

The Arminian Confession of 1621

Translated and Edited by
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INTRODUCTION

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Some will think it strange that one not from the Arminian tradition would undertake the translation of this first and very important Remonstrant confession.¹ My initial exposure to Arminian theology came when, as a Calvinist pastor of a Reformed baptistic church, a friend challenged me to read Jacobus Arminius’ (1560-1609) works.² Having been taught he was both Socinian and Pelagian, I was surprised how Calvinist his affirmations sounded about trinitarianism, Scripture, original sin and the necessity of grace. This led to a broader study of those who shared Arminius’ theology, with special emphasis on his protégé, Simon Episcopius (1583-1643), the primary author of this confession.³ The Remonstrants published the *Confession or Declaration of the Remonstrant Pastors* shortly after the Synod of Dort.⁴ They intended it as a concise, easily understandable statement of their faith and a corrective to what they viewed as the misrepresentations published in the *Acts of the Synod of Dort*.⁵

The impetus for a new translation of the *Confession* is its value as a primary source of early Remonstrant doctrine. In the desire to help English readers maintain the “feel” of the original and assist in finding the corresponding passages in Latin, the translation largely maintains the flow of the text, although it divides longer sentences and moves verbs to the beginning of sentences, often substitutes participles for nouns and infinitives and sometimes uses synonyms even when cognates were available in English.⁶ Nevertheless, the style remains complicated and some sentences are long. Whitaker’s *Words*⁷ and Lewis and Short’s *Latin Dictionary*⁸ guided word selection. Italics in the Latin are from the original and brackets in the English indicate the addition of words for comprehension. Different theological traditions will find this book useful for different reasons. Those from an Arminian tradition may want to compare their theology with that of the early Remonstrants. Certainly it is much easier to consult the *Confession* than wade through Arminius’ private and public disputations, orations and treatises. One must keep in mind, however, that the *Confession* does not reflect Arminius’ theology alone. It also represents those who were “Arminian” before Arminius (such as Wtenbogaert and older pastors), together with Episcopius’ own creative impulses.

The *Confession* also offers benefits to those from Calvinist/Reformed backgrounds. It dispels common misrepresentations, such as the Arminians were Socinians, an accusation the Arminians’ opponents brought against them from the beginning of the conflict.⁹ In chapter three of the confession, the Remonstrants gave a clear repudiation of Socinianism’s denials of the divinity of Christ and the trinity and provided an orthodox declaration of trinitarianism, the eternal generation of the Son and procession of the Holy Spirit and the sharing of the divine nature by both.

More common are accusations of Pelagianism. The *Confession* gives ample evidence that the Remonstrants did not hold to Pelagius’ theology.¹⁰ Whereas Pelagius taught Adam’s sin affected himself alone and only served as a bad example for his descendents, the Remonstrants affirmed that all men except Jesus Christ were “involved and implicated”

in Adam's sin and so were subject to "death and misery" and "destitute of true righteousness necessary for achieving eternal life, and consequently are now born subject to that eternal death...and manifold miseries" (7.4). Whereas Pelagius defined grace as the native ability conferred through creation, together with a mind illuminated by the preaching of the law, the Remonstrants affirmed grace is a "special work" which only functioned in those who believe (7.1), and that under the Law, grace was "revealed it only from afar, obscurely and almost as if through a lattice." While Pelagius thought there were those even in the Old Testament who attained sinless perfection through the Law, the Remonstrants affirmed that even in the Old Testament "they were not entirely lacking those who believed in God by the assistance of that divine grace and by faith walked blamelessly and sincerely before him" (7.8). In contrast to Pelagius' belief in human ability, the Remonstrants wrote that "(we) could neither shake off the miserable yoke of sin, nor do anything truly good in all religion, nor finally ever escape eternal death, or any true punishment of sin. Much less could we at any time obtain eternal salvation without it or through ourselves" (7.10). They reaffirmed human inability and the necessity of grace in (8.1, 8.2.2) and that salvation is the work of God (9.2). It is only by grace that people "may really believe in their Christ the Savior, obey his gospel and be freed from the dominion and guilt of sin, indeed also through which they may really believe, obey and be freed"(9.2) The Remonstrants clearly were not Pelagians.

If not Pelagians, were they semi-Pelagian? Domingo Bañez (1528-1604) coined the term in the sixteenth century to refer to the doctrines of the Jesuit thinker Luis de Molina (1535–1600) in the controversy between Dominicans and Jesuits over grace and free will, which paralleled discussions among Protestants. The term entered Protestant theology through inclusion in the Lutheran Formula of Concord (1580). It defined "...the error of the Semi-Pelagians, who teach that man by virtue of his own powers could make a beginning of his conversion but could not complete it without the grace of the Holy Spirit." Semi-Pelagianism began as a reaction by monks who agreed with Augustine on the doctrines of original sin, the inability of man to perform any act of saving worth and the necessity of illumination, but defended the freedom of the will by attributing to it the initial act of faith. Fallen sinners initiate and God responds. They also taught that people could, of themselves, freely accept and persevere in grace.¹¹ Again, if one allows history to define labels, neither Arminius nor the Remonstrants were semi-Pelagian. They made this plain in the original Remonstrance of 1610,¹² and repeated the same in the *Confession* (17.6). They stressed "that the grace of God is the beginning, progress and completion of all good, so that not even a regenerate man himself can, without this preceding, or preventing, exciting, following and cooperating grace, think, will, or finish any good thing to be saved, much less resist any attractions and temptations to evil." They differed with their opponents not over the necessity of grace, but in their belief that a person can "despise and reject the grace of God and resist its operation, so that when he is divinely called to faith and obedience, he is able to render himself unfit to believe" (17.7).

In the end, one wonders why those who look to Geneva would need to resort to fabricating or extrapolating their differences with the Remonstrants. The Remonstrant rejections of unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace and perseverance, together with the unique doctrines they affirmed in the *Confession* (such as multiple definitions of election) are *per se* reasons enough to declare that they represented an alien theological development.

On the other hand, those from non-Arminian theologies may also find ideas they appreciate. Many from the “lordship” perspective will value the Remonstrant emphasis on repentance, that it is a requirement for salvation, that it precedes faith and that the biblical authors understood that when Scripture mentions “faith” alone it included the idea of repentance. We within the Baptist tradition will resonate with Remonstrant efforts to write a confession which was an accurate expression of their faith, yet did not violate liberty of conscience and avoided the chains of creedalism. We affirm with them the perspicuity of the Scriptures, soul competence and the priesthood of the believer.

We also see in the *Confession* that the Remonstrant challenge was not merely doctrinal. From its inception, the Remonstrants considered their movement as a rejection of Reformed scholasticism as a theological method.¹³ Certainly Arminius viewed himself this same way. On October 8, 1603, shortly after his installation as professor at Leiden, Arminius observed his first student-led disputation on original sin. He was critical of the presenter for depending too much on logic and too little on Scripture. He then used this occasion to challenge his colleagues to abandon what he called “the cumbrous mass of scholastic assertions” for what he termed an “earlier and more masculine method of study” of the Scriptures.¹⁴ If someone were to discount this protest as merely “typical” of the time, this seems strange in light of his criticizing men who were in a position to point out his own inconsistencies. This criticism becomes even more interesting if the source of this “earlier and more masculine method of study” was none other than John Calvin. We find an indication of this a letter Arminius wrote two years before his death:

But after the reading of Scripture, which I vehemently inculcate more than anything else, which the entire academy can testify and of which my colleagues are conscious, I encourage the reading of the commentaries of Calvin, which I extol with the greatest praise.... For I say that he is incomparable in the interpretation of Scripture, and his comments are better than anything which the Fathers give us.¹⁵

These examples evidence that Arminius perceived differences between his theological method and that of other Reformed scholastics and was attempting both to sway his students away from theological speculation toward the more biblical theological method of Calvin.

Episcopius adopted Arminius’ perspective on Reformed rationalism and speculation and removed himself even further. For example, Episcopius began his private disputations by repeating his emphasis on biblical, practical theology, limited by the constraints of the text. ¹⁶ He pointedly refused to comment on some subjects, such as details about angels, which he viewed as “scholastic innovations.” He repeated his rejection of Reformed scholasticism in his farewell address to his students,¹⁷ and incorporated it into the *Confession*.¹⁸ That 17th century Calvinist Reformed theologians were sensitive to these attacks can be seen in the writings of Gisbert Voetius, who tried to counter Remonstrant accusations of excessive speculation, innovation and “bogging down” on small points and *minutiae*.¹⁹

We find in the *Confession* a corollary to the rejection of Reformed scholasticism, the Remonstrant insistence that all true theology was entirely practical and not speculative or theoretical.²⁰ Whatever the modern equivocations over the meaning of “speculative theology,” for Episcopius it signified theology which was derived from reason rather than from Scripture and served to satisfy theological curiosity rather than promote the worship of God. As Episcopius wrote in the introductory section of his *Theological Institutes*,

“Theology is not a speculative knowledge, but practical. Nor is it, as some desire, partly speculative and partly practical. Still less, is it as others desire, the greatest part being speculative. It is purely practically.”²¹ This emphasis on theology as a practical science became one of the hallmarks of Remonstrant theology.

Having mentioned Simon Episcopius numerous times in the introduction and given his general obscurity among modern scholars, it would be helpful to include some information about his life and work. Episcopius was singularly responsible for the survival of the Remonstrant movement after the Synod of Dort.²² We may rightly regard him as the theological founder of Arminianism, since he both developed and systematized ideas which Arminius was tentatively exploring before his death and then perpetuated that theology through founding the Remonstrant seminary and teaching the next generation of pastors and teachers.²³

His given name was Simon Bisschop, which he later Latinized according to the academic practices of his day. He was born to Reformed parents in Leiden and from early childhood showed keen intellect and great promise in Greek and Latin. In spite of his family’s humble financial circumstances, private and public benefactors provided him with the best education available in the Netherlands. He entered the University at Leiden in 1600, where he formed his close relationship with Arminius. That Arminius was an orphan and Episcopius lost both parents to plague during this time may have fostered their friendship.

After receiving his master’s degree on February 27 1606,²⁴ he continued in academic life at the university through participation in daily disputations and attendance at the lectures of the three professors of theology, Franciscus Gomarus (1563-1641), Lucas Trelcatius (1573-1607) and Arminius. During this time open conflict broke out between Arminius and Gomarus.²⁵ We know little about how much Episcopius entered the debate, but nearly every letter he wrote during this time to his brother, Rem Bisschop, contained references to Arminius.²⁶ His association with Arminius created problems for him in Amsterdam²⁷ and later at Franeker, where he had gone to study Hebrew under Ioannes Drusius.²⁸ Arminius’ death in October 1609 compounded frustration with grief.²⁹ Episcopius’ recognition among those who shared Arminius’ theology grew quickly. In May 1610 he was appointed pastor in the small town of Bleysswick. In 1611, he was chosen as one of six to represent the Remonstrants at a conference called by the government to try to resolve the growing conflict. In 1612, the curators of the University of Leiden formally recognized his theological leadership among the Remonstrants by inviting him to succeed Gomarus as professor of theology, an appointment which aroused bitter enmity among Calvinists. It is likely that, on account of the influence his appointment gave to the spread of Remonstrant opinions, this was a significant factor leading up to the Synod of Dort in 1618.

Theological and political turmoil brought the Netherlands to the brink of civil war in the years leading up the synod and troubled both Episcopius and his family.³⁰ Persecution progressed to the point that on August 30, 1618, Johannes Wtenbogaert, the political leader of the Remonstrants, heeded the advice of his colleagues and fled the country.³¹ In his absence the leadership of the Remonstrants fell to Episcopius. On September 20, Episcopius received a letter from the States of Holland and West-Friesland inviting him to represent the University at the national synod. The synod began on November 17 and one of the first acts was to change Episcopius’ status from a representative to a subpoenaed person.³² The Remonstrants knew this ended their hope for open debate and turned to other

means in order to gain a hearing. Episcopius asked for permission to address the Synod and then launched into an hour and a half oration detailing the Remonstrant position and their oppression at the hands of the Calvinist Reformed.³³ The speech was powerful and soon circulated throughout the Netherlands and beyond.³⁴ The Remonstrant protest, however, was short-lived. The president of the synod expelled them for refusing to cooperate,³⁵ and the synod decided to judge them from their writings.³⁶ It condemned their beliefs on April 24, 1619, civil sentences were pronounced on May 6 and on July 5 the leaders of the Remonstrants were loaded into wagons and driven into exile.

The exiled Remonstrants eventually settled in Antwerp, where in they formed the Remonstrant Brotherhood and selected Episcopius, Wtenbogaert and Nicholas Grevinchoven to form the “foreign directorship.”³⁷ It was during these meetings that the Remonstrants discussed their need for a confession. Many were hesitant, fearful of establishing the same type of creedalism which had resulted in their persecution and banishment. The *Preface to the Confession*, which the Remonstrants considered an integral part of the document, emphasized its non-binding character. The society eventually judged it more important to prove their orthodoxy to those who wanted to assist them, to silence the misrepresentations of their opposition, and most of all, to encourage and unite the now distressed and scattered Remonstrants. They selected Episcopius and two others to write it, but in the end, he did the work alone. He completed the *Confession* on February 6, 1620 and the directory called a general meeting in Antwerp for the purpose of discussing it.³⁸ After some revisions, it was approved on February 8 and the gathering charged Wtenbogaert and Episcopius with making a Dutch translation which the Remonstrants approved and accepted on February 9. The Dutch edition was published in 1621,³⁹ the Latin in 1622.⁴⁰ The response from those friendly to the Remonstrants was immediate and gratifying to the Brotherhood.⁴¹

Episcopius lived in exile from 1619 until 1626, first in Antwerp and then alternating between Rouen and Paris. During this period he encouraged the Remonstrants who remained in the Netherlands and defended the movement from its opponents. By 1626 the persecutions in the Netherlands were beginning to abate. Prince Maurice was dead and his half-brother Henry, a Remonstrant sympathizer, was now leading the country. Episcopius arrived in Rotterdam in July. Wtenbogaert returned in September and resolved any potential leadership crisis by declaring Episcopius the director of the Brotherhood.⁴² Episcopius lived 16 years after his return from exile. He ministered at the church in Rotterdam, revitalized the church in Amsterdam (1629), founded the Remonstrant seminary (1632) and wrote and traveled much in support of the Remonstrant cause. During such a trip to Rotterdam a torrential rainstorm overtook him and having arrived too late to enter the city, he spent the night in the cold. The resulting fever left him permanently weakened. He fell ill again in similar circumstances in February 1643 and died peacefully on April 4. Four days later, his friends buried him in the Western Church by the side of his wife. His funeral was large, but the most poignant presence was that of Wtenbogaert. Van Limborch wrote that when he came into the room where Episcopius was laid, he approached the body and placing his hands upon the head cried out “O Head! O Head! How much wisdom there was within you!”⁴³ He had buried Arminius, and now he would bury Episcopius as well.

In sum, the *Confession or Declaration of the Remonstrant Pastors* treats the major areas of Christian doctrine as held by Arminius’ colleagues and successors after the Synod of Dort. They published it to inform both lay and professional Christians about what they

believed and defend themselves against the attacks of their opponents. Their dominant concern was to expound what they believed were the central teachings of Sacred Scripture. This translation will not only allow the reader to directly interact with those theology was the object of the Synod of Dort, but also brings us into the thought and vocabulary of Simon Episcopius, the primary developer and defender of Arminius' theology.

I completed this translation while my wife Diane and I were on furlough from missionary service in Brazil. I am grateful to Dr. David Dockery and Union University for their kind hospitality during this time, with special mention to Todd Bradey and Suzanne Mosley of Student Ministries.

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Notes

¹ Although those who agreed with Arminius are often called Arminians, Arminius was merely a rallying point for many who represented the pre-Calvinist reformation movement in the Netherlands which looked more to Melanchthon, Bullinger and Hemmingius than to Calvin and Beza. Rather than calling themselves "Arminians," they took the name "Remonstrants" from the remonstrance (legal protest) they lodged with the government requesting protection from persecution. The church continues today as the Remonstrant Brotherhood. For a fuller presentation of Arminianism as a pre-Calvinist branch of the Dutch Reformation, see my dissertation, "Simon Episcopius and the Doctrine of Original Sin" (Ph.D. diss, Dallas Theological Seminary, 2002).

² Although many of Arminius' theological works were published individually, the Remonstrants published them collectively for the first time in *Opera Theologica* (Leiden: Goderfridum Basson, 1629). They are available in English in two versions, *The Works of James Arminius* (Reprint of the London edition [London: vols. 1-2, Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown and Green; vol. 3, Thomas Baker, 1825-75]; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1986, henceforth cited as *WA*), and *The Writings of James Arminius* (Reprint of 1853 ed. [Auburn and Buffalo: Derby, Miller and Orton]; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1956, henceforth cited as *WrA*).

³ Episcopius' essential theological works, including orations and shorter treatises, were published in *Opera Theologica* (ed. Stephanus Curcellaeus, Amsterdam: Ioannis Blaev, 1650, henceforth *OTE*) and *Operum Theologicorum, Pars Altera* (ed. Philip van Limborch, Rotterdam: Arnoldum Leers, 1665, henceforth *OTPA*). His sermons were collected and published in *Predicatie van M. S. Episcopius* (ed. Philip van Limborch. Amsterdam: Isaak Pieterz., 1693).

⁴ The Latin text used in this translation is from *OTPA* 1:69-94.

⁵ Published in Latin as *Acta Synodi Nationalis* (Dort: Isaaci Ioannidis Canini Et Sociorum, 1620), and in Dutch as *Acta ofte Handelinghen des Nationalen Synodi* (Dort: Isaack Jans. Canin, 1621). Numerous translations are available in English.

⁶ For example, I used "thoughts" to translate "cogitationes" even though "cogitations" exists in English, and "seeking" rather than "procuring" when translating "procurandum."

⁷ <http://users.erols.com/whitaker/wordsdoc.htm>

⁸ <http://perseus.uchicago.edu/cgi-bin/morphindex?lang=la>.

⁹ See the anonymous *Een Kort en Waerachtich Verhael / wat voor een grouwelijck ghevoelen dat de Arminianen / Vortianen / ofte nieuwe Arrianen / Pelagianen / Socinianen / Samosatianen ghesocht hebben in de Gehereformeerde kercke in te voeren / en in kort heir teghen gestelt het ghevoelen der Ghereformeerde kerche* (N.p.: “Ghedruyck buyten Romen,” n.d.), published during the time of the conflict leading up to the Synod of Dort. Simon Episcopus was accused of Socinianism by Lubbertus Sibrandus while a student in Franeker, by Daniel Hensius while teaching at the University of Leiden and by the Leiden professors after returning to the Netherlands, but always proved himself orthodox when given an opportunity to answer his accusers. Regarding the absence of Pelagian or Socinian theology among the Remonstrants, see W. Robert Godfrey, “Calvin and Calvinism in the Netherlands,” in *John Calvin, His Influence in the Western world*, ed. W. Stanford Reid and Paul Woolley (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1982), 104–05.

¹⁰ The Remonstrant rejection of Pelagianism had already been made plain in the Remonstrance of 1610, which stated in Article III, “That man has not saving grace of himself, nor of the energy of his free-will, inasmuch as he, in the state of apostasy and sin, can of and by himself neither think, will, nor do anything that is truly good (such as having faith eminently is); but that it is needful that he be born again of God in Christ, through his Holy Spirit, and renewed in understanding, inclination, or will, and all his powers, in order that he may rightly understand, think, will, and effect what is truly good, according to the word of Christ, John 15:5: “Without me ye can do nothing.””

¹¹ *Columbia Encyclopedia*, 6th ed., s.v. “Pelagianism.”

¹² “Article IV: That this grace of God is the beginning, continuance, and accomplishment of all good, even to this extent, that the regenerate man himself, without prevenient or assisting, awakening, following and cooperative grace, can neither think, will, nor do good, nor withstand any temptations to evil; so that all good deeds or movements, that can be conceived, must be ascribed to the grace of God in Christ, but respects the mode of the operation of this grace, it is not irresistible; inasmuch as it is written concerning many, that they have resisted the Holy Ghost. Acts 7, and elsewhere in many places.”

¹³ This perspective was defended by both James Nichols and W. R. Bagnall in their editions of Arminius’ works. Bagnall wrote, “In view of his early training and the universal practice of the theological writers of that age, it might be expected that Arminius would adopt the phraseology and manner of the Schoolmen. This was, to some extent, true of him. Yet it will be found, we think, on the perusal of his writings, that he was less scholastic in his style and more practical and scriptural both in his views and in his mode of presenting them than most of his contemporaries.” (W. R. Bagnall, “Preface,” *WrA* [Baker: Grand Rapids, MI, 1977] 1: v).

¹⁴ Caspar Brandt, *The Life of James Arminius*, trans. John Guthrie [Nashville: E. Stevenson & F.A. Owen, Agents for the Methodist Episcopal Church South, 1857], 191-92).

¹⁵ “Sed post Scripturæ lectionem, quam vehementer inculco, & magis quam quisquam alius, quod tota Academia testabitur, etiam conscientia meorum collegarum, ad Calvini Commentarios legendos adhortor, quem laudibus majoribus extollo.... Dico enim incomparabilem esse in interpretatione Scripturarum, & majores faciendos ipsius commentarios quam quidquid Patrum Bibliotheca nobis tradit.” Jacobus Arminius to Sebastian Egbert, 3 May, 1607, Christiaan Hartsoeker and Philippus van Limborch, eds., *Præstantium ac eruditorum virorum epistole ecclesiasticæ et theologice* (Amsterdam: Henricum Wetstenium, 1660), 236-37.

¹⁶ *Disputationes Theologicæ Tripartæ* (Amsterdam: Ioannem Blæv, 1644, henceforth *DTT*), 2.12, *De Creatione Mundi*. He repeated this sentiment in *DTT*, 3.8.1: “Sicut naturæ divinæ excellentia & supereminentia Deum cultu & honore dignum facit; ita opera quæ Scriptura ei tribuit, jus, auctoritatem, & potestatem postulandi à nobis cultum & obsequium eidem conciliant.”

¹⁷ “ORATIUNCULA habita à M. SIMONE EPISCOPIO 13. Novemb. Anni 1618 in auditorio Theologico cum ad Synodum Dordracenam ab Illustr. Ordd. Hollandiæ evocatus discederet,” in *OTPA*, pp. 170-172.

¹⁸ “As to thorny and excessively subtle questions, which are appropriate for universities and schools, and which neither help the knower nor hurt the ignorant, we have purposely abstained from them, leaving them to the idle and overly curious, and who have an incurable disease of disputing, to whom it is pleasurable to show their acumen, and from this laurel-cake they seek for fame in trifles” (*Preface*, p. 22).

¹⁹ Gisbert Voetius, “Selectæ Disputationes Theologicæ,” in *Reformed Dogmatics*, ed. John W. Beardslee III (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 268, 278.

²⁰ See the *Preface*, page 23. Note also the inclusion of sections which give specific applications for the content of each chapter.

²¹ “Theologiam non esse scientia speculativam, sed practicam: Nec esse, ut quidam volunt, partim speculativam, partim practicam, nedum, ut alii, maximam partem speculativam. Pure practica est” (*Institutiones Theologicæ*, in *Opera Theologica* [Amsterdam: Ioannis Blæv, 1650], 1:4).

²² Important biographical sources for Episcopus are Stephanus Curcellæus’ preface in Episcopus’ *Opera Theologica* (Stephanus Curcellæus, “Præfatio Ad Lectorem Christianem,” in *Opera Theologica* [Amsterdam: Ioannis Blæv, 1650]), and Philip van Limborch’s more complete *Leven van Mr. Simon Episcopus* (In *Predicatie van M. S. Episcopus*, [Amsterdam: Isaak Pieterz., 1693]), which he augmented and republished as *Historia Vitæ Episcopii* (Amsterdam: Georgium Gallet, 1701). The only significant biography in English is Calder’s *Memoirs of Simon Episcopus* (London: Simpkin and Marshall, 1835). Although Calder stated he relied heavily on van

Limborch for historical details (Calder, *Memoirs*, 71), much of his analysis is unique. These biographies do not discuss the content of Episcopius' theological works. Henrik Haentjens filled many such gaps with his 1899 doctoral dissertation, *Simon Episcopius als Apologeet van het Remonstrantisme in zijn leven en werken geschetst* (Anton Hendrik Haentjens, *Simon Episcopius als Apologeet van het Remonstrantisme in zijn leven en werken geschetst* [Leiden: A. H. Adriani, 1899]). In the 1960's, Gerrit J. Hoenderdaal provided important information concerning the relationship between Arminius and Episcopius in Gerrit J. Hoenderdaal, "Arminius en Episcopius," *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis* 60 (1980): 203-35. See also extensive comparisons in my dissertation, "Simon Episcopius and the Doctrine of Original Sin" (Ph.D. diss, Dallas Theological Seminary, 2002)

²³ One of the most important of his students was Stephanus Curcellus.

²⁴ Van Limborch, *Vitae*, 4-5.

²⁵ Van Limborch, *Vitae*, 5-7.

²⁶ Haentjens, *Simon Episcopius als Apologeet*, 11.

²⁷ He was blocked from entering the ministry there. See Calder, *Memoirs*, 53-54.

²⁸ Calder, *Memoirs*, 56. Despite Arminius' warnings not to involve himself in debates, Episcopius disputed with Sibrandus Lubbertus over Romans 7 (Haentjens, *Simon Episcopius als Apologeet*, 14).

²⁹ Episcopius travelled to be with Arminius as soon as he heard of his illness, and stayed with him at his bedside until he was assured Arminius would recover. Arminius died shortly after Episcopius returned to Franeker.

³⁰ Rem Bisschop's home in Amsterdam was broken into and plundered under the watchful eye of at least one Calvinist Reformed pastor, Ursinus (Geeraert Brandt, *The History of the Reformation and other Ecclesiastical Transactions in and about the Low-countries: From the Beginning of the Eighth Century, Down to the Famous Synod of Dort, Inclusive: faithfully translated from the original Low-Dutch* [London: Printed by T. Wood for T. Childe, 1720], 2:95).

³¹ Van Limborch, *Vitae*, 5. Johannes Wtenbogaert (sometimes Uytbogaert, Utenbogaert or Uitenbogaert) was a colleague of Arminius at Geneva, one of Arminius' staunchest defenders and primary leader of the Remonstrant movement. Regarding his relationship with Episcopius, Haentjens wrote, "There was also a growing attraction on the part of Episcopius for Wtenbogaert, and they developed such a strong relationship that they later spent their time in exile together. They complemented one another. Wtenbogaert took the lead in practical details, but in questions of scholarship he deferred to Episcopius, whose judgments he valued more than 'those of the greater and lesser gods'" (Haentjens, *Simon Episcopius als Apologeet*, 29-30). Wtenbogaert wrote the original Remonstrance of 1610 and outlived both Arminius and Episcopius. The standard work concerning his life is *Johannes Utenbogaert en Zijne Tijde* by H. C. Rogge (Amsterdam, 1874).

³² The difference in status was significant. One could compare it to being moved from the panel of judges to being suppoened as a defendant.

³³ The oration can be found in the Dutch version of the Acts of the Synod of Dort (*Acta ofte Handelingen*, 68-79), but was left out of the Latin (*Acta Synodi Nationalis*). The 23rd session appears on pages 64-66, complete with the accusations against Episcopius. Latin versions appear in van Limborch, *Vitae*, 145-167 and *OTPA* 2:1-4. One may find English translations in Calder, *Memoirs*, pages 284-315 and Brandt, *History*, 3:52-61.

³⁴ Wtenbogaert heard about it even from exile, and wrote to thank Episcopius for it (Johannes Wtenbogaert to Simon Episcopius, April 25, 1619, in the Remonstrant Library in Rotterdam, and published in Rogge, *Brieven van Johannes Wtenbogaert*, #220. Quoted by Haentjens, *Simon Episcopius als Apologeet*, 50).

³⁵ The president of the synod was Iohannes Bogerman, whose unique contribution to the persecution of the Remonstrants prior to the synod was translating Beza's tract defending the execution of heretics. His relationship with Episcopius was already strained because of Episcopius' speech, and Bogerman's attempts to prove Episcopius a liar. The conflict came to a head when he demanded the Remonstrant delegation sign yet another declaration of whether they still held to their opinions, and Episcopius responded with frustration, "Let it then be brought to us, and we will sign it." The president thought he was arrogant, and demanded each come before him to sign it. Bogerman became embarrassed by the dignity with which each came to his desk, lost control of himself and expelled them from the synod with accusations of "base artifices, cheats and lies" (Brandt, *History* 3:151-52).

³⁶ Some of the strongest evidences of misrepresentation of Remonstrant beliefs by the Synod come from the letters of Walter Balcanqual. He served as a British delegate, was a committed Calvinist and held to particular redemption (Nicholas Tyacke, *English Arminianism*, 44-45, 92, 95-98). These letters were reports on the synod to the British ambassador Sir Dudley Carleton. He wrote that the British delegation had been criticized for attempting to define Remonstrant beliefs from those books in which "they spake best and soundest," while the tendency was to gather their sentiments "out of all places in their books, where they spake most absurdly, which we thought was very far besides the rule of charity." (George Balcanqual, Dort, to Dudley Carleton, February 9, 1619, in Hales, "Letters from Dort;" quoted by James Nichols, "A Brief Account of the Synod of Dort, Taken Out of the letters of Mr. Hales and Mr. Balcanqual, written from Dort, to the Rt. Hon. Sir D. Carleton, Lord Ambassador then at the Hague," in *The Works of Arminius*, London ed. [London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme,

Brown and Green, 1825; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986], 1:545). He noted that when Bogerman read from Episcopus, “the President picked out the worst part of it . . . which contained nothing but a bitter satire against Calvin, Beza, Pareus, Piscator, Whitaker, Perkins, Bogerman, Festus and twenty more. But in truth, through unhappily, yet it was finely penned” (George Balcanqual, Dort, to Dudley Carleton, February 15, 1619, in Hales, “Letters from Dort;” quoted in Nichols, “The Synod of Dort,” 1:546). Finally, he criticized the delegates for distorting Remonstrant sentiments when he wrote, “They are so eager to kill the Remonstrants, that they would make their words have that sense which no grammar can find in them. . . . They condemned the thing itself as a thing most curious, and yet would have it retained only to make the Remonstrant odious, though they find the very contrary of that they would father upon them in their writings” (George Balcanqual, Dort, to Dudley Carleton, February 19, 1619, in Hales, “Letters from Dort;” quoted in Nichols, “The Synod of Dort,” 1:546). Blaising provides several examples of these misrepresentations (Craig A. Blaising, “John Wesley’s Doctrine of Original Sin,” [Ph.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1979] 111-124).

³⁷ The meeting lasted from September 30 through October 4. Concerning this meeting, see Johannes Tideman, *De Stichting Der Remonstrantsche Bruderschap, 1619-1634* (Amsterdam, Y. Rogge, 1871), 1:118. Even though Wtenbogaert was present, Episcopus was chosen to chair the meetings. Ibid, 1:49.

³⁸ So wrote Haentjens, *Simon Episcopus als Apologeet*, 56. Although some have questioned the authorship of the *Confession*, its appearance without qualification in *Opera Theologica, Pars Altera* (Rotterdam: Arnoldum Leers, 1665, 2:69-94) supports that the first and second generation of Remonstrants attributed it to Episcopus. Nevertheless, comparisons with Episcopus’ public and private disputations demonstrate that while the great majority of the *Confession* is clearly his work, there are those points at which Episcopus deviated from Arminius prior to the writing of the *Confession*, but Arminius’ theology was reasserted in the *Confession*. I presume the other pastors in attendance were responsible for this reaffirmation of Arminius’ thought.

³⁹ *Belijdnisse ofte Verklaringhe Van’t ghevoelen der Leeraren die in de Gheunieerde Neder-landen Remonstranten worden ghenaeemste, over de voornaemste Articulen der Christelijcke Religie* (N.p, 1621).

⁴⁰ *Confessio, sive, Declaratio, Sententiae Pastorum, qui in Foederato Belgio Remonstrantes Vocantur, Super Praecipuis Articulis Religionis Christianae* (Harderwijk: Theodorum Danielis, 1622). It was reprinted in *Opera Theologica, Pars Altera* (Rotterdam: Arnoldum Leers, 1665), 69-94, and later translated into English as *The Confession or Declaration of the Ministers or Pastors which in the United Provinces are called Remonstrants, Concerning The Chief Points of Christian Religion* (London: Francis Smith, 1676).

⁴¹ Hugo Grotius’ approval is especially interesting. See Hugo Grotius, Lutetiae (Paris) to Simon Episcopus, June 7, 1621, in *PEVE* (#198), 632-33. Grotius’ words show his clear identification with the Remonstrants: “*Confessio apud aequos homines, ut spero, nobis proderit.*” Episcopus’ letter to Grotius immediately precedes this one in the 1660 edition (pp. 630-32).

⁴² Haentjens, *Simon Episcopus als Apologeet*, 79.

⁴³ “O caput, quanta sapientia in te recondita fuit!” (quoted by van Limborch, *Vitae*, 320).