The Year 1625, the Dutch Republic, and Book History
Perspectives for Reframing Studies of Mennonites and Early Modernity

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Abstract: This essay presents evidence for the importance of printed books on a wide variety of topics by "Anabaptist" authors and other related contributors (e.g., printers, publishers, booksellers, and engravers) to the early modern book industry. It shows that books written in Dutch made up the great majority of works published until 1700. Only some of these books fit the usual categories of Mennonite history. In short, the essay provides a way of analyzing early modern Anabaptist-Mennonite sources that does not assume the normativity of early sixteenth-century Swiss and German history nor of church history. The perspectives of book history and cultural history open up important but too-often-neglected questions and evidence about the cultural and historical diversity of early modern *Doopsgezind* ("baptism-minded") life and ideas. In particular, the essay highlights how seventeenth-century Dutch *Doopsgezinden* ("baptism-minded people") of all orientations were both "in the world and of the world" of urban, urbane, cosmopolitan, ecumenical interactions. A consequence is that it is difficult to interpret them as a single, completely separated, self-contained confessional tradition. Their complicated, often close, and even overlapping relationships with their neighbors from other confessional traditions were integral to who they were. And these urban, Dutch-speaking people were the largest, most publicly active, and significant community that debated and attempted to define "Mennonite" identity for about ten generations (approx. 1550–1800).

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For the two-hundredth anniversary of Menno Simons's departure from the Catholic priesthood (1736), eighteenth-century Dutch congregational leaders commissioned the Lutheran silversmith Martinus Holtzhey to design and create a commemorative medallion.[1] The resulting artefact is an early example of Mennonite memory culture. In recent years, Mennonite memory-making has been energized anew. Of course, today the campaigns to build collective stories about the Anabaptist-Mennonite past have shifted their subjects and their commemorative dates. In the early twenty-first century, 1525 and Conrad Grebel's circle have replaced 1536 and Menno's circle.

With the new dates and subjects come new concerns. In the shadow of the very Lutheran Reformation anniversary (2017),[2] contributors to a special issue of *Mennonite Life* considered the pros and cons of celebrating the anniversary of 1525 and the Zurich baptisms versus 1527 and the Schleitheim Confession.[3] In the discussions, contributors traced twenty-first-century concerns for racial, gender, and economic justice plus other gospel-related themes back to—or contrasted them with—the long and complicated legacies of early sixteenth-century "Anabaptism proper," to use Harold S. Bender's term from "The Anabaptist Vision" of 1944. With any commemoration, there are of course also acts of selection and foregrounding. With these choices come willful as well as unintended forgetting. In both the Lutheran commemorations of 1517 and the Mennonite discussions about commemorating 1525 or 1527, sixteenth-century German-speaking cultures and heroes are the focus of remembrance—or of debates about these choices.

What about early modern Dutch subjects? This essay is not intended to promote a different year or a different set of heroes for celebration. Nonetheless, by highlighting 1625 for sustained attention rather than 1525, and the Dutch Republic rather than the Swiss Cantons or other German-

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[1] For more details about this medallion, see Nanne van der Zijpp, Alf Redekopp, and Victor G. Wiebe, "Commemorative Medals," *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*, 2019, https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Commemorative_Medals). An image of the medallion is also included on the front and inside cover of the second printing of Nanne van der Zijpp, *Geschiedenis der Doopsgezinden in Nederland* (Enkhuizen: Doopsgezinde Historische Kring, 1980 [1952]).

[2] For a challenge to the standard view of Lutheran memory culture, see Peter Marshall, *1517: Martin Luther and the Invention of the Reformation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

[3] See the contributions to the special issue titled *Why 500 Years?* in *Mennonite Life* 71 (2017), https://mla.bethelks.edu/ml-archive/2017/. See also additional articles by Katherine Hill, "Memories from the Margins? Anniversaries, Anabaptists, and Rethinking Reformations," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* (October 2019): 531–47; and John D. Roth, "How to Commemorate a Division? Reflections on the 500th Anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation and Its Relevance for the Global Anabaptist-Mennonite Church Today," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 91 (January 2017): 5–37.

speaking territories, and book history rather than church history, I intend to shine some light on a complex of subjects neglected by the commemorative impulse among Mennonites today. The reason these subjects deserve more attention is not simply that they have been neglected. The main argument of this essay is that Dutch speakers were the culturally dominant protagonists for many generations of Mennonite history. Therefore, a fuller knowledge of their ideas and their concerns from about 1550 to 1800 (the period when they played an outsized role among those people who baptized adults upon a confession of faith) helps us better understand a very long period of the "Anabaptist" past. This period was also important in the rise of early modernity, and in this era, Dutch baptizers of adults played a small but quite significant role in the rise of the European Enlightenment and religious liberalism—a series of historical connections that might be ignored by those who study the more conservative, rural, and separatist branches of the Mennonite family tree.

The essay is divided into five main parts. It starts with several short accounts or vignettes of noteworthy events in 1625 and then continues with an examination of the possible significance of the year 1625 (an arbitrary but interesting date) and more generally with an examination of the early modern era after the early sixteenth century, a long period for which 1625 might act as a marker in Anabaptist-Mennonite studies. The third part discusses the central but often-neglected role that the Dutch Republic held as a cultural center for continental European adult baptizers until at least 1700. In this period (and for several additional generations), Dutch was the most important language in the "Anabaptist" world. The fourth and longest part of the essay examines the subjects about which Dutch baptizers of adults wrote and published books in the long early modern period. These subjects were not limited to "Mennonite" themes narrowly understood. This fact offers us the opportunity to reconsider basic assumptions about Anabaptist-Mennonite history. These reconsiderations are big subjects in themselves, and I can address them only briefly in this essay's fifth part.

Part 1: 1625 in Three Vignettes[4]

Many readers might assume that the year 1625 is not particularly important in *Anabaptist* history. The following three vignettes are linked only in part to that year, and none is meant to suggest that 1625 should be

[4] In literary studies, a vignette is "a short scene that captures a single moment or a defining detail about a character, idea, or other element of the story." "Vignette," Literary Terms, accessed November 24, 2022, https://literaryterms.net/vignette/. The literary meaning is related to an older use of the word in book studies, where "vignette" refers to a typographical ornament.

granted the special status of an anniversary year comparable to 1517, 1525, 1527, or 1536—or any other mythical "year of origin." The purpose of the vignettes is to point to the active roles of Dutch *Doopsgezinden* and German *Taufgesinnten* (Dutch and German for "baptism-minded people") in seventeenth-century cultural life and also to their role in lively public controversies about defining the identity of *dopers* (Dutch for "baptists" or "baptizers"). Both topics—*Mennonite* cultural engagement and public controversies about collective identities of Europe's *Täufer* (Dutch and German "baptists" or "baptizers")—are central concerns of the present essay.

In the preceding paragraph, I italicized names in Dutch, German, and English for the people who are the subjects of this essay. From the perspective of 1625, the proper terms to describe the people who baptized adults upon a confession of faith were topics of ongoing controversy. Several generations after the first Reformation divisions, the ecclesio-political landscape of Europe had changed considerably. By the early seventeenth century, passionately held differences about religious commitment had led to institutional divisions between Catholics and various types of protesting church blocs (e.g., Lutheran, Reformed, and Anglican). Disagreements among supporters who shared confessional allegiances also led to further institutional divisions, including divisions among supporters of adult baptism upon a confession of faith. By 1625, there were already multiple competing groups of "Mennonites." Therefore, a challenge for all confessional groups in seventeenth-century Europe was that new or renewed confessional commitments by no means guaranteed unity of purpose among those supposedly sharing the same allegiances.

For example, in the seventeenth century, not all continental adult baptizers accepted the name "Mennonite" or agreed with Menno Simons's teachings or disciplinary practices. For this reason, a significant number preferred to use the Dutch term *Doopsgezind*[5] for themselves, or to use the name of their particular congregational alliance ("the Flemish" or "the Frisians" or "the Jan-Jacobsz-People," to list just a few examples). They were especially wary of the labels applied to them by their opponents. In fact, one central feature of their public identity was that they rejected any claim that they were heretical or criminal rebaptizers (in German, *Wiedertäufer*, and in Dutch, *wederdoopers*). In the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries, the name in English for the people charged with

[5] I have used the term here as a singular noun for an "adult baptizing person." I sometimes also use the term in the same spelling for the adjectival form of the name. *Doopsgezinden* is the plural noun. Note that Dutch grammatical rules might decline the terms with more variations, but I have kept these variations to a minimum for simplicity's sake. In German, the related terms are grammatical variations on the term *Taufgesinnte* or *Täufer*.

these heresies and crimes was "Anabaptists," and a significant English literature from this period denounces "Anabaptism."[6]

Today it is common to use "Anabaptist" as a value-neutral or even positive descriptor for the great diversity of adult baptizing groups in the broad "Mennonite" community. The result is that it is normal today to speak about an Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition. From my point of view as a specialist in early modern history, this equation seems problematic because it makes it difficult to analyze both the hatreds aimed at continental baptizers and the attempts by adult baptizers to defend against these hatreds and name themselves. It is worth stating clearly: from an early modern point of view, Anabaptist history and Mennonite history were not connected but were antitheses, because it was highly libelous and legally dangerous to be labeled an "Anabaptist" until about 1800. The legal dangers in the sixteenth century (and sometimes beyond that) included capital punishment. For this reason, Mennnonites insisted that they were not Anabaptists. In other words, "Anabaptist-Mennonite history" seems to be an oxymoron![7]

Therefore, in the remainder of this essay, I usually reserve the words "Anabaptist" and "Anabaptism" for the early modern accusation (an occasional exception is that I sometimes do mention "Anabaptist studies" when referring to the field today). Furthermore, because "Mennonite" was

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[6] For more details about the complicated variety of names used in Netherlandic territories, see Nanne van der Zijpp, "Names Given to the Anabaptists-Mennonites in the Netherlands," *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*, 1957, https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Names_Given_to_the_Anabaptists-Mennonites_in_the_Netherlands. Polemics against *Wiedertäufer*/*wederdoopers*/Anabaptists were an internationally popular genre. Ace Gammon-Burnett at Brock University has counted over two hundred English-language books printed before 1700 that mention "Anabaptists" in their titles (research conducted using the collection *Early English Books Online*). Many hundreds more discuss "Anabaptists" in their main texts, either at some substantial length or in passing. For more on an important aspect of this topic, see Gary K. Waite, "The Devil of Delft in England: The Reception of the Dutch Spiritualist David Joris in 17th-Century English Polemics," *Church History and Religious Culture* 101 (2021): 429–95.

[7] For a case study of this kind of antithesis, see Michael Driedger, "Sind Mennoniten tatsächlich Wiedertäufer? Der Reichskammergerichtsprozeß Hübner contra Plus 1661–1663," in *Aussenseiter zwischen Mittelalter und Neuzeit*, ed. Norbert Fischer and Marion Kobelt-Groch (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 135–47. For analysis of the problem associated with an alternative category common in scholarship today, see Michael Driedger, "Against 'the Radical Reformation': On the Continuity between Early Modern Heresy-Making and Modern Historiography," in *Radicalism and Dissent in the World of Protestant Reform*, ed. Bridget Heal and Anorthe Kremers (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2017), 139–61; and Michael Driedger and Gary K. Waite, "From 'the Radical Reformation' to 'the Radical Enlightenment'? The Specter and Complexities of Spiritualism in Early Modern England, Germany, and the Low Countries," *Church History and Religious Culture* 101 (2021): 135–66. The latter essay is the introduction to a special issue of *Church History and Religious Culture* on "Spiritualism in Early Modern Europe." Spiritualism was a fundamental aspect of adult baptizing cultures from their earliest years, a factor that complicates attempts to categorize groups, since spiritualists tended to eschew labels.

a disputed term in early modern literature, I also try to avoid imposing this term on groups that did not accept it. One alternative would be to use one of the foreign-language names (for example, *Täufer* or *Doopsgezinden*) as a catch-all term. In this essay, I sometimes refer to *Doopsgezind*-Mennonite history, but more frequently I choose another path: calling my general subjects "baptizers" or "adult baptizers" (and only occasionally "adult baptists") in the lower case to designate a general category of people—baptizers of adults upon a confession of faith. My purpose in avoiding a capital letter is to indicate that these people were not a single group and therefore we should not use a proper noun to name them.

First Vignette

For seventeenth-century opponents of *Wiedertäuferei/wederdooperij/* Anabaptism, 1625 was an anniversary of sorts but not one that adult baptizers wanted to celebrate. In that year, the German Lutheran minister Martin Rinckhart published a drama celebrating Martin Luther's triumph over Thomas Müntzer in the Peasants' War of 1525.[8] This play does not mention a connection between Anabaptists and Thomas Müntzer, but other works of that era did. An example is *Babel, dat is verwarringe der weder-dooperen onder malcanderen* (Babel, that is, the confusion among the Anabaptists) of 1621, authored by Hermann Faukelius (d. 1625), a Reformed preacher in the Dutch Republic. Faukelius's book inspired Johannes Cloppenburgh to dedicate a new anti-Anabaptist polemic to Faukelius. In 1625, Cloppenburgh published *Gangraena theologiae anabaptisticae, dat is: Cancker van de leere der weder-dooperen* (The theological gangrene of the Anabaptists), a book that attacked a range of adult baptist texts from the years 1535 to 1624, including Claes Claesz's *Bekentenisse van de voornaemste Stucken des Christelijcken Gheloofs, ende der Leere* (Confessions of the principal tenets of the Christian faith) from 1624. This latter book by a Mennonite elder sparked Cloppenburgh's disdain because Claesz used his *Bekentenisse* to respond to and reject Faukelius's attacks against Mennonites. In 1626, another Dutch adult baptizing preacher, Anthoni Jacobs (aka Roscius), published *Babel, d.i. Verwerringe der Kinderdooperen onder malcanderen* (Babel, that is, the confusion among the child baptizers).

Second Vignette

The year 1625 marks the beginning of a major controversy among Dutch Mennonites that has become known as the Two-Word Debate—that is, a debate about the relationship between the inner Word of the Holy Spirit and God's literal Word in the Bible. Between 1625 and 1628, a

[8] On Rinckhart, see Hans-Jürgen Goertz, *Thomas Müntzer: Revolutionär am Ende der Zeiten* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2015), 257.

pamphlet war among Mennonites resulted in the publication of at least twenty-two polemical texts.[9] Jan Theunisz (1569–1638) stands out as a central figure in these lively exchanges as a defender of the biblicist faction against those he and others perceived as fanatical spiritualists. Among those "fanatics" was the famous preacher and author of confessions of faith and martyrologies, Hans de Ries (1553–1638).

Theunisz is a fascinating figure in so many regards. In the *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*, Nanne van der Zijpp notes the following about Theunisz:

> He settled at Leiden as a book printer ca. 1599, at the same time operating a bookshop, which was transferred to Amsterdam in 1604, where he soon added his own type foundry. From 1606 he also ran a well-known inn, called "D'os in de Bruyloft," also called "de Menniste Bruiloft" (wedding-party). This inn was an unusual place; it was provided with many curiosities and objects of art; musical performances were given there, attended by the upper ten of Amsterdam; among the regular visitors were Joost van den Vondel and the Waterlander preachers Wybrandsz, Hesseling, and Anslo. Another business of this man was the distilling and sale of brandy. But first and foremost Jan Theunisz was a man of learning. Though a self-made man, he knew many languages, not only German and French, and probably also English, but also Latin and Greek, and even Hebrew, Arabic, and Ethiopian. Among the books he printed and published were *Verscheyden Schriftuerlijcke Liedekens* (Scriptural hymns) (1603), a book by the Flemish Elder Claes Claesz, a number of books by Coornhert, Coolhaas, and other liberal theologians, a kind of newspaper, but also books which he translated from the Hebrew, the first in this language ever published in the Netherlands. The pamphlets and poems he wrote were usually anonymous, bearing the devices "Jaecht nae't Beste" (Strive for the best) or "een liefhebber der waerheyt" (a friend of the truth). In 1612 he was appointed professor of Arabic at the Leiden University, but already in 1613 he had to give up his professorship because it was considered improper to tolerate a

[9] For a list of books published in this debate, see J. G. Boekenoogen and G. J. Boekenoogen, *Catalogus der werken over de Doopsgezinden en hunne geschiedenis, aanwezig in de bibliotheek der Vereenigde Doopsgezinde Gemeente te Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: J. H. de Bussy, 1919), 111–13. For more background about the debate, see Gary K. Waite, "The Drama of the Two-Word Debate among Liberal Dutch Mennonites, c. 1620–1660: Preparing the Way for Baruch Spinoza?," in *Radicalism and Dissent in the World of Protestant Reform*, ed. Bridget Heal and Anorthe Kremers (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2017), 118–36.

Mennonite in the university; in 1617–26 he taught Hebrew at the "Duytse Academie" at Amsterdam.[10]

In addition to his many intellectual and cultural engagements, Theunisz seems to have been keen to provoke those with whom he disagreed. Evidence of this is not only his central role in publications related to the Two-Word Debate but also his disruptive actions in his congregation in 1625. As a result, he was placed under the ban for a few years but eventually reconciled with his congregation.

At about the same time that the Two-Word Debate was underway, new religious movements were forming with members from adult baptizing communities. Two examples connected with the 1620s in the Dutch Republic include the *Vredestadsburgers* (Citizens of the City of Peace) and the Collegiants.[11] The leader of the Citizens of the City of Peace, Pieter Pietersz, published his guide to spiritual journeys, *Wegh na Vredenstadt* (The path to the city of peace), around 1625. The anti-confessional Collegiants, who practiced adult baptism by immersion, remained a small group but spread throughout the Republic by the middle of the seventeenth century, when the choice of either allying with or opposing them contributed to another schism among Dutch baptizers.

Third Vignette

The year 1625 marks the births of at least two men who became leading figures in another major seventeenth-century controversy among Dutch baptizers: the so-called War of the Lambs.[12] From the perspective of today, Thieleman Jansz van Bragh (1625–64) is among the most famous

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[10] Nanne van der Zijpp, "Theunisz, Jan (ca. 1569–1637?)," *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*, 1959, https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Theunisz,_Jan_(ca._1569-1637%3F). See also Keith L. Sprunger, "Jan Theunisz of Amsterdam (1569–1638): Mennonite Printer, Pamphleteer, Renaissance Man," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 68 (1994): 437–60.

[11] On the *Vredestadsburgers*, see Piet Visser, *Broeders in de geest: De doopsgezinde bijdragen van Dierick en Jan Philipsz. Schabaelje tot de Nederlandse stichtelijke literatuur in de zeventiende eeuw*, Deventer Studiën 7, 2 vols. (Deventer: Sub Rosa, 1988), 1:68–81, 123–33. On the Collegiants, see Francesco Quatrini, *Adam Boreel (1602–1665): A Collegiant's Attempt to Reform Christianity* (Leiden: Brill, 2020). For a shorter but also older introduction to Collegiantism, see Andrew Fix, "Mennonites and Rationalism in the Seventeenth Century," in *From Martyr to Muppy: A Historical Introduction to Cultural Assimilation Processes of a Religious Minority in the Netherlands: The Mennonites*, ed. Alastair Hamilton, Sjouke Voolstra, and Piet Visser (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam Press, 1994), 159–74.

[12] On the War of the Lambs, see Samme Zijlstra, *Om de waare gemeente en de oude gronden: Geschiedenis van de dopersen in de Niederlanden 1531–1675* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2000), chap. 16; Michael D. Driedger, *Obedient Heretics: Mennonite Identities in Lutheran Hamburg and Altona in the Confessional Age* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), chap. 3; and Piet Visser, "Mennonites and Doopsgezinden in the Netherlands, 1535–1700," in *A Companion to Anabaptism and Spiritualism, 1521–1700*, ed. James M. Stayer and John D. Roth (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007), chap. 8, esp. 333–40.

Anabaptist-Mennonites of the seventeenth century, mainly because he compiled the stories in and wrote an important introduction to *Het Bloedigh Tooneel* (The bloody theater, later known as *Martyrs Mirror*) in 1660. The original publication of that influential book took place in the middle of the War of the Lambs, and van Braght was one of the main protagonists on the "conservative," confessionalist side of the disputes. Together with other defenders of Mennonite confessions of faith, such as Bastiaan van Weenigem (ca. 1625–97) and Tobias Govertsz van den Wyngaert (1587–1669), van Braght worked to silence supposedly dangerous Socinian, anti-trinitarian, anti-confessional ideas that he and others claimed were advocated by the Amsterdam preacher Galenus Abrahamsz de Haan (1622–1706) and his Collegiant allies. Among those people on Galenus's side was the preacher Willem van Maurik (1625–1710), himself embroiled in related controversies. Between about 1654 and 1664, the War of the Lambs and its offshoots resulted in the publication of approximately 150 pamphlets by adult baptizers and other concerned writers.[13] Although the main disputes peaked around the time of van Braght's death in 1664, when the warring factions separated into Lamist and Zonist congregations, the controversies continued until at least the beginning of the eighteenth century.

Part 2: 1625 and 1725 in the Shadow of 1525

Because this essay's most general goal is to discuss the importance of the seventeenth century in *Doopsgezind*-Mennonite history, it must do more than merely present interesting vignettes about the seventeenth century. Essays in the 2021 edition of the *Mennonitische Geschichtsblätter* make a good case for the importance of 1525 in the history of early "Anabaptism" and for the importance of early baptizing movements in Reformation history.[14] It is noteworthy that unlike the articles about 1525 and 1527 in the 2017 edition of *Mennonite Life*, the discussions in the 2021 edition of the *Mennonitische Geschichtsblätter* pay significant attention to the radical, political, even revolutionary activism of those accused of anti-pedobaptism and Anabaptism in the 1520s. The differing historiographical emphases aside, the focus on 1525 in both journals is an attempt to raise the profile of Anabaptist-Mennonite studies that has been obscured by the shadow of mainstream Protestant (mainly Lutheran) mythmaking. By comparison, at least at first glance, 1625 seems to be a random year whose only significance is that it marks the one-hundredth

[13] See Boekenoogen and Boekenoogen, *Catalogus der werken over de Doopsgezinden*, 114–28.

[14] See especially Astrid von Schlachta, "1525—das Jahr," *Mennonitische Geschichtsblätter* 78 (2021): 9–32; and Hans-Jürgen Goertz, "Bewegungen der Täufer im Aufbruch der Reformation," *Mennonitische Geschichtsblätter* 78 (2021): 33–58.

anniversary of "1525—the year."[15] Therefore, to address possible assumptions that the vignettes above are of only minor significance, we must confront a common set of assumptions about the comparison of 1525 and 1625; we could even add 1725 so that we expand our considerations to encompass "the long seventeenth century."

One reason that English- and German-speaking scholars of early adult baptizing groups know relatively little about the significance of the long seventeenth century is that this subject rarely receives as much attention in their circles as does the era of early Reformation movements. Developing assumptions is easy when many readers have relatively little exposure to a subject. The baptizers of generations immediately before and long after 1625 tend to get lost in the shadow of the heroes and villains of the early sixteenth century.[16] The implied rhetorical question at the heart of Anabaptist historiography of the last 150 years seems to be this: Are not the year 1525 and the early sixteenth century more generally the most significant times in early modern adult baptizing history?

Like 1517 in the Lutheran historical imagination, the year 1525 has taken on its own mythic dimensions. To the best of my knowledge, the idea that this year held special significance as the beginning of the Anabaptist tradition gained currency among Mennonites only after the mid- to late nineteenth century. In the years 1625 and 1725 (and even in 1825), the year 1525 did not stand out in the Mennonite historical imagination as a year that deserved special celebration. That changed for the first time in 1925 when Europe's Mennonites held four-hundredth anniversary events in Switzerland.[17]

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[15] This is a reference to the title of Astrid von Schlachta's insightful essay, cited in the note above.

[16] In the last twenty to thirty years, more research has appeared on the longer early modern history of European adult baptizers. Nonetheless, the predominance of research is not focused on subjects in the later eras. An example is Brian C. Brewer, ed., *T&T Clark Handbook of Anabaptism* (London and New York: T&T Clark, 2022); most of this collection's thirty-five essays concentrate on sixteenth-century topics (or, secondarily, on modern ones). An important exception is Troy Osborne, "Anabaptists in the Netherlands," chap. 8.

[17] For more background about the 1925 celebrations as well as other previous commemorative events, see Benjamin W. Goossen, "Why 500 Years? A Critique of Anabaptism's Upcoming Anniversary Celebration," *Mennonite Life* 71 (2017), https://mla.bethelks.edu/ml-archive/2017/why-500-years-a-critique-of-anabaptismrsquos-upcom.php#notes. For details about tensions between Swiss hosts and their Dutch guests at these celebrations in 1925, see Troy Osborne, "'Golden Age' or 'Global Age': Commemorating Anabaptists Past, Present and Future," *Mennonite Life* 71 (2017), esp. note 5, https://mla.bethelks.edu/ml-archive/2017/golden-age-or-global-age-commemorating-anabaptists.php.

It is possible to draw "a rainbow connection"[18] between the 1520s and our world—between "Anabaptist origins" and Mennonites today. These kinds of connections across the centuries are not wrong in themselves. However, they have the potential to be problematic because they leave out the long, complicated, and fascinating paths that led from the early sixteenth century to the present. To use another more negative metaphor, building "a short-circuit"[19] between the 1520s and the modern world leaves so many lives, so many accomplishments and challenges and tensions, so much early modern adult baptizing history in the shadows.[20] We have to wonder: Are we leaving some important developments, stories, and themes in the dark by focusing so much on "origins"?

In a word, the answer this essay emphasizes is yes! The long seventeenth century was a golden age of *Doopsgezind*-Mennonite book production, but not everywhere throughout Europe. By the middle of the sixteenth century, most books by Europe's adult baptizers were published in Dutch, and the great majority of these were published in the Dutch Republic, a political entity that existed from the 1580s until the end of the eighteenth century. These were the centuries of the Scientific Revolution, the Enlightenment, and the earliest years of democratic revolutions in Europe. Europe's book industries played a crucial role in these and other historic trends, and the Dutch Republic was a center of that industry. During its existence, the Dutch Republic was also the cultural and confessional center of early modern adult baptizers. In short, a rich treasure trove of Dutch-language sources is in danger of becoming the main orphan of a rainbow connection linking our present world with the world of the early sixteenth century. The more we ignore these sources, the more we risk distorting two to three centuries of Anabaptist-Mennonite history by forgetting or downplaying the role that *Doopsgezinden*, Mennonites, and other adult baptizers played in the rise of early modernity.

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[18] I am borrowing this concept from the medievalist Matthew Gabriele. See, for example, "Islamophobes Want to Recreate the Crusades. But They Don't Understand Them at All," *Washington Post*, June 6, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2017/06/06/islamophobes-want-to-recreate-the-crusades-but-they-dont-understand-them-at-all/.

[19] I am borrowing this concept from Alberto Toscano, *Fanaticism: On the Uses of an Idea* (London: Verso, 2017).

[20] See James Urry, *Mennonites, Politics, and Peoplehood: Europe –Russia –Canada, 1525–1980* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2006), 10: "Mennonite scholars tend to consider that the core ideas and principles of their faith were largely formed during the early period of the Reformation and all later developments either built upon that core or deviated from it. As a consequence, in Mennonite studies there exists a strange, dark age between the period of Anabaptist ferment and the nineteenth century, when the rise of nation-states presented new challenges to the continuance of Mennonite life."

Part 3: The Dutch Republic

Dutch History in the Shadow of German History

The argument is not original to this essay, but it deserves stating anew. Since the late nineteenth century, English- and German-language Mennonite studies have tended to downplay the significance of Dutch history. One reason for this is that histories (even Dutch-language ones) that do focus on the longer history of Dutch Mennonites and other adult baptizers tend to emphasize narratives of Dutch cultural assimilation and numerical decline.[21] This has been a trope even in some moralizing Dutch Mennonite literature since the seventeenth century itself.[22] Another reason for downplaying Dutch history is that beginning in the nineteenth century, the new German nation-state and the post–Civil War United States became international centers of university learning, and German and English became the main languages of scholarship. Following international trends, new generations of leading Mennonite scholars published increasing proportions of their studies in German and English. Dutch scholars and Dutch-language publications did not disappear, but over the generations, a diminishing audience could understand new, modern Dutch contributions—or read untranslated Dutch primary sources from the early modern era. In short, by the late nineteenth century, the Netherlands ceased to be the cultural center of international Mennonite culture.

From a modern point of view, it might be easy to forget how central a role the Dutch language played in early modern adult baptizing cultures, especially after the middle of the sixteenth century. For example, in an article from 2007 on early modern "Anabaptist" religious literature and hymnody, John D. Rempel includes analysis of Leenaerdt Clock's influential prayer book. Although the oldest known version was published in Dutch at Leeuwarden in 1625, it was later translated and became popular among German-speaking audiences. In his discussion of this text's translation history, Rempel remarks that German was "the

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[21] For examples, see van der Zijpp, *Geschiedenis der Doopsgezinden*, esp. chap. 11 ("Tolerantie en Teruggang"); and C. J. Dyck, *An Introduction to Mennonite History: A Popular History of the Anabaptists and the Mennonites*, 3rd ed. (Scottdale, PA, and Waterloo, ON: Herald Press, 1993).

[22] Four iconic early modern figurers (Hans de Ries, Jan Philipsz Schabaelje, Thieleman Jansz van Braght, and Galenus Abrahamsz de Haan) all expressed versions of this idea in print. For additional background and critical reflection about the thesis in Dutch historiography of the decline of Mennonite life, see Piet Visser, "Enlightened Dutch Mennonitism: The Case of Cornelis van Engelen," in *Grenzen des Täufertums / Boundaries of Anabaptism: Neue Forschungen*, ed. Anselm Schubert, Astrid von Schlachta, and Michael Driedger (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2009), 369–91, esp. 371–80.

dominant language of European Mennonitism."[23] Rempel can be excused for making this incorrect statement, because he could find significant support for it in older as well as recent published literature.

The quintessential example of a rainbow connection that skips over Dutch dominance in early modern history of adult baptizers by linking the early sixteenth century with the modern era is Harold S. Bender's famous essay from the 1940s, "The Anabaptist Vision."[24] In this essay, Bender includes only a few references to Dutch history and culture, most of which are dismissive or so brief as to seem unimportant. He certainly was aware of his Dutch Mennonite colleagues, their research, and their traditions, but these did not seem important for the claims of the essay. In "The Anabaptist Vision," a mid-twentieth-century American Mennonite church leader presents a prescription for his contemporaries, which he bases on a narrow and selective reading of sixteenth-century Germanic "Anabaptism proper." This is, of course, not a new critique.

The focus on the German language and on German-speaking regions in Mennonite history might not be a result of intentional forgetting. Instead, it might simply be an artifact of scholarly specialties and preferences. Two recent German-language introductions for broad audiences devote significant attention to Dutch and northern German themes in the early sixteenth century. One of these books is *Die Täufer* (2019) by Thomas Kaufmann. In addition to the history of Swiss and southern German groups, the book looks closely at Dutch adult baptizing history until 1550, but it pays only brief and scattered attention to Dutch Mennonites after the 1550s, preferring instead to focus on English Baptist histories from the seventeenth century to the present.[25] The other book, *Täufer* (2020) by Astrid von Schlachta, avoids this uneven attention by making sure to follow the history of the same traditions of continental adult baptizers from the sixteenth century until the present. This excellent, long-term history provides much discussion of Dutch authors and subjects, but it is primarily a book about German history. This is most evident in the chapter about "Die täuferische Landkarte" (The Anabaptist map) of the early modern period. Although that chapter includes important discussions of a few Dutch writers and activists who helped German and Swiss refugees in the early modern period, it does not include a section that highlights the importance of *Doopsgezind*-Mennonite life in

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[23] John D. Rempel, "Anabaptist Religious Literature and Hymnody," in *A Companion to Anabaptism and Spiritualism, 1521–1700*, ed. James M. Stayer and John D. Roth (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007), 407.

[24] Harold S. Bender, "The Anabaptist Vision," *Church History* 13 (1944): 3–24; also published in the *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 18 (1944): 67–88.

[25] Thomas Kaufmann, *Die Täufer: Von der radikalen Reformation zu den Baptisten* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2019).

the United Provinces of the Dutch Republic.[26] The Dutch Republic is not on von Schlachta's map.

Early Modern Doopsgezind*-Mennonite History in Its Dominant National Context*

The provinces of Friesland, Groningen, Utrecht, Holland, and Zeeland—where so many early modern adult baptizers lived—certainly deserve a central place on the map of early modern *Doopsgezind*-Mennonite history! Adult baptizers were a diverse group (see the three opening vignettes). New estimates suggest that there were about sixty-five thousand congregational members in the Dutch Republic in the later seventeenth century. By 1625, most of this population had been born to adult baptizing parents, who attended congregations with established institutional traditions. The largest group was the United Flemish congregations (about 60 percent of the total), followed by the Waterlanders (about 20 to 25 percent), and then the diverse and smaller "conservative" congregations such as the Hard Frisians, the Jan-Jacobsz-People, and the Groningen and Danzig Old Flemish (about 15 percent). The so-called High German community of Dutch adult baptizers was linked closely with the Waterlanders. It is important to note that by the end of the sixteenth century, the groups' regional names were little more than factional labels. By 1625, these groups were represented throughout the Dutch Republic and other northern European regions.[27]

The relationship between these groups was dynamic and complex. The United Flemish and the smaller conservative congregations considered themselves to be loyal to the inheritance of Menno Simons and often called themselves Mennonites. However, according to Piet Visser, unlike their more consequently separatist brothers and sisters of Hard Frisians and similar congregations, the supposedly "conservative" United Flemish approached relations with their surrounding non-adult-baptizing world with "a pragmatic mentality characteristic of the broad-thinking Waterlanders."[28] Although they maintained connections with other adult baptizers, the Waterlanders distanced themselves from a conservative understanding of their baptizing inheritance. Instead of adopting the

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[26] Astrid von Schlachta, *Täufer: Von der Reformation ins 21. Jahrhundert* (Tübingen: Narr Francke Attempto Verlag, 2020). Chap. 5 is about "Die täuferische Landkarte."

[27] For the data in this paragraph, I am relying on Visser's 2007 summary in "Mennonites and *Doopsgezinden*," 327. See also Zijlstra, *Om de waare gemeente*, chap. 17.

[28] Visser, "Mennonites and *Doopsgezinden*," 327–28. Visser's overall interpretation of Dutch Mennonite history differs in important ways from Zijlstra's. I trust Visser more than Zijlstra, because I think that Visser's 2007 essay provides a more historically informed and nuanced treatment of Anabaptist identity. For Visser's critique of Zijlstra, see "Mennonites and *Doopsgezinden*," 299–300.

name Mennonite, they preferred to call themselves *Doopsgezinden* ("baptism-minded people").[29] They were the most willing to participate in reformist, renewal-oriented, spiritualistic religious movements such as the Citizens of the City of Peace and the Collegiants (see the second vignette). Conservatives and reformists alike made great efforts to heal the factional differences in the seventeenth century, often using confessions of faith as peace treaties. Ironically, the strategy of building congregational alliances through confessions of faith led to one of the largest schisms among Dutch Mennonites and *Doopsgezinden*: the War of the Lambs (see the third vignette). The division between Lamists and Zonists mainly affected congregations of United Flemish and Waterlanders, who together made up the majority of Dutch adult baptizers.

Beyond the boundaries of the Dutch Republic, the early modern Dutch-speaking adult baptizing diaspora included congregations in the northern Rhineland in such places as Goch and Krefeld, and the North Sea and Baltic coasts in places such as Friedrichstadt, Hamburg-Altona, and Danzig. Despite their distance from one another, adult baptizing congregations in these far-flung regions often relied on congregations in the Dutch Republic for theological and pastoral support throughout the early modern era. It is worth emphasizing again: during its existence from the late sixteenth century until the late eighteenth century, the Dutch Republic was the cultural and congregational center of early modern adult baptizing communities.

An additional reason the Dutch Republic deserves attention in Mennonite studies is its place in European political history. For steadfast baptizers of adults, the frequency of death by martyrdom decreased dramatically by about 1600, but other threats remained. In the 1620s, most adult baptizers lived in European territories under threat of war. These wars included the overlapping conflicts of the Eighty Years' War (1568–1648) and the Thirty Years' War (1618–48).[30] If we consider English Baptists to belong in a generous interpretation of "Anabaptist"/Mennonite history, then we should also include the British civil wars of the mid-seventeenth century, when a revolt against the authority of Charles I (r. 1625–49) led to a breakdown of ecclesiastical centralization and the proliferation of new religious movements in the British Isles.[31]

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[29] The tension between Mennonite and *Doopsgezind* cultures is a main theme of Visser's essay "Mennonites and *Doopsgezinden*."

[30] For a history of these conflicts written by an expert in early modern *Täufer* history, see Hans-Jürgen Goertz, *Deutschland 1500–1648: Eine zertrennte Welt* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schoningh, 2004).

[31] The literature on this topic is vast. One important contribution to this literature that will be of interest to scholars of Mennonites is Keith L. Sprunger, *Trumpets from the Tower: English Puritan Printing in the Netherlands 1600–1640* (Leiden: Brill, 1994).

These conflicts mattered for adult baptizers for at least two reasons. First, confessional hatred was one factor in these conflicts, and it was not uncommon for adult baptizers to be targets of this hate; their opponents persecuted them either as *Wiedertäufer*/*wederdoopers*/Anabaptists or in Catholic territories sometimes simply as Protestants. To escape persecution and dispossession, many adult baptizers fled to new homes. A famous case of persecution in the 1620s is the expulsion of Hutterites from Moravia,[32] and throughout the seventeenth century, Swiss adult baptizers had to contend with several waves of anti-Anabaptist mandates and very aggressive police actions.[33] Second, in addition to threats to lives and property, wars and the political realignments that came with them created some opportunities for new sanctuaries. One of these sanctuaries in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was the territory newly conquered by Europeans in colonial North America. But the most significant of these new areas of refuge was the Dutch Republic, which, despite its wars with Habsburg Spain and then later England and France, provided a relatively safe and stable territory for Mennonites and other adult baptizers during its two centuries of existence.

It should be noted that adult baptizers were not merely victims of political events.[34] Sometimes they profited economically from war.[35] Sometimes they were also among the magistrates in local governments; there are a few well-documented cases of *Doopsgezind*-Mennonite magistrates in some Dutch and northern German towns and regions in the early seventeenth century.[36] Around 1700, two members of the Dutch

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[32] On this topic, see Astrid von Schlachta, *Hutterische Konfession und Tradition (1578–1619): Etabliertes Leben zwischen Ordnung und Ambivalenz* (Mainz: Von Zabern, 2003); and Martin Rothkegel, "Anabaptism in Moravia and Silesia," in *A Companion to Anabaptism and Spiritualism, 1521–1700*, ed. James M. Stayer and John D. Roth (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007), chap. 5.

[33] An excellent, recent overview of Swiss history of baptizers and their networks is Hanspeter Jecker, "Die Entwicklung täuferischer Gemeinden in der Schweiz im 17. Jahrhundert," *Mennonitische Geschichtsblätter* 79 (2022): 87–110.

[34] Urry (*Mennonites, Politics, and Peoplehood*) shows that Mennonites, far from acting apolitically, were "the Loud in the Land"—that is, engaged actively in public and political life wherever they lived. For more examples of early modern Mennonite political activism, see Astrid von Schlachta, *Gefahr oder Segen? Die Täufer in der politischen Kommunikation* (Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2009); and Driedger, *Obedient Heretics*.

[35] For some examples, see Bert Westera, "Mennonites and War in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: The Brants Family between Pacifism and Trade in Guns," in *From Martyr to Muppy: A Historical Introduction to Cultural Assimilation Processes of a Religious Minority in the Netherlands: The Mennonites*, ed. Alastair Hamilton, Sjouke Voolstra, and Piet Visser (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam Press, 1994), 149–55; and Michael D. Driedger, "Kanonen, Schießpulver und Wehrlosigkeit: Cord, Geeritt und B.C. Roosen in Holstein und Hamburg 1532–1905," *Mennonitische Geschichtsblätter* 52 (1995): 101–21.

[36] Piet Visser, *Dat Rijp is moet eens door eygen Rijpheydt vallen: Doopsgezinden en de Gouden Eeuw van De Rijp* (Wormerveer: Stichting Uitgeverij Noord-Holland, 1992), esp. 58–62; and Sem C. Sutter, "Friedrichstadt an der Eider, Ort einer frühen Erfahrung religiöser Toleranz,

Bidloo family even served as doctors for royal houses—one in England and the other in Russia.[37]

Despite these examples, overall, continental European baptizers tended to remain ambivalent about participation in political offices for most of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[38] There were good reasons as to why they were suspicious of secular authorities. From the point of view of territorial state authorities, those people who were defined as Anabaptists had no rights in international law. The Treaties of Westphalia of 1648 guaranteed collective rights to only three confessional groups: Catholics, Lutherans, and the Reformed. While citizenship was allowed for adult baptizers in some territories beyond the Dutch Republic, few territories granted adult baptizing citizens full rights to political participation, and many excluded them altogether. Some of Europe's rulers granted adult baptizers limited legal privileges that gave rights not to individuals but to groups.[39] When early modern northern European baptizing communities received political protection from local and regional authorities, their leaders would often preach sermons of thanks for the goodness of godly magistrates.[40] A major example of defense of group rights is the long-term relief effort and international diplomatic campaign that Dutch *Doopsgezind*-Mennonites led in support of Polish,

1621–1727," *Mitteilungsblatt der Gesellschaft für Friedrichstädter Stadtgeschichte*, 84 (Fall 2012): 86–92.

[37] See Victor G. Wiebe, "Bidloo, Nicolaas (ca. 1674–1735)," *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*, 2013, https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Bidloo,_Nicolaas_(ca._1674-1735). See also Alex Noord, "'Terwijl men Beeld en Staf der Majesteiten ziet; De Godsdienst, Vryheid, Recht en Wijsheid rust geniet': Govert Bidloo (1649–1731), vertrouweling en propagandist van Willem III, stadhouder van de Republiek en koning van Engeland," *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* 39 (2013): 197–219.

[38] For additional details about this topic, see Michael Driedger, "Anabaptists and the Early Modern State: A Long-Term View," in *A Companion to Anabaptism and Spiritualism, 1521–1700*, ed. James M. Stayer and John D. Roth (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007), chap. 13. Dutch Anabaptist activism in the 1780s and 1790s in favor of revolutionary-era representative democracy is a noteworthy and important change from earlier trends. See Yme Kuiper, "The Dutch Enlightenment and Patriotism: Mennonites and Politics in Late Eighteenth-Century Friesland," in *European Mennonites and the Challenge of Modernity over Five Centuries*, ed. Mark Jantzen, Mary S. Sprunger, and John D. Thiesen (North Newton, KS: Bethel College, 2016), 71–90; and Joris Oddens, "Menistenstreken in het strijdperk: Het eerste parlement van Nederland en de mythe van de moderate middenpartij," *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* 35/36 (2010): 337–61.

[39] The politics of *privilegia* and group rights is a major subject of Urry, *Mennonites, Politics, and Peoplehood*.

[40] See examples in Pieter van Rooden, *Religieuze regimes: Over godsdienst en maatschappij in Nederland, 1570–1990* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1996). See also Alex Noord, "'Heer, houdt 's landts Overheydt in eer': De overheid als thema in de doopsgezinde liedcultuur van de eerste helft van de zeventiende eeuw," *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* 40 (2014): 113–33.

Moravian, Palatinate, Alsatian, and Swiss adult baptizing groups in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.[41]

Even in the Dutch Republic, *Doopsgezind*-Mennonites had to be vigilant of their rights. Most congregations had to hold their religious services in *schuilkerken* ("hidden churches"), since almost everywhere in the Republic they did not have rights of public worship. By the time of the Dutch Great Assembly of 1651, a growing convergence between Reformed orthodoxy and Dutch secular rulers had put increasing pressure on minority groups such as the Mennonites and other adult baptizers to submit to Reformed dominance. In 1653, because its powerful detractors considered it to be an anti-trinitarian and therefore an anti-Christian, heretical group, Socinianism was criminalized in the Dutch Republic. This legal act added an extra threat to Dutch adult baptizers, some of whom held complicated views on Christology, and their opponents sometimes took advantage by charging them publicly with anti-trinitarian crimes. Because of this threat, many Mennonite groups emphasized their trinitarian orthodoxy in confessions of faith.[42] Despite these kinds of disadvantages, adult baptizing communities were better able to survive and thrive in the Dutch Republic over many generations than in any other early modern European territory.

Part 4: Book History

The Dutch Republic as "the Bookshop of the World"

In the seventeenth century, life in the Dutch Republic was shaped by rapid urbanization. While many adult baptizing men earned a living in various crafts or in shipping, a significant minority of families were able to build business empires. Some families were concentrated in rural districts such as Friesland, but many lived in rapidly growing urban centers such as Amsterdam, Haarlem, the Zaan region, Leiden, and Utrecht, to name just a few and most important.[43] In other words, long before twentieth-century American and Canadian Mennonites were forced to come to terms with the religious and cultural pluralism of city

[41] Two important accounts of this diplomacy, with references to other historiography and primary sources, are Troy Osborne, "The Development of a Transnational 'Mennonite' Identity among Swiss Brethren and Dutch *Doopsgezinden* in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 88 (2014): 195–218; and von Schlachta, *Täufer*, esp. chap. 5. See also Piet Visser, "'Verloren' bronnen en hun verhaal over de Commisie voor Buitenlandsche Nooden (1694–1710): Berner bielzen en Oberländer baarden, koning en keurvorst, betweters en weldoeners en de Schijnliefde voor Galenus," *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* 46 (2020): 9–68.

[42] For more on these themes, see Willem Frijhoff and Marijke Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity* (Assen: Royal Van Gorcum; and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

[43] For more details about the distribution of adult baptizing populations and economic activities, see Zijlstra, *Om de ware gemeente en de oude gronden*, chap. 17.

life in North America, *Doopsgezind*-Mennonites in the early modern Dutch Republic had lived and thrived for many generations in urban, culturally diverse settings. To quote Mary S. Sprunger, early modern Dutch Mennonites "were in the city and of the city."[44]

With early modern economic and urban expansion came the expansion of the cultural industries, and, among these, book production was a leading example. During and immediately after the Reformation, the book industry created a media and communicative revolution with far-reaching consequences. Members of all confessional groups participated in the rapidly growing, international book market, particularly in the Dutch Republic. Because of a variety of factors, including the relative openness of the Dutch public sphere and war in other parts of Europe, the seventeenth-century Dutch book market grew so quickly that historians have given the Dutch Republic such titles as "bibliopolis" and "the bookshop of the world."[45] From the mid-seventeenth century onward, the Dutch Republic was a leading center in Europe's early modern literary, scientific, and philosophical revolutions that we today call the Enlightenment. These revolutions were central to the rise of modernity, in all its complexity.

Dutch adult baptizers were active in these revolutions from an early stage. Sometimes with funding from inherited economic enterprises, and sometimes through hard work and talent, a notable number of baptizers played important roles in the Dutch Republic's thriving book market. In an article from 2006 on Dutch martyr books, Keith L. Sprunger provides a good synopsis of the roles of these men and women:

> With persecution a fading memory, Dutch Mennonites increasingly joined the culture of the seventeenth-century "Golden Age." Anabaptist-Mennonite printing, once dangerous, secretive work, became an ordinary business. During the Republic in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, from eighty to ninety printers and publishers of Mennonite origin have been identified. Now, instead of focusing on

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[44] Mary S. Sprunger, "In der Stadt und von der Stadt: Die Täufer in der Wirtschaftsgeschichte des Goldenen Zeitalters der Niderlande: Ein Gegenentwurf zum agrarisch geprägten Mennonitentum," *Mennonitische Geschichtsblätter* 79 (2022): 43–68. The topic of urbanization in Mennonite history is a significant one. For more on this subject in its broader scholarly contexts, see James Urry, "Mennonites, Anthropology, and History: A Complicated Intellectual Relationship," *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 39 (2021): 15–41.

[45] Marieke van Delft and Clemens de Wolff, eds., *Bibliopolis: History of the Printed Book in the Netherlands* (Zwolle: Waanders; and The Hague: Koninklijke Bibliotheek, 2003); and https://www.bibliopolis.nl/. Furthermore, see Andrew Pettegree and Arthur der Weduwen, *The Bookshop of the World: Making and Trading Books in the Dutch Golden Age* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019); and Lotte Hellinga, Alasdair Duke, Jacob Harskamp, and Theo Hermans, eds., *The Bookshop of the World: The Role of the Low Countries in the Book-Trade, 1473–1941* (Leiden: Brill, 2001).

> martyr topics, Mennonite printers became spokesmen for the Age of Enlightenment (the *Verlichting*), speaking out for cultural elegance and freedom of ideas, rather than dogmatic certainty. From this time on, Dutch Mennonite publishing flourished so greatly that the Netherlands exceeded all other countries in the quantity and quality of Mennonite-related printing, at least until the twentieth century, when the United States and Canada became significant players in the field.[46]

Adult baptizers of all descriptions had in fact participated in book production since the early sixteenth century, when most continental European books by adult baptizing authors were written in German.[47] Nonetheless, by the middle of the sixteenth century, the focus of cultural activity shifted to Dutch-speaking territories and remained predominantly Dutch throughout the seventeenth century and beyond.

The data in support of Sprunger's statement are clear. The best sources that provide an overall impression of adult baptizing publishing everywhere in early modern Europe are two research bibliographies. In 1962, Hans Hillerbrand, with the help of Nelson P. Springer and many others, published *A Bibliography of Anabaptism, 1520–1630*, and in 1977, N. P. Springer and A. J. Klassen, again with the help of a bigger research team, published the *Mennonite Bibliography, 1631–1961*. Each is organized using different criteria. I have done a careful count of all books published in German and in Dutch between 1521 and 1700 that are included in these collections.[48]

The two bibliographies show that German-language printed texts dominated continental European adult baptizing public life only in the

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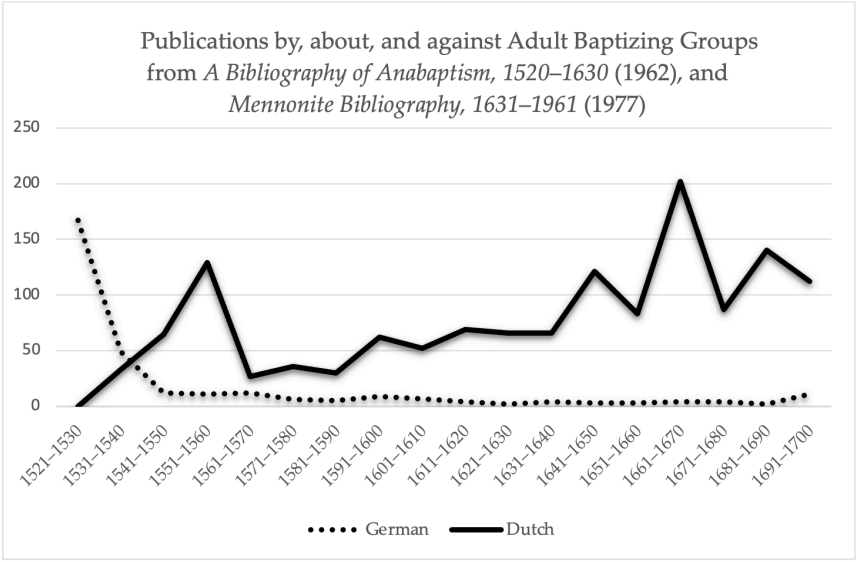
[46] Keith L. Sprunger, "Dutch Anabaptists and the Telling of Martyr Stories," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 80 (2006): 149–82. Piet Visser, another important historian of Anabaptist history and book history, is Sprunger's source for the estimate of the number of Mennonite printers and publishers in the Dutch Republic. For more about the role of adult baptizers in the Dutch Enlightenment, see Michael Driedger, "Aufklärung," *Mennonitisches Lexikon* 5, no. 1 (2020): 94–103, http://www.mennlex.de/doku.php?id=top:aufklaerung. See also Piet Visser, *Keurige ketters: De Nederlandse doopsgezinden in de eeuw van de Verlichting* (Amsterdam: Vrije Universiteit, 2004).

[47] For an excellent discussion of the book trades, with a focus on the 1520s, and references to additional scholarship about the subject, see Kat Hill, "Anabaptism and the World of Printing in Sixteenth-Century Germany," *Past & Present* 226 (2015): 79–114.

[48] H. J. Hillerbrand, ed., *A Bibliography of Anabaptism, 1520–1630* (Elkhart, IN: Institute of Mennonite Studies, 1962); and N. P. Springer and A. J. Klassen, eds., *Mennonite Bibliography, 1631–1961*, 2 vols. (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1977). Please note: the purpose of the graph is to show trends only, not the exact counts of books. For example, a significant number of the books discussed in the following sections of this essay are not included in either of the bibliographies. It should also be noted that I have used the first edition of Hillerbrand's *Bibliography*. For more details about the data in this paragraph, see Michael Driedger, "Evidence of Early Modern Anabaptist Book Production," *Dutch Dissenters*, 2022, http://dutchdissenters.net/wp/2022/05/anabaptist-book-production/.



1520s and 1530s. This dominance was short-lived. In the 1540s and 1550s, the incredible energy of David Joris and his network of clandestine printers played a temporary role in shifting the linguistic balance decisively in favor of Dutch books.[49] Even after Joris died, the great majority of printed texts written by adult baptizers and about "Anabaptists" were published in Dutch. Dutch-language books made up the overwhelming majority of all published books by and about adult baptizers in continental Europe from the mid-sixteenth century until the end of the seventeenth century—and certainly far beyond. Most of these were published in the Dutch Republic. The chart illustrates Sprunger's conclusions very effectively.

Despite this essay's focus on book production, nothing in it should be misunderstood to mean that non-Dutch cultures were unimportant in early modern adult baptizing history. Quite the contrary! Each region had its unique cultures. Cultures shaped by communication forms other than printed books could be and were of deep meaning for so many people. C. Arnold Snyder and Alejandro Zorzin have shown how forms of oral

[49] For more about this specific subject, see Paul Valkema Blouw, "Printers of the 'Arch-Heretic' David Joris," in *Dutch Typography in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. T. C. van Uchelsen and P. Dijstelberge (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 495–542. Valkema Blouw's essays include many others that will be of interest in "Anabaptist" studies.

communication could be powerful in the era of the Reformation.[50] But because manuscript and oral communication forms did not have the advantages of standardized reproducibility and the portability of printed books, these forms of communication tended to be limited locally. Unlike oral, person-to-person persuasion and propaganda, printed communication in the early modern world facilitated the creation of new genres, such as collective confessions of faith, martyrologies, and works of poetry, drama, philosophy, history, natural science, and art—and more. These printed books also gave adult baptizers access to a new, powerful, international audience and network of intellectuals: the European Republic of Letters.[51]

A significant number of Dutch adult baptizers took full advantage of Europe's Republic of Letters in the long seventeenth century. They were participants in it from a very early time, and they continued to shape it actively over many generations. As a minority group, they were not dominant in this Europe-wide discourse, but many of their members worked hard to make their voices heard. In other words, they were not merely reacting to broader cultural developments; they were helping to influence how these developments unfolded! Because these contributions might be easy to overlook from the point of view of church history and social history, scholars should add book history, communication history, and cultural history to the approaches used to study early modern adult baptizers.

The Doopsgezind*-Mennonite Cultural Spectrum: Evidence from Book Production*

The men (and a smaller but significant number of women) who worked in the book trades made up only a small portion of the overall community of Dutch adult baptizers. Nonetheless, the numbers and variety of people involved are a significant minority. In addition to about eighty to ninety printers and publishers in the early modern era that Sprunger cites (using Piet Visser's numbers), we could add numerous paper merchants, bookbinders, type forgers, engravers, mapmakers, translators, editors, booksellers—and, of course, many, many authors[52]—to the list of roles in the book trades that adult baptizers filled. Their activities had an outsized

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[50] C. Arnold Snyder, "Orality, Literacy, and the Study of Anabaptism," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 65 (1991): 371–92. See also Alejandro Zorzin, "Reformation Publishing and Anabaptist Propaganda: Two Contrasting Communication Strategies for the Spread of the Anabaptist Message in the Early Days of the Swiss Brethren," trans. James M. Stayer, *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 82 (2008): 503–16.

[51] The literature about this subject is vast. For an important, recent contribution, see Manual Llano and Dirk van Miert, "The 'Province' of the Dutch Republic in the International Republic of Letters," *Renaissance Studies* 36 (2022): 163–84.

[52] For more on these roles within the book trade, see van Delft and de Wolff, *Bibliopolis*.

influence on the public definition of adult baptizing collective identities at a time when their opponents across Europe continued to argue that *Wiedertäuferei/wederdooperij*/Anabaptism was a heresy that led to sedition (see the first vignette).

Despite the importance of writings that defended *Doopsgezind*-Mennonite identities or made anti-Anabaptist accusations, we should remember that adult baptizing activity in the Dutch book market was not limited to the publication of works about adult baptism or the theologies of its practitioners. The following subsections provide more details about the categories of books that adult baptizing authors and other workers in the creative industries produced. The discussion begins with the most recognizable and conventional *Doopsgezind*-Mennonite literature—as understood from the perspective of twentieth- and twenty-first-century Anabaptist-Mennonite studies. As the discussion progresses, it includes titles that are less and less familiar in Anabaptist-Mennonite studies because these books contain little obvious or explicit discussion of the religious beliefs or practices of adult baptizers. Authors from adult baptizing congregations and families did not always write about their religious lives and beliefs, and even when they did, their books could address broad audiences that reached far beyond the limits of adult baptizing congregations. After all, the Dutch Republic was a confessionally pluralistic, cosmopolitan republic of books.

When we not only pay attention to conventional "Mennonite" themes but also are curious about the kinds of books that adult baptist authors and other book industry workers actually created in the early modern era, what we discover is evidence of a very broad spectrum of cultural concerns and participants. The subjects and people along this spectrum reach far beyond the boundaries of conventional church history and challenge standard definitions and descriptions of early modern *Doopsgezind*-Mennonite culture.

Confessions of Faith and Martyr Books

At the top of the list of conventional Mennonite literature, as understood by scholarship in Anabaptist-Mennonite studies, are confessions of faith and martyrologies. Although Claes Claesz's *Bekentenisse* (see the first vignette) is not well-known today, many other Dutch Mennonite confessions of faith as well as martyr books have attracted a great deal of attention among scholars because they are part of a larger pattern that historians have dubbed "confession-building" or "confessionalization." While most histories of early modern adult baptizing communities focus on the early sixteenth century, an era when congregational traditions were not yet established, later generations of

baptizers (especially those in the Dutch Republic) established their own distinct confessional cultures using methods that were similar to the methods used in Tridentine Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed communities. Because of the local, congregational character of adult baptizing institutions, some modern historians talk about "Anabaptist" micro-confessionalization[53] (perhaps a neutral version of the polemicist's charge of an Anabaptist "Babel"—see the first vignette). The methods of confession-building included codifying beliefs in confessions of faith and catechisms; recording collective memories in histories, martyr stories, and hymnbooks; keeping congregational records of baptisms and marriages; and administering systems of congregational discipline.[54]

Dutch adult baptizers devoted a great deal of energy to the publication of confessions of faith. According to data from Dirk Visser, they produced nineteen distinct confessional texts between the later sixteenth century and 1800. Most of these were published multiple times. The result was over one hundred printings. Most of this activity was concentrated in the later sixteenth century and the first half of the seventeenth century.[55] In these books, congregational leaders defined what baptizing groups should believe and how they should practice their faith.

The long seventeenth century was also the heyday of the production of martyr books in the Dutch Republic. Between 1563 and 1599, eleven editions of *Het Offer des Heeren* (Sacrifice unto the Lord) were published, most anonymously.[56] These were followed in the early seventeenth century by several competing editions of Waterlander and Old Frisian martyrologies, the former coordinated by Hans de Ries and the latter by Pieter Jansz Twisck (1565–1636). However, the most famous of the martyr books is Thieleman Jansz van Braght's *Het bloedigh tooneel der Doopsgesinden en weereloose Christenen* (The bloody theater of the *Doopsgezinden* or defenseless Christians) (1660). The second edition of this martyrology (1685) was printed by a group of Reformed booksellers, not by *Doopsgezind*-Mennonites, and included the addition of the now-famous title *Martelaers Spiegel* (*Martyrs Mirror*). Unlike the older editions of *Het Offer des Heeren*, which were created in small, portable formats, this 1685

[53] For example, see Brad S. Gregory, *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 232–35.

[54] For more on confessionalization and literature about it, see Michael Driedger, "Konfessionalisierung (im Täufertum)," *Mennonitisches Lexikon* 5, no. 2 (2020): 289–300, http://www.mennlex.de/doku.php?id=top:konfessionalisierung.

[55] Dirk Visser, "A Checklist of Dutch Mennonite Confessions of Faith to 1800," *Documenta Anabaptistica Neerlandica* 6–7 (1974–75).

[56] For more on this important source, see T. Alberda-Van der Zijpp, "'Het Offer des Heeren': Geloof en getuigenis van de martelaren," in *Wederdopers, menisten, doopsgezinden in Nederland, 1530–1980*, ed. S. Groenveld, J. P. Jacobszoon, and S. L. Verheus (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 1993), 46–61.

edition was produced on fine paper in a large format, and it included 104 etchings by the adult baptist artist Jan Luyken.[57] No additional early modern editions of the *Martyrs Mirror* were produced in the Dutch Republic, although four editions of a much-abridged martyr book (*'t Merg van de Historien der Martelaren* [Marrow of the histories of the martyrs]) were printed between 1699 and 1769 in Dutch. Three eighteenth-century editions of the *Martyrs Mirror* were printed in German in the United States and southern Germany.[58]

The confession-building strategy of some Mennonite groups had complex results. It should be remembered that the strategy of defining *Doopsgezind*-Mennonite identity in confessions of faith became a subject of controversy and the root of congregational schisms in the mid-seventeenth-century Dutch Republic (see the third vignette). At the same time, confessionalist activism helped build a pan-European community of adult baptizers. The Dordrecht Confession of 1632 was one of the documents that emphasized the trinitarian orthodoxy of adult baptizers and their political obedience to secular authorities while also defending such nonconforming practices as adult baptism, the refusal to swear oaths, and the refusal to bear arms. This confession of faith became the cultural point of connection that linked German, Swiss, and American adult baptizing groups with their Dutch points of cultural reference in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[59] The first German- and English-language translations of this confession were printed in Amsterdam, and the confession was "adopted in Germantown, Pennsylvania, in 1725."[60] Translations of this confession of faith were also reprinted many times in German and American regions, but most of these reprintings outside Netherlandic territories date from after 1800.

Catechisms and Sermons

Another very significant work of devotional literature by the compiler of the famous *Martelaers Spiegel*, Thieleman Jansz van Braght, was his guide to a virtuous Christian life for young people, *De Schole der zedelijcken Deught* (The school of moral virtues), published in 1657. This book was far more popular in the early modern era among Dutch readers than van

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[57] For more about Luyken, see Nel Klaversma, "Jan Luyken (1649–1712): Dichter en boekillustrator," *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* 37 (2011): 87–104; and Piet Visser, "De pilgrimage van Jan Luyken door de doopsgezinde boekenwereld," *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* 25 (1999): 167–95.

[58] See Sprunger, "Dutch Anabaptists," esp. 156–60, 169–74; and additional evidence from Springer and Klassen, *Mennonite Bibliography*, 1:80–81.

[59] See von Schlachta, *Täufer*, chap. 5; and Osborne, "Development of a Transnational 'Mennonite' Identity."

[60] Dyck, *Introduction to Mennonite History*, 149.

Bragh t's now-more-famous martyrology. *De Schole* went through four editions in the seventeenth century and an additional fourteen editions before the end of the eighteenth century.[61] Most readers in the seventeenth century had been born into adult baptizing families and taught to accept believer's baptism when they became old enough. Van Bragh t's guide to young Christians was thus aimed not at new converts but at the inheritors of an established religious tradition. Even so, unlike the confessions of faith, *De Schole*'s contents did not emphasize the distinctive features of congregational practice. After van Bragh t's death, fifty-one of his sermons were published in 1669 and 1670. This collection was nowhere near as popular as *De Schole* or even the *Martyrs Mirror*.

There were numerous other adult baptizing authors of catechetical literature. Alfred van Wijk has counted 115 early modern Dutch *Doopsgezind*-Mennonite catechisms.[62] Sermons were also a very popular genre. In a study of Dutch sermons from all Christian groups, Jelle Bosma counted 112 separate volumes by adult baptizing ministers—and these are numbers from the second half of the eighteenth century alone![63] Compared with the output of confessions of faith and martyrologies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the cultural energy that Dutch adult baptizers invested in the production of these two genres of catechisms and sermons is remarkable. Most of these are forgotten or ignored by English-speaking scholars today.

Hymnbooks

Het Offer des Heeren contained some hymns, but hymns were frequently published as a separate genre. Some German-language hymnals were printed frequently in the early modern period. *Ausbund* is the best-known of these (about a dozen editions from 1564 until the end of the eighteenth century). While this is a remarkable output, it does not match the thirty-three editions of *Veelderhande Liedekens* (Diverse hymns) that appeared in Dutch between 1554 and 1752, most before the middle of the seventeenth century. Dutch compilers of hymns published numerous additional hymnbooks in the early modern period that seem to have taken the place of this older book. These later hymnals included at least two compilations

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[61] These details are from Springer and Klassen, *Mennonite Bibliography*, 1:165–66.

[62] For the one-hundred-year period starting in 1631, see Springer and Klassen, *Mennonite Bibliography*, 1:154–93. The range of titles in this section on "Doctrine" is vast and varied. For more on this subject, see Alfred R. van Wijk, *Pflicht tot leren en plichten leren: Een onderzoek naar de ontwikkeling van de doperse geloofsopvoeding in de Lage Landen (ca. 1540–1811), aan de hand van de in druk verschenen geloofspedagogische geschriften*, 2 vols. (Kampen: J. H. Kok, 2007).

[63] Jelle Bosma, *Woorden van een gezond verstand: De invloed van de Verlichting op de in het Nederlands uitgegeven preken van 1750 tot 1800* (Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1997).

by women (Soetken Gerrits and Vrou Gerrets van Medenblick)[64] around the beginning of the seventeenth century, and another famous collection (*De Gulden Harpe* [The golden harp], 1599) by Karel van Mander was also printed several times. The variety of titles is striking. About Dutch hymnbooks, Piet Visser writes that "by 1800 more than 150 different hymn books had appeared, with an estimated 15,000 different songs!"[65] Again, this astonishing output was far and away greater than the output of confessions of faith or martyrologies in the same period.

Other Devotional Literature: The Special Case of *Lusthof des Gemoets*

Among the hymnals published in the early seventeenth century was *Walchers Liedboeck* (Hymnbook of Walcheren) (1611) by the brothers Schabaelje. One of the brothers, Jan Philipsz Schabaelje (1592–1656), deserves special attention because he was the author of the most frequently published book in the Dutch Golden Age by an adult baptizing author, and in fact by any author in the Dutch Republic: *Lusthof des Gemoets* (The pleasure garden of the soul). It is a story told in the form of a dialogue centered around a character called the Wandering Soul who is on a spiritual journey that has a moralizing, edifying purpose. While it is not a *Doopsgezind*-Mennonite confessional text in a conventional sense, it was the product of an adult baptizing milieu—namely, the circle of the

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[64] Troy Osborne notes that there is a need for more research on early modern Dutch adult baptizing women; Osborne, "Anabaptists in the Netherlands," 223. On this subject, see Mirjam van Veen, Piet Visser, Gary K. Waite, Els Kloek, Marion Kobelt-Groch, and Anna Voolstra, eds., *Sisters: Myth and Reality of Anabaptist, Mennonite, and Doopsgezind Women, ca. 1525–1900* (Leiden: Brill, 2014). See also Els Kloek, ed., *1001 Vrouwen uit de Nederlandse Geschiedenis* (Nijmegen: Vantilt, 2013); and the related website http://www.1001-vrouwen.nl/vrouwenlexicon. I have done a count of adult baptizing women in the latter collection and have found at least thirty-five women for the period from about 1570 to 1800; Michael Driedger, "'Anabaptist,' Mennonite and Doopsgezind Women in Early Modern Dutch History (ca. 1570–1800)," *Dutch Dissenters*, May 2022, http://dutchdissenters.net/wp/2022/05/anabaptist-women-in-early-modern-dutch-history/. An important contributor to the early modern book history of adult baptizing communities is Isabella Henrietta van Eeghen (1913–96); an entry on her is also included in the *Vrouwenlexicon*.

[65] Visser, "Mennonites and *Doopsgezinden*," 328. Most of the details in this paragraph are from Hillerbrand, *Bibliography of Anabaptism*, 203–6; and Springer and Klassen, *Mennonite Bibliography*, 1:237–43, 436. For more on the history of hymns, see Piet Visser, *Het lied dat nooit verstomde: Vier eeuwen doopsgezinde liedboekjes* (Den Iip: Doopsgezinde Gemeente Den Ilp, 1988); Piet Visser, "Lithanie van een liturgisch stiefkind: Een korte geschiedenis van de psalm bij de doopsgezinden," in *Psalmzingen in de Nederlanden: Vanaf de zeventiende eeuw tot heden*, ed. J. de Bruijn (Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1991), 115–48; and Louis Peter Grijp, "A Different Flavour in a Psalm-Minded Setting: Dutch Mennonite Hymns from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in *From Martyr to Muppy: A Historical Introduction to Cultural Assimilation Processes of a Religious Minority in the Netherlands: The Mennonites*, ed. Alastair Hamilton, Sjouke Voolstra, and Piet Visser (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam Press, 1994), 110–32.

spiritual reform movement known as the Citizens of the City of Peace (see the second vignette).[66]

Piet Visser has compiled a list of all the editions of *Lusthof des Gemoets*. Between the book's original publication in 1635 and the end of the seventeenth century, the book underwent at least sixty-one printings in the Dutch Republic. At least another forty-one printings took place in the eighteenth century. In other words, this one book alone went through about as many editions in the Dutch Republic as all the Dutch *Doopsgezind*-Mennonite confessions of faith combined in the same period. In addition to these Dutch-language editions, twelve German-language editions were published in the eighteenth century by German, Swiss, and American presses; at least two English-language editions were published in eighteenth-century England.[67] This is a considerable amount of attention for one book. It was obviously popular. Among its purchasers and readers were people from inside and beyond adult baptizing communities. This should not be surprising, since it was written for as broad a Christian audience as an ecumenically oriented Dutch writer of that era could imagine. While Jan Philipsz Schabaelje was very much a part of the seventeenth-century Dutch adult baptizing world, and while he had tried to find common ground among *Doopsgezind*-Mennonite groups and their confessions of faith in a text titled *Vereenigingh van de principale Artijckelen des Geloofs eeniger Doops-ghesinde* Ghemeynten (Union of the principal articles of faith of some *Doopsgezind* congregations) (published first in 1640 and then again in 1674 and 1739), he did not emphasize explicitly or overtly adult baptizing themes in his most famous text. *Lusthof des Gemoets* was not a work that fits easily in the canon of Anabaptist-Mennonite church history, but it is one of the outstanding cultural creations of seventeenth-century Dutch adult baptizers.

Of *Lusthof des Gemoets* John D. Rempel has written that "this signature volume of 17th century Mennonite religious literature is bewilderingly distant in every way from the Anabaptist mindset. It has an ostentatious and contrived style; it tries to impress the reader with its detailed

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[66] See Piet Visser, "Jan Philipsz Schabaelje, a Seventeenth Century Dutch Mennonite, and His Wandering Soul," in *From Martyr to Muppy: A Historical Introduction to Cultural Assimilation Processes of a Religious Minority in the Netherlands: The Mennonites*, ed. Alastair Hamilton, Sjouke Voolstra, and Piet Visser (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam Press, 1994), 99–109; and Visser, *Broeders in de geest*.

[67] Piet Visser, "De Lusthof des gemoets van Jan Philipsz Schabaelje: Het populairste Nederlandse boek uit de Gouden Eeuw," in *Boekenwijsheid: Drie eeuwen kennis en cultuur in 30 bijzondere boeken: Opstellen bij de voltooiing van de Short Title Catalogue, Netherlands*, ed. Jan Bos and Erik Geleijns (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2009), 105–13, 278–81. See also Visser, *Broeders in de geest*, 2:223–68; and Piet Visser, "Schabaliana: Een bibliografische na-oogst van het werk van Dierick end Jan Philipsz Schabaelje," *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* 28 (2002): 173–210.

knowledge of historical events."[68] If Rempel is contrasting the style and themes of early sixteenth-century writers with those of Schabaelje (who wrote *Lusthof des Gemoets* about one hundred years after the early Reformation controversies), differences should not seem so problematic. They are similar to the way grandchildren of any era express themselves differently than and independently from the style and concerns of their grandparents and great-grandparents. Schabaelje's style and content were typical of the Baroque era of Dutch literature.

Books about Historical, Polemical, and Political Subjects

Seen from the perspective of the Dutch literary mindset of the seventeenth century rather than from that of the early sixteenth century, concern and even fascination with historical events were not at all odd. Dutch adult baptizing historians were a small but active and important group in the early modern era. According to research by Anton van der Lem, about eighteen Dutch writers from adult baptizing backgrounds before 1800 wrote important works of history. Not on van der Lem's list are leading martyrologists such as Hans de Ries and Thieleman Jansz van Braght. Nonetheless, the list is noteworthy.[69]

Among these authors was the merchant and preacher in the Old Frisian congregation in Hoorn, Pieter Jansz Twisck. In addition to his martyrological work (see above), Twisck wrote at least three chronicles of world history that mixed church history with secular history. The first was *Religions vryheyt: Een korte Cronijcsche beschryvinghe van de Vryheyt der Religien, tegen die dwang der Conscientien* (Religion's freedom) (1609). It was followed a decade later (1619–20) by a very large two-volume work titled *Chronijck van den Onderganc der Tijrannen, ofte Jaerlycksche Geschiedenissen in Werltlycke ende Kercklijke Saecken* (Chronicle of the decline of tyrants). This collection claimed to survey the history of the world from the birth of Jesus until Twisck's era. The third (*Comeet-Boecxken* [Comet book]), from 1625, was a much shorter volume with a similarly broad aim. These

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[68] Rempel, "Anabaptist Religious Literature and Hymnody," 410. This is almost certainly an unfair, ahistorical statement.

[69] Anton van der Lem, "Men of Principle and Men of Learning: The Mennonite Backgrounds of Some Dutch Historians, with Special Reference to Johann Huizinga and Jan Romein," in *From Martyr to Muppy: A Historical Introduction to Cultural Assimilation Processes of a Religious Minority in the Netherlands: The Mennonites*, ed. Alastair Hamilton, Sjouke Voolstra, and Piet Visser (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam Press, 1994), 203–21, esp. 217–19. See also the section "History and Description," in Springer and Klassen, *Mennonite Bibliography*, 1:94–101; for the period from 1631 until the end of the eighteenth century, I estimate that there are about 150 books in this section of the *Bibliography*.

books added anti-papal and anti-Spanish commentary to their historical descriptions.[70]

Anti-Catholic polemicizing in historical writing seems to have been common among adult baptist writers of the seventeenth century. The conservative Twisck and the more ecumenically oriented Jan Philipsz Schabaelje both wrote anti-Catholic texts.[71] The line between political, historical, and polemical texts can sometimes be difficult to draw. The three vignettes at the start of this essay already give a sense of the role that controversy played in publications by and about adult baptizers in the Dutch Republic and beyond. These controversies could involve both adult baptizers responding to anti-Anabaptist writers and adult baptizers writing against one another, as was the case in the Two-Word Debate and the War of the Lambs. In these literary battles, the lines of allegiance could be complex. For example, between 1641 and 1645, the Reformed preacher Petrus Bontemps started a new public debate that equated adult baptizers with deceptive Anabaptists. About twenty titles were published in this exchange. Many of these were from Bontemps's pen, and at least six of his books were printed by the Haarlem Mennonite printer Thomas Fonteyn—surprising, perhaps, since these were anti-Mennonite texts.[72]

Twisck, Schabaelje, and Fonteyn were not the only adult baptizers to make historical and current affairs the stuff of publishing success. In the middle of the seventeenth century, Abraham Casteleyn (ca. 1628–81), another adult baptizing congregational member and publisher in Haarlem, began printing and selling *Weeckelycke Courante van Europa* (Weekly news of Europe) (first edition in 1656; later renamed *Oprechte Haerlemsche Courant* [Upright news of Haarlem]). Part of Casteleyn's success as a newspaper entrepreneur was based on a printing business inherited from his father, Vincent, who was the official printer for the city of Haarlem until his death in 1658. Abraham took over the official city printshop from his father. *Oprechte Haerlemsche Courant* is one of Europe's most successful, long-running newspapers. After

[70] For more on Twisck, see Archie Penner, "Pieter Jansz Twisck: Second Generation Anabaptist/Mennonite Churchman, Writer and Polemicist" (PhD diss., University of Iowa, 1971); James Lowry, "Pieter Jansz Twisck on Biblical Interpretation," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 75 (2001): 355–79; and Gary K. Waite, "Pieter Jansz Twisck on David Joris: A Conservative Mennonite and an Unconventional Spiritualist," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 91 (2017): 371–402.

[71] Jan Philipsz Schabaelje, *Tractaet teghen de Successie der Pausen van Romen* (1633); Pieter Jansz Twisck, *Tegen den pausselijcke Successie* (1636); and Pieter Jansz Twisck, *Ontdeckinghe des Pausdoms* (1624 and 1646).

[72] See Springer and Klassen, *Mennonite Bibliography*, 1:158–60, esp. Nr. 3958, 3980, 3981, 3982, 4013, 4014.

Abraham's death, his wife, Margaretha van Bancken (1628–94), continued to run the family business.[73]

Literary, Artistic, Scientific, and Philosophical Books

When building the *Mennonite Bibliography*, the compilers focused on books that were (in their view) clearly about Anabaptist-Mennonite history or religious doctrine. In the case of books by adult baptizing authors that had literary or philosophical themes not related to confessional Mennonitism understood in a conventional sense, the compilers listed them under a separate heading—"Miscellanea"—or excluded them. By my count, about 240 titles listed under the heading "Miscellanea" in the *Mennonite Bibliography* were published in the one hundred years between 1630 and 1730.[74]

While this is a significant number, the *Bibliography*'s list is certainly incomplete. Piet Visser has compiled a list of eighty-four Dutch adult baptizing authors (including eight women) active from the late sixteenth century until the end of the eighteenth century; about half of these were active before 1700.[75] The work of only some of these authors was included in the *Mennonite Bibliography*. A possible gap is the inclusion of one entry from Joost van den Vondel (1587–1679), who is sometimes described as the Dutch Shakespeare.[76] By 1630, van den Vondel's associations with the baptizing congregations in which he had been a deacon for a time had started to weaken. The high point of van den Vondel's *Doopsgezind*-Mennonite period was the 1610s and 1620s, well before he converted to Catholicism.[77] In other words, the period of van den Vondel's career during which he was most active as a member of an adult baptizing community (Amsterdam's Waterlander congregation) is covered by *A Bibliography of Anabaptism*. Even this collection lists only one entry, a short

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[73] Among the best recent scholarship on Casteleyn is Jason Peacey, "Managing Dutch Advices: Abraham Casteleyn and the English Government, 1660–1681," *Media History* 22 (2016): 421–37. See also W. P. Sautijn Kluit, "De Haarlemsche Courant," *Handelingen en Mededeelingen van de Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde* (1873): 3–132.

[74] Springer and Klassen, *Mennonite Bibliography*, 1:295–304.

[75] In addition to Visser's writing about Jan Philipsz Schabaelje, see Piet Visser, "Aspects of Social Criticism and Cultural Assimilation: The Mennonite Image in Literature and Self-Criticism of Literary Mennonites," in *From Martyr to Muppy: A Historical Introduction to Cultural Assimilation Processes of a Religious Minority in the Netherlands: The Mennonites*, ed. Alastair Hamilton, Sjouke Voolstra, and Piet Visser (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam Press, 1994), 67–82, esp. 82. See also Marijke Spies, "Mennonites and Literature in the Seventeenth Century," in *From Martyr to Muppy*, 83–98.

[76] This one work is a multivolume collection of the author's works, compiled in the nineteenth century. See Springer and Klassen, *Mennonite Bibliography*, 1:331–32, Nr. 9493.

[77] For details, see Mieke B. Smits-Veldt and Marijke Spies, "Vondel's Life," and Judith Pollmann, "Vondel's Religion," in *Joost van den Vondel (1587–1679): Dutch Playwright in the Golden Age*, ed. Jan Bloemendal and Frans-Willem Korsten (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), chaps. 4, 5.

pamphlet from 1626 that van den Vondel wrote in response to the Two-Word Debate (second vignette),[78] but most of his plays and poems from this period (and later in life) were written for a broad Dutch audience. We can get a good sense of the scope of literature by authors from an adult baptizing milieu that was written for a broad, multi-confessional Dutch audience in Piet Visser's research. In his list of eighty-four adult baptizing authors mentioned above, Visser marks with an asterisk those "authors of more general, not specifically Mennonite literature." He places well-over half (fifty-seven) of these eighty-four in this category![79]

In addition to literary works, other areas of cultural production in which Dutch adult baptizers created works for broad national and even European audiences included the visual arts and natural sciences. Early modern Mennonites and *Doopsgezinden* were mathematicians, engineers, experimental scientists, anatomists, doctors, etchers, painters—to name just a few natural scientific and artistic occupations. However, because of an editorial choice, the compilers of the *Mennonite Bibliography* tended to ignore most works by these kinds of creators. Thanks to the research of Ernst Hamm and other scholars, we are starting to get a better impression of the central place that natural scientific interests played in Dutch adult baptizing life.[80] And thanks to the work of Nina Schroeder, we also have a better understanding of the central place that the visual arts played in *Doopsgezind*-Mennonite life.[81] Sometimes natural scientific and artistic activities went hand in hand, as in the case of botany and anatomy, the study of which required exact illustrations. Mapmaking is another example of a profession that required mathematical and artistic precision

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[78] Hillerbrand, *Bibliography of Anabaptism*, 165, #3408.

[79] Visser, "Aspects of Social Criticism and Cultural Assimilation," 82.

[80] Ernst Hamm, "Marginal and Modern, Mainstream and Scientific: Mennonites and Experimental Philosophy in the Dutch Republic," in *European Mennonites and the Challenge of Modernity over Five Centuries*, ed. Mark Jantzen, Mary S. Sprunger, and John D. Thiesen (North Newton, KS: Bethel College, 2016), 91–107; Ernst Hamm, "Science and Mennonites in the Dutch Enlightenment," *Conrad Grebel Review* 30, no. 1 (2012): 4–51; and Ernst Hamm, "Doopsgezinde verzamelpunten: Martelaren en instrumenten," *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* 39 (2013): 221–56. See also Huib Zuidervaart, "'Meest alle van best mahoniehout vervaardigd': Het natuurfilosofisch instrumentenkabinet van de doopsgezinde kweekschool te Amsterdam, 1761–1828," *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* 34 (2008): 63–103. Nanne van der Zijpp's article about the practice of medicine among adult baptizing preachers in the Dutch Republic is also noteworthy here: "Medicine among the Dutch Mennonites," *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*, 1957, https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Medicine_Among_the_Dutch_Mennonites.

[81] Nina Schroeder, "'Parks as Magnificent as Paradise': Nature and Visual Art among the Mennonites of the Early Modern Dutch Republic," *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 25 (2017): 11–39; and Nina Schroeder, "Heretics and Martyrs: Picturing Early Anabaptism in Visual Culture in the Dutch Republic" (PhD diss., Queen's University, Kingston, ON, 2018). See also Piet Visser, "De artes als zinnebeeld: Over doopsgezinden en hun relatie tot kunst en wetenschap," *De Zeventiende Eeuw* 5 (1989): 92–102.

and was practiced by people with adult baptizing backgrounds, such as Jacob Aertsz Colom (1599–1678).[82]

In addition to his work as a mapmaker, Colom was also a bookseller and publisher. Another way to help expand our conception of which works were important in the adult baptizing book trades and popular culture would be to direct more attention to the activities of printers, translators, publishers, and booksellers. These were the people who helped curate, organize, and make available books for a reading public. One motivation for work in the book trades was profit, but another was conviction: spreading ideas and promoting authors who shared a publisher's or translator's view of the world. The circle of supporters around Baruch Spinoza (1632–77), one of the most important and controversial philosophers of the seventeenth century, can provide examples, because a significant number of these men were Lamists. Among them were Jan Rieuwertsz Sr. (ca. 1617–87), Spinoza's main publisher, and Jan Hendrik Glazemaker (1619/1620–82), his main translator from Latin into Dutch. These adult baptizing publicists engaged with but did not confine themselves to "Mennonite" ideas. In the *Rampjaar* of 1672 (a year of invasion and disaster in the Dutch Republic), the same year that he anonymously published an edition of Spinoza's *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* (The theological-political treatise), one of the most famous books of seventeenth-century philosophy, Rieuwertsz also published an edition of an adult baptist catechism of faith by Reynier Wybrantsz Wybma (1573–1645) from 1640; the complete theological works of Dirck Rafaelsz Camphuysen (ca. 1586–1626), a Remonstrant poet who was a favorite of many early modern Dutch adult baptizing publishers (and, presumably also, readers); a study of botany by the Reformed professor Abraham Munting (1626–83); a Cartesian study of algebra by the Waterlander-Collegiant Abraham de Graaf (1635–1717?); and a philosophical tale by Ibn Tufayl, a medieval Muslim from Andalusia.[83]

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[82] On Colom, see Dirk Visser, "De geest buiten spel: Jacob Aertsz. Colom, een onorthodox drukker en uitgever te Amsterdam," in *De geest in het geding: opstellen aangeboden aan J. A. Oosterbaan ter gelegenheid van zijn afscheid als hoogleraar*, ed. I. B. Horst, A. F. De Jong, and D. Visser (Alphen: Tjeenk Willinck, 1978), 268–82. On one of Colom's likely anonymous Mennonite publications, see Brookelnn A. Cooper, "Op zoek naar de anonieme drukker van Menno Simons' *De blasphemie van Jan van Leyden* (1627): Een bibliografische analyse," *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* 46 (2020): 181–208.

[83] For more on Rieuwertsz, see Piet Visser, "'Blasphemous and Pernicious': The Role of Printers and Booksellers in the Spread of Dissident Religious and Philosophical Ideas in the Netherlands in the Second Half of the Seventeenth Century," *Quaerendo* 26 (1996): 303–26; and Michael Driedger, "Spinoza and the Boundary Zones of Religious Interaction," *Conrad Grebel Review* 25, no. 3 (2007): 21–28. On Glazemaker, see M. Keyser, *Glazemaker, 1682–1982: Catalogus bij een tentoonstelling over de vertaler Jan Hendriksz Glazemaker* (Amsterdam: Universiteitsbibliotheek, 1982); and F. Akkerman, "J. H. Glazemaker, an Early Translator of

The engagement of adult baptizers in the religious, political, literary, and scientific life of the Dutch Republic put them in a good position to be actively involved in the intellectual and philosophical movements known generally as the Enlightenment. *The Dictionary of Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Dutch Philosophers* contains at least twenty biographies of thinkers who were members of adult baptizing congregations or who were from or closely integrated into *Doopsgezind*-Mennonite communities.[84] These men (and one woman) lived in and contributed to a diverse, city-centric, cosmopolitan world of ideas. These people were both in the world of the Enlightenment and of it.[85] In the adult baptizing world of their day, they were not anomalies.

Part 5: From "Anabaptist Identity" to the Associations of Adult Baptizers

I have arranged the books discussed in part 4 along a spectrum that we could describe as starting with confessionally exclusive "Mennonite" literature and ending with cosmopolitan literatures meant as much for adult baptizers as for their Dutch and European neighbors. What is the significance of this spectrum of themes that adult baptizing authors created in the long seventeenth century, primarily in the Dutch Republic?

Confessionalist Exclusivity versus Spiritualist Ecumenism: Zonists versus Lamists

One interpretation of the spectrum is that it becomes less and less "Mennonite" the further we go through the subheadings. This interpretation adopts some of the conservative assumptions common in

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Spinoza," in *Spinoza's Political and Theological Thought*, ed. C. de Deugd (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing, 1984), 23–29.

[84] Wiep van Bunge, Henri Krop, Bart Leeuwenburgh, Paul Schuurman, Han van Ruler, and Michiel Wielema, eds., *The Dictionary of Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Dutch Philosophers*, 2 vols. (Bristol: Thoemmes, 2003). I am counting Balling, Bontekoe, van Dale**, Glazemaker, Hulshoff, Jelles, ten Kate*, Kinckhuyzen, Luyken*, Neufville, Ostens, Plockhoy, Rabus**, Rieuwertsz, Schagen*, Stinstra*, Tirion, Verwer**, de Volder, and Wagenaar**. I did not count Cornelis Jacobsz Drebbel, but his name might belong on this list. The names marked with * are also on Piet Visser's list of Dutch adult baptizing authors and poets; Visser, "Aspects of Social Criticism and Cultural Assimilation." The names marked with ** are also on Anton van der Lem's list of Dutch adult baptizing historians until 1800; van der Lem, "Men of Principle and Men of Learning." Neufville is the only woman on the list; there should certainly be more.

[85] This last statement is a modification of the older, more conservative view in Mennonite historiography—namely, that Mennonites were "in the world but not of it." For a statement of the older view, see W. H. Kuipers, "In de wereld, maar niet van de wereld: De wisselwerking tussen de doopsgezinden en de hen omringende wereld," in *Wederdopers, menisten, doopsgezinden in Nederland, 1530–1980*, ed. S. Groenveld, J. P. Jacobszoon, and S. L. Verheus (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 1993), 219–39.

studies of "Anabaptist identity." A major reason this interpretation is problematic is that it privileges the views of seventeenth-century Zonists over those of Lamists. Dutch Zonists tended to view congregations of baptized believers as the visible, pure, apostolic church of Christ, while Lamists tended to view the same groups of people as members of an invisible, worldly remnant of a long-fallen Christian church. In the former view, the careful maintenance of collective standards defined in confessions of faith was necessary to preserve Mennonite communities in a hostile world. In the latter view, strict adherence to confessions of faith contributed to the fracturing of an already fractured Christian community, and the solution was not a further disciplining of congregational practice but rather a return to the simple love of one's neighbors that Jesus had outlined in the Gospels.

The clear juxtaposition of Zonist and Lamist visions of the adult baptizing community might lead to the conclusion that conservative Zonists are represented more toward the beginning of part 4 and Lamists influenced by spiritualist ideals more toward the end. There is some value in this conclusion, as long as we do not make this observation into a value judgment or a far-too-simplistic historical pattern. Lamists made the clearest and most principled arguments for cosmopolitan ecumenism over confessional exclusivity—at least in the middle of the seventeenth century. Among the most significant sources that articulated these arguments was *Negentien Artikelen* (Nineteen articles) of the late 1650s, a reformist statement by Galenus Abrahamsz de Haan and David Spruyt (fl. 1648–79), two preachers in Amsterdam's Lamb Church. The ideals of Christian institutional openness and confessional coexistence outlined in this text sparked reactionary opposition from conservative members of the same congregation. These opponents of spiritualistic openness and defenders of confessional distinctiveness were the leaders of the breakaway group that founded a separate congregation in a meetinghouse marked by a sign of the sun; they became the founders of the Zonist Conference.[86] The War of the Lambs followed. Among the members of Amsterdam's Lamb congregation who provided further reflections on the theological and philosophical rationale for Lamist principles were not only Jan Rieuwertsz Sr. and Jan Hendrick Glazemaker but also Jarig (or Jarich) Jelles (1619/1620–83). Recently, Jonathan Seiling has analyzed the ecumenical, irenic ideas that Jelles published in his foreword to Spinoza's collected works that Rieuwertsz published. In another text, also published by Rieuwertsz, *Belydenisse des Algemeenen en christelyken Geloofs* (Confessions of the universal, Christian faith) (1684), Jelles elaborated on his ecumenical,

[86] Nanne van der Zijpp, "Zonist Conference," *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*, 1959, https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Zonist_Conference.

universalist, philosophical principles and biblical hermeneutics.[87] At least in the middle to later seventeenth century, Lamist adult baptizers such as Galenus Abrahamsz, Jan Rieuwertsz, and Jarig Jelles opposed confessionalist exclusivity in favor of spiritualist openness, while Zonists did the reverse.

As much as it is useful in ideal-typical terms, there are problems with an all-too-clear distinction between Lamist spiritualizing ecumenism and Zonist confessional distinctiveness. A curious footnote in the history of differences between Zonists and Lamists is that the Lamist Collegiant publisher Jan Rieuwertsz Sr. released the sermons of the martyrologist and Zonist activist Thieleman Jansz van Braght in 1669 and 1670. A hypothesis drawn from this anecdote is that—perhaps—the intensity of the disagreements between Zonists and Lamists faded over time. More than in anecdotes such as this, the problematic nature of an all-too-clear distinction between Zonists and Lamists is easiest to see from a longer-term perspective. Over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Dutch adult baptizers of many descriptions had very diverse publishing programs in the Dutch Republic. Among the leading contributors to the broad, national proto-Enlightenment and Enlightenment discourses were members of conservative Mennonite congregations. They included the Old Flemish Karel van Mander (1548–1606), the Hard Frisians Pieter Jansz Twisck[88] and Jan Jansz Deutel (d. ca. 1652), and the Zonist Lambert Bidloo (1638–1724).[89] In addition to his activities opposing *onbepaalde Verdraagzaamheid* ("unlimited toleration") in adult baptizing circles around 1700, Bidloo is especially noteworthy for his leading role in the early eighteenth-century project known by the title *Panpoëticon Batavûm* (1720)—that is, the project to publicize the careers of the Dutch Republic's great poets of all backgrounds.[90] Bidloo might seem to have been at once opposing conservative Mennonite societal integration and promoting it. Perhaps these apparently contradictory tendencies were different phases of his intellectual life, but it is also possible that his views and commitments—as well as those of other adult baptizing "conservatives"—were more complex than we might think at first glance. In the middle of the eighteenth century, one of the many notable

[87] Jonathan Seiling, "Die biblische Hermeneutik des mennonitischen Kollegianten Jarich Jelles: Zwischen Spinozismus und biblischen Spiritualismus," *Mennonitische Geschichtsblätter* 79 (2022): 69–85.

[88] On Twisck, see footnotes 70 and 71 in this essay. In particular, see Gary K. Waite's research listed in these footnotes that shows conservative Mennonites like Twisck employed spiritualist arguments, when it suited them.

[89] On Deutel, van Mander, and Bidloo, see Zijlstra, *Om de ware gemeente en de oude gronden*, 489.

[90] On this work, see Lieke van Deinsen and Timothy de Paepe, "Visualizing Literary Heritage: A Viable Approach? The Case of the *Panpoëticon Batavûm* (1720)," *Digital Applications in Archeology and Cultural Heritage* 4 (2017): 49–58.

Mennonite publishers from the Dutch Republic was Frans Houttuyn (ca. 1719–65). In addition to acting as a lay preacher in Amsterdam's conservative Frisian congregation *Arke Noach* (Noah's Ark), Houttuyn was a publisher and bookseller at a bookshop named after one of Europe's most famous scientist-philosophers, Isaac Newton.[91] Another later hint of complex and shifting commitments dates from the 1790s. Then a hymnbook of the previously conservative Zonists had more rationalistic, Enlightenment content than a contemporary hymnbook of the famously spiritualistic Lamists.[92] In other words, the ideal-typical line separating various groups of adult baptizing factions was not fixed across the generations, or even at any given time. These examples suggest that "cultural elegance" and Enlightenment commitments could coexist with "dogmatic certainty."[93] After all, when it suited them, conservative adult baptizers employed spiritualist modes of theological argumentation, cited and imitated classical literature, and collaborated with their Dutch neighbors from other confessional groups. In these regards, they seem to have been not so different from their Lamist co-religionists over the long term.

Associations in Adult Baptizing Milieus

A conclusion that I draw from the complexities in this part and previous parts of the essay is as follows: scholars interested in the early modern era could and should study the identities and cultural associations of adult baptizers rather than searching to see who in the past conformed to an abstract, unchanging, and ahistorical conception of "Anabaptist identity."[94] In other words, a more useful approach would be to study the ideas, beliefs, concerns, and self-descriptions that people from

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[91] Keith L. Sprunger, "Frans Houttuyn, Amsterdam Bookseller: Preaching, Publishing, and the Mennonite Enlightenment," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 78 (2004): 165–84. On another conservative Dutch Mennonite publisher who supported the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century, see Piet Visser, "'Redelyke regtzinnigheid': Prolegomena van een onderzoek naar de betekenis van de doopsgezinde leraar, uitgever en vertaler Marten Schagen (1700–1770) voor de 'Nederlandse Verlichting,'" in *Balanceren op de smalle weg*, ed. Lies Brussee-van der Zee (Zoetermeer: Uitgeverij Boekencentrum, 2002), 216–84; Alex Noord, "Verlichting, vroomheid en verbondenheid: Marten Schagen en zijn vertaalarbeid van James Hervey," *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* 33 (2007): 103–19; and Piet Visser, "Dopers zaaigoed op gereformeerde akkers - of omgekeerd? De doopsgezinde kruisbestuiving van uitgever en vertaler Marten Schagen met Engelse 'zielstigters' als James Hervey, Thomas Green en Benjamin Bennet," *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* 42 (2016): 181–214.

[92] The source of this information is Pieter Post, *Geschiedenis van het doopsgezinde kerklied (1793–1973): Van particularisme naar oecumeniciteit* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2010), chap. 1.

[93] This is a modification of Keith L. Sprunger's ideas quoted above (see footnote 46).

[94] Robert Friedmann applied this latter, very conservative approach to early modern subjects in *Mennonite Piety through the Centuries: Its Genius and Its Literature* (Goshen, IN: Mennonite Historical Society, 1949).

adult baptizing backgrounds actually defended and promoted at any given time and place—even if these do not match earlier or later ideals of "Mennoniteness."[95]

A shift from "Anabaptist identity" to the identities and intellectual activities of adult baptizers requires a further consideration of whom to include as protagonists. So far in this essay, I have emphasized that early modern baptizers of adults are my main subjects. Occasionally, however, I have added a qualification that includes people who were "from or closely integrated into *Doopsgezind*-Mennonite communities." This qualification is important for understanding the religious and philosophical diversity in the early modern Dutch Republic. There was not only a complex spectrum of themes in adult baptizing book production but also a complex spectrum of religious commitments and associations among adult baptizers and those close to them. On the conservative, Zonist side, adult baptizers defended strict congregational allegiances—but they also sought out connections with conservative Calvinists who (like them) defended Protestant-trinitarian orthodoxy and opposed Socinian heresy. On the more open, spiritualistic, Lamist side of the spectrum were adult baptizers who stayed loyal members of congregations but who also were willing at the same time to join related adult baptizing groups such as the Dutch Collegiants (or even the much-vilified Socinians or Quakers) or who were open to connections with the liberal, Remonstrant wing of the Reformed confessional community. Members of both sides of this spectrum could hold and advocate for a broad range of ideas in print. A main point here, however, is that both groups extended their close associations and allegiances beyond the realm of adult baptizing circles.

The observations above are limited to the religious and intellectual life of people active in adult baptizing congregations, but they could be extended if we were to expand analysis to include other kinds of connections in the milieus of adult baptizers. For example, an often-neglected aspect of the spectrum involves those people who were born into and maintained important lifelong connections with adult baptizing families and networks in the long seventeenth century but whose membership in *Doopsgezind*-Mennonite congregations was otherwise limited. Two examples are Arnold Houbraken (1660–1719) and Pieter Langendijk (1683–1756). The first was the son of Flemish Mennonite parents in Dordrecht. Although he was baptized in the congregation of his birth, he seems to have drifted apart from his congregation after his

[95] My preferred approach has strong affinities with the approaches applied to non-Mennonite subjects in Bronwen Wilson and Paul Yachnin, eds., *Making Publics in Early Modern Europe: People, Things, Forms of Knowledge* (New York: Routledge, 2010).

marriage to a non-Mennonite wife. Nonetheless, his public career as a chronicler of Dutch national art and artists shows notable signs of enduring influence from his adult baptizing roots.[96] Like Houbraken, Pieter Langendijk came from an adult baptizing background, but, unlike Houbraken, Langendijk was not baptized as a young man. From time to time in his long public career as a poet, playwright, and publicist, Langendijk did publish works that are noteworthy for scholars of Mennonite studies today. In particular, he published *Zwitsersche Eenvoudigheid, klaagende over de bedroven zeden veeler Hollandse Doopsgezinden of Weerloze Christenen* (Swiss simplicity, lamenting the depraved morals of many Dutch *Doopsgezinden* or defenseless Christians) in 1713. The writings by Langendijk that relate directly to adult baptizing subjects are limited, especially compared with his much more extensive output. These other works include comedic and moralizing plays with either classical or contemporary subjects—but with little hint of explicitly "Mennonite" content. While he mostly addressed subjects aimed at a broad Dutch-language audience, he did keep close ties with the milieus of educated and socially well-connected *Doopsgezind*-Mennonite families throughout his adult life. Yet only at the very end of his life did he accept baptism in a Mennonite congregation.[97]

I would contend that Houbraken and Langendijk are the tip of a cultural iceberg in the long seventeenth century. In other words, I suspect that there were many more men and women who were connected closely with, who were shaped by, and who contributed to adult baptizing culture and life in the early modern world but who were not official members of an adult baptizing congregation (at least not ones recognized in modern Mennonite studies).[98] Providing full and proper evidence for

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[96] For more, see Nina Schroeder, "Art and Heterodoxy in the Dutch Enlightenment: Arnold Houbraken, the Flemish Mennonites, and Religious Difference in *The Great Theatre of Nederlandish Painters and Paintresses*," *Church History and Religious Culture* 101, nos. 2–3 (2021): 324–56.

[97] See Visser, "Aspects of Social Criticism and Cultural Assimilation," esp. 67, 79–81; Kees Smit, *Pieter Langendijk* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2000); and Joyce Goggin and Frans De Bruyn, eds., *Comedy and Crisis: Pieter Langendijk, the Dutch, and the Speculative Bubbles of 1720* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020).

[98] We should remember that Collegiants, too, were advocates of adult baptism (usually by immersion) upon a confession of faith. For more, see Quatrini, *Adam Boreel*. For simplicity's sake, I have limited discussions of Collegiants in this essay, but scholars should include Collegiants in the early modern adult baptizing cultural spectrum. In fact, in some cases (e.g., Glazemaker, Jelles, Rieuwertsz Sr., to name just those mentioned in detail in this essay), the line separating "Mennonite" from "Collegiant" is difficult or even impossible to draw. People could (and did) have multiple associations. For more on this cultural world, see Leszek Kołakowski, "Dutch Seventeenth-Century Anti-Confessional Ideas and Rational Religion: The Mennonite, Collegiant, and Spinozan Connections," trans. and intro. by James Satterwhite, *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 64 (1990): 259–97, 385–416. For details about the historical background to this cultural world, see Ruben Buys, "'Without Thy Self, O Man,

this claim requires more space than I have here. Therefore, this claim must remain a strong hypothesis for further debate and research. If this hypothesis can be maintained, an implication might be that the decline of Dutch adult baptizing congregational memberships in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries did not necessarily mean that *Doopsgezind*-Mennonite ethics and ideas were diminishing in Dutch culture but rather that these ethics and ideas were becoming ever more integrated into the Dutch mainstream.

A Fourth and Concluding Vignette

In 1625, the Waterlander mapmaker and bookseller Jacob Aertsz Colom published a controversial play by his fellow Waterlander, Joost van den Vondel. Van den Vondel's *Palamedes, of Vermoorde Onnozelheit* (Palamedes, or murdered innocence) tells the story of an ancient Greek hero who had been unjustly executed on the orders of King Agamemnon during the campaign against the city of Troy. In the 1620s, when van den Vondel was still connected closely with the adult baptizing milieu of his youth, his Dutch contemporaries were divided by the issues associated with the Synod of Dortrecht (1618–19), and many quickly suspected that the play was a thinly veiled condemnation of the public trial and execution in 1619 of the statesman Johan van Oldenbarnevelt (1547–1619) on the orders of Maurice of Nassau, the Prince of Orange. The play sparked public outrage in conservative Reformed circles. This was because it seemed to criticize as tyranny what Dutch ecclesio-political conservatives thought of as legitimate clerical and governmental authority. In the face of statist and confessional constriction, the play made a case for political and religious openness.[99]

Van den Vondel's play anticipates themes that scholars today associate with the European Enlightenment. These themes can include "the great principles of freedom of conscience, separation of church and state, and voluntarism in religion." This quotation is taken from the extraordinary

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Thou Hast No Means to Look for, by Which Thou Maist Know God': Pieter Balling, the Radical Enlightenment, and the Legacy of Dirck Volckertsz Coornhert," *Church History and Religious Culture* 93 (2013): 363–83; and Ruben Buys, *Sparks of Reason: Vernacular Rationalism in the Low Countries, 1550–1670* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2015).

[99] On *Palamedes*, see Nina Geerdink, "Decoding Allegory in *Palamedes* (1625)," in *Joost van den Vondel (1587–1679): Dutch Playwright in the Golden Age*, ed. Jan Bloemendal and Frans-Willem Korsten (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), chap. 12. See also Mike Keirsbilck, "The Tongue, the Mouth and Safeguard of Freedom: Towards a Governmental Reading of Vondel's *Palamedes* (1625)," in *Wissenstransfer und Auctoritas in der frühneuzeitlichen niederländischsprachigen Literatur*, ed. Bettina Noak (Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2014), 275–93; and Freya Sierhuis, "Victim Tragedy and Vengeance: Vondel's *Palamedes* (1625)," in *The Literature of the Arminian Controversy: Religion, Politics and the Stage in the Dutch Republic*, ed. Freya Sierhuis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 191–226.

second paragraph of Harold S. Bender's 1944 essay, "The Anabaptist Vision":

> There can be no question but that the great principles of freedom of conscience, separation of church and state, and voluntarism in religion, so basic in American Protestantism and so essential to democracy, ultimately are derived from the Anabaptists of the Reformation period, who for the first time clearly enunciated them and challenged the Christian world to follow them in practice. The line of descent through the centuries since that time may not always be clear, and may have passed through other intermediate movements and groups, but the debt to original Anabaptism is unquestioned.[100]

My essay shows that the "other intermediate movements and groups" that Bender mentioned dismissively in 1944 included several important early generations of Dutch *Doopsgezind*-Mennonite writers and related cultural workers. Because freedom of conscience and separation of church and state were more clearly, forcefully, and frequently articulated in the long seventeenth century than in the early sixteenth century, these "other" adult baptizing voices from the Dutch Republic deserve more attention, if Bender's thesis is to hold.[101]

Future studies of early modern Dutch adult baptizers can gain from broadening scholarly perspectives. In 2000, Samme Zijlstra published a book of over five hundred pages on the social and religious history of the early history and traditions of Dutch Mennonites until 1675.[102] Zijlstra's book is rich in new research and fresh insights, especially in his fields of specialization: social and economic history. But when addressing cultural and religious subjects, the book presents a very conservative view of *Doopsgezind*-Mennonite history. The book's title is a case in point: *Om de ware gemeente en de oude gronden* (For the sake of the true congregation and the old foundations). The ideals outlined in this title and in the book's contents align with the ideals of the Dutch Zonists much more than those of their Lamist rivals. The book skews our picture of early modern Dutch adult baptizers in another way too. It addresses the rich and complex subject of adult baptizing contributions to the arts and sciences only in the

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[100] For details about the essay, see footnote 24.

[101] For a critique of Bender's claims in the passage cited above, see Urry, *Mennonites, Politics, and Peoplehood*, "Conclusion: The Loud in the Land." For more about the relationship between dissenting religion and the early Enlightenment, see Jonathan I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650–1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); and the analysis and references in Driedger and Waite, "From 'the Radical Reformation' to 'the Radical Enlightenment'?" See also citations to the works of Ruben Buys in the footnotes above.

[102] Zijlstra, *Om de ware gemeente en de oude gronden*.

very last subsection of the book's very last chapter.[103] My essay, based on the research of Keith L. Sprunger and Piet Visser, makes the case that *Doopsgezind*-Mennonite contributions to the arts and sciences in the Dutch Republic should be a central part of future scholarship in Anabaptist-Mennonite studies, not an appendix or afterthought.

How did adult baptizers become involved in the arts and sciences? The question suggests a false problem—that is, a problem only from an anti-intellectual and countercultural view of the histories of continental European adult baptizers. These people were a part of the society of the Dutch Republic from its earliest days; this is to say, they were in the early modern Dutch cultural world—and of it—since its inception. As Dutch society experienced generations of war and renewal that led to national independence, rapid urbanization, and growing wealth, Dutch adult baptizers adapted along with their fellow citizens of the Republic. Members of each new generation had to make sense of their inherited traditions (adult baptizing, Dutch, and perhaps more) and find their own ways to live in and contribute to their world. The result of normal generational change is that adult baptizing groups (which had been diverse and in the process of change since the 1520s and 1530s) remained diverse and in the process of change into the era of the European Enlightenment—an era they helped shape.[104]

It is worth noting that both the Dutch Golden Age and the Age of the Enlightenment had their dark dimensions. This is evident in *Palamedes*, particularly in van den Vondel's negative portrayal of "the African."[105] With this negative image in mind, we can and should wonder what roles increasingly wealthy and privileged adult baptizers played in Dutch-European colonialism. Like so many other issues in European history, the ethical questions related to the Dutch economic glory of the Dutch "Golden Age" are significant. The only way we can learn more about the role of adult baptizers in Dutch colonialism is to look more closely at their lives. Their many, many books—*Palamedes* included—are windows into the world of early modernity that deserve more attention.

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[103] Zijlstra, *Om de ware gemeente en de oude gronden*, chap. 18, part 4: "Doopsgezinden en kunsten en wetenschapen."

[104] Piet Visser has outlined a four-stage process of change in Dutch adult baptizing cultural engagement from about the 1570s to the end of the Dutch Republic in the 1790s. See Visser, "Enlightened Dutch Mennonitism," esp. 373–75. He labels this process of change "assimilation." I am not sure this is the best term, but that is a subject for another time.

[105] See Frans-Willem Korsten, "Vondel's Dramas: Ways of Relating Present and Past," in *Joost van den Vondel (1587–1679): Dutch Playwright in the Golden Age*, ed. Jan Bloemendal and Frans-Willem Korsten (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), chap. 3; and Frans-Willem Korsten, "Making History (In-)Cohere: An African and Africanism in Joost van den Vondel's *Palamedes* (1625)," in *Africa and Its Significant Others: Forty Years of Intercultural Entanglement*, ed. Isabel Hoving, Frans-Willem Korsten, and Ernst van Alphen (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 107–20.