efficacious grace is held before one accepts efficacious grace while synchronically the same power is held at the same time when one accepts grace. Ames’s explanation shows his preference to the latter sense:

> The meaning of this distinction is this: when the [human] will is determined through grace and moved efficaciously and infallibly to

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assent, although it would not have the power to disagree simultaneously [in the composite sense], it has the power to disagree simultaneously [in the divided sense], though not an altogether equal, or absolutely indifferent one.\(^9\)

The qualification at the end of this section is important: it implies that the power to disagree in the composite sense is equal to absolute indifference, which is distinguished from the power to disagree in the divided sense. What Ames holds is only the latter and not the former. In other words, true freedom does not necessarily mean the same with absolute indifference and they should be conceptually distinguished.

In order to explain more about this distinction between the divided and the composite sense, Ames introduced yet another, fourth distinction: between simultaneity of power \((\text{simultas potentiae})\) and the power of simultaneity \((\text{potentia simultatis})\). The former points to the simultaneous existence of potencies of not doing something or doing something else when the agent is doing something, while the latter regards the power by which the agent can act and not to act something or act something else at the same time. The former is accepted but the latter is rejected by the Reformed. Ames explained this distinction:

There is simultaneity of power \((\text{simultas potentiae})\) in the will for giving assent and dissent, although it would be inclined to the other part, so to speak, when restored to order. However, there is no power of simultaneity \((\text{potentia simultatis})\) for giving assent and dissent, by which those actions can be produced at the same time. Thus, effectual grace and

\(^{9}\) 'Distinctionis huilis haec mens est; quum determinatur voluntas per gratiam, et efficaciter movetur atque infallibiliter ad assentiendum; quamvis non habeat potestatem simul dissentienti, simul tamen habet potestatem dissentienti licet non omni modo aequalem, aut absolute indifferentem.' Ames, \textit{Rescriptio Scholastica}, p.151. Although there is no explicite references to the composite/divided sense, they are presupposed here as they are mentioned in the section which immediately preceds this quote.
the power of rejection are present in the will at the same time, for this is the combination of the determination to one act with the power to the other. However, there is never effectual grace and rejection, or the power of receiving effectual grace working efficaciously and of rejecting it at the same time. That is a combination of determination to one action with another or a contrary action.  

Thus, it is not the power of simultaneity but simultaneity of power which is present in the will at the same time with the determination to one act. This potency to act otherwise, in this case the power to reject the divine grace, is distinct from the action of rejection itself, and yet considered a genuine alternative which one holds when receiving the effectual grace. The genuineness of these logical alternatives are expressed by Ames as something which ‘would be inclined to the other part’ when it would be ‘restored to order’. This language suggests that the genuineness of logical alternatives held by the human agent does not depend on whether or not they are actualized.

On the basis that the power of resistance is still held within the human faculty in the process of conversion, Ames argued that the primacy of divine will and the irresistibility of divine grace are not only compatible with human freedom, but also would establish true human freedom. When explaining the basis of that human freedom, Ames emphasized the simultaneous nature of alternatives which is held by a human agent:

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92 ‘Est in voluntate simultas potentia ad assentiendum et dissentiendum, licet in alteram partem inclinata fit et quasi in ordinem reducta: non est autem in voluntate potentia simultatis, ad assentiendum et dissentiendum, qua potest hos actus simul proferre. Sic simul adsunt in voluntate gratia efficax et potentia dissentiendi, haec enim est compositio determinationis ad unum cum potentia ad alterum; nunquam autem gratia efficax et dissensus; aut potentia habendi gratiam efficaciter moventem et dissentiendi simul: quae est compositio determinationis ad unum cum actu altero sive contrario.’ Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, p.151.
For I do not maintain this: that the will preserves absolute indifference when placed already by the action of its own determination. Nor do I affirm free will on the basis of that reason only, namely, because before one determines for one thing, he could choose another, but also because at that moment of time when one is in actuality determined for one thing, one holds true power of choosing the other if he would will so to choose.93

Significantly, the idea of contingency is explained not only because of the ability to choose otherwise before choosing one action, but also because of the ability to choose otherwise at the same moment of time when performing one action.

Ames continued to explain how this simultaneous ability to choose otherwise can be held by human agents through the use of the first act/second act distinction again: ‘because the freedom which is in the first act, is not taken away but performed in the second act, nor the action itself should be called free if the freedom is lost by acting’.94 Thus, the capability of willing two opposite actions in the sense of the first act can still be thought to remain in the will of the human agent while at the same time exercising the determinate action in the second act. In this way, the simultaneous capacity to act otherwise ensures the contingent nature of an action on the level of actuality. Moreover, it is worth noting that Ames shows why this simultaneous nature of alternativity is preferred in the second part of this sentence: ‘nor the action itself should be free if the freedom is lost by acting’. Unless the alternative is simultaneously held by

93 'Non enim hoc contend, voluntatem posito iam actu determinationis suae adhuc absolutam indifferential servare; neque ea sola ratione liberam voluntatem affirmo, quia prius quam se determinaret ad una partem, alteram eligere potuit, sed etiam quia in eo ipso temporis momento, quo actu determinatur ad unam, veram retinet potestatem alteram si velit eligendi.' Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, p.162.

94 'quia libertas illa quae fuit in actu primo, non tollitur sed perficitur in actu secundo: nec liber dicendus esset actus ipse, si agendo libertas amitteretur'. Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, p.162. The problem here is that the meaning of distinction between the first and the second act, unlike the previous example, seems to be consistent with the commonly accepted meaning. Ames’s use of this distinction seems therefore slightly confused. See pp.191-93 above.
the agent with the actual action, that action would not be truely free. In other words, Ames thinks the idea of contingency must be understood synchronically, rather than dischronically, in order to establish human freedom. Ames’s clarification and emphasis on the genuineness and simultaneous nature of these logical alternatives indicates not only a clear Scotist influence upon Ames’s thinking on the issue of contingency but also the weight of importance he attached in this Scotist formulation of synchronic contingency.95

However, there is also an undeniable Thomistic influence found in Ames’s formulation of the divine concurrence, the idea of how divine grace and human will work together in the process of human actions. Ames tried to address this question as follows:

We do not attribute the whole determination to God alone, except in the first act, by which the will is rendered fit for eliciting its own act. But the determination in the second act is an operation of the will moved by God, and therefore, primarily by God as the first cause or the supreme and absolute ruler, but secondarily by the will. Therefore, the will effects what had not previously been done in it, for it determines itself in the second act, though it had not being determined in it [the second act] before; yet it does not act as the first agent, but as an agent acted upon by

95 The significance of simultaneous capacity for opposite acts should not be undermined simply by the fact that it is not actualized on the factual level. The simultaneous presence of capacity of willing not X allows the factual act of willing X to be caused contingently, rather than necessarily, shaping and modifying the very nature of the actual act X. Scotus thought that, in order to grasp the true causal nature of the will, the opportunity to will contrary acts at different moments must be removed, and the process of action should be collapsed into single instant. This is reflected in Ames’s argumentation. Thus, Muller’s (and Helm’s) repeated critique — that the logical language of synchronic contingency does not constitute an ontology, and therefore does not have any ontological impact in the world — seems to miss the point of synchronic contingency. For helpful discussions, See John Duns Scotus: Contingency and Freedom Lectura I 39, pp.117-23; Michael Sylwanowicz, Contingent Causality and the Foundations of Duns Scotus’ Metaphysics (Leiden:Brill, 1996), pp.57-82; Stephen D. Dumont, ‘The Origin of Scotus’s Theory of Synchronic Contingency’, The Modern Schoolman LXV (January/March, 1995), pp.149-67. For Muller’s critique, see Richard Muller, Divine Will and Human Choice, pp.61-63, 283-310.
something else and predetermined toward this very thing – that it freely determine itself.96

Here, an action in the sense of the second act is attributed to both divine and human agents by Ames: God as the first and the human as the second cause.

Ames further clarified this relationship between divine and human when he tried to answer the charge levelled against him that there would be coercion or violent motion of the will in the process of conversion if the will has the external cause only and the reluctant will is forced to perform in a certain way by divine power. Ames dismissed this objection by calling it ‘obsolete’ and ‘outdated’. If the act of believing is considered, divine grace should not be simply thought as the external cause but rather intrinsic within the believer as grace is inherent as the principle by which (principium quo), whereas the will is the principle which (principium quod).97 To support this, Ames cites Aquinas’s argument that the intrinsic principle of action within the agent does not have to be ‘the first principle unmoved by another’ (primum principium non motum ab alio).98 Although the human will under the influence of saving grace has obviously the external principle as the first principle, it still has the internal proximate principle within itself.

Furthermore, Ames used another Aquinas’s argument that a change within human will brought about by God cannot be violence or coercion. This is based

96 ‘Deo soli determinationem totam non tribuimus, nisi in actu primo, quo idonea redditur voluntas ipsa ad eliciendum actum suum. Determinatio autem in actu secundo est operatio voluntatis a Deo motae, atque adeo primario a Deo, ut a causa prima seu domino supremo ac absoluto, secundario vero a voluntate. Efficit igitur voluntas quod non ante factum in ipsa fuit, determinat enim sese in actu secundo, quum in eodem antea determinata non erat: non agit tamen ut primum agens, sed ut agens ab alia actum, et ad hoc ipsum praedeterminatum, ut libere determinet semet ipsum.’ Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, p.163.
97 For definitions of these terms, see Muller, ‘principium quo’ ‘principium quod’, DLGTT, p.246.
98 Aquinas, S.Th. Ia IIae, q.9, a. 4. Cited by Ames, Rescriptio Scholastica, p.154.
on the contrary natures between inclination of the will and force or violence. The way in which God moves the will is such that it is ‘not contrary to the inclination still extant’ but only contrary to the inclination that had previously existed but has already disappeared. Therefore, the physical way of conversion and the irresistible nature of grace does not imply any sense of violence or coercion from the divine upon human will.

This particular section of Ames’s defence of his position, along with his argument for the idea of physical premotion discussed above, seems to indicate his reliance on Thomas and a broader Dominican tradition as opposed to Scotist influence which we found in Ames’s emphasis on the will and the idea of synchronic contingency. The logical flow of Ames’s arguments seems to be that, Ames employed Scotist idea of synchronic contingency in order to defend his position on Thomistic idea of premotion. This combination, Thomistic influence on Ames’s idea of divine concurrence coupled with Scotistic influence on his idea of contingency, seems to confirm Muller’s basic thesis that the Reformed orthodox use of the medieval scholastic sources was eclectic.99

99 The issue is more complicated by the fact that Muller argued for a fundamentally Thomistic background for Ames’s formulation of divine ideas as surveyed in the Introduction. See Introduction, p.38-41 above. What is more, Muller went on to propose ‘a kind of modified Thomism’ as the background for the early modern Reformed, based on the understanding that the idea of divine concursus provides ‘ontological framework into which the Reformed has interjected the language of synchronic contingency’. Muller, Divine Will and Human Choice, p.289. The answer to this particular scholarly debate depends perhaps on the weight of importance attached to particular idea or area whose medieval antecedent is examined. The Utrecht school seems to emphasize the idea of synchronic contingency as the important key behind the Reformed orthodox doctrine of God and their attempt to establish human freedom. By contrast, Muller seems to put more weight on the issue of divine concurrence. Moreover, in order to clarify the precise nature of Ames’s eclecticism and reach a more secure conclusion about Ames’s medieval background, further research is required to identify the direct theological source of Ames’s argumentation for the idea of synchronic contingency and the divine concurrence. Diego Alvarez could be suggested as a possible source for Ames’s formulation, as the combination of both Scotistic and Thomistic elements and Ames’s possible reliance upon Alvarez in his refutation of middle knowledge, discussed in Chapter Two,
Even if scholarly issues concerning the idea of synchronic contingency are set aside, Ames’s discussion of human freedom and his use of these scholastic distinctions can be seen as a significant contribution toward the development of the Reformed orthodoxy. Ames appropriated a series of crucial scholastic distinctions, such as divided/composite sense, the first/the second act, simultaneity of power/power of simultaneity in his attempt to defend the compatibility of irresistible grace with human freedom against his Arminian opponent albeit not in a fully developed form as seen in the later high orthodoxy. This is not to claim Ames’s originality since a vast number of other contemporary thinkers and university disputations must be examined in order to make such a claim. However, it could be said that at least Ames was one of the earlier Reformed thinkers who appropriated these scholastic distinctions in the context of Arminian controversy in his attempt to defend his idea of physical premotion, pointing out a path which many of the Reformed would follow.100


100 Muller observed that this combination of Thomistic influence in the idea of physical premotion and Scotistic influence in the idea of contingency is common among the Reformed. Richard Muller, Divine Will and Human Choice, p.289. Prior to Ames’s articulation, attempts to provide an elaborate definition of freedom had been made by the Reformed thinkers such as Franciscus Junius and Franciscus Gomarus. However, their definitions still lack the language of simultaneous nature of alternatives held by an agent as seen in the case of Ames and later Reformed thinkers in the era of high orthodoxy. For the text and discussion on Junius’s disputation on free choice, see W. J. van Asselt, B.J.D.van Vreeswijk, ‘An Image of Its Maker: Theses on Freedom in Franciscus Junius (1545-1602)’ in RTF, pp.95-126. For Gomarus’s disputation, see W.J. van Asselt, E. Dekker, M.A. Schouten, ‘Undisputed Freedom: A Disputation of Franciscus Gomarus (1563-1641)’ in RTF, pp.127-144. William Twisse would be another example of Reformed thinker who adopted the idea of synchronic contingency but nearly all of his relevant works were written in 1630s onwards. For Muller’s analysis of Twisse’s disputations, see Richard Muller, Divine Will and Human Choice, pp.225-35.
This might well explain why Ames was so highly regarded for his polemics against Arminianism.

**Conclusion**

This chapter explored how Ames tried to expose the synergistic tendencies of Grevinchoven, which was not obvious from what was officially stated about the process of conversion in the third and the fourth heads of the Remontrance 1610. While Grevinchoven appealed to the partial causes as illustrated by the father and the son rowing the same boat, Ames argued at great length that this illustration points to a synergistic tendency which results in the inevitable conclusion that ‘human free will is the greater cause than the divine grace in the conversion of this person rather than that person’. Moreover, when debating on this issue of the way of conversion, Ames made clear that the process involves both moral suasion of the intellect and physical determination of the will. Alongside the efficacious work of divine grace on the human will, there always exists an intellectual process of moral suasion, setting out what should be believed, confirming and performing what is believed.

This insistence on a process of conversion which involves both the intellect and will sheds important light on the issue of Ames’s voluntarism: that is, his emphasis on the will in the life of faith. In the third section, we saw that Ames’s emphasis on the will should not be taken in a way which excludes the role of the intellect altogether, but rather in a way which implicitly presupposes it. It can, in fact, be interpreted in light of the principle which Ames made clear in his debate with Grevinchoven: that both the intellect and will are involved in the
process of coming to faith and therefore both have roles to play. Ames held that faith as an action involved both the will and the intellect while holding to the idea that faith as a virtue or habit should be attributed only to the will. We also saw the current scholarly consensus that the origin of Ames’s voluntarism can be found in Arminianism is unfounded. The philosophical issue of the internal relationship between will and intellect should be kept distinct from the theological issue of the relationship between divine grace and human free will. Once the difference between these two issues are understood, Ames’s voluntaristic emphasis does not at all imply synergistic tendency found in Arminianism. Rather, Ames might well have developed his emphasis on the will in his effort to refute the intellectualistic tendency of Arminianism and this voluntaristic emphasis should be seen as a reason for the effectiveness of Ames’s polemical effort.

Finally, the fourth section dealt with Ames’s discussion on the question of how the seemingly irreconcilable combination of divine irresistible grace and human freedom can stand together. Ames’s effort was through the use of the language of synchronic contingency, with a series of scholastic terms such as the divided/compound sense, the first/second act, simultaneity of power/power of simultaneity. By utilizing these distinctions, Ames argued that, despite the irresistible nature of divine grace, the potency to reject grace is genuinely held by a person, precisely at the same moment when that person is choosing to believe. The simultaneous nature of alternatives which Ames emphasized in his argument suggests not only a clear Scotist influence on Ames concerning the issue of contingency but also the decisive change brought about the use of such
language, compared with diachronic understanding of contingency. However, Thomistic influence is also present in Ames when addressing divine concurrence, how divine grace and human will work together in the process of a human action. This combination of Scotistic ideas of contingency with Thomistic ideas of divine concurrence points to an eclectic tendency in terms of his medieval scholastic source. In his appropriation of his idea of synchronic contingency to support his idea of physical premotion, Ames seems to have played a pioneering role, pointing out a path which many of the Reformed would follow. This would also explain why Ames was highly regarded as the defender of Reformed orthodoxy.

The issues of the nature of grace and conversion, which have been dealt with in this chapter, have profound implications for other soteriological issues such as whether or not the believer can ‘fall’ from the grace and how the doctrine of assurance should be understood. These are the issues originally expressed in the fifth article of the Remonstrance (1610) and to these we now turn in the next chapter.
Chapter V

The Perseverance of the Saints

This chapter focuses on the topic of the perseverance of the saints. The central issue is whether a true believer can ‘fall’ from saving grace. The wording of Remonstrant opinion, expressed in the fifth article of the Remonstrance (1610), was quite ambiguous. Commenting on the nature of Christian life, the Remonstrance seems to acknowledge the necessity of divine grace and actions in the life of the believer: it is ‘through the assistance of the grace of the Holy Spirit, and that Jesus Christ assists them through his Spirit in all temptations, extends the hand and ... keeps them standing, so that by no cunning of or power of Satan can they be led astray or plucked out of Christ's hands’. Yet significantly, a conditional clause was attached to this statement: that these things are true ‘if only they are prepared for warfare and desire his [Christ's] help and are not negligent’. Due to this conditional clause, the Reformed orthodox suspected that the Remonstrants were not affirming the perseverance of the saints properly. On the very question of whether believers can fall away, the fifth article in the Remonstrance remained undecided:

But whether they can through negligence fall away from the first principle of their life in Christ, again embrace the present world, depart from the pure doctrine once given to them, lose the good conscience, and neglect grace must first be more carefully determined from the Holy

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1 Appendix 4 in Matthew Barrett, The Grace of Godliness, p.145.
Scriptures before we shall be able to teach this with the full persuasion of our heart.\(^3\)

Later the Remonstrants made up their mind, and admitted their position rather emphatically in *The Opinion of the Remonstrants* (1618): ‘true believers can fall from true faith and can fall into such sins as cannot be consistent with true and justifying faith; not only is it possible for this to happen, but it even happens frequently.’\(^4\) The document continues to state, as if this was not enough, that ‘true believers are able to fall through their own fault into shameful and atrocious deeds, to persevere and to die in them; and therefore finally to fall and to perish.’\(^5\) Thus, the suspicions of the Reformed orthodox proved true. The most central and pressing issue in the debate surrounding the fifth article of Remonstrance, then, was whether a true believer can fall from the grace, to which the Reformed orthodox answered negatively and the Remonstrants positively.

Among the polemical writings which Ames produced, extensive discussion on this topic is mostly found in his *Coronis*: a book he wrote and published in 1618 as a preparation for the Synod of Dort and as his response to the Hague Conference between the Remonstrants and the Reformed orthodox in 1611. Ames devoted the final chapter of *Coronis* to the issues surrounding the fifth article of the Remonstrance. The present chapter, therefore, focuses on Ames’s counter-arguments put forward against the Remonstrants in his defence of the Reformed orthodox position.

\(^3\) Appendix 4 in Matthew Barrett, *The Grace of Godliness*, p.145.
The amount of secondary literature which deals with the doctrine of perseverance of the saints in this period is unfortunately scarce. Yet R.T. Kendall’s study, which focuses on the doctrine of faith in this period, poses significant questions which demand our attention. The main concern of this book was to support Kendall’s ‘Calvin against Calvinist’ scheme by showing that the problem inherent within soteriology among Perkins’s followers (whom Kendall called ‘experimental predestinarians’) was the practical syllogism: the idea that sanctification is the only ground of assurance. One of the two implications of this idea of practical syllogism, according to Kendall, was that ‘temporary faith has no convenient place in such a theological scheme’. The reason is that, if believers can only look to themselves for signs and proofs of being among the elect, then, the idea that the reprobate can manifest sanctification causes trouble for sincere Christians: they might well fear that they are among the reprobate. Based on this assumption, Kendall claimed that William Ames was determined to have nothing to do with the teaching of temporary faith in the reprobate and thus gave his weighty sanction to an ongoing trend already developing within the English theological tradition. It is important to examine Kendall’s claims, particularly because his distinction between credal and experimental predestinarians are widely accepted by English historians. So, in addition to asking what arguments Ames used to

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6 R.T. Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649*, pp.7,151. The other implication was that ‘faith is an act of the will’ but this has been discussed already in the previous chapter.

7 Kendall defined credal predestinarians as ‘the position of the majority of the bishops ... who, though not known for their stress upon experimental divinity, were none the less predestinarian in their theology as a whole’. By contrast, experimental predestinarians were ‘mainly pastors who not only believed but vigorously stressed that one’s election may be known by experimental knowledge; indeed it must be known lest one deceive himself and, in the end be damned’. This experimental knowledge derived through the practical syllogism.
defend the Reformed orthodox case, it is important to examine Kendall’s assessment of Ames’s teaching on temporary faith and its supposed link to practical syllogism.

Another recent study, written by Jay T. Collier, specifically focused on debates in the English context on the issue of the perseverance of the saints. Building on the work of Peter White, Collier argued that there was a diversity of positions regarding the teaching of salvation within the English Church in this period, as opposed to widely shared ‘Calvinist consensus’, proposed by Nicholas Tyacke. Collier paid attention to a significant minority opinion which existed in England before the Synod of Dort and the dilemma which the British delegates had to face during the Synod because of it. The advocates of this minority opinion held that, despite accepting the doctrine of unconditional predestination, saving faith can be lost in the case of reprobates. In other words, the reprobate can also have saving faith for a certain duration of time.

Although the British delegates themselves did not hold this opinion, they requested that it should not be rejected as unorthodox. However, the British

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R.T. Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649*, p.79, n.6, p.80, p.8 For examples of the use of this distinction among historians, see Peter G Lake, ‘Calvinism and the English Church 1570-1635’, *Past and Present*, No.114 (1987): pp.32-76.


11 Collier argued that the change made by Archbishop John Whitgift in the article 5 of Lambeth Articles was to allow those minority opinions and suggested that Matthew Hutton and Adrianus Saravia were among them. Jay T. Collier, *Debating Perseverance*, pp.20-58.
delegates faced a dilemma since this request was not granted by the Synod as a whole, which explicitly rejected this position.

As Collier did not particularly draw attention to the theological rationale behind the Synod’s decision not to grant the British request, it will be fruitful to compare the position expressed by the British delegates and Ames’s argument for the perseverance of the saints. Given the nature of the minority position highlighted by Collier, the consideration of Ames’s arguments will be focused on the link, both logical and exegetical, between the perseverance of the saints and the doctrine of unconditional predestination. This will allow us to highlight possible influence of Ames’s argument behind the Synod’s decision.

In their attempt to refute the Remonstrant teaching on perseverance at The Hague Conference of 1611, the Reformed orthodox put forward their arguments in a clear Trinitarian structure: perseverance of the saints is rooted in the promise and the election of God; it is also secured by the intercession and preservation of Christ; and finally it is sealed by the work of the Holy Spirit.12 Throughout their debate on the work of the three persons of the Trinity in perseverance, common recurring themes and exegetical approaches, (which are similar to those arguments discussed in the previous chapters), are noticeable both on the part of the Reformed orthodox and the Remonstrants. So the first two sections in this chapter will show examples of these recurring themes to demonstrate how this issue of perseverance is closely connected to other topics (discussed in the previous chapters), especially the doctrine of predestination, and to show how Ames’s arguments were exegetically informed. The last two

12 The basic ten arguments from the Reformed orthodox are set out in Collatio, pp.342-48.
sections will deal with the questions of the ground of assurance and temporary faith in order to examine the supposed link between the practical syllogism and temporary faith. In the last section, which deals with the issue of temporary faith, consideration will be given to the position expressed by the British delegates, and to their theological context as distinct from the Dutch polemical context where Ames had been engaged.

5.1 The decree and the perseverance

The most obvious and important link between the issue of the perseverance of the saints and the issue of predestination clearly emerged when the Reformed orthodox argued for the perseverance of the saints based on divine predestination. They argued that life-giving, true faith is only given to the elect and that God surely ordained to lead his own elect to salvation through their faith. Therefore, the faithful will never withdraw finally or even totally. In response, the Remonstrants dismissed this argument as weak and absurd. Among the three charges which they put forward against the Reformed orthodox, the third is of particular interest: that this argument would only prove the finality of perseverance but not the totality of it. The Remonstrants explained: ‘for even if the decree of God of leading the elect to salvation through faith would be immutable, the faithful can however lose their faith totally, if only it would have been restored to them before their death’.13 Ames responded to this charge by pointing out the common ground (ratio) behind both the idea of

13 ‘Nam etsi Dei decretum de electis per fidem ad salutem perducendis fit immutabile, tamen possent fideles fidem totaliter amittere, modo illis ea ante obitum restitueretur.’ Collatio, p.429.
the totality and finality of perseverance. The nature of divine election is so constant and certain that it would provide freedom from defection both ‘in the way’ as well as ‘in the end’, referring to totality and finality of perseverance respectively. What is more, if the elect are not preserved in their faith totally, then election would not be called immutable.\textsuperscript{14}

As the exegetical basis for the link between divine election and the perseverance of the saints, Romans 8:29-30 would arguably be the single most important passage where Paul stated that God called, justified, and glorified those who have been predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son. The Remonstrants tried to read this passage as an encouragement for the believer to endure sufferings and afflictions so that they can be glorified in the end.\textsuperscript{15} Ames piled up twelve arguments, amounting to six pages, in his defence of the Reformed orthodox position, which was later hailed as ‘the most convincing exegesis’ of that particular passage by a contemporary.\textsuperscript{16} The important element in this extended exegetical discussion for our purpose is the connection Ames made between alternative ways of reading this passage and the issue of the possibility of apostasy. If one reads this passage as divine calling to endure affliction (as the Remonstrants did), then there is no guarantee of glorification, and apostasy may often occur as a result of affliction. If one reads this passage as pertaining to the saving grace which leads the elect to glorification (as the Reformed orthodox did), then there is no possibility of the apostasy of the saints.

\textsuperscript{14} Ames, \textit{Coronis}, p.310.
\textsuperscript{15} \textit{Collatio}, p.99, pp.432-33.
Certainly, Ames argued for the latter case extensively, by paying close attention to the wider context in which the passage is located. For Ames, the explanatory phrase about the nature and origin of the calling in v.28, ‘according to his purpose’, the proximity between the glory and the image of the Son to which the believers are called in v.29, ‘all the things’ in v.32 which God is willing to give to the faithful, and Christ’s intercession before the Father mentioned in v.33-34: all point to the interpretation of v.29-30 as setting out a chain of salvation by which the elect are led to final glory. Therefore, Ames argued, those who are predestined according to divine purpose are securely destined to glory. For Ames, the link between divine election and the perseverance of the saints was based not only on logical but also on solid exegetical grounds of this important passage.

In the Hague Conference, this link between divine election and the perseverance of the saints was also highlighted in their discussion of passages in John 6:37, 39, where Christ promised not to lose any of those who were given to him by his Father. The Reformed orthodox cited these passages to support their case for perseverance. However, the Remonstrants read these texts consistently from their own perspective: Christ’s work of preservation is made upon meeting the condition of believers’ obedience, even when the conditional statement is not made explicit. The act of coming to Christ in John 6:37, according to the Remonstrants, involves not only believing in Christ but also remaining in Christ on the part of believers, as it is explicitly required by Christ in John 15:2, etc. Therefore, as Ames summarized it, ‘believers can turn away,
step back, and abandon their faith’.  

Similarly, the work of Christ mentioned in John 6:39, that he will not lose any, is not, according to the Remonstrants, about losing faith in the life of believers but about destruction through death. For the verb used here for ‘losing’ (ἀπολέσω) the believers can also mean ‘to destroy, ruin, and kill’ as well as ‘to lose’. It was in response to this that Ames highlighted the link mentioned in John 6:37 between the act of coming to Christ and divine election:

This coming to Christ and remaining in his communion is said to flow from divine election, ‘whoever the Father gives me etc.’. Since this election brings about that somebody would come to Christ surely and infallibly, by the same reason and disposition, it will also bring about that he would remain with him.

Furthermore, Ames argued that verse 39 should really be understood as Christ’s continuous clarification of what he previously said in verse 37, ‘I will not cast away’. The reason for that promise in verse 37 lies in the Father’s will, which he also mentions in verse 38. It is this will of the Father, about which Ames explains further here in relation to verse 39. The same verb translated as to ‘lose’ (ἀπολέσω) is used in the same way as in the case of three parables contained in Luke 15, which were about the ‘lost’ sheep, the ‘lost’ coin, and the ‘lost’ son. So, it is much more natural to take the word of Christ in verse 39 as the promise of not losing faith. Thus, the case for perseverance of the saints by linking it to divine election was made not only on logical grounds but also on a
number of exegetical grounds. This link will be important when the difference between the British and Dutch theological context is considered below.

As with the other topics in the Arminian controversy, the fundamental issue behind the debate on the perseverance of the saints was how the nature of the relationship between divine and human action should be understood. The Remonstrants were concerned that human actions should have a role to play in their soteriology in a way which was not acceptable for the Reformed Orthodox, including Ames. The characteristic device which the Remonstrants employed for this purpose was the distinction between the absolute and conditional nature of divine actions. This distinction can be observed in their response to all three arguments the Reformed Orthodox set out at the Hague Conference. Ames’s response to this distinction was almost exactly the same as his previous response to similar distinctions made by the Remonstrants: the absolute nature of divine action can and should be compatible with the contingent nature of human actions, however difficult it is to explain exactly how they are compatible with each other.

The nature of divine promise became the issue when discussing the work of the Father in the Hague Conference. Ames cited the following syllogism by which the Reformed orthodox put forward their argument for perseverance of the saints:

What God promised with his words is certain and cannot happen otherwise. Indeed, God promised with his sure words that the faithful would persevere totally and finally (that is, they are to be saved from the total and final apostasy). Therefore, truly the faithful will certainly totally
and finally persevere, that is, they will be saved surely from total and final apostasy.\textsuperscript{20}

Against this syllogism, the Remonstrants put forward a number of arguments which include a series of distinctions in the nature of divine promise. For example, they tried to qualify the concluding part of the syllogism by making a distinction between certainty and necessity: the syllogism’s conclusion that the faithful will persevere should not be understood in terms of necessity but only in terms of certainty. This means that this conclusion does not contradict the possibility of apostasy in true believers. This distinction between necessity and certainty was simply dismissed by Ames. According to Ames, the difference between these concepts does not exists as, logically speaking, what is certain in the future cannot be uncertain and ‘whatever is when it is, it is necessary to be’\textit{(quicquid est cuum est, necesse est esse)}.\textsuperscript{21}

More importantly, the Remonstrants tried to object to the syllogism by appealing to the distinction between the absolute promise and the conditional promise: the promise, understood absolutely, is that which God wills to effect without the intervention of human will; whereas the promise, understood conditionally, is that which God does not will to effect without the conditions being met by the intervention of human will. If the divine promise in the syllogism is understood absolutely, then the syllogism can stand: the divine promise of the perseverance of the saints cannot be made otherwise. If the

\textsuperscript{20}‘Quod Deus Verbo suo promisit, illud certum est, nec potest aliter fieri. Vere fideles totaliter et finaliter perseveranturos (id est a totali ac finali apostasia servandos esse) certo promisit Deus verbo suo. Vere fideles igitur certo, totaliter ac finaliter perseverabunt, id est, a totali ac finali apostasia certo servabuntur.’ Ames, \textit{Coronis}, p.278.

\textsuperscript{21}Ames, \textit{Coronis}, p.279.
divine promise is understood conditionally, then the syllogism is false, as the
divine promise of perseverance can be otherwise depending on whether the
condition is met by human response.\textsuperscript{22} Certainly, their conclusion is that the
syllogism is false because the nature of divine promise should be understood
conditionally.

Ames’s response to this objection displays a striking similarity with his
previous response to the same distinction the Remonstrants made in the case of
divine decree. The problem posed by this distinction seems to be the same as
with the distinction which was made for the divine decree: the absolute promise
or decree can perfectly co-exist with the contingent action of human will or any
other creatures.\textsuperscript{23} In other words, ‘there was ever and can be no absolute decree,
promise, or threat (according to their opinion) about these [contingent] things,
which is performed without interceding contingent action, whether of humans
or of other creatures’.\textsuperscript{24} This is abundantly clear from the examples of
punishment God inflicted upon the Egyptians by the means of creatures such as
locusts and frogs: the absolute nature of these acts of judgement is clear even if
the incident involves ‘contingent’ actions of these creatures. This is also clear
from the examples of other promises relating to salvation of humanity such as
the seed of the woman crushing the head of serpent, and various events in
Christ’s life and his redemptive work. All of these involve the ‘intervention’ of
human will in some way or another. God exercises his reign through events

\textsuperscript{22} Collatio, p.415.
\textsuperscript{23} See pp.106-107 above.
\textsuperscript{24} ‘Nullum igiture decretum, promissum, aut comminatio absoluta (ex eorum sententia) fuit
unquam aut esse potest, de istiusmodi rebus, quae non perficiuntur nisi intercedente vel
which involve various human actions but this does not mean the nature of promises is necessarily conditional. The absolute nature of the promise stands even if it is fulfilled through creaturely contingent actions.  

After anchoring perseverance to divine election, promise, and the protection of the Father, the Reformed orthodox then went on to link it to the work of the Son. In particular, the efficacy of Christ’s prayer to the Father is taken up as one of their arguments: ‘whatever our Lord Christ prays to the Father, this is surely done. (John 11:41,42) But Christ surely prayed to the Father for the perseverance of the faithful. (Luke 22:32, John 17:15, 20, Romans 8:34). Therefore, the faithful will certainly persevere.’

The distinction which the Remonstrants used to object this argument was between prayers ‘absolutely and simply’ understood and other prayers more broadly understood. Christ’s prayer for Lazarus to come back to life was an example of the former category but his prayer for the perseverance of the faithful should be taken as an example of the latter. The Remonstrants explained their reason: ‘If God had decided such an absolute and inevitable perseverance of the faithful, they would have been placed outside the danger of failure and Christ would not have been praying so anxiously that they would persevere.’

The Remonstrants made a point in the form of rhetorical questions: after all, did

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\[27\] ‘Si Deus tam absolutam et inevitabilem perseverantiam fidelium statuisset, positos fuisse illos extra omne defectionis periculum, et Christum tam sollice non fuisse oratum, ut perseverarent.’ *Collatio*, p.435.
not Christ pray on the cross that the Father would forgive those who crucified him, and who would dare to say that that prayer was heard by the Father? Furthermore, when praying for the protection of believers, did Christ not pray also for the unity of believers? According to the Remonstrants, this was not certainly heard by the Father either. So these examples show that Christ's prayer was not always necessarily heard and answered by the Father. It was only when Christ prayed absolutely that his prayer was immediately answered and done by the Father, which was the case in the resurrection of Lazarus.28

Ames’s strategy to answer these objections was to argue step by step from the example of human friendship to the intra-Trinitarian relationship within the divine. In terms of human friendship, it is not quite right that one does not acquire what he is asking from others. In terms of our prayer to God, even we know for sure that if we pray in accordance with divine will then our prayer will be heard. Ames presses his point: ‘how much more God always hears Christ, in whose will there was such a conformity with the divine that he either would have prayed and or even properly willed anything apart from what pleased the Father?29

As for the examples of Christ’s prayer which were ‘not heard’, as argued by the Remonstrants, it proves not to be the case upon careful consideration of the texts. Christ’s prayer for forgiveness at the crucifixion was not necessarily intended for every single individual present at the scene. For the fact that the sins of some people were forgiven, by responding to Peter’s call for repentance

28 Collatio, pp.434-35.
29 ‘Quanto magis audit semper Christum, in cuius voluntate tanta conformitas est cum divina, ut nihil unquam, nisi quod Patri placuit, vel petierit, vel etiam proprie voluerit?’ Ames, Coronis, p.322.
on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2:36-41, shows that Christ’s prayer was indeed heard by the Father. As for Christ’s prayer for the unity of believers, it will surely be answered ultimately in the coming age, if not immediately here and now. Moreover, as for the distinction between absolute and simple prayers and other prayers, Ames pointed out that this would contradict Arminius’s own definition of prayer – using the strategy which Ames employed many times over the course of his debate with the Remonstrants. It was Arminius who insisted that ‘prayer is a representation of our will submitted before God, so that it will be done by himself.’ An explanation of our wish would not make a proper prayer, ‘for we desire nothing properly what we do not want absolutely’. 30

After linking the perseverance of the saints to the work of the Father and the Son, the Reformed orthodox defended the teaching of the perseverance of the saints by arguing that it is secured by the sealing of the Holy Spirit. This argument, which appealed to the role of the Holy Spirit, runs as follows: ‘those who are sealed through the Holy Spirit in their own hearts, they would not lose their faith either finally or totally. But surely the faithful are sealed through the Holy Spirit. (2 Corinthians 1:21, Ephesians 1:13,14, 4:30.) Therefore, they will never lose their faith either finally or totally.’ 31

The first distinction which the Remonstrants used to object to the sealing of perseverance by the Spirit was the distinction between the realm of salvation and the realm of faith: the effect of sealing by the Holy Spirit was limited to the

30 ‘Oratio enim est submissa repraesentatio voluntatis nostrae apud Deum, ut ab ipso perficiatur. … nihil volumus proprie quod non absolute volumus.’ Ames, Coronis, p.323.
realm of salvation, not to the realm of faith. Ames dismissed this distinction: ‘for the one, who seals into salvation, seals into all those things, which are necessarily connected with salvation, and therefore into faith’.\textsuperscript{32} Also, Paul called this act of sealing as ‘being made in Christ’ in 2 Cor 1:21, that is, ‘we would remain constantly in Christ through faith’.\textsuperscript{33} This, Ames contended, indicates inseparable nature of the act of sealing and the faith in Christ.

Moreover, the Remonstrants tried to apply the distinction between the absolute and the conditional – exactly the same distinction they had used before – to the act of sealing by the Holy Spirit. They argued that the nature of the promise attached to this act of sealing was conditional rather than absolute: conditional upon the efforts of the believer. Otherwise, they would ask, why are we instructed not to grieve the Holy Spirit of God in Ephesians 4:30? Why are we warned that those who are immoral, impure, etc. cannot inherit the kingdom of God in Ephesians 5:3?\textsuperscript{34}

In response to this objection, Ames bluntly stated that this was a settled issue as the case was made for the absolute nature of divine promise: the involvement of human effort in the process of salvation is perfectly compatible with the absolute nature of divine promise and his reign. As for Paul’s instruction and warning in Ephesians, Ames explained, they are written ‘because ... they are acting most ungratefully if they are dishonouring such a grace with so unworthy manner; because through those warnings, God willed to bring about that they would not do in that manner; because he wanted to show

\textsuperscript{32} ‘qui obsignat enim in salute, obsignat in iis omnibus, quae necessario coniuncta sunt cum salute, atque adeo in fide.’ Ames, \textit{Coronis}, p.340.
\textsuperscript{34} Ames, \textit{Coronis}, p.340.
through these warnings that those, who are acting this way, either never had this sealing or cannot hold its saving consolation while they are acting this way.\textsuperscript{35} So the existence of these warnings does not undermine the absolute nature of sealing of the Holy Spirit.

This insistence of Remonstrants on a conditional reading of divine actions was not without Scriptural support. There are a series of passages where the perseverance is said to be conditional upon the spiritual state of believers. Particularly, there are passages which state that believers are true disciples of Christ, in the house of Christ, only if they ‘hold onto’ Christ’s teachings (John 8:31), the confidence and hope through which they glorify (Hebrew 3:6), and only if they hold them all the way up to the firm end (Hebrews 3:14). These passages seem to suggest that, unless one perseveres to the end, one cannot be a true believer. In order to approach these passages, Ames paid attention to the causal relationship between the mark of perseverance (\textit{signum perseverationem}) and being true disciples with true faith. For Ames, perseverance is a mark which comes out of true discipleship and faith, not rather a pre-condition as a result of which one becomes a true disciple. Importantly, the present tense of verbs in the main clause of these sentences (you \textit{are} true disciples, in the house of Christ ...) allows this causal order. The Remonstrants wrongly changed the present tense into the future in their attempt to restrict the meaning of these

\textsuperscript{35} Quia ... ingratisissime facerent, si tantam gratiam tam dignis modis dehonestarent: quia per has admonitions efficere voluit Deus ne sic facerent; quia denique ostendere voluit, eos qui sic facerent, vel nunquam hanc obsignationem habuisse, vel saltem consolationem eius, dum sic faciunt, retinere non posse.’ Ames, \textit{Coronis}, p.340.
sentences to the end of life and future judgement while in fact they simply refer to the present state of believers.\textsuperscript{36}

Apart from the distinction between the absolute and the conditional, another recurring issue during the debate on perseverance was the issue of cause (or causes), in particular the issue of the causes of perseverance: whether it is Christ’s work or our obedience to him which causes the perseveration of our faith. This question of cause was triggered by the Reformed orthodox argument that based the perseverance of believers. The Remonstrants, not surprisingly, argued that whether or not believers can persevere in faith depends on our obedience as well as on the work of Christ: ‘preservation of the faithful in faith does not only depend on the sure and faithful preservation of Jesus Christ, but the obedience of the faithful is also required for this purpose so that they would not neglect their duty’.\textsuperscript{37}

The problem which Ames saw in this articulation was exactly the same as what he saw in their articulation of the causes of conversion: the Remonstrants placed divine action and human action at the same level as causes for perseverance. In this case, divine action is Christ’s work of preservation and human action is obedience to Christ. In response, Ames uses the same strategy as he used in the discussion of causes of faith: drawing implications from the

\textsuperscript{36} Ames, \textit{Coronis}, p.344. It is notable that Beza’s translation has future tense in John 8:31. Ames might be referring to the Greek original.

\textsuperscript{37} ‘Conservatio fidelium in fide non pendet tantum ex certa et fidei Iesu Christi conservatione, sed ad hoc etiam requiritur debita obedientia ipsorum fidelium, ne ofificio suo desint.’ Ames, \textit{Coronis}, p.331.
position of his opponents.\textsuperscript{38} In this case, if it is true that preservation of faith in believers not only depends on Christ’s work of preservation but also on the obedience of believers, then, first, there is no difference between the grace bestowed on Adam before the fall and the grace given to believers through Christ. The promise given to Adam that he would preserve in his life was upon the condition that he would show obedience and not neglect his duty, which is the same condition that the Remonstrants described for the preservation of the faithful. Secondly, if the Remonstrant formulation is true, the contrast between the old and new covenant will be taken away, particularly the contrast explained in Hebrews 8:8-9: this passage indicates that people under the old covenant are preserved on the basis of their remaining faithful to the covenant. This condition, according to the passage, would change radically in the new covenant. Thirdly and finally, in the Remonstrant formulation, divine action in the preservation of believers would not be prior to but subsequent to the obedience of believers, in terms of causal order. The obedience of believers must necessarily precede the preservation of the faithful. By contrast, the causal order in the new covenant would be reversed: ‘it was made clear ... that the faithful show obedience to God \textit{because} they are preserved by God. Therefore, they are preserved by God \textit{so that} they would be able to show their obedience and they do show it in fact.’\textsuperscript{39}

As already shown clearly, throughout the debate on the nature of divine action within the Trinity, there has been a recurring pattern noticeable both in

\textsuperscript{38} Ames, \textit{Coronis}, p.332. See also pp.156-61.

\textsuperscript{39} ‘quum tamen apertum fit, ... fideles obedientiam Deo praestare, \textit{quia} conservantur ab ipso; et ideo eos a Deo conservari, \textit{ut} obedientiam illam praestare possint, et actu praestent.’ Ames, \textit{Coronis}, p.332. (Emphasis added.)
the arguments of the Remonstrants and Ames: the Remonstrants tried to compromise the absolute nature of divine actions – whether it was the divine promise made by the Father, Christ’s prayer or the sealing by the Holy Spirit – while Ames insisted on the compatibility of the absolute nature of the divine actions with the contingent nature of human response. For Ames, the absolute nature of divine actions should be maintained without necessarily destroying the significance or contingency of human actions. Indeed, this was what Ames laid out as his position very clearly from the beginning of his discussion of perseverance in *Coronis*. When commenting on the basic principle or cause of perseverance in the true believer, it should be attributed to God, as ‘it has no other cause, reason, or preceding condition regarding the formed efficacy, than free giving of God although the human will intercedes between that efficacy and the completion of that effect and being made to persevere, it acts persistently.’

Moreover, the strategies of Ames and the Remonstrants, which were used in the issue of causes of perseverance, were also similar to the ones which each of them employed in the case of causes of conversion. The Remonstrants tried to ensure that human actions have a significant role to play by insisting that both divine and human play a part as the causes of perseverance; Ames argued that perseverance should be attributed singularly to Christ’s act of preservation by drawing problematic implications from the Remonstrant causal framework. The perseverance of the saints should be thought primarily as the divine action, which derives from the divine action of election, not only logically but also

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40 'nec aliam habet causam rationem aut conditionem antecedentem quoad formalem eius efficiaciam, quam gratuitam Dei donationem: Quamvis inter illam efficaciam et completum eius effectum, voluntas hominis intercedit, et perseverans facta perseveranter agit.' Ames, *Coronis*, pp.275-76.
exegetically. For Ames, the link between the election and the perseverance is inseparable.

5.2 Exegetical discussions

The discussion in the previous section highlighted a recurring pattern in argumentation both in the Remonstrant objections to the Reformed and Ames's response in his defence of the Reformed. However, it is important to stress that Ames's argument was not without exegetical foundations but thoroughly informed by a close reading of the biblical texts. Furthermore, interesting features of different exegetical approaches can be observed by examining both the Remonstrant and Reformed discussions of relevant texts: while the Remonstrant approach tended to stick to literal meaning of the text and to limit the scope of application, Ames's approach displayed more flexibility.

As a part of their objection to the Reformed argument for perseverance, the Remonstrants appealed to cases where God is said to have changed his mind. The list of biblical examples includes: I Samuel 2, where a prophecy is pronounced against Eli that his family would not continue priestly ministry; Numbers 14, where judgement is given upon Israel of not entering into the Promised Land; and I Samuel 13, where Saul is told by Samuel that his kingdom will not endure. The Remonstrants argued that these cases, along with a set of other examples, show that God changes his mind and his promise depends upon whether or not the condition will be met by human response.41

In response to this argument, Ames demonstrated that a closer reading of the same texts would reveal different conclusions. In 1 Samuel 2, there is no mention of a specific divine promise toward Eli and his family: God is only said to set up the general principle of priesthood in Aaron's family. The same thing applies to the case of Numbers 14. The promise God made toward Israelites was not specifically to single individuals within their family, but to the Israelites as a people and their entrance into the Promised Land. There was no mention of divine promise in the case of the appointment of Saul in 1 Samuel. For other examples listed by the Remonstrants, Ames argued that there are different purposes behind the concept of promise and of warning. A warning is given to people 'so that people would be changed by the way of threatening. By that change, that threat has its own end, and therefore ceases [to function]. This works in the same simple way, by which that command, which is placed for the purpose of trials, loses the power of command after these trials.'

In order to show the absolute nature of divine promise, the Reformed orthodox cited a number of specific promises made in Scripture. A stark contrast in their approach to biblical texts can be noticed from the extended discussion which focused on the promise made in Jeremiah 31 and 32. According to Ames, divine promise is made in these passages:

where God with the most firm covenant promises that he will not only grant abundantly salvation of each one of his own (which is regarding to justification and sanctification) but also sustain it eternally with constant favour and by the continual work of the Spirit from within, by which it is

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42 ‘ut homo mutetur ab eo quod est ratio minitandi, ex qua mutatione minitatio illa suum finem habet, atque ade cessat, eodem plane modo, quo mandatum illud quod, tentandi causa proponitur, mandati vim amittit post horam tentationis.’ Ames, *Coronis*, pp.280-81.
effected that they are not forsaken by God nor they would ever will to forsake.\textsuperscript{43}

The Remonstrants tried to read the Jeremiah texts by limiting the scope and meaning of the divine promise toward those in the Babylonian captivity and restoration from it, and not toward the elect in general. This point is clear for the Remonstrants from the context of Jeremiah 32:37, which mentions God’s act of ‘gathering’ to the land where God banished them. Furthermore, the Remonstrants found that a series of other passages, such as Ezekiel 11:18, 21, and Romans 11:17, led to the same conclusion, as they describe those people, who were ethnically of Israel but unrepentant, as branches broken off from the olive tree. After all, the Remonstrants asked, why do we see that gentiles were warned not to be broken off from the tree in Romans 11 if they were part of the promise and the nature of the promise was absolute?\textsuperscript{44}

Interestingly, Ames’s main response to this reading was to appeal to the typological use of this promise by New Testament writers: ‘the promise was indeed made to whole people of Israel, but as a type’. This is clearly the case from the application made by ‘Paul’ in his letter to Hebrews 8:8,9 and 10:16, 17 and also his statement in Romans 11:26 that ‘all Israel will be saved’ as support of his point: the promise was made to whole people ‘with regards to their common state, not present but future after the entrance of multitude of

\textsuperscript{43} ‘Ubi foedere firmissimo policetur Deus, se non salutaria tantum singula (quia ad iuustificationem et sanctificationem spectant) abunde suis largiturum, sed et perpetua illa praestiturum, constanti favore et perenni Spiritus influxu, quo efficietur ut nec a Deo deserantur, nec ipsum unquam deserere velint.’ Ames, \textit{Coronis}, p.284.

\textsuperscript{44} \textit{Collatio}, p.416.
gentiles’. Therefore, this promise, though originally made to those who were
under Babylonian captivity, should by extension apply to all the elect including
those under the new covenant.

A particular passage, which must have posed some difficulty to the
Remonstrants, was Jeremiah 32:39-40: ‘I will impart a single heart to them ... for
the purpose of fearing me all the days ... I will put the fear of me in their hearts
so that they would not fall back from me’. The Remonstrants admitted that this
passage could be taken as support for the Reformed orthodox case. However,
they pointed out that the linking word ‘so that’ in Hebrew original does not
always mean a future fact, as in the necessity that they would fear God, or fall
from God. Rather it often means ‘God’s intention’ or ‘human duty’ which God
does not always obtain and the case of which is seen in Genesis 3:11 and John
5:34, 40. Very similarly to the approach taken to the issue of nature of grace, the
Remonstrants would read Jeremiah 32:39-40 basically as moral persuasion,
instead of taking the nature of this divine promise as absolutely efficacious.

Their position is summed up as follows:

It is clear that this is the passage [Jeremiah 32:39-40] which means some
great and efficacious motion, which were to happen through signs and
many benefits, by whose grace they should convert themselves, or God
willed them to be converted. God would impart fear toward himself to
his own, and persuade their spirits to return love to himself, as much as
it was in itself, although it can happen differently since that was not
going to happen apart from their cooperation.46

45 ‘quoad commune eorum statum, non praesentem, sed futurum post gentium plenitudinem
46 ‘Manifestum est hanc esse phrasin, quae significat magnum et efficacem quondam motionem,
quae erat futura per insignia ac multa beneficia, quorum gratia se debebat convertere, aut
Deus volebat eos converti, qui et nderet ipsis reverentiam sui, et animos eorum ad ipsum
redandum flecteret, quantum in ipso erat, quamquam hoc et aliter evenire posset, quoniam
Apart from the idea of grace, which is described as something resisted (as discussed in the previous chapter), the main objection which Ames raised against this reading of the divine promise in Jeremiah is that it would make the new covenant meaningless: ‘If this [way of reading the passage] would be true and all, then here God promised this people nothing which he had not provided long before this.’ If moral suasion was all that God intended by this promise, then he was doing the same thing that he had done for many years: calling them to turn away from their evil by sending prophets to his own people. Furthermore, the idea of benefits by which people should convert themselves bears nothing more than ‘what stood true in Law and the old covenant, when people had to observe perfectly all the precepts of God because of divine benefits’.

   Indeed, there was a stark contrast between Ames and the Remonstrants with regards to the precise nature of the covenant expressed in the passage in Jeremiah. For the Remonstrants, the nature of the covenant is always such that there is mutual obligation among those who enter into it, and this new covenant foreshadowed in Jeremiah is no exception. Newness of this covenant should be understood not in terms of its kind but only in terms of its degree: the new covenant is ‘greater, more abundant and in larger scale’ (maior, amplior, et copiosior). By contrast, Ames argued for a basic distinction between the old

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47 ‘Hoc si verum ac totum fit, tu nihil hic promisit populo huic, quod diu antea non praestitisset.’ Ames, Coronis, p.290.
49 Collatio, p.418.
and new covenant: the nature of the newness of this covenant should be taken rather in terms of its kind. The Hebrew word for covenant does not always mean the covenant proper, where the mutual obligation is agreed by those who participate, but ‘sometimes simply means one party unilaterally making an arrangement’, which is the case here in Jeremiah. This interpretation is more in line with how ‘the apostle’ put it in Hebrews 8:13: the old covenant was made obsolete and outdated by being replaced with the new covenant.

A similar difference in their respective approaches to Scripture was also noticeable in the case of Luke 22:32 and John 17:15, 20, which the Reformed orthodox cited to support their argument based on Christ’s prayer. Indeed, these passages, where Christ prayed for the perseverance of his disciples and the believers, became the focus of exegetical discussions. The absolute nature of the prayer Christ offered for Peter was not denied by the Remonstrants. Yet they took this prayer to be offered only for Peter and not applicable in general to those who come to faith. However, the logical continuity between Peter’s denial of Christ and serious sins committed by the faithful are inseparable for Ames: if Peter’s faith did not fail despite his denial of Christ, the faith of believers would not fail despite serious sins they might commit. In particular, Ames paid attention to the word ‘all’ for which Christ said Satan has asked to sift as wheat (Luke 22:31): the scope of prayer which Christ offered in response to Satan was certainly not only for Peter. The scope should rather be extended to


51 *Collatio*, pp.435-36.
all believers, ‘for all the faithful are built upon the same rock and therefore they are sustained by the same posts’. 52 This is also shown in the fact that Christ continued to instruct Peter to strengthen his brothers after turning back from failure (Luke 22:32).

Ames argued that the validity of this reading of Luke 22:31-32 becomes more apparent when compared with Christ’s priestly prayer recorded in John 17:15, 20. There, Christ not only prayed for protection of disciples from the evil one but also for ‘those who will believe in him through their message’. These passages were certainly difficult for the Remonstrants to come to terms with, as the scope of prayers is explicitly extended to all believers (John 17:20). Still, the Remonstrants tried to read Christ’s prayer in verse 15 for protection not of their faith from any particular sin but of their particular ministry as his disciples: the protection of their ministry from persecution, hatred, and resentment of the world. 53 This Ames did not deny. However, Ames went on to argue, the mention of evil is always closely associated with the temptation to sin. In the Lord’s Prayer, where we are instructed to pray ‘lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil’, the idea of avoiding temptation and of deliverance from the evil are not expressed as separate ideas. 54 With the reference to those who will believe through the message of the disciples in John 17:20, the Remonstrants’ explanation inevitably becomes ambiguous: Christ’s prayer here was not simply

52 *omnes enim fideles super eandem petram sunt aedificati, atque adeo iisdem sustentantur fulcris.* Ames, *Coronis*, p.325.
(re ipsa) for those who will believe but more precisely for the disciples by whose ministry others also will believe.\textsuperscript{55}

Another explanation the Remonstrants provided for John 17:20 was that the content of Christ’s prayer at this point was different from that for disciples: here Christ prayed for the unity of his church which is not controversial. \textsuperscript{56} Ames’s strategy to respond to the Remonstrants on this point was the same as he had employed in case of the passage in Luke: paying attention to the context, pointing to benefits shared broadly by the disciples and the rest of the faithful. For example, the ‘all’, for whom Christ prayed unity in verse 21, includes certainly both his disciples and the rest of the faithful, precisely because Christ was praying ‘not for them [disciples] alone’, but ‘also for those who will believe in me through their message’. Furthermore, the unity Christ prayed for here in verse 21 was the same prayer for unity that he prayed for his disciples in John 17:11 where their protection and their unity are placed as continuous effects. Then, the protection Christ prayed in verse 11 is, in turn, the same with what we find in verse 15, ‘you protect them from the evil one’. Therefore, Ames concluded, ‘there is no open crack here by which they can escape’.\textsuperscript{57}

Another example of how Ames and the Remonstrants interpreted biblical texts differently is shown in their respective understanding of sin as mentioned in John’s first epistle. One of the Reformed orthodox arguments is articulated as follows: ‘if the faithful are dead to sin such that they would not be ruled by it, and they are born of God through a seed which remain in them such that they

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{55} Ames, \textit{Coronis}, p.327.
\item \textsuperscript{56} Ames, \textit{Coronis}, p.328.
\item \textsuperscript{57} ‘Nulla hic patet rima, qua possunt elabi.’ Ames, \textit{Coronis}, p.328.
\end{itemize}
cannot give their work to sin, ... then they would not lose their faith totally and finally.' One of the important passages which backed up this argument, and from which the most of the language was taken, was 1 John 3:9: ‘whoever is born of God, does not give his work to sin, since the seed of God himself remains in him; he cannot sin because they have been born of God’. The Reformed orthodox explained this passage to mean that ‘those who are born of God, that is, the true faithful and regenerated, do not sin in such a way that the sin has dominion again over them, nor can sin in such a way.’ In this way, they limited the meaning and the scope of sinning mentioned in this passage to the state of being ruled by sin.

That was the very thing against which the Remonstrants had a complaint: that the meaning of sin is restricted to a certain kind of sin (that is being ruled by sin), without justification. Ames’s simple answer to this complaint was that the word sinning should be taken as a synecdoche: a figure of speech where the part represents the whole or vice versa. In this case, the act of sinning in general (the whole) refers to a specific sin (the part). If the meaning of this word is taken to apply simply and universally, then it would contradict many other passages even in the same epistle, which state that the truly regenerate do sin, such as 1 John 1:8. Moreover, 1 John 5:17-18 explains the matter clearly. While verse 18 repeats that ‘whoever is born of God does not sin’, the kind of sin which is in consideration becomes clear from the context of the previous verse (or

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58 ‘si fideles ita sint peccato mortui, ut iis iterum non dominetur; ita ex Deo nati per semen in iis manens, ut non possint dare operam peccato; ... tum non finaliter vel totaliter suam fidem amittunt.’ Ames, *Coronis*, p.347.

59 ‘Qui ex Deo natus est, id est, vere fidelem et renatum non ita peccare, ut peccatum ei iterum dominetur, nec ita posse peccare.’ *Collatio*, pp.447-48.
indeed previous verses): it makes a distinction between sin that leads to death and sin that does not lead to death. So, the sin that leads to death, that is, total apostasy, is the same kind of sin which chapter 3:9 of the same epistle states the truly regenerate cannot commit.60

All these examples of exegetical issues indicate Ames’s concern to show that his position to be built upon a solid exegetical foundation. Moreover, they seem to indicate the different approaches to interpretation: the Remonstrants showed a tendency to be literal while Ames’s approach was arguably broader and more flexible, as a result of taking account of the literary context such as in types and other figures of speech. This allowed Ames to apply texts, particularly the texts in the Old Testament, more widely to believers under the new covenant.

5.3 The Ground of Assurance

The Reformed orthodox case for perseverance, which was discussed in two previous sections, has two important implications for related doctrines: the doctrine of assurance and the doctrine of temporary faith. These two issues are particularly important in light of Kendall’s thesis that the doctrine of temporary faith became ‘inconvenient’ teaching, and even ‘the embarrassment, if not the scandal’ for English puritans including Ames, due to their conviction of the practical syllogism. Puritans’ apparent heavy emphasis on the practical syllogism as the ground of assurance was used by Kendall as the primary

evidence in support of his ‘Calvin against Calvinists’ framework.\textsuperscript{61} Although Kendall’s framework has been roundly refuted by a number of studies already, his particular claims concerning Ames as someone who ‘gave its [the temporary faith’s] virtual demise a systematic sanction’\textsuperscript{62} has never been examined in detail before. Therefore, we need to explore how Ames articulated the ground of assurance before we examine the supposed link between the practical syllogism and the temporary faith.

The question of the ground of assurance (the question of how the believer can be certain of their salvation) did not seem to have a prominent place in the debate between the Remonstrants and Reformed orthodox in the Hague Conference. None of the ten arguments set out by the Reformed orthodox against the Remonstrants touches on the issue of assurance, as they are strictly concerned with the issue of perseverance: whether or not the true believer can fall from the grace. The only place in Coronis where Ames touches on the issue of assurance is at the beginning of the chapter which deals with the fifth article of the Remonstrance. In order to explain status questionis regarding the fifth article, Ames sets out the fundamental Reformed orthodox position on the question in the form of the following concise prepositions: that God calls some miserable sinners since He has chosen them to save; that it was to eternal fellowship or communion with him that He calls them; by calling them efficaciously, God imparts the principle of eternal duration; though that principle does not carry

\textsuperscript{61} In fact, the origin of Kendall’s framework goes back to a debate between Wilhelm Niesel and Karl Barth. Although they disagreed in their views on Calvin on the question, they agreed that the later development in the Reformed orthodox in their emphasis on the practical syllogism as anthropocentric and predestinarian as opposed to Calvin’s christocentric system. See Richard Muller, \textit{Calvin and the Reformed Tradition}, pp.247-50.

\textsuperscript{62} Kendall, \textit{Calvin and English Calvinism}, p.7.
absolute necessity of perseverance, God guaranteed by his unchangeable covenant (immutabili foedere) that he would preserve that principle as seen in Jeremiah 32:40; while this promise is not executed without external means such as the word of ministry, the assistance of the Spirit is necessary for that work of protection.63

After describing the fundamental position of the Reformed orthodox, Ames went on to draw out implications or inferences (consectaria) of those fundamentals, which includes his basic position on the issue of assurance. Ames's approach to the doctrine of assurance was based on the distinction between certainty of the object and certainty of the subject. Concerning the former, Ames stated:

Certainty of this object, or of the thing itself – that the one who is truly faithful will persevere in his faith – is of absolute truth, provided it be so understood as to include the same certainty of those means which are necessary for preserving faith.64

Importantly, the objective nature of this certainty requires that it is something which should be understood rather than experienced or perceived. The point of this statement is that the scope of perseverance should be understood in a way that includes the means as well as the end of perseverance. This point will be important because of the claim that assurance, as understood within the Reformed orthodox of Perkins's tradition, mainly depends on the ground of one's experience of sanctification.

63 Ames, Coronis, pp.274-75.
64 ‘Certitudo objecti huius, vel ipsius, vere fidelem in fide sua perseveraturum, est absolutae veritatis, modo sic intelligatur, ut eandem certitudinem includat mediorum eorum, quae necessaria sunt ad fidem conservandam.’ Ames, Coronis, p.276.
It was only after the objective element of certainty was stated that Ames moved on to the certainty of the subject. Ames explained:

Certainty of the subject, or apprehension and special application of this truth, in the faithful himself is not altogether absolute, but has a condition attached ... therefore, it is mediated through the knowledge and the practice of faith itself and also those things which nurture and increase their faith. For this apprehension does not occur without signs and proofs, and therefore, it is increased or decreased or even some way tends to be taken away, just as that signs and the proofs of faith vary.\(^\text{65}\)

The significance of this way of articulating the assurance of believers is obvious: while certainty of the subject is something we can increase or decrease depending on our exercise of faith and practice, certainty of the object is something which should be understood by all the true believers and does not vary depending on the degree of exercise of the faith. The content of the latter is simply that divine actions in the perseverance of the saints include not only the end of the perseverance but also the means.

Interestingly, the distinction between certainty of the object and certainty of the subject had such an importance for Ames that it re-appeared later in his *Marrow*. Ames dealt with the doctrine of assurance under the topic of glorification, which comes at the end of his section on the application of Christ: ‘this certainty about the thing itself, which is called a certainty of the object, is made fast for all true believers. But the perceiving of it, which is called a certainty of the subject, is not always enjoyed by all.’ After setting out this distinction, Ames continued to expound what this certainty of the object entails

\(^{65}\) ‘Certitudo subjecti, vel huius veritatis apprehensio, specialis applicatio, in ipso fidei non est omni modo absoluta, sed admixtam habet conditionem: ... est igitur mediata per fidei ipsius notitiam et exercitium, et eorum etiam quae fidem fovent ac augent: haec enim apprehensio non oritur nisi ex signis vel argumentis, atque adeo vel augeri, vel minui, vel etiam aliquo modo tolli solet, prout illa signa vel argumenta fidei variant.’ *Ames, Coronis*, p.276.
in the following section: ‘This certainty is established and confirmed to believers by the word, by seals, by oath, and by the guarantee of God himself.’ Then, Ames tuned to the question of how the true believer perceives this certainty. He argued that certainty is perceived and made certain in us in three ways:

First, by a certain spiritual sense in which the grace of God now present becomes known and evident to the believer. Second, by the gift of discernment through which believers distinguish true grace from its shadow. Third, by the whisper and witness of conscience in which grace and salvation are made fast for believers, just as sin and death are for unbelievers. Fourth, the Spirit of God so confirms to believers these ways of perceiving that they have the same certainty as faith itself.

The implication of this is that, as far as the certainty of the subject is concerned, repentance and keeping and maintaining a good conscience against grievous wound of the sins will be a necessary condition for perception of this truth.

When two places where Ames discussed the topic of certainty are compared, there is a sign of development in Ames’s thinking about this concept of certainty, particularly about the object. While his statement about the certainty of the object in Coronis was somewhat limited in its scope - to the matter of

66 Ames, Marrow, L.XXX.14. This statement is followed by two citations from Scripture. One is from Hebrew 6:17 where God is ‘willing abundantly to show to the heirs of the promise the immutability of his counsel, he bound it with an oath so that by two immutable things... we might have strong consolation’. Another citation is from Ephesians 1:13, 14, ‘you have been sealed with the promised Holy Spirit which is the guarantee of our inheritance’. Although there might be a little ambiguity about which kind of certainty Ames is explaining in Marrow L.XX.14 (certainty of the object or of the subject), upon a closer reading it becomes clear that it is the certainty of the object which is referred here. In LXXX.13, the basic terms Ames uses to denote both kinds of certainty was ‘this certainty about the thing itself’ (to which Ames adds ‘which is called a certainty of the object’) and the perceiving of it’ (to which Ames adds, ‘which is called a certainty of the subject’). Then Ames goes on to expand the former by referring it ‘this certainty’ in LXXX.14 and the latter in L.XXX.15.

67 I. Sensu quodam Spirituali; quo ratio Dei iam praesense praesentiam suam manifestam et evidentem reddit fidelis. II. Ex discretionis dono, quo distinguish fideles veram gratiam ab eius specie adumbrata. III. Conscientiae discursu ac testimonio, quo non minus fidelibus obsignatur gratia ac salus, atque infidelibus peccatum et mors. IV. Spiritus ipse Dei has omnes percipienti rationes fidelibus ita confirmat, ut eandem certitudinem habeant cum ipsa fide’. Ames, Marrow, L.XXX.15.

68 Ames, Marrow, L.XXX.16-20.
understanding that the perseverance includes means as well as the end - his later statement in *Marrow* makes an explicit appeal to divine actions as the ground of assurance, such as divine word, oath, and sealing. This development in his Ames's thinking can be explained by his involvement with the process of the debate in the Synod as that event happened during these two publications.69

In Article 5:10, the Canons of Dort also show plurality of grounds of assurance:

> Accordingly this assurance does not derive from some private revelation beyond or outside the Word, but from faith in the promises of God which he has very plentifully revealed in his Word for our comfort, from the testimony of the Holy Spirit testifying with our spirit that we are God's children and heirs (Romans 8:16-17), and finally from a serious and holy pursuit of a clear conscience and of good works.70

Although this expresses the ground of faith slightly differently from Ames, there is basic agreement that the ground of assurance can be found in elements both external and internal to the believers: the assurance derives from the promises of God, from the testimony of the Holy Spirit, and finally from a pursuit of sanctification. Obviously, this means that the sanctification in the believer is not the sole ground of assurance but constitutes only one part of threefold grounds of assurance.

This formulation might well be the result of the Trinitarian argument which the Reformed orthodox put forward against the Remonstrants on the issue of perseverance: the perseverance of the saints rests on the work of Trinity, which is essentially external to the believers. As the work of perseverance rests on divine actions, the ground of assurance should not be confined to internal signs

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69 As was noted above, *Coronis* was published in 1618 in preparation for the Synod and the first edition of *Marrow* was published in 1623, only five years after the Synod.

and proofs within the believer's conscience but should also derive from divine actions which are external to believers.

The significance of the plurality of grounds of assurance articulated both by Ames and the Canons of Dort cannot be overstated: while experiential ‘signs and proofs’ of sanctification within the life of the believer have room in their teaching of assurance, external divine actions such as God’s word, oath, promise, and sealing also constituted the vital part of the ground of assurance. To use Ames’s terminology, it was only after the certainty of object had been declared that Ames went on to explain how this certainty was to be received subjectively. Therefore, the ground of assurance, for Ames, is found not only in the sanctification of the believers but also in the divine actions such as God’s promises, oath, and sealing. Thus, the claim that puritans of Perkins’s tradition only appealed to sanctification as the ground of assurance was unfounded, at least as far as Ames is concerned.71

One might point out that Ames devoted far more space to perception of certainty than the certainty of the object and therefore argue that more emphasis is put on the latter. On this matter of puritan’s general emphasis on the subjective side of assurance, Beeke has provided a helpful explanation in terms of their pastoral concern: ‘[t]he Puritans tended to give a topic time and attention proportionate to its difficulty instead of its relative importance’.72 Thus, their emphasis on the subjective side of assurance does not necessarily

reflect its primary importance as the evidence of saving grace but its
significance for their pastoral needs. This explanation might well apply to
Ames’s emphasis on the subjective side of assurance. Therefore, it can still be
argued that assurance was primarily grounded in God’s promises in Ames’s
system.

5.4 The Temporary Faith

Another area, closely connected to debate on the issue of perseverance, was the
nature of temporary faith. This is particularly important in light of the perceived
link between the idea of the practical syllogism and the ‘inconvenient’ teaching
of temporary faith. Kendall argued that puritans in Perkins’s tradition found the
teaching of temporary faith ‘inconvenient’ and ‘scandalous’ because this
teaching might well have led sincere believers into a state of despair. This claim
was based on the assumption that they held no difference between the nature of
temporary faith and saving faith. Therefore, in order to examine this assumption,
it is necessary to look closely at the case of Perkins first and then Ames. Closer
reading reveals that the opposite is the case: a subtle line has drawn by these
authors between the nature of temporary faith and of saving faith.

Upon closer reading, Perkins devoted much of his discussion to the faith of
the reprobate in A Golden Chain, where he developed three stages or ‘degrees’ of
how the divine decree of reprobation is executed: ‘uneffectual’ calling, falling
away from faith, and condemnation. The nature of temporary faith is described
in detail in Perkins’s exposition of uneffectual calling, which is further divided

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into five degrees. After two initial steps of enlightening of their minds and
certain acknowledgement of their sins, the third degree is temporary faith,
‘whereby the reprobate doth confusedly believe the promises of God made in
Christ’. Their faith is ‘confused’ because, being content with a general faith, they
do not believe that they themselves particularly shall be saved. What is
particularly interesting for us is the next degree in Perkins’s exposition:

The fourth [decree] is a tasting of heavenly gifts, as of justification and
sanctification and of the virtues of the world to come. This tasting is
verily a sense in the hearts of the reprobates whereby they do perceive
and feel the excellency of God’s benefits, notwithstanding they do not
enjoy the same. For it is one thing to taste of dainties and a banquet and
another thing to feed and be nourished thereby.\(^\text{74}\)

How should this ‘tasting’ be understood as compared with the saving faith of a
true believer? Perkins continued to comment in the fifth degree that the
reprobate might even experience a certain degree of sanctification. Given the
extent to which Perkins allowed the reprobate to make progress in their faith,
one might be tempted to read the nature of tasting of heavenly gifts here as
basically the same as saving faith. However, Perkins never described this step as
justification and sanctification proper. Moreover, the important qualification at
the end of paragraph, ‘for it is one thing to taste ... and another thing to feed and
to be nourished thereby’, means that a certain distinction is maintained: the
reprobate are not properly fed by what they taste. It is here that a subtle but
clear distinction exists between the nature of temporary faith and the nature of

saving faith.\textsuperscript{75} This basic distinction will be important when considering the later development.

Compared with Perkins’s fully developed articulation of the degrees within the execution of divine decree for the reprobates, the significance and space given to the idea of temporary faith in Ames’s system set out in his \textit{Marrow} seems small indeed. One point where Ames mentioned it was in his chapter on ‘calling’: ‘this [the offer of Christ both outward and inward] is sometimes and in a certain way granted to those who are not elected’\textsuperscript{76} Ames developed this idea no further than this. For Kendall, this is the primary evidence which suggests that Ames tried to ‘skirt’ the problem of temporary faith while succeeding in remaining ‘sound’.\textsuperscript{77} However, it must be remembered that Ames deliberately chose to write his \textit{Marrow} as a concise theological handbook, not as an exhaustive account of his theological system.\textsuperscript{78} This means that his brief comment on the idea of temporary faith should not be taken merely as paying lip service for the sake of remaining sound. Rather, it should be taken as evidence for a basic continuity of Ames’s position with Perkins on the question. This can be confirmed through examination of Ames’s arguments, as recorded in \textit{Coronis}.

At the Hague Conference, the Reformed orthodox tried to treat the issue of temporary faith by arguing that they were not true believers from the beginning. The logic of this wasconcisely presented in the following argument:

\textsuperscript{75} Kendall did not seem to acknowledge the significance of this distinction. As a result, he accused Perkins of never satisfactorily answering the central question: how a man may discern he is in the state of grace. Kendall, \textit{Calvin and English Calvinism}, p.74.

\textsuperscript{76} Ames, \textit{Marrow}, I, XXVI, 15.

\textsuperscript{77} Kendall, \textit{Calvin and English Calvinism}, pp.155-56.

\textsuperscript{78} See pp.35-36 above.
Scripture testifies that those, who do not persevere but abandon etc., were never truly believers before, nor grafted to Christ through the true faith. It testifies also that those of true believers are known because they persevere in faith. (John 8:31, I John 2:19, Hebrew 3:6, 14.) Therefore, it follows that truly the faithful do not abandon their faith but persevere up to till the end.\footnote{Collatio, p.445.}

However, this brief argument was certainly not enough to convince the Remonstrants. They thought it was ‘absurd’ to state that those who abandon their faith were not really believers and that their faith should be understood merely as an external confession of faith. To this, Ames responded that those statements might be ‘against human opinion but they contain nothing so foreign either from the truth or from the logic of Scripture that they are thought to be rejected by that name [of absurdity]’\footnote{Ames, Coronis, p.343.}. In order to support the Reformed orthodox case, Ames went on to supply additional passages –Luke 8:18, and John 2:23-24 – ‘where we are taught clearly that many are said to be believers, not because they have true faith in their heart, but because they appear as such externally’.\footnote{Ames, Coronis, p.343.}

Another objection made by the Remonstrants against the Reformed orthodox primarily concerned the meaning of scriptural exhortations for perseverance in faith. If the Reformed orthodox case were true, it would have a number of problematic implications: exhortations for perseverance would be

\footnote{‘Scriptura testatur eos, qui non perseverant, sed deficient, etc., nunquam ante fuisse vere fideles, aut Christo per veram fidem insitos: et vere fidelium proprium et notam esse, quod in fide perseverant Ioan 8.31. I Ioan 2.19. Heb.3.6.14. Unde sequitur vere fideles non desciscere, sed usque ad finem perseverare.’ Collatio, p.445.}

\footnote{‘contraque hominum opinionem, nihil tamen idcirco continerent, aut a veritate, aut a ratione Scripturae tam alienum, ut eo nomine rejicienda putentur.’ Ames, Coronis, p.343.}

\footnote{‘Ubi expresse docemur fideles multos in Scriptura dici, non quia veram fidem habebant in corde, sed quia tales externe apparebant.’ Ames, Coronis, p.343.}
meaningless, the risk of defection would be minimized; the sin of apostasy would be alleviated; descriptions of such apostasies in Scriptures would be overthrown.82 These accusations were dismissed pointedly by Ames:

nothing urges on more toward being anxiously eager for perseverance than understanding that only those who persevere before God are reckoned as the faithful, and the danger of defection is not plainly taken away from the true faithful, but only defection itself, nor can a graver sin scarcely be thought of than to blaspheme recognized truth out of hatred, which those who were never truly faithful are accustomed to do.83

Exegetically, a key verse to which the Reformed orthodox appealed was I John 2:19: 'They went out from us, but they were not from us. [For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us]; but they went out from us so that it would be known that they were not from us'.84 For the Reformed orthodox, this verse confirmed that those who seemingly abandoned their faith in fact did not have true saving faith in the first place. Although the Remonstrants admitted that the verse 'seems to confirm this argument [by the Reformed orthodox] more readily than the other, it is utterly distorted from its own natural sense.'85 The natural sense of the verse, according to the Remonstrants, was to read it in terms of mission: the reference is about those people who were sent out (egressi sunt) by the apostles, but did not come back

82 Ames, Coronis, p.343.
83 'ad perseverantiae solictae studendum, nihil magis urget, quam intelligere, solos perseverantibus coram Deo fideles haberi: et periculum defectionis non plane tollatur a veris fidelibus, sed ipsa defectio sola; neque gravius peccatum cogitari fere possit quam agnitar veritatem ex odio blasphemare, quod facere solent ii qui nunquam vere fideles fuerunt.' Ames, Coronis, pp.343-44.
84 The phrase in bracket is lacking in Beza’s translation but it is supplied here from Tremellius’s translation as it is a part of Ames’s discussion.
85 ‘hoc argumentum videtur plenius confirmare, quam piror ille, torquetur hic prorsus ex sensu suo genuine.’ Collatio, p.446.
(regressi sunt) to them because they did not remain in the orthodox teachings to which they originally adhered.\textsuperscript{86}

To this, Ames responded with a long list of objections (amounting to ten in number) in order to defend the Reformed orthodox reading. Here it is enough to pick up two main points. First, no concept of 'mission' is mentioned in this verse. Therefore, the verse does not refer to some people, who pretended to be sent (mitti) by the apostles, but it does refer to those very antichrists who went out (expressi sunt) from them.\textsuperscript{87} Secondly, there is no mention of 'coming back' but only of 'remaining' in this verse. Importantly, that act of remaining is placed as meaning opposite to the act of going out. This means, if they had remained, they would not have gone out. However, this contrast between 'remaining' and 'going out' would not be the case in the Remonstrant interpretation. For the act of going out and the act of remaining (which was interpreted as coming back by the Remonstrants) 'fit and agree with each other very well' (optime convenit et consentit) in their attempt to interpret this passage in terms of the apostolic mission. Therefore, their interpretation does not match with the natural meaning of the term used in the passage.\textsuperscript{88}

From what has been described above, the position of the Reformed orthodox on the question of temporary faith is clear: those who do not persevere, but who seem to abandon their faith, were in fact never truly believers before and their faith was merely an external profession. In other words, the nature of temporary faith which the reprobate hold for a certain period of time was not

\textsuperscript{86} Collatio, p.446.
\textsuperscript{87} Ames, Coronis, p.345.
\textsuperscript{88} Ames, Coronis, p.345.
the same in essence as the nature of true faith, which only the elect hold and
persevere in to the end. That was the only natural conclusion drawn from this
debate. Having engaged in the debate themselves directly, the Reformed
orthodox felt it absolutely necessary to reject the opposing view. This is
highlighted in the rejection clause of the fifth article of the Dort Canons. In the
rejection clause 5.3, the Synod rejected those:

Who teach that those who truly believe and have been born again not
only can forfeit justifying faith as well as grace and salvation totally and
to the end, but also in actual fact do often forfeit them and are lost
forever.\footnote{Appendix 7 in Matthew Barrett, \textit{The Grace of Godliness}, p.188.}

Similarly in rejection clause 5.7, the Synod also rejected those: ‘who teach that
the faith of those who believe only temporarily does not differ from justifying
and saving faith except in duration alone’.\footnote{Appendix 7 in Matthew Barrett, \textit{The Grace of Godliness}, p.190.}

This case for the perseverance of the saints based on the idea of a
fundamental difference between the nature of saving faith and temporary faith
is significant: it shows an almost completely different picture from what Kendall
has argued. According to Kendall, the idea of the practical syllogism led
Perkins’s followers, including Ames, to have nothing to do with the idea of
temporary faith, finding it embarrassing and scandalous. It has already been
shown in the previous section that Ames did not really have the practical
syllogism as the sole ground of assurance. Moreover, Ames did not really reject
the idea of temporary faith as such: it was the idea of a clear boundary between
saving faith and temporary faith that was important for him. For Ames and the
Reformed orthodox, the basic argument that those who abandon faith were not
true believers in the first place – the argument which Ames and the Reformed employed in their case for perseverance – led them to conclude that the faith of the reprobate was categorically different from that of true believers. They naturally felt that this conclusion had to be expressed explicitly by a clear rejection of those who tried to confuse that fundamental difference.

The significance of Ames’s argument will be even clearer when the position expressed in the Canons of Dort is compared with the opinion of the British delegates of the Synod. What was a natural conclusion, for those who had gone through debating with the Remonstrants in the Dutch context in the years prior to the Synod, was not the case for the British delegates who participated in the discussion at the Synod. The British context from which they had come was less straightforward than the Dutch context. This becomes clear by paying attention to the British delegates’ opinion expressed in *The Collegiate Suffrage of the British Divines* and the requests the British made in the process of formulating the Canons on the idea of temporary faith.

The carefully crafted propositions concerning the Fifth article of Remonstrance contained in *The Collegiate Suffrage* reflects the complex nature of their circumstances. After a short introductory comment, their position is stated in positive form: four theses concerning those who are non-elect, eight theses concerning the elect, and another four concerning ‘ourselves’, which is on assurance of faith. Then, in negative form, six theses are stated as erroneous
opinions to be rejected. Each thesis is followed by detailed comments and exegetical discussions.91

What is particularly interesting are the first four theses ‘touching those who are not Elect’, their positions on the precise nature of temporary faith. The Collegiate Suffrage stated that ‘there is a certain supernaturall enlightening granted to some of them, who are non elect’ by which the non-elect understand those things which are revealed in the word of God and they ‘yeeld an unfeigned assent’. The genuineness of this assent extends not only to the mind but also to the affections as they further state that there is ‘a certain change of their affections, and some kinde of amendment of their manners’. Based on these outward changes, they should be considered as justified and sanctified believers ‘by a charitable construction’. However, a clear distinction is drawn between them and true believers, as they ‘yet never attained unto the state of adoption and justification’ because the changes brought by the faith of the non-elect were only ‘preparatives tending in some sort to justification’, yet not truly attaining justification. Therefore, their resulting apostasy should not be regarded as the apostasy of the saints. This kind of faith, which the non-elect experience, is called only ‘dogmaticall’. It is distinct from justifying faith, which is granted only to the elect and by which the elect are transferred from the state of wrath to the state of adoption and salvation.92

The position carefully described in these statements was broadly in agreement with the conclusions which were drawn at the Synod. Particularly,
they agreed on the idea that the nature of the temporary faith granted to the reprobate is clearly distinct from the nature of the true faith given to the elect. Although the reprobate may experience some kind of change in their mind, affections and manner of life, yet they never attain to the state of justification and adoption, which only the elect experience through justifying faith. The nature of these two kinds of faith are never the same.

Despite these broad agreements, however, there was also a significant difference between the Synod of Dort as a whole and the British delegates. Particularly, a stark contrast can be seen in their attitudes toward those who disagree on the nature of temporary faith, which relates to the rejection clauses in the Canons. The British delegates requested that the third and the seventh rejection clauses be dropped, although that request was not granted by the Synod. As noted above, these clauses rejected those who teach that true believers can abandon justifying faith and that there is no difference between the faith of the elect and of the reprobate.93

Why did the British make that request? Their explanation reflects their own circumstances: between the irenic attitude of the British delegates and the strong concern of Dutch Reformed theologians to take this opportunity to refute the Remonstrants once and for all.94 The British explained that they themselves

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94 Detailed analysis of the process of drafting process awaits publication of the volume III of *Acta et Documenta Synodi Nationalis Dordrechtae (1618-1619)* series. The drafting committee consisted with three Dutch theologians, three foreign theologians, together with president Bogerman and assessors Hermannus Faukelius and Jacobus Rolandus. The foreign theologians were Bishop George Carleton on behalf of the British, Genevan theologian Jean Diodati on behalf of the French, and Heidelberg theologian Abraham Scultetus on behalf of the Germans. Dutch theologians were Johannes Polyander, Antonius Walaeus, and Jacobus Trigland. Donald Sinnema, *The Drafting of the Canons of Dort*, p.298. Among them, president Bogerman has been directly involved with the controversy by attending the Hague Conference in 1611.
'think that this doctrine [that the true believers can fall from the justifying faith] is contrary to Holy Scripture, but whether it is expedient to condemn it in these our canons needs great deliberation'. 95 Though they were willing to affirm that true believers cannot fall from saving grace, they had some reservation about the explicit rejection of contrary teaching. Among the four reasons they listed for that request, the most interesting for our purposes is the third:

that (greater significance) in the Reformed churches themselves, many learned and saintly men who are at one with us in defending absolute predestination, nevertheless think that certain of those who are truly regenerated and justified, are able to fall from that state and to perish and that this happens eventually to all those, whom God has not ordained in the decree of election infallibly to eternal life. 96

As rightly described by Collier, the irenic attitude of the British delegates at the Synod was conditioned by their own context: they had been commissioned by King James and strictly instructed to be as conciliatory as possible, which included their attitude toward the Lutheran tradition.97 Besides, when they mentioned ‘many learned and saintly men’, who thought despite their agreement with the absolute predestination that the true believer can fall from the saving grace, they could well include English bishops like Lancelot Andrewes and John Overall.98 So, from their own perspective, it was very also difficult to imagine that Ames was excluded from this drafting process, given the close tie he had with the president.

97 On King James’s instruction to the delegates, see Jay Collier, Debating Perseverance, pp.61-63.
98 Jay Collier, Debating Perseverance, pp.39-53. Collier’s survey of possible candidates of ‘respected men’, for whom the article 5 of the Lambeth articles was made acceptable, included Lancelot Andrewes, Richard Hooker, Matthew Hutton, Adrianus Saravia, John Overall.
important that the Canons of the Synod should be formulated in a way that was acceptable for theologians back home.

However, these attempts of the British delegates failed in the end: the requests of the British delegates were not accepted by the drafting committee who went ahead to write the explicit rejection clauses 3 and 7. That decision not to grant the request of the British delegates was necessary from the committee’s perspective because of the debate they had with the Remonstrants. As shown above, the critical issue for them was whether a true believer can fall from saving grace, which the Remonstrants affirmed and the Reformed orthodox rejected. As part of their argument, the Reformed orthodox tried to show the inseparable connection between the divine action of predestination and the perseverance of the saints. The divine action of predestination is, as Ames argued, so constant and certain that the faith of believers is preserved both totally and finally. Otherwise, it would not make predestination immutable. Therefore, holding to the doctrine of absolute predestination and not approving the totality and finality of perseverance is a contradiction in terms. Ames rested this argument not only on logic alone but also on solid exegesis of Romans 8:29-30 and John 6:37, 39. Furthermore, Ames and the Reformed orthodox interpreted the sin mentioned in I John 3:9 as the sin of apostasy. This reading means that people who are born of God, namely true believers, cannot fall from saving grace. As for the interpretation of passages which seem to describe people falling from the grace, the Reformed orthodox took them to mean those who were not believers, particularly in light of I John 2:19, which states that those who abandoned their faith ‘were not with us’ from the first place. As we
have seen above, Ames showed his ample support of this reading by putting forward a number of arguments against the Remonstrant reading of the same text.

As a result of this debate, and Ames’s counter-arguments against the Remonstrants, the Synod as a whole could confidently conclude that the nature of temporary faith is categorically different from saving and justifying faith. In other words, the idea of a fundamental difference between the temporary faith of the reprobate and the saving faith of the elect was part and parcel of the Reformed orthodox case for perseverance. To drop these important rejection clauses, which were intended to refute Remonstrant teaching explicitly, would have been out of question for those who shared this concern. Thus, the drafting committee concluded that the teaching of ‘many learned and saintly men’ (cited by the British delegation), who shared the doctrine of absolute predestination broadly with the Reformed but did not hold the finality and totality of perseverance, should also be rejected.

Ames may well have helped to steer the decision of the drafting committee against the British request. No explicit evidence to support this survives, but one way to approach this is by looking at another English man, George Carleton. Being both a part of the British delegates (the head of the delegation in fact) and a part of the drafting committee, Carleton requires closer scrutiny from this comparison. While making the request to drop the rejection clauses as the British delegate, how could he, as a member of the drafting committee, decide not to grant that request? Collier posed a similar question in his discussion of the Montagu affair in England after Dort and Carleton’s polemic against
Montagu, particularly his teaching of the apostasy of the saints. When Carleton charged Montagu with Arminianism for teaching about the apostasy of the saints, he displayed no sensitivity to those who taught the apostasy of the saints while at the same time supporting absolute predestination. This was the very moderation the British delegation urged to the Synod. Collier asks: ‘If the British delegation wanted the condemnation dropped from the Canons of Dort, why was Carleton now so insensitive to this position [of Montagu]?’ It is impossible to give a definitive answer. Collier suggested that Carleton was not fully convinced as the other British delegates about an alternative reading of Augustine which allowed the apostasy of the saints, as the other British delegates, and his attitude can be explained by the new polemical context in 1620s. Whatever the reason behind this perceived inconsistency, what stands out from Carleton’s argument against Montagu is a close affinity to Ames’s arguments against the apostasy of the saints in Coronis. Particularly, Carleton devoted a whole chapter to an argument based on the link between the predestination and the perseverance of the saints: ‘[t]hat perseverance to the end is a gift of God given to true believers, – flowing from God’s purpose and predestination’. Carleton appealed to Romans 8:29-30, where chain of salvation from predestination, calling, justification, and glorification is ‘so linked together that it cannot be separated’. Carleton also used I John 3:9 where the act of ‘sin’, which nobody who is born of God can continue to do, should be understood as the sin of apostasy. These were arguments which surely Carleton

100 George Carleton, An Examination of Those things wherein of the late the Author Appeale holdeth the Doctrines of the Pelagians and Arminians, to be the Doctrines of the Church of England (1626), p.68.
picked up from his involvement in the Synod in general and even from working together with Ames in the Synod and from reading *Coronis* in preparation – the work which Carleton reportedly regarded ‘most accurately and solidly written’\(^{101}\).

Carleton’s possible affinity for Ames is attested also in his extraordinary ‘defence’ of puritanism. In response to Montagu’s charge of being ‘puritans’ against those who agreed with Lambeth Articles, Carleton remarkably argued that there had long been unity between conformists and puritans in terms of what he calls ‘doctrines’, most probably meaning soteriology. The matter which divided them was only with regard to discipline, the question of ecclesiology and practice of worship. Carleton thus concludes, ‘hitherto there was no Puritane Doctrine knowne’.\(^{102}\) This striking assertion must have been a reflection of Carleton’s encounter with Ames, who made a distinct contribution to the Reformed orthodox cause in terms of soteriological issues, despite his radical puritanism against the English Church in terms of liturgical and ecclesiological issues.

**Conclusion**

This chapter explored how Ames defended the Reformed orthodox position that the true believer cannot fall from saving grace totally and finally. Throughout their debate on this topic, the Remonstrants’ synergistic tendency was more explicit than in topics covered in previous chapters. In the previous issues

\(^{101}\) Horton, *Ames by Nethenus*, p.4.  
\(^{102}\) George Carleton, *An Examination*, p.8.
examined, Ames’s strategy was to expose synergistic tendencies hidden in ambiguous statements. With this issue of the perseverance of the saints, Ames did not have to expose that tendency since the synergistic tendency was clearly seen every time the Remonstrants used the distinction between the absolute and conditional nature of the divine actions of the three persons within Trinity. According to the Remonstrants, the nature of the divine promise was not really absolute but conditional on a human response. The same argument applied to the work of the Holy Spirit: the work of sealing was not absolute in nature but conditional upon work on the part of the believer. Intercession offered by Christ for the perseverance of the saints was not ‘simply and absolutely’ heard by the Father as it was a different kind of prayer, which was not immediately heard by the Father. Against this synergistic and conditional understanding of divine actions, Ames employed the same strategy which he had used previously: the absolute nature of divine action can be and should be compatible with the contingent nature of human actions; the nature of the divine actions should be regarded as absolute even if they are performed in time through the intervention of human actions. Scriptural warnings to believers about falling from saving grace and exhortations to remain faithful should not be regarded as meaningless statements as indicating that the danger of falling is still there though the act of falling is taken away by divine action of preservation: ‘the danger of defection is not plainly taken away from the faithful but only the defection itself’. A series of passages in Scripture, which suggest the conditional nature of perseverance, should be understood in terms of a causal

103 See p.245, n.83 above.
relationship between a mark of perseverance and true discipleship: perseverance is a mark which comes out of true discipleship.

In addition, in order to support the Reformed orthodox case for perseverance, Ames displayed his remarkable sensitivity to interpret the key passages by considering different natures of the texts under discussion. For example, the promise of a new covenant in Jeremiah was broadly applied by Ames to believers under the new covenant by means of typological interpretation. Christ's intercession for the perseverance of Peter was extended to all true believers and the idea of sin in I John 3:9 was strictly understood as the sin of apostasy by taking it as a figure of speech.

Although the debate between Ames and the Remonstrants did not touch on the issue of assurance on the whole, Ames set out his position on the ground of assurance by distinguishing between the certainty of the object and of the subject: the former constitutes the understanding that the divine work of perseverance includes the means as well as the end whereas the latter is personal perception of that truth. Ames developed this idea of this distinction further in his Marrow: the certainty of the object was defined more explicitly in terms of divine actions such as God's word, oath, and seals. After these objective elements of certainty had been declared, Ames went on to state the certainty of the subject. This plurality of the ground of assurance in Ames, in agreement with the Canons of Dort, challenges the assumption of Kendall's thesis that the practical syllogism was the basic ground of assurance for the English puritans in Perkins's tradition. This means that the validity of distinction between
experimental predestinarians and credal predestinarians is doubtful since the assumption is unfounded.

Moreover, it was not exactly the case that Ames had nothing to do with the teaching of temporary faith. Ames argued for a fundamental difference between the nature of temporary faith of the reprobate and saving faith of true believers. However, it was not as a result of his emphasis on the practical syllogism nor because he found the teaching of temporary faith inconvenient or scandalous, as Kendall suggested. Rather, it was a crucial part of the Reformed orthodox argument against the Remonstrants for perseverance based on I John 2:19: those who seemed to abandon their faith were not ‘with us’ from the beginning. Furthermore, the doctrine of perseverance of the saints is inseparably linked with and rests on the doctrine of predestination for the Reformed orthodox. Ames argued for this inseparable link not only based on the logic alone but also his solid exegesis of Romans 8:29-30 and John 6:37, 39. So, not surprisingly the British delegates’ requests to drop the rejection clauses 5.3 and 5.7 were not approved by the Synod. Ames’s emphatic argument on this point might well have influenced the Synod's decision. Drawing a clear distinction between the nature of temporary faith and saving faith was absolutely essential for Ames and other Reformed orthodox in order to refute the Remonstrant teaching. Making this distinction ambiguous would be equal to undermining the doctrine of predestination which is absolutely rooted in divine will.
Chapter VI: Conclusion

It will be recalled that Festus Hommius urged the readers of Ames's Coronis, which was published in timely fashion during preparations for the Synod of Dort: ‘behold now, with his sharp pen, Ames the Briton plucks it [the arrogant teaching] out utterly from the roots’, and ‘its filaments cut to pieces’.1 After the Synod, all three Leiden Theology Professors – Johanness Polyander, Antonius Walaeus, and Antonius Thysius – were willing to take direct action by appealing to Archbishop Abbot, when Ames’s appointment in Leiden was blocked by the English authorities: William Ames has proved to be ‘a godly and very learned man ... because of his faithful defence of sound doctrine against the Remonstrants which he has published here in various writings’.2 For Nethenus, Ames was ‘the enemy of falsehood and godlessness, the hammer for heresies’, particularly ‘Remonstrant heresies’. Ames was even ‘the lucky star, as it were, of the Dutch Churches when they were tossed about in those devastating storms of Arminianism which endangered even the Republic itself’.3 Indeed, Nethenus was in no doubt that Ames was ‘given by England’. Within a decade of arriving in the Low Countries, William Ames readily proved to be one of the most active – and arguably the most effective – opponent of Arminianism by producing a

1 See Appendix for the Latin original.
2 Cited by Donald Sinnema,'The Attempt to Establish a Chair in Practical Theology', p.428.
3 Horton, Ames by Nethenus, p.4.
series of polemical writings, through which Ames was hailed as the champion of Reformed orthodoxy and received as a precious gift from England.

What was so effective about Ames’s argument against Arminianism which earned him such a high regard? What precisely were Ames’s contributions to the controversy in his polemical writings? What light do his polemics shed on the views articulated in relevant sections in his major work, Marrow? Having closely examined Ames’s arguments in the four major topics of the Arminian controversy, we are in a position to sum up our findings and answer these questions.

First, as discussed in Chapter 2, Ames argued that the divine act of predestination logically precedes faith and thus predestination is ‘for faith’ and not ‘from faith’. This contradicted what Grevinchoven argued following Arminius’s teaching of predestination based on foreseen faith. As predestination is for faith, faith itself is primarily the means by which God leads his people to his own glory, not a condition required of those who will be saved. Therefore, faith is necessarily included as the means together with the end within the divine decree. Next, we saw how Ames defended this position against two main charges, one regarding contradictory wills within God, another regarding reprobation. Ames answered both charges by utilizing tools which were already well-established within the Reformed tradition. With regard to the perceived contradictory wills, Ames used the distinction between God’s revealed and hidden will, within the decree-execution framework. With regard to reprobation, Ames used a series of scholastic terms and distinctions: the distinction between positive and negative reprobation; the distinction between the act of
reprobation and the act of damnation; the language of permission within divine will. The use of the decree-execution framework, coupled with the principle that what comes first in intention comes last in execution, suggests that Ames had a supra-lapsarian tendency, which was confirmed by our investigation of Marrow. So, contrary to the majority view in modern scholarship, Ames had a basic supra-lapsrian framework for his doctrine of predestination, despite his apparent reluctance to deal with the topic of reprobation in his debate with Grevinchoven, and his use of a nuanced, infralapsarian language of reprobation (noticable in Marrow).

Ames’s more significant contribution to the Reformed orthodox cause was found, however, not in his defence of the orthodox position but rather in his attack on his opponents’ position. This Ames did by refuting the philosophical basis on which Arminianism rests: the concept of middle knowledge. Ames made this contribution by offering both a theological and philosophical critique of that concept. Ames offered a philosophical critique of middle knowledge by raising the problem of the metaphysical ground for the connection between Peter and faith within middle knowledge: the connection lacks necessity due to its existence outside of the divine decree. Theologically, Ames argued that, according to the theory of middle knowledge, God’s freedom in ordaining the future by his decree would be lost and his knowledge would be merely conjectural, which implies imperfection within God. Ames constructed his arguments, most probably by appropriating the arguments Dominicans had used against Molina within the Catholic context.

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Second, we examined Ames’s arguments for the definite atonement (Chapter 3). Ames identified the Remonstrant idea of separation between impetration and application (and the similar idea of separation between oblation and intercession) as the most problematic and made this the target for his attack. Based on the idea of a single divine intention behind both impetration and application, Ames provoked a response from Grevinchoven which revealed his idea of an almost complete separation between oblation and application: Grevinchoven contended that, while the intention for impetration is for all humanity, the intention for application is only for the faithful. This was most emphatically expressed in Grevinchoven’s bold declaration: ‘the worth, necessity and usefulness of impetration can stand abundantly even though the accomplished redemption would have been applied to no individual as a matter of fact’.\(^5\) This declaration, which Ames had flushed out, would be used extensively by the Reformed orthodox as the prime target of attack. Ames also dealt with the similar issue of a separation between oblation and intercession in Christ’s priestly work. Based upon the continuity and integrity among Christ’s various priestly works, such as death, resurrection, session before the Father, and intercession, Ames attacked Grevinchoven’s idea of this separation by appealing to Christ’s priestly prayer recorded in John 17 and to the integrity of Christ’s priestly work described in Hebrew 9:12.

Another key scholastic distinction, widely discussed in the debate about the extent of atonement, was a distinction between sufficiency and efficiency.

\(^5\) Ames, \textit{De Arminii Sententia}, p.5.
Contrary to previous scholarship,⁶ we discovered that Ames positively affirmed this distinction. Moreover, Ames made a contribution to the development of the Reformed orthodox position by providing clarifications for these terms: sufficiency is defined as the intrinsic power and fitness of the matter while efficiency is defined as the extrinsic act of ordinance or distribution, which derives from the divine willing and intention. In this sense, the death of Christ is sufficient for all and efficient only for the elect. In light of Ames’s careful formulations on this issue, it is likely that he took a significant part in efforts to mediate between ‘strict’ and ‘moderate’ parties at Dort. He must have played a greater role than previously suggested at the Synod since its canons (the article 2:3 and 2.8) are based on the same understanding of these terms defined by Ames. Thus, the impact of Ames’s arguments on discussion at the Synod is more clearly attested in this topic than in others.

Third, we examined Ames’s arguments regarding the issue of nature of grace and conversion (Chapter 4). The synergistic tendency within Remonstrant teaching was not so explicitly articulated in the third and the fourth articles of the Remonstrance (1610) nor by Grevinchoven in his debate with Ames. Grevinchoven tried to make the issue implicit by arguing for co-causality of both divine and human, and for the superiority of divine power in the process of conversion, as illustrated by the father and the son rowing the same boat together. Ames argued at great length that this illustration led to the inevitable conclusion that human free will would be the proper cause by which God produces the effect of conversion. The same synergistic tendency in

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Grevinchoven was exposed by Ames when Grevinchoven argued that the way of conversion, as far as the will is concerned, is limited to persuasion. This position, Ames retorted, also made human will the ultimate cause of conversion rather than divine grace.

By contrast, Ames argued that the process of conversion involves both moral suasion of the intellect and physical predetermination of the will. His insistence on this has been seen by previous scholarship as at odds with his own exposition of faith in *Marrow*. On the evidence presented in Chapter 4, Ames’s exposition of faith and his strong emphasis on the will in *Marrow* is compatible with his argument in his debate with Grevinchoven: just as the roles of intellect and will in the process of conversion are affirmed during Ames’s debate with Grevinchoven, the roles of both faculties are presupposed in his exposition of faith. More importantly, Ames’s pronounced emphasis on the will has been a major reason behind an interpretation that Ames was somehow sympathetic toward Arminianism, borrowing this emphasis on the will from it. However, we have found that the opposite was the case: Ames might well have developed his emphasis on the will in his attempt to refute the intellectualistic tendency he found in Grevinchoven. Moreover, it could even be the case that Ames proved himself an effective polemicist against Arminianism precisely because of his emphasis on the will. Ames could maintain the priority of divine grace and theory of physical predetermination in the process of conversion because of the priority he placed in the will over the intellect within humanity.

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In order to respond to the accusation of absolute determinism associated with the idea of irresistible grace, Ames argued that the potency to reject grace is genuinely held by a person, precisely at the same moment when that person is choosing to accept grace. This Ames did by utilizing a series of scholastic distinctions – particularly the first / the second act, composite/ divided sense, and simultaneity of power / power of simultaneity – which were developed to support the idea of synchronic contingency. Although Ames's articulation of this aspect is not as fully developed as it would become among theologians of the late Reformed orthodoxy, Ames’s emphasis on the simultaneous nature of capacity not to accept grace at the same time when actually accepting it is significant. Ames thought that the nature of alternative potency held by the agent must be simultaneous with the action itself in order to maintain true freedom.

Ames appears to have played a pioneering role in the Reformed appropriation of this scholastic device. Ames's appropriation of these distinctions displays his clear dependence on Scotist notion of synchronic contingency. Coupled with Ames's voluntaristic emphasis on human psychology and the pivotal role that Ames attached to divine will in the act of divine knowing, it appears that Ames was consistently Scotistic in his formulations. Yet, Ames was not a Scotist through and through. In particular, his idea of divine concurrence and physical premotion in his rejection of partial causation displayed his reliance on Thomistic categories and argumentations. In light of this, our findings point toward the eclectic tendency of the Reformed orthodox which Muller has argued, but they contradict with a ‘fundamentally Thomistic’
tendency which Muller found in his examination of Ames’s treatment of divine ideas or a kind of ‘modified Thomism’ which Muller proposed for the Reformed orthodox in general. By combining Thomistic ideas of physical pre-motion and divine concurrence with Scotistic metaphysics of contingency, it seems that Ames points out the path which many of the Reformed theologians would follow. In order to maintain Thomistic idea of pre-motion and divine concurrence thoroughly, many of the Reformed would employ Scotistic metaphysics of contingency.

Fourth, we turned to the issue of the perseverance of the saints (Chapter 5) and saw how Ames argued for the total and final perseverance of the saints. His strategy here was based on the similar patterns of argumentation to those he developed on the issues already discussed. While the Remonstrants employed a distinction between the absolute and conditional natures of divine actions and tried to attach a conditional nature to the divine action of preserving the saints, Ames responded that the absolute nature of divine action is compatible with the contingent nature of human actions. Thus, Scriptural warnings should be still taken seriously by believers as the danger of falling away is not entirely taken away, even when the divine action of preservation of the saints is absolute.

Although the doctrine of assurance was not the focus of the debate between Ames and the Remonstrants, it was an important aspect of the debate. The distinction Ames used between the certainty of object and the certainty of subject points to the significant fact that he thought signs and proofs within the believer were not the sole ground for assurance. This is in contrast with a widespread perception, promoted by Kendall, that sanctification was the only
ground of assurance among English puritans. Following on from the Synod’s formulation of multiple ground of assurance, Ames further developed his idea of this distinction between the certainty of object and subject in Marrow. There he stated that the certainty of object is established and confirmed to believers ‘by the word, by seals, by oath, and by the guarantee of God himself.’

Although Ames – like many English puritans – spent considerable space expounding the subjective side of assurance, this can perhaps be explained by the pastoral difficulty of the issue, not necessarily by its theological importance vis-à-vis the certainty of ‘God’s guarantee’.

On the idea of temporary faith in the reprobate, this did not cause embarrassment or scandal for Ames, as Kendall claimed. We saw that Ames maintained a crucial distinction between the nature of temporary faith in the reprobate and of saving faith in the elect. This distinction was an essential part of Ames’s argument against the Remonstrants as the Remonstrants insisted that there is no difference in essence between the faith of the elect and the reprobate, except only in duration of time. Ames’s main argument for this distinction was in part based on logical link between predestination and perseverance. Just as the nature of predestination is certain and unchangeable, the nature of saving faith given to the elect accordingly is indefectible. This conviction was not, however, shared with the British delegates in the Synod, at least as expressed in The Collegiate Suffrage of the British Divines. Although the British delegates themselves agreed that there was a distinction between temporary faith and saving faith, they asked the Synod’s drafting Committee to drop the rejection

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Ames, Marrow, LXXX.14.
clauses which rejected the Remonstrant view. Their reservation was out of their concern for some theologians back in England, who despite believing in the doctrine of absolute predestination did not necessarily hold to the totality and finality of perseverance. That the British delegations’ request was not granted is not surprising considering Ames’s strong arguments for a fundamental distinction between temporary faith and saving faith.

All of the main issues in the Arminian controversy were debated not only on logical grounds but also on exegetical grounds. For example, contrary to the claim often made in previous scholarship, the Reformed doctrine of salvation is not only based on logic alone but also firmly rooted in exegesis of Scripture. In interpreting the key texts which underlined the Reformed teaching, Ames often appealed to a long-held hermeneutical tradition in the West which dates back to Augustine. In order to interpret a series of texts which implied universal atonement, Ames held the meaning of ‘the world’ not as all humanity but as ‘all kinds of people’. He applied I Cor 4:7 to support the idea of the priority of divine grace over human cooperation even if he admitted that that meaning is not strictly intended in the original context. Moreover, Ames’s approach to exegesis displayed remarkable sensitivity to literary genres and contexts of Scripture: he utilized various tools of interpretation such as typology, synecdoche, and tried to make broader applications of the promises made to the individuals in Scripture to the faithful in general. Ames emphatically argued for the perseverance of the saints by appealing to Romans 8:28-30. Based on the wider context of Romans 8, this passage clearly points toward an unbreakable ‘golden

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*R.T. Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649*, p.x.*
chain’ of salvation by which the elect are lead to final glory. Taken together, these exegetical arguments amply demonstrate not only the important role which exegesis had in the debate but also Ames’s considerable skill as an exegete of Scripture.

These aspects of Ames’s anti-Arminian polemical arguments identified above advance our current understanding of this prominent English puritan who spent most of his career as an exile in the Low Countries, and ultimately explain why his contemporary admirers received him as a gift from England. Raised in Scripture-saturated puritan environment and equipped with all the necessary skills as an exegete and polemicist in England, Ames went to the Low Countries at a time when the threat of Arminianism was causing a great crisis in every corner of the Dutch society and he ably defended the Reformed orthodoxy against the threat.

Despite these significant findings, there are of course limitations to our study. For example, we could not establish clear theological sources for Ames in some cases. Although we could suggest a Dominican background for his refutation of middle knowledge and Ames’s use of scholastic distinctions for his argument for human freedom might probably mediated through Diego Alvarez, we could not identify the source of Ames’s voluntarism. In this regard, a more thorough examination of his medieval scholastic background should be conducted in order to locate Ames into wider intellectual currents and developments. Another example of the limitations of our study, one is reminded that anti-Arminian polemics was not the only reason Ames was received as the gift from England. An examination of Ames’s other contributions such as his
polemic against Cardinal Robert Bellarmine would be fruitful research in order to paint a fuller picture.\textsuperscript{10} This study also focused on Ames’s contributions in the development of Reformed tradition in the continental context. This focus derives from the simple fact that Ames engaged with the Arminian controversy in the Dutch context. However, there is room for the investigation of the reception of Ames’s anti-Arminian polemics in English context. In this regard, John Davenant’s interaction with Ames’s arguments on the extent of atonement, and William Twisse’s polemical effort against Arminianism might well be fruitful areas of future research.

In the face of Remonstrant teaching which tended to compromise divine sovereignty at the cost of human freedom, Ames made serious efforts to maintain the supremacy of God in his works of predestination, redemption, conversion, and perseverance, while at the same time establishing human freedom. These efforts served Reformed communities well back then, by providing arguments that helped to refine Reformed thought and defending it against attack. To point out, as some have previously done,\textsuperscript{11} that Ames was sensitive to charges levelled against Reformed teaching was certainly true in some sense. It is clear that Ames took those charges from the Remonstrants with utmost seriousness. This is particularly seen in examples of his strategic appropriation of scholastic distinctions, and his willingness to engage in exegesis of difficult passages and use various hermeneutic tools. However, this did not mean that Ames was somehow making compromises or softening the

\textsuperscript{10} Ames, \textit{Bellarminus Enervatus}, 4 volumes, (1625-1629)

\textsuperscript{11} Eusden, ‘Introduction’ in \textit{Marrow}, p.7.
Reformed tradition as some scholars have previously suggested. On the contrary, he vigorously maintained and defended his own tradition. It is his steadfastness in defending his own tradition and orthodoxy on the one hand, while having a keen awareness of contemporary issues and a willingness to face new exegetical and theological challenges on the other hand, which can still be received as a precious gift today.
Appendix

From William Ames, *Coronis ad collationem Hagiensem*, 1618
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