ORTHODOXY, SCHOLASTICISM, AND PIETY IN THE SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY FURTHER REFORMATION: SIMON OOMIUS

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INTRODUCTION

The Further Reformation, a movement in the Netherlands spanning the seventeenth century through the early eighteenth century, is rich with potential to explore many of the themes prominent in Richard A. Muller’s scholarship. An overview of the life, career, and writings of Simon Oomius (1630–1706) helps fill a gap in scholarship on the period and can serve to correct certain misunderstandings of the period.

Oomius’ primary career was that of a pastor (for fifty-four years) in the Reformed church of the Netherlands. This man, busy with the same day by day and week by week tasks as pastors in the centuries before and after him, also managed to publish over thirty-five, many substantial, books throughout his lifetime. In the past two decades scholars have begun to explore Pastor Oomius’ substantial body of theological literature.¹ This essay seeks to add to this recent scholarship, especially in the context of this volume of essays which hopes, on the shoulders of Dr. Muller, to provide a more nuanced and historically accurate picture of church and school in early modern Protestantism.

We begin with some essential foundations for our study and contribution, especially related to the history and current state of scholarship on the post-Reformation movement known in Dutch as the *Nadere Reformatie*, spanning, roughly, the years 1600–1750.

**Laying Foundations**

The first matter, quite basic, but necessary to establish, is that of terminology. The term *Nadere Reformatie* has been translated into English most often as either “Dutch Second Reformation,” or “Further Reformation.” Each presents its problems, as many translations of technical terms do, though “Further Reformation” appears to be the English and Puritan origin of *Nadere Reformatie*.2 From here on out our preference will be to use the Dutch term for the period. Church historical scholarship knows and acknowledges various terms, periods, and movements left untranslated. As the breadth and depth of the *Nadere Reformatie* continues to become more known, it will no doubt more and more become known by its proper name, which goes back to the period itself.3

Another foundational matter related to the study of this period is recognizing how little is known of it outside of church-historical and theological scholarship in the Netherlands. While especially the last thirty years have produced numerous Dutch language articles and monographs on the period—especially instrumental has been the *Documentatie Nadere Reformatie*, a journal begun in 1977—still little scholarship has been attempted in English. Solid awareness is lacking of even the major representatives, such as Jean Taffin, Willem Teellinck, Gisbertus Voetius, Jodocus van Lodenstein, Jacobus Koelman, Herman Witsius, Wilhelmus à Brakel, Bernardus Smytegelt, Wilhelms Schortinghuis, and Theodorus van der Groe, well-known among church historians in the Netherlands. Lesser-known figures, as yet to be studied in-depth by Dutch church historians, are almost entirely unknown. Dr. Joel Beeke, one of the few who have written on the subject in English, mentions in this context Theodorus G. à Brakel, Adrianus Hasius, Abraham Hellenbroek, Nicolaas Holtius,

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