Eric Platt

Britain and the Bestandstwisten

The Causes, Course and Consequences of British Involvement in the Dutch Religious and Political Disputes of the Early Seventeenth Century

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Edited by
Herman J. Selderhuis

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Emidio Campi, Irene Dingel, Elsie Anne McKee,
Richard Muller, Risto Saarinen, and Carl Trueman

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Abbreviations

Add.	Additional
BL	British Library
Bodleian	Bodleian Library
CCC	Corpus Christi College
CSP Dom.	*Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series*
CUL	Cambridge University Library
ECO	Exeter College
Ep.Ecc.	*Praestantium ac eruditorum virorum epistolae ecclesiasticae et theologicae*
Erasmus	Erasmus Collection at the Erasmus Center for Early Modern Studies
G&C	Gonville and Caius College
GC	Gabbema Codex
KB	Koninklijke Bibliotheek
Knuttel	W.P.C. Knuttel, *Catalogus van de pamfletten-verzameling berustende in de Koninklijke Bibliotheek*
MS.	Manuscript
NA	Nationaal Archief
ODNB	Oxford Dictionary of National Biography
Rawl.	Rawlinson
RG	Remonstrantse Gemeente Rotterdam
SA	Stadsarchief Amsterdam
SL	Scottish Library
Slade	*Matthew Slade (1569 – 1628): Letters to the English Ambassador*
SPD	State Papers Domestic
SPF	State Papers Foreign
SS	Sidney Sussex College
STC	*English Short Title Catalog*
TA	Tresoar Archief
The NA	The National Archives, United Kingdom
UP	University Press
UVA	University of Amsterdam
Wing	*Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales and British America, and of English Books Printed in Other Countries, 1641 – 1700*

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Brooklyn, April 2014, Eric Platt

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Preface

In writing my book, I have followed the spelling, punctuation, and capitalization of the original seventeenth- and eighteenth-century texts with only a few exceptions. These include eliminating catchwords and substituting "j" for "i," "v" for "u," long "s" for "f," "w" for "vv," and "ss" for "ß" where appropriate. When quoting passages I have translated from Dutch, French, or Latin into English, the original untranslated text has been placed either in brackets or in a footnote.

I refer to the lands controlled by the Dutch during the early seventeenth century in this book as either the "Dutch Republic" or the "United Provinces." Although "Holland" is often used in English to refer to the entire Netherlands, I only use the name when referring to the Province of Holland.

Soon after King James ascended to the throne he adopted the title of King of Great Britain, much to the dismay of many of his new subjects. I have followed the King's wishes by using the terms "British" and "Great Britain" throughout my book. This only seems correct since the British sources utilized by the opposing sides in the Dutch disputes came from Scotland as well as England, and British interest in what was happening in the Dutch Republic extended well beyond the borders of England.

By the early seventeenth century, most—but not all!—of the Dutch Republic had already adopted the Gregorian calendar (New Style), while the British Isles continued to rely the Julian calendar (Old Style), which was 10 days behind its counterpart. Although this book will follow modern practice and begin the New Year on 1 January, it will list dates using both the Old and New Styles whenever possible in hopes of reducing confusion.

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Introduction

The *Bestandstwisten* [Truce Conflicts] resulted in the Dutch Republic becoming deeply divided not only in religion but also in politics. In fact, the country's two most powerful men supported different sides in the struggle. Maurice of Naussau, the stadtholder of most of the country and Prince of Orange from 1618 on, supported the Contra-Remonstrants, while Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, the Land's Advocate of Holland, supported the Remonstrants.[1] During the 1610s, there were many, many things about which the two men disagreed. But they both agreed on one point: the importance of King James I and Great Britain as a whole in determining the outcome of the Dutch disputes.

This view was expressed multiple times by the two men during the course of the decade but no more powerfully than in late 1617 and early 1618 as the *Bestandstwisten* was reaching its climax. For example, in December 1617 Maurice sent a special envoy to Great Britain in order to confer with King James about his upcoming plans to end the conflict and to state in very strong terms the importance that he placed on "his ma[jes]tyes countenance and assystance, from whence (next unto god) he doth acknowledge to have receaved his greatest incouragments."[2] Maurice's actions during this period show that he was not just engaging in political niceties by making this statement. For example, he begged Dudley Carleton, the British ambassador to the Dutch Republic, to postpone a long-desired leave back to Great Britain the next spring as he feared that Carleton's departure before then "wouldbe hurtfull to the cause."[3] Once Carleton was able to take his leave, Maurice bombarded him with requests through intermediaries to return as quickly as possible.[4] Meanwhile, Oldenbarnevelt was ruing what he believed was King James's negative impact on the conflict. As he wrote to Noel Caron, the Dutch ambassador to Great Britain, on two separate occasions in the spring of 1618 as he saw his and the Remonstrants' position deteriorating, "we would not have

1 The Remonstrants received their name from the "Remonstrance" that they submitted to the States of Holland in July 1610. The Contra-Remonstrants submitted their own "Contra-Remonstrance" in March of the next year.

2 Letter from Carleton to Buckingham and Lake, 2/12 Dec. 1617, in: The NA, SPF, MS. 84/81, fol. 14.

3 Letter from Carleton to Rudyard, 29 March/8 April 1618, in: The NA, SPF, MS. 84/83, fol. 165.

4 Cf., for example, Letter from Horace Vere to Carleton, 11/21 July 1618, in: The NA SP 84/85, fol. 49; Letter from Horace Vere to Carleton, 14/24 July 1618, in: The NA SP 84/85, fol. 63; Letter from Carey to [Carleton], 16/26 July 1618, in: The NA SP 84/85, fol. 71.

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fallen into these difficulties" if it were not for the strong support of King James and the British government for Maurice and the Contra-Remonstrants.[5]

At first blush it may seem odd that a foreign ruler such as King James—and the British government overall—would have been viewed by Maurice and Oldenbarnevelt as playing such a pivotal role in an internal Dutch conflict. My book, however, shows that the two men were not exaggerating Great Britain's importance in the *Bestandstwisten.* The King and his government were not only closely involved in the religious and political turmoil that rocked the Dutch Republic during the 1610s, but also played a key role in bringing about the victory of Prince Maurice and the Contra-Remonstrants over Oldenbarnevelt and the Remonstrants. Events in the conflict from the Vorstius affair to the Synod of Dordt were significantly influence by British involvement in them. The Dutch disputes were also closely followed in and had a significant effect on Great Britain.

The significant amount of British involvement in the Dutch religious disputes should come as no surprise given the close ties between Great Britain the Dutch Republic during the latter sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Dutch and the British were close trading partners (and often rivals) at this time with, for example, the vast majority of cloth, Great Britain's largest export, being sent to the United Provinces for finishing. The two countries also spent most of the period as close allies against a common enemy—Habsburg Spain—with the British providing troops and financial aid to the United Provinces' eighty-year war of independence. An entire book, Hugh Dunthorne's *Britain and the Dutch Revolt, 1560 – 1700* (2013), has recently been published about this involvement. In return for this assistance, the Dutch gave the British a say in their government that brought the two countries even closer together. The Dutch government, for instance, gave their ally several key "cautionary towns" and made its ambassador a member of their Council of State. The importance that the British government placed on its relationship with the United Provinces during the early modern period is shown by the fact that there are 590 volumes in the National Archives' State Papers Foreign, Holland, collection from 1560 to 1780, almost twice the number of similar volumes dealing with Anglo-French relations!

A great deal of immigration took place between the two countries as well. Emigrants from the Low Countries, fleeing religious persecution and the ravages of the war against Spain, had flocked to England in huge numbers during the sixteenth century, making them by far the largest group of foreign nationals living on English soil.[6] London and southeastern England were

5 "wij en souden in dese swaricheyden nyet gecommen sijn" (360. Letter from Oldenbarnevelt to Caron, 16/26 March 1618, in: VEENENDAAL, ed., *Oldenbarnevelt*, vol. 3, 377 – 378. The quotation is from 377); See also, 371. Letter from Oldenbarnevelt to Caron, 25 April/5 May 1618, in: VEENENDAAL, ed., *Oldenbarnevelt*, vol. 3, 435.

6 D.W. Davies cites estimates that place the percentage of foreigners in England who originated in the Low Countries as being over eighty percent (DAVIES, *Dutch Influences* [1964], 9).

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especially popular destinations due to their close proximity to the Low Countries. By 1600 these immigrants made up as much as a third of the population of English cities such as Colchester and Norwich. The Pilgrims were far from the only group to make the journey in the opposite direction. Many British émigrés came to the United Provinces for religious purposes, but others were soldiers serving in the Dutch Army, merchants, and even workers in the cloth industry.[7] The seas dividing Great Britain and the Dutch Republic must have seemed quite insignificant indeed during King James's reign, a fact acknowledged by the Dutch in their terming the watery divide between them and Great Britain as the "Narrow Seas."[8] For his part James stated that apart from his own lands he held the Dutch Republic dearer than any other nation in the world.[9]

Trade, military aid, and immigration were not the only two areas linking the two countries. There was a great deal of intellectual and cultural commerce between them as well. One example is the scholarly interaction between the two countries. The leading Contra-Remonstrant, Franciscus Gomarus, for instance, completed much of his university education in England. A few English intellectuals, such as William Ames and Matthew Slade, became affiliated with Dutch schools and universities, while individuals such as Adrian Saravia left the Dutch university setting and came to England. Some scholars, such as Richard "Dutch" Thomson, straddled the two academic settings their entire adult life. Intellectual and cultural commerce between the two countries was readily visible in print production as well. Recent research by scholars such as Lisa Jardine and Harold Cook has also demonstrated the close connections between Great Britain and the Dutch Republic during the seventeenth century in the areas of science, art, music and even gardening.[10]

The largest sector of the cultural and intellectual commerce between the two countries, however, was religion. In fact, the bond created by both countries' strong commitment to the Reformed tradition should be seen as the strongest link between them. During this period, Dutch and British divines corresponded frequently with each other in what many historians now term the "Calvinistic Republic of Letters." Most Dutch translations of British works, a field that was already flourishing by the early seventeenth century, dealt with religion—75 – 80 % of all translations according to Cornelis Schoneveld.[11] Even British military aid to the Netherlands had a distinct religious component. Research conducted by David Trim has shown that most members of the British officer corps in the United Provinces were devout Calvinists whose writings express their strong desire to aid the Dutch Republic

7 Cf. GRELL, "Merchants and Ministers" (1994), 256; VAN DEURSEN, *Plain Lives* (1991), 33.
8 JARDINE, *Going Dutch* (2008), xviii.
9 Cf. EDMUNDSON, *Anglo-Dutch Rivalry* (1911), 30.
10 Cf. BROEYER, "William Whitaker" (1982), 185; JARDINE, *Going Dutch*; COOK, *Matters of Exchange* (2007).
11 Cf. SCHONEVELD, *Intertraffic of the Mind* (1983), 123.

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in its fight against Spain because of the "kinship" they felt with their Dutch co-religionists, even at times when Great Britain was not directly threatened by the Habsburgs.[12] In the end I find it impossible to disagree with J.C. Grayson that "[t]he importance of religion in the Anglo-Dutch relationship is indisputable. Religious and intellectual ties with the United Provinces were closer than those with any other foreign country."[13] The editors of *Protestantism Crossing the Seas* have made a similar point, arguing that the two countries' shared Protestant heritage "contributed to or [at times] even constituted the channel for a lively exchange of ideas and goods between these two countries separated by the sea."[14]

My book examines one incident in this political, religious, and intellectual interplay between the two countries: British participation in the intense political and religious conflict that rocked the Dutch Republic during the first two decades of the seventeenth century, and the profound impact that this involvement had on religion and politics on both sides of the North Sea. These years were a period of great crisis in the young Republic's history. Having successfully waged a war of independence for forty years against the greatest power of the age, Habsburg Spain, the Dutch agreed to a Twelve-Year Truce with their old enemy in 1609. But the Truce years proved anything but peaceful for the United Provinces, a fact acknowledged by the Dutch word used to describe these disputes: "Bestandstwisten" or "Truce Conflicts."

Although there was indirect British influence in the Dutch disputes from the very beginning as both opposing sides repeatedly drew on authors and sources from the British Isles to argue their positions, significant British involvement in the conflict did not begin until late 1611, when King James vigorously acted against the appointment of Conradus Vorstius as a professor of theology at Leiden University. The roots of the conflict, however, lie years before this intervention with the debate at Leiden between Jacobus Arminius and Franciscus Gomarus over predestination, free will, and grace. Although Arminius's teachings about predestination were controversial even before he became a professor at the university in 1603, after his appointment the disputes about them grew significantly as he and Gomarus frequently clashed over doctrinal issues.[15]

Arminius believed in "conditional" election, the doctrine that God gives salvation to those people whom he foresees will choose to have a persevering faith in Christ. He emphasized that everyone has free will over whether or not to believe and argued that people can resist God's free gift of grace if they choose to do so. Gomarus, on the other hand, argued for "absolute" or "unconditional" election, the doctrine that God has made an irreversible

12 TRIM, "English Officer Corps" (2004).
13 GRAYSON, "From Protectorate to Partnership" (1978), 123.
14 LE CAT et al., *Protestantism Crossing the Seas* (2000), v.
15 Cf. ISRAEL, *The Dutch Republic* (1998), 393.

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decision to give salvation to some people and not to others without taking any foreseen faith into account. Gomarus taught that God only gives faith to the elect, and that those to whom he offers grace cannot resist it.[16] A.Th. van Deursen has summarized the theological differences between the two men as follows: "According to Arminius, God elects those whom he foresees will believe. According to Gomarus, God bestows belief on those whom he elects."[17]

As the disagreements between Arminius and Gomarus intensified, both gained zealous followers. University students, pastors, and even non-churchmen such as Leiden's textile workers became involved in the increasingly turbulent debates.[18] The leadership of the States of Holland tried to take measures to reduce the tensions, but none worked. The disputes instead actually began spilling into local politics in places such as Alkmaar. There, a dispute that began with the local church classis deciding in late 1608 to suspend any pastor who refused to sign the Confession, ended in early 1610 with a revolt by the local militia against the town's Calvinist city council.[19] As Jonathan Israel has pointed out, "[a]fter Alkmaar, little doubt remained as to the capacity of the Arminian-Gomarist disputes to create political turmoil, or exacerbate tensions in society."[20] The conflict between supporters of Arminius and Gomarus also played a role in the political unrest that swept through Utrecht in 1610.[21] The disputes would take on additional political overtones as the decade progressed, and the two sides vehemently argued about the role that government should play in church affairs. As discussed earlier, the two leading political figures in the country, Prince Maurice and Oldenbarnevelt, supported separate sides in the disputes. So did the governing bodies of the various provinces, heightening the conflict even more. The very nature of the Dutch Republic even came to be questioned as the Arminian-supporting minority in the States-General began to deny that this assembly could pass any laws that affected their provinces, such as the one convening a National Synod, unless they consented to them.

As the last paragraph makes clear, Arminius's death in 1609 did not lessen the disputes. In fact, they were only intensifying when the Curators of Leiden began recruiting Vorstius to succeed Arminius as professor of theology in 1610, the event that would trigger the close British involvement in the disputes that would continue through the rest of the decade. By 1610 both sides were

16 Cf. ISRAEL, *The Dutch Republic*, 393; STANGLIN, *Arminius on the Assurance of Salvation* (2007), 112; DEN BOER, *God's Twofold Love* (2010), 15.

17 "Volgens Arminius verkiest God diegenen van wie Hij voorziet dat ze zullen geloven. Volgens Gomarus schenkt God het geloof aan degenen die Hij heeft verkoren" (VAN DEURSEN, *Maurits van Nassau* [2000], 227).

18 Cf. ISRAEL, *Dutch Republic*, 393; DEN TEX, *Oldenbarnevelt* (1973), 446.

19 Cf. DEN TEX, *Oldenbarnevelt*, 511–515.

20 ISRAEL, *Dutch Republic*, 424.

21 Cf. ISRAEL, *Dutch Republic*, 424.

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indeed beginning to detail their doctrinal positions. The supporters of Arminius did so with their *Remonstrance*, which was submitted to the States of Holland in July 1610. Those who agreed with Gomarus in the disputes responded with a *Contra-Remonstrance* of their own in March 1611.[22] Throughout the rest of the religious disputes the two sides would be known as the "Remonstrants" and "Contra-Remonstrants."

But why did King James choose to intervene so forcefully in the Dutch disputes, and why did he support Maurice and the Contra-Remonstrants rather than Oldenbarnevelt and the Remonstrants in the conflict? What impact did direct British involvement have on the course of the Dutch disputes? The first five chapters of the book answer these questions as they detail British involvement in the *Bestandstwisten* in roughly chronological order.

The first chapter examines early British involvement in the Dutch disputes up through the end of the Vorstius affair. Although King James had been familiar with the conflict in the Netherlands before he became entangled in the struggle to keep Vorstius from becoming a professor of theology at Leiden University, the affair marked his first major intervention in it. There were several reasons why the King reacted so strongly against the appointment. The first was his sincere opposition to what he viewed as Vorstius's heterodox and even atheistical opinions. As "Defender of the Faith" for not only Great Britain but also all of European Christendom, James believed that it was his duty to keep Vorstius's heresies from infecting the United Provinces. Matters of state played a role as well. James perceived Vorstius's appointment as only exacerbating religious and political divisions in the Dutch Republic that had already been all-too-clear to him even before the affair. The King rightly feared that these divisions would greatly weaken the Dutch state, potentially crippling an important ally. Even worse, James believed that the close religious and intellectual ties between Great Britain and the Dutch Republic meant that Vorstius's heresies could easily spread from the Low Countries to the British Isles, infecting his domains as well. The fact that opposing Vorstius highlighted the King's own orthodoxy during the height of the Oath of Allegiance was an added incentive for intervening.

The Vorstius affair not only marked the beginning of significant British involvement in the Dutch political and religious disputes. Many of the reasons why King James acted to block the theologian from becoming a professor at Leiden also explain his close participation in the Dutch disputes as a whole. Just like during the Vorstius affair, for instance, King James made it clear throughout the entire decade that a major reason for his intervening in Dutch internal affairs was that he believed it was his duty as "Defender of the Faith" to uphold orthodox beliefs in a fellow Reformed church against attacks from heterodox elements within it. The fact that the King feared that the disputes

22 Cf. DEN TEX, *Oldenbarnevelt*, 456 – 460, 462 – 465.

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within the Dutch Church would spread to the Church of England as well if they were not quickly squelched only made him redouble his efforts. King James stated on more than one occasion that four of the five articles of belief espoused by the Remonstrants were "perhaps not greatly to be misliked." But although strenuous efforts by Oldenbarnevelt and the Remonstrants caused the King to occasionally waver in his assessment, throughout most of the decade James believed that the five Remonstrant articles were "expressed with cunning and art to make a spacious shew" and that "they served but for a bait to swallow doctrine, which was of more danger than the articles would pretend."[23] His ambassadors to the United Provinces and Archbishop of Canterbury George Abbot reinforced this opinion from early on, while the strong support given to Vorstius by many of the Remonstrants and their allies in the Dutch government increased it even more. From the beginning of 1616 on King James never wavered in his belief that the Remonstrants' heterodox beliefs should not be tolerated.

Another important reason for the British intervention was that King James and other important members of the British government were extremely concerned that the political and religious unrest caused by the conflict was significantly undermining the unity and strength of the Dutch Republic. David Trim has pointed out in another context that "the King was constantly being advised of the importance for British security of preserving the Dutch state,"[24] and it is quite clear that the British Court viewed the growing disorder in the Republic with great apprehension. James indeed expressed concerns about the growing religious divisions to a visiting Dutch trade delegation as early as 1610. Winwood had also come to believe in the months before the Vorstius affair that the deteriorating religious and political situation in the United Provinces placed the "conservac[i]on of the state … [under] a desperate hazard."[25] King James and other important British figures would voice similar concerns time and again during the Dutch disputes. For instance, in April 1617 Winwood, now the Secretary of State, wrote to his successor as ambassador to the United Provinces, Dudley Carleton, that he feared that Republic would "soon be dissolved" to the "glory of their adversaries" and "grief of their friends" if King James's actions to quell the Dutch disputes were not successful.[26]

Although not an issue in the King's initial intervention in the Vorstius affair, a major factor in the continued British involvement in the Dutch disputes was the widespread belief that they were part of some devious Catholic plot whose final goal was to have the United Provinces once again subjugated to Spain.

23 Letter from James I to Carleton, 22 Dec. 1617/1 Jan. 1618, in: HARDWICKE, ed., *Letters from and Carleton* (1757), 221.

24 TRIM, "Calvinist Internationalism" (2007), 241.

25 Letter from Winwood to Salisbury, 26 March/5 April 1611, in: The NA, SPF, MS. 84/68, fol. 34.

26 Letter from Winwood to Carleton, 1/11 April 1617, in: HARDWICKE, ed., *Letters from and to Carleton*, 124.

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Not surprisingly, Winwood worked to stoke these fears, in the process implying that Oldenbarnevelt and the Remonstrants were a domestic fifth column for the Catholics. Maurice agreed, ominously adding that he believed that the plot was part of a larger scheme against all of Protestant Europe. By 1612 King James was convinced that the rumor was true as well. Nor did this belief diminish as the decade progressed. In 1618 George Carew, a courtier held in high favor by King James, described Oldenbarnevelt to a correspondent as "a great upholder of the Arminians, and, as men suppose, a papist."[27] British pamphlets from the 1620s continued to argue that both the Dutch disputes and the growing conflict in Great Britain about predestination were the result of an insidious plot by the Spanish, the Pope, and the Jesuits.

The final element fueling British intervention in the Dutch disputes, Anglo-French rivalry, was linked to these fears of a Catholic plot. The French government's decision to send an extraordinary ambassador to the United Provinces in late 1611 for a completely unrelated purpose indeed became the lynchpin for arguments in favor of such a conspiracy. The supposed Franco-Spanish initiative would begin by seeking a permanent peace on terms detrimental to the United Provinces, including religious toleration for Dutch Catholics, and end with the Dutch once again being under Spanish control.

Throughout the decade important figures at Court, including King James, expressed the belief time and again that Oldenbarnevelt was too pro-French. For its part the French government, too distracted by its own internal conflict to intervene in the Dutch disputes to any great extent, thought that there were too close of ties between Maurice and Great Britain. Both governments came to believe that a resolution of the conflict in favor of the Contra-Remonstrants would bring the United Provinces closer into Great Britain's orbit, while a Remonstrant victory would result in stronger ties with France. At the end of the conflict, Carleton praised God that "all affaires have succeeded to his Ma[jes]ty honor & service" despite the fact that "a contrarie faction [was] supported by divers Ambassag[e]rs & large expence from an other Prince [i. e., Louis XIII]."[28] Carleton also believed—and frequently argued to King James—that a victory by Maurice would result in the Dutch government being more amenable to British demands in areas such as trade than the pro-French Oldenbarnevelt had been.

By early 1612 there was no doubt which side King James supported in the Dutch disputes: the Contra-Remonstrants. After all, during the height of the Vorstius affair the King had made his opposition to the "enemie of God *Arminius*" and his "Athestical" followers quite clear. Since the Vorstius affair had also highlighted James's ability to influence events in the Dutch disputes,

27 Letter from Carew to Roe, 18/28 Jan. 1618, in: CAREW, *Letters from George Lord Carew* (1860), 94.

28 Letter from Carleton to Buckingham and Naunton, 8/18 June 1619, in: The NA, SPF, MS. 84/90, fol. 176v.

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the Remonstrants and their allies in the Dutch government exerted a great amount of effort attempting to gain the King's support or at the very least assure his benevolent neutrality. Chapters 2 and 3 detail these attempts as well as the counter efforts by the Contra-Remonstrants to ensure that they retained the King's backing. The first major attempt came in early 1613 when Oldenbarnevelt and leading Remonstrants worked together to draft letters written in the King's name calling for the States-General and States of Holland to take a leading role in settling the disputes and stating that both sides' beliefs about predestination were compatible with orthodox Christianity. James's decision to sign these letters was a major coup for the Remonstrants and would be used by them time and again during the remainder of the conflict. Another major initiative during 1613 was Hugo Grotius's efforts to court support for the Remonstrants during a trade mission to Great Britain.

The States of Holland's "Resolution for the Peace of Churches" of January 1614, which was backed by Oldenbarnevelt and Grotius and attempted to quell the disputes using a policy of mutual toleration, was received positively by King James and his Court. The King thought that it could truly restore unity to the United Provinces, and that by passing it the States were taking an important step in ending the conflict. The Resolution was indeed the most important reason why British participation in the Dutch disputes dropped significantly in 1614 and 1615. But by the end of 1615 it was clear that the Resolution was not having its intended effect, and that the conflict was more serious than ever. From this point on King James and the British government enmeshed themselves in the disputes more than ever before—and did so strongly in support of the Contra-Remonstrants.

There are several reasons why King James and the British government as a whole supported Maurice and the Contra-Remonstrants in the Dutch disputes. To begin with James, his ambassadors to the Dutch Republic during the decade, and other leading advisors such as Archbishop Abbot shared the same beliefs about predestination as the Contra-Remonstrants. While the King held that differing views of predestination should be tolerated under normal circumstances, he had come to believe that the conflicts about them in the Dutch Republic had escalated to a point where they seriously threatened the peace and unity of the Dutch Republic and must be suppressed. When faced with a choice between the two sides, James would, not surprisingly, choose the one with which he agreed. Furthermore, as has already been discussed above, the King had become convinced that the Remonstrants' officially stated beliefs were just a front for much more heretical opinions. When it came to the political backers of the two sides, it was an easy choice to support the increasingly pro-British Maurice rather than the pro-French Oldenbarnevelt, who had also earlier been an important (and stubborn) supporter of Vorstius.

Attempts by Oldenbarnevelt, Grotius and others to secure British support for the most part only managed to further the King's opposition to them.

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James, for example, came to believe that he had been tricked into signing the 1613 letters to the States-General and States of Holland and was furious that they had become major pieces of propaganda for the Remonstrants. As the King bitterly complained to the Dutch ambassador Caron in one hostile audience, he had agreed to send the letters in hopes of quelling the disputes. Instead, Oldenbarnevelt and the Remonstrants had used them to "kindle the fire more than it had ever been before."[29] The inept efforts by Petrus Bertius to secure backing for the Remonstrants in Great Britain only damaged the Arminian cause there even more.

Chapters 4 and 5 detail the final years of the Dutch disputes, a period in which King James, Ambassador Carleton, and the British government as a whole completely threw their weight behind Maurice and the Contra-Remonstrants. This backing was made extremely clear through several speeches given by Carleton before the States-General and a new letter written by King James at Maurice's request to the States in March 1617. This missive, meant to counteract the previous letters from 1613, argued that the only way to end the current conflict was for the Dutch to return to their Reformed roots and adhere to the doctrines espoused by the Contra-Remonstrants. If the disputes did not lessen soon, the King urged that a National Synod be used to decide them. By this point the question over whether to hold a National Synod had become a major point of contention between the Remonstrants and Contra-Remonstrants, and James's letter became one of the Contra-Remonstrants' main arguments in favor of holding one. When the deeply divided States-General failed to give a formal response to James's letter, Carleton gave another speech in which he blamed the Dutch disputes completely on the Remonstrants and once again called for the convening of a National Synod. Carleton's speech and the extremely negative Remonstrant response to it only worsened the conflict. By the first few months of 1618 it seemed as if the country was on the verge of outright civil war.

Forceful action taken by Prince Maurice with King James's blessing and even urging brought the conflict to an end in the months that followed, however. Before the end of 1618 Oldenbarnevelt had fallen from power, and the long-debated National Synod had begun in the Dutch city of Dordrecht. Both of these events were significant victories for Prince Maurice, the Contra-Remonstrants, and King James. When asked by the States-General to send representatives to the Synod, the King readily agreed to do so. This British delegation played an important role in fashioning the Synod's doctrinal statements, mediating differences among the delegates, and condemning Vorstius and the Remonstrants.

29 "dat het vier daermede meer ontsteecken was dan het noyt en hadde geweest tevooren" (433. Letter from Caron to Oldenbarnevelt, 16 – 17/26 – 27 May 1613, in: VEENENDAAL, ed., *Johan van Oldenbarnevelt*, vol. 2 [1962], 548).

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Although the Dutch disputes had ended exactly the way that King James had hoped that they would, the question remains what role British involvement played in bringing this about. Prince Maurice and Oldenbarnevelt both acknowledged the significant amount of British influence in the Dutch disputes, as was discussed at the beginning of this "Introduction." Events during the Dutch disputes supported their perception about the importance of British involvement too. Vorstius, for example, was about to begin his teaching duties at Leiden University before King James intervened against him. The Contra-Remonstrants had actually turned to Great Britain only after their earlier attempts to block the appointment on their own had failed. Although Oldenbarnevelt at first strenuously resisted the King's efforts to block the appointment, Vorstius never taught a single class at Leiden because of James's intervention. Evidence of British influence can also be seen during the Synod of Dordt. When disagreements about a thorny doctrinal issue divided both the British delegation and the Synod as a whole, Carleton informed the King about the matter. James had an opinion on the controversy, and after he made it known to Maurice, the Prince promised that his position would be followed by the Synod—and it was. Ambassador Carleton's intervention when dissension arose in the Synod on another occasion served to quench that conflict as well. The British delegation to Dordt also played an important role in the Synod.

British influence can be seen in the years between the Vorstius affair and the Synod of Dordt too. The amount of effort exerted by the Remonstrants and their allies in the Dutch government to secure British support are one indication of the amount of influence wielded by King James and the British government. The biggest coup stemming from these efforts was the securing of the "King's" letters to the States-General and States of Holland in 1613, which would be utilized repeatedly in the years that followed by the Remonstrants and their political supporters. The States of Holland even credited the advice given in the letters as being the leading impetus behind their "Resolution for the Peace of Churches." James's March 1617 letter advocating the use of a National Synod to settle the conflict was similarly used by the Contra-Remonstrants. It indeed dominated the Dutch debates in the weeks and months that followed its receipt. Provinicial governments controlled by supporters of the Contra-Remonstrants used it repeatedly to argue for the holding of a National Synod. So did the Contra-Remonstrant towns of Holland. In fact, the letter was used so frequently by the Contra-Remonstrants that a widespread belief developed that the idea of holding a Synod had originated with James himself. No wonder Oldenbarnevelt felt so strongly that matters would have been much different without British support for Maurice and the Contra-Remonstrants! Carleton was not exaggerating when he stated that both sides "attribute much both to your majesty's example and counsels."[30]

30 Letter from Carleton to James I, 8/18 December 1617, in: HARDWICKE, ed., *Letters from and to Carleton*, 216.

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As Chapters 6 and 7 make clear, not all the British influence in the Dutch disputes came about as a result of direct involvement in them by King James and other leading members of the British church and state. One of the main weapons used by both sides in the conflict to sway public opinion were cheap, typically short pamphlets. These pamphlets set forth their authors' position on topics such as religious toleration, the proper relationship between church and state, and of course predestination using language that could easily be understood by common men and women. In producing these works Dutch pamphleteers chose time and again to use examples and theses gleaned from Great Britain. A large number of these pamphlets were direct translations of British works, ranging from letters written by King James about the disputes to speeches given by the King's ambassadors about them to books on relevant subjects. Many other pamphlets that were not direct translations utilized British authors and examples when setting forth their arguments as well. Given the large amount of cultural and intellectual commerce between Great Britain and the Dutch Republic during this period, both sides definitely had a large number of sources available to them from which to draw. In the end no major subject was debated in the pamphlet war between the Remonstrants and Contra-Remonstrants without heavy recourse to British sources.

The motives behind the use of so many British sources varied. One reason was that both sides hoped to win public support by showing that other Reformed churches and Protestant governments sided with them on the debated subjects. Non-British sources were utilized in these pamphlets as well. But the marked ties between Great Britain and the Dutch Republic, close British participation in the Dutch disputes, and an already well-established industry for rendering English-language works into Dutch resulted in a heavier recourse to British texts than anywhere else. A second factor had to do with the tendency of one Dutch pamphlet during the disputes to spawn another, opposing one. Contra-Remonstrant pamphlets from the 1610s repeatedly claimed that the Church of England supported their views about predestination. Remonstrant pamphleteers responded to these assertions by attempting to prove this was not the case. These pamphlets of course spawned new Contra-Remonstrant ones rebutting the Remonstrants' rebuttals. A similar process can be seen in claims by Remonstrant pamphleteers that their views of church-state relations matched those in Britain, and the Contra-Remonstrant pamphlets written in response.

Cultural and intellectual commerce, of course, goes both ways. As described in Chapters 8 and 9, the Dutch disputes were closely followed throughout the British Isles. They were indeed knowledgeably discussed in a significant amount of private correspondence written by a wide swath of individuals ranging from private citizens in England to Scottish noblemen to Irish intellectuals. The disputes were also followed closely at Oxford University and Cambridge University, where they became, as one student of the time would

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later remember, "every Man's Talk and Enquiry."[31] The many books published about the conflict and the production of a play at the Globe Theater about the fall of Oldenbarnevelt also showcased the great amount of popular interest in the subject. The doctrinal issues being debated in the Low Countries were widely discussed as well. Numerous sermons, university lectures, disputations, and books were written on the subject. Given the dominance of Reformed theology in the Church of England at the time, it should not come as a surprise that most, if not all, of these works attacked Arminianism and were supportive of the Contra-Remonstrants.

But despite the fact that a large majority of the printed and unprinted material produced in Great Britain about the Dutch disputes supported the Contra-Remonstrants and their doctrinal positions, a widely expressed fear emerged during the 1610s that the conflict was spreading from the Low Countries to the British Isles. These concerns increased even more during the 1620s and were expressed in sermons, books, and speeches before the House of Commons. They were not groundless. There was a marked rise in conflict over the doctrine of predestination during this period, shattering the Calvinist consensus that had dominated the Church of England for half a century. The very real growth of what became known as English Arminianism took on even more sinister overtones for many individuals, however, who feared that the growing conflict in Great Britain was mirroring events in the Dutch Republic during the 1610s. In a sermon before King Charles I in 1626, for instance, the Irish Archbishop of Armagh, James Ussher, marshaled the Dutch disputes as evidence that the growing conflict about predestination in the British Isles would lead to "dissention in the Church," "distempter in the State," and even "our ruine" unless it was quashed immediately.[32]

There had been earlier disagreements about predestination within the Church of England, and there were clear differences of emphasis between English and Dutch Arminians. But there is nonetheless ample evidence that the conflict in the United Provinces had an influence on the later disputes in Great Britain. The clashes in the Netherlands generated a large amount of discussion and debate throughout the British Isles. At the same time Dutch works written about the conflict began to reach eager British hands. These two factors combined to increase disagreements about predestination in Great Britain significantly, leading directly to the heated conflicts of the 1620s. Contemporaries on both sides of the North Sea definitely made a connection between events in the United Provinces in the 1610s and Great Britain in the 1620s. Personal accounts from the period provide evidence of the discussion, debate, and reevaluation spawned by the Dutch disputes as well. Debates generated by the Dutch disputes also highlighted disagreements among

31 GOODWIN, "Memoir," vol. 5 (1704), vi.
32 Sermon by Ussher on 1 Cor. 14:33, in: CUL, MS. 270 [Dd.v.31], foll. 102v, 101.

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