

**Adam Pastor's *Vnderscheit/Onderscheet*:
The Reputation of an Anabaptist Bishop Alongside Menno
Simons and Dirk Philips¹**

THEO BROK*

Abstract: Adam Pastor (c.1500 - c.1565) was an itinerant Anabaptist bishop in the Lower Rhine region. Ordained by Menno Simons around 1542, he is best known for the division that unfolded with Dirk Philips and Menno Simons in 1547 over Pastor's opposition to Menno's Melchiorite doctrine of the incarnation and for his subsequent denial, at least implicitly, of the trinity several years later, which led to the first schism in Mennonitism. Although sixteenth-century contemporaries described him as an important bishop alongside Menno, Mennonite historiography since then has largely ignored him, due to his anti-trinitarianism. Today, Pastor's theological views are known primarily from his *Vnderscheit* (Distinctions) of ca. 1554. The recent discovery of an earlier and hitherto unknown version of this writing, however, calls for a fresh examination of Adam Pastor, his break with Menno Simons and Dirk Philips, and the consequences of that division.

ADAM PASTOR'S PLACE WITHIN ANABAPTISM

Adam Pastor was an itinerant Anabaptist bishop in the Lower Rhine area—encompassing the Dutch territories of Guelders and Limburg, as well as the German territory of Westphalia—who was included in the circle of Menno Simons (1496-1561) and Dirk Philips (1504-1568) around 1542 along with four other new Anabaptist bishops.² In the historiography of Anabaptism, Pastor is best known for his provisional break with Dirk Philips and Menno Simons in 1547 when, at a gathering of Anabaptist leaders in Goch, he took issue with a central theme in Menno's theology—

*Theo Brok is a PhD researcher at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam / Doopsgezind Seminary. The working title of his current research is "Adam Pastor (ca. 1500-ca. 1565): Anabaptist Bishop in the Lower Rhine; Contributor and Dissident within the Mennonite Tradition in the Netherlands and North-Germany." The author would like to thank John D. Roth for his generous assistance with the preparation of this article.

1. This article is a revised version of "Het 'Onderscheytboeck' van Adam Pastor. De reputatie van 'eyn principaell doper' naast Menno Simons en Dirk Philips," *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* [hereafter cited as *DBJ*] 45 (2019), 141-164.

2. The other four were: Gillis of Aachen (ca. 1500-1557), Frans the Cooper from Friesland, and Antonius of Cologne and Hendrik of Vreden, both from the Lower Rhine.

the Melchiorite doctrine of incarnation.³ Pastor argued that it was well-established “that the flesh of children comes not only from the father but also from the mother, which some now deny in an attempt to prove that Christ’s flesh is not from Mary.”⁴

This division, however, did not prevent Pastor from continuing his activities as an Anabaptist leader on the Lower Rhine, where he enjoyed the support of numerous adherents.⁵ And Menno himself seems to have regretted the quarrel.⁶ But five years later, at a gathering of Anabaptist bishops at Lübeck in 1552, the break became irreversible when Pastor came under suspicion once again of “false doctrine,” this time for allegedly denying the doctrine of the trinity.⁷

This article will first describe Adam Pastor’s role in Dutch/Northern German Anabaptism. It will then consider a previously unknown version of his *Vnderscheit*, and conclude by demonstrating the relevance of this text and the overall influence of Adam Pastor at a crucial moment in the history of Dutch Anabaptism.

WHO WAS ADAM PASTOR?

There are no extant documents regarding Pastor’s origins or early years, and information about his career as an Anabaptist is also scarce. What is known about him derives from a very limited number of sources,

3. Melchior Hoffman (1495-1543) proclaimed that the Holy Spirit enabled Christ “to become a man in Mary” and thus did not accept Adam’s sinful flesh in his incarnation.—Cf. Rainer Kobe, “... wie Wasser durch ein Rohr: Wie kam Melchior Hoffman zu seiner Inkarnationslehre?” *Mennonitische Geschichtsblätter* [hereafter cited as *MGB*] 75 (2018), 9-28, 11. Sjouke Voolstra has argued that “Hoffman’s theory of incarnation became the hallmark of ‘mennist orthodoxy’ in the consolidating Anabaptist movements in the Netherlands and a point of dispute in the struggle with the flexible ones for the preservation of the original Anabaptist legacy.”—*Het woord is vlees geworden. De melchioristisch-menniste incarnatieleer* (Kampen: Kok, 1982), 12.

4. Samuel Cramer, *Bibliotheca Reformatoria Neerlandica* [hereafter cited as *BRN*] (’s-Gravenhage: M. Nijhoff, 1909), 5:375.

5. For more on Pastor, see Aart De Groot, “Adam Pastor,” *Biografisch lexicon voor de geschiedenis van het Nederlandse protestantisme* 4 (1998), 11-12; the bibliography by Jan J. Kalma, *Adam Pastor (ca. 1500-ca. 1565): een vrijzinnige 16de eeuwse doper* (Leeuwarden 1985); and Theo Brok, “Adam Pastor,” *Biographisch-Bibliografischen Kirchenlexikons* 29 (2008), 1033-1035. For English works on Pastor, cf. Anthony F. Buzzard, “Adam Pastor, Anti-Trinitarian Anabaptist,” *A Journal from the Radical Reformation* 3:3 (1994), 23-30, and Albert H. Newman, “Adam Pastor, ‘Antitrinitarian Antipaedo Baptist,’” *The American Society of Church History* 5 (1917), 73-99.

6. *BRN* 10:21.

7. Hence, George H. Williams, who has written about Pastor in English more than any other author, categorizes him as a “spiritualizing Anabaptist,” in *Radical Reformation* (Kirksville, Mo.: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1992³), 1297, and as a “contemplative Anabaptist” in *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1957), 30. Cf. Samme Zijlstra, *Om de ware gemeente en de oude gronden, Geschiedenis van de dopersen in de Nederlanden 1531-1675* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2000), 181.

some of them consisting of only a few words. The most comprehensive source is a small chapter, known as the *Inlasschingen* (Insertions), that Gerhard Nicolai, a Reformed preacher in Emden and Norden, added to his 1569 translation of Heinrich Bullinger's polemical *Teghens de Wederdoopers (Against the Anabaptists)*, into which Nicolai inserted a refutation of the ideas of several Dutch Anabaptists.⁸

Adam Pastor was born as Roelof (or Rudolf) Martens around 1500 in Dörpen in the Emsland close to the border with East Frisia. He died sometime between 1560 and 1570, probably at Münster or Emden. Martens/Pastor was trained as a Catholic priest, which is apparent from his knowledge of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. In 1531 he became the parish priest in Aschendorf, about eight miles from his birthplace. Sometime around 1533 he gave up this office to become a traveling Anabaptist preacher and baptizer.⁹ We do not know when or why he changed his name from Roelof Martens to Adam Pastor.¹⁰ Was it a pseudonym? Did he wish to distance himself from a Melchiorite or even a Münsterite past as the persecution of Anabaptists increased in the diocese of Münster, where several Anabaptist leaders resided?¹¹ With the name "Adam" he almost certainly wanted to imply that he had freed himself from the sinful Adam and had become a "new Adam."¹² The choice of "Pastor" is undoubtedly linked to his decision to leave his position as a village priest in Aschendorf and to emphasize his new role as the shepherd (Latin:

8. Gerhard Nicolai, "Teghens de Wederdoopers, ses Boecken Henrici Bullingeri, nu eerst uut de Latijnsche Tale in Nederduytsch overgestelt, door Gerardum Nicolaj, in zijnen leven Kerckdienaer tot Norden in Oostvrieslandt. Die daer bij gevoecht heeft de Wederlegginghe der leeringen van Menno Symons, Dierick Philips, Adam Pastor, Hendrick Niclaes, ende meer andere" (Emden 1569).—*BRN* 7:291-487. Nicolai's text was frequently copied and rewritten, especially the "Successio Anabaptistica, Dat is het Babel der Wederdopers...", door V.P.," (1603).—*BRN* 7:15-87. Cramer (*BRN* 5:321) stated that Herman Moded, *Grondich bericht, van de eerste beghinselen der wederdoopsche secten* (Middelbvrgh, 1603), 108-109 and 233-234 copied the "Successio." However, Moded provides more biographical information about Adam Pastor. Both works were published in the same year, which also makes overwriting from the "Successio" unlikely. It is more plausible that Moded's source was the *Inlasschingen*.—*BRN* 7:321.

9. Christian Neff and Harold S. Bender, *The Mennonite Encyclopedia* [hereafter cited as *ME*], 1:10 without evidence. Karel Vos, "Adam Pastor," *DB* 49 (1909), 104-126, 108-109 cites a statement from documents from the Court of Guelders of a captured weaver: "he [Adam Pastor] has been a pastor in Aschendorpe." Aschendorf became Lutheran in 1538, meaning that Pastor had certainly left his parish at the time.

10. In the sources, Adam Pastor is also called "Pastoer," "Pastoir," "Pastoor," or "Pastoris," which all refer to his role as a (Catholic) parish priest.

11. Karl-Heinz Kirchoff, "Die Täufer im Münsterland. Verbreitung und Verfolgung des Täuferturns im Stift Münster 1533-1550," *Westfälische Zeitschrift* 113 (1963), 2-109, 81.

12. Cf. Hans de Waardt, "Witchcraft, Spiritualism, and Medicine: The Religious Convictions of Johan Wier," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 42 (2011), 369-391, 374.

pastor) of a flock. We do not know when or how he first encountered Anabaptist ideas.¹³



[Pic. 1] Adam Pastor, engraving by Christoffel van Sichem (Rijksmuseum RP-P-1918-849)

It appears that Pastor had no influential position among Melchiorite Anabaptists in the northern Netherlands before 1540. Obbe Philips's *Bekentnisse*, for example, which includes a detailed contemporary description of the early Melchiorite Anabaptist movement in Groningen, Friesland, and Holland, does not mention him.¹⁴ Prior to 1540, Pastor lived and worked in places along the Ems river, which connected the cities of Emden and Münster. Münster was an important transition point between

13. *ME* 1:10 claims, without citing any sources, that "Adam Pastor received the (re) baptism in Münster."

14. *BRN* 7:109-138. The *Bekentnisse* was written before 1560 as self-justification for the years 1533-1536 when Obbe Philips (ca. 1500-1568) worked as a follower of Melchior Hoffman and baptized his brother Dirk Philips in Amsterdam (c 1534), David Joris in Delft (c. 1534), and Menno Simons in Groningen (1537). Presumably this writing circulated in Anabaptist circles until it was issued in 1584 as a polemic against the Mennonites.

the Ems and Rhine rivers, for travel moving to and from Strasbourg.¹⁵ Thus, Pastor's homeland was more connected by trade and shipping routes with Emden in the north and Münster in the south than it was with the nearby provinces of Groningen and Overijssel to the east, due to barriers of inaccessible heaths.¹⁶

An early seventeenth-century description of the life of Jan Matthijs van Haarlem (c. 1500-1534), a key figure in the violent Anabaptist takeover of the city of Münster in 1534, mentions a "Rudolph Martensz" as a missionary associated with the Anabaptist Kingdom of Münster.¹⁷ The Mennonite minister and historian Karel Vos (1874-1926) noted two sources dating from 1621 that also identified Pastor as a messenger from Jan Matthijs. However, Vos regarded a mission to Haarlem for this pastor from "the vicinity of Munster" as unlikely,¹⁸ and there is no convincing evidence that Pastor had any ties to these messengers in the 1530s or was traveling in the provinces of Holland, Friesland, and Groningen during the Münster uprising.¹⁹ The suggestion that he was one of Jan Matthijs's apostles is almost certainly a false accusation, designed to discredit Adam Pastor by associating him with the scandal of Münster.

Nevertheless, Pastor was likely part of the regional Melchiorite movement associated with Anabaptism, probably participating in the "Obbenite" Anabaptist movement before Menno Simons, who joined only in 1537. De Groot doubts that Adam Pastor was directly connected to the

15. Lucien Febvre, *Der Rhein und seine Geschichte*, 1st ed. 1935 (Frankfurt: Campus, 2006³), 122.

16. *Rondom Eems en Dollard/ Rund um Ems und Dollart: historische verkenningen in het grensgebied van Noordoost-Nederland en Noordwest-Duitsland / historische Erkundungen im Grenzgebiet der Nordostniederlande und Nordwestdeutschlands*, ed. Otto S. Knottnerus (Groningen: Schuster, 1992), 11-41, 24.

17. *Grouwelen der voornaemster hooft-ketteren die voortijts (ende in dese leste tijden) soo in Duytslant als in Nederlandt, hen opgeworpen hebben : haer leere, leven, begin ende eynde. . . . Naer de copye van Delft, ghedruckt voor Nicolaes de Clerck (Leyden [1607])*, in the chapter about Jan Matthysz, 63-68, 65; on Adam Pastor, 155-157.

18. Karel Vos, "Kleine bijdragen over de Doopersche beweging in Nederland tot het optreden van Menno Simons," *DB* 54 (1917), 74-202, 98 hints first that the *Successio Anabaptistica* of 1603 was a source for identifying Jan Matthijs's twelve missionaries. Hermannus Faulkelius, *Babel, dat is verwarringe der weder-dooeren onder malcanderen, over meest alle de stucken der christelijcker leere. Met een cort verhael van den oorspronck, verbreydinghe ... derselven ...* (Middelbvrgh, 1621) mentions eleven missionaries, including Rudolf Martens [Adam Pastor]. S. Ampzing, *Het Lof der stadt Haerlem in Hollandt* (Haerlem, 1621) mentions twelve, also including Rudolf Martens. Obbe Philips *Bekentnisse* also mentions twelve "and many more others," but does not refer to Rudolf Martens. Vos concludes that *De Grouwelen der Hoofd-ketteren* [he used the edition of 1623] makes the same mistake as Faulkelius, but overlooks that the latter most likely consulted the *De Grouwelen der Hoofd-ketteren* edition of 1607.

19. Samme Zijlstra, *Nicolaas Meyndertsz van Blesdijk. Een bijdrage tot de Geschiedenis van het Davidjorisme* (Assen: Van Gorkum, 1983), 193, fn 64 claims, albeit without evidence, that Pastor visited Groningen in 1544.

Münster Anabaptists around 1535.²⁰ Yet he must have been aware of what was going on, in one way or another, if only as a spectator. As a priest in an important parish that belonged to the Benedictine abbey of Corvey, located between the two competing dioceses of Osnabrück and Münster, Pastor must also have been aware of the tense situation that arose when the Prince-Bishop of Münster initiated a blockade of Münster in 1532. Although Karl-Heinz Kirchhoff concluded in his meticulous study of Anabaptism in the region around Münster that the teachings of Obbe Philips remained unknown in Westphalia, he acknowledged that some of Obbe's followers joined Anabaptist groups active in the Münsterland.²¹ Pastor's involvement in one, or both, of these "Obbenite" or "Melchiorite/Münsterite" networks in 1533, the year he resigned from the Catholic priesthood, is very likely.

The Anabaptists' seizure of the city of Münster in 1534, and their subsequent call for Melchiorite groups to also come to Münster in late March 1534, created a sense of solidarity among the different networks of Melchiorites. The fact that Obbe Philips considered going to Münster is evidence of this. In response to the call to arrive at the city before Easter—the announced date of the return of Christ—large groups of Anabaptists traveled to Münster from Holland, Friesland, Groningen, and other Dutch provinces as well as from the Lower Rhine region. The authorities, however, intercepted many of these groups at various places along the way.²²

After Münster was retaken in the summer of 1535, the Melchiorite movement disintegrated, disillusioned by the fact that their expectations regarding the return of Christ had not been fulfilled.²³ Leadership among the Anabaptists was resumed by those who had not been directly involved with the "Kingdom of Münster" such as Obbe Philips and David Joris, or by those who had survived the battle for Münster such as Hinrich

20. De Groot, "Adam Pastor," 10.

21. Kirchhoff, "Die Täufer im Münsterland," 46.

22. Zijlstra, *Om de ware gemeente*, 127. According to Albert F. Mellink, this mass movement was also influenced by the social and economic circumstances of that year. Baltic trade was hampered by war with Denmark and Lübeck and unemployment prevailed in many Dutch cities.—"De beginperiode van het Nederlandse Anabaptisme in het licht van het laatste onderzoek," *DB* 12/13 (1986-1987), 29-39, 34.

23. According to Cornelius Krahn, "less known is that after the end of the Münsterite movement in 1535, Anabaptism survived in various towns and municipalities in Westphalia."—"Anabaptism in Westphalia," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* [hereafter cited as *MQR*] 35 (Oct. 1961), 282-285, 282; see also Kirchhoff, "Die Täufer im Münsterland," 91; Mathilde Monge, "Überleben durch Vernetzung. Die täuferischen Gruppen in Köln und am Niederrhein im 16. Jahrhundert," *Grenzen des Täufertums / Boundaries of Anabaptism. Neue Forschungen*, ed. Anselm Schubert et al. (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlaghaus, 2009), 214-231.

Krechting (1501-1580) and Jan van Batenburg (1495-1538).²⁴ From 1536 to 1540, David Joris was the most prominent leader of the Anabaptist networks in the Netherlands.²⁵ His influence, however, decreased noticeably after he fled from Antwerp to Basel in 1544.²⁶ In addition to these new networks of "Obbenites," "Davidjorists," "Batenburgers," and "Krechting's people," a network of Melchiorite "Christian brothers" on the Lower Rhine—i.e., in Upper Guelders and Jülich, including Aachen, Cologne, and Maastricht—had been active since 1533.²⁷ Pastor must have been familiar with this last group.

There was contact and overlap between these various networks.²⁸ They can be characterized as "shifting communities" of Anabaptists, each representing a different orientation.²⁹ In the early 1540s, however, the struggle for direction among the various groups of Melchiorite Anabaptists gradually coalesced. Local leaders of the original and newly-formed "Obbenite" networks from the northern Netherlands, Westphalia, and the Lower Rhine region supported views that were in line with Obbe Philips, against the teachings of David Joris and his followers.³⁰

24. Zijlstra, *Om de ware gemeente*, 152-153.

25. C. Arnold Snyder, *Anabaptist History and Theology: Revised Student Edition* (Kitchener, Ont.: Pandora Press, 1997), 223, lists active Anabaptist leaders from 1536 to 1540 to display davidjorist leaders outnumber competing groups; Gary K. Waite, *David Joris and Dutch Anabaptism (1524-1543)* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1990), 195-196: appendix 1, "Anabaptist Leaders Active after 1535."

26. Cf. Samme Zijlstra, "G. K. Waite, David Joris and Dutch Anabaptism (1524-1543)," *DB* 17 (1991), 211-213, asserts there is something to argue against Waite's argument for the cesure 1544, but that this year has undoubtedly been a milestone in Joris's life, as he changed from a hunted heretic to a peaceful living family patriarch.

27. Mathilde Monge, "Who is in the 'Society of Christian Brothers'? Anabaptist Identity in Sixteenth-Century Cologne," *MQR* 82 (Oct. 2008), 603-614, 604, 613; Johann F. G. Goeters, "Die Rolle des Täuferturns in der Reformationsgeschichte des Niederrheins," *Rheinische Vierteljahrsblätter* 24 (1959), 217-236, 226-228; Jos Habets, *De Wederdoopers te Maastricht tijdens de regering van keizer Karel V, gevolgd door aantekeningen over de opkomst der hervorming te Susteren en omstreken* (Roermond: J.J. Romen en Zonen, 1877), 70-73. Cf. Otto Knottnerus, "Menno als tijdverschijnsel," *DB* 22 (1996), 79-118, 106.

28. Albert F. Mellink, "Groningse dopers te Munster (1538), een bijdrage tot de geschiedenis van de Batenburgse richting," *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis* [hereafter cited as NAKG] 44 (1961), 87-100, 92-97; Albert F. Mellink, "Antwerpen als Anabaptistencentrum tot ± 1550," *NAKG* 46 (1964-1965), 155-168, 158-159; Mathilde Monge, *Des communautés mouvants. Les 'sociétés des frères chrétiens' en Rhénanie du Nord, Juliers, Berg, Cologne vers 1530-1694* (Genève: Librairie Droz, 2015), 43-44.

29. Cf. Monge, *Des communautés mouvants*, 1-25.

30. Sigrud Haude, *In the Shadow of 'Savage Wolves': Anabaptist Münster and the German Reformation during the 1530s* (Boston: Brill, 2000), 70f.; Knottnerus, "Menno als tijdverschijnsel," 108-109. This rapprochement could possibly be referred to as a *Sammlungsbewegung* or the pursuit of micro-confessionalism, following Martin Rothkegel, "Die Austerlizer Brüder oder Bundesgenossen. Pilgram Marpecks Gemeinde in Mähren" *Grenzen des Täuferturns / Boundaries of Anabaptism* 232-270, 239. Due to controversy and competition with the Davidjorists, David Joris experienced increasing resistance, on the one hand from the northern network of the 'Obbenites' and on the other from the networks from

It was in this context that Menno Simons and Dirk Philips started their efforts at institutionalizing Anabaptist communities in Groningen, Friesland, and Holland.³¹ This attempt to unite the various Anabaptist networks, however, was heavily influenced by larger political realities that prompted some Anabaptist bishops to move to different areas.³² The piecemeal acquisition by Emperor Charles V of provinces to the east of those he had inherited—culminating in the conquest of the Duchy of Guelders in 1543—brought greater political unity to the region, and intensified the persecution of non-Catholic “heretics” in the Habsburg territories.³³ Thus, a consolidation of Imperial power in the neighboring county of East Friesland³⁴ and the Lower Rhine duchies Kleve, Jülich, Berg, and Mark³⁵ led to the collapse of tolerant religious policies and to a renewed persecution of Anabaptists there.

Adam Pastor’s activity as a itinerant Anabaptist preacher focused on this Lower Rhine area: the Duchy of Kleve, the diocese of Münster, and neighboring Dutch areas.³⁶ In the sources we find Pastor in the region of Zutphen (Doetichem and Zutphen),³⁷ in the region of Roermond,³⁸ in Odenkirchen,³⁹ and in the cities of Kleve⁴⁰ and Goch.⁴¹ On January 8, 1539, Johan Peterssen testified in Münster, that Roleff Beerdenss—probably a

Lower Rhine.—Piet Visser, “‘Ick vrees uwer sielen seer’ Johannes a Lasco kruist in 1544 vreedzaam de degens met Menno Simons en een vertegenwoordiger van David Joris,” *DB* 29 (2003), 43-64, 51. Peter J. A. Nissen, *De katholieke polemiek tegen de dopers. Reacties van katholieke theologen op de doperse beweging in de Nederlanden (1530-1650)* (Enschede: Quick Service drukkerij, 1988), 106, however, underestimates the size of the followers of Davidjorism.

31. Zijlstra, *Om de ware gemeente*, 179.

32. Cf. Knottnerus, “Menno als tijdverschijnsel,” 113.

33. Cf. Geoffrey Parker, *Emperor. A New Life of Charles V* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019), 525.

34. Heiko E. Janssen, *Gräfin Anna von Ostfriesland; eine hochadelige Frau der späten Reformationszeit (1540/42-1575). Ein Beitrag zu den Anfängen der reformierten Konfessionalisierung im Reich* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1998), 89f.

35. Franz Petri, “Im Zeitalter der Glaubenskämpfe (1500-1648),” F. Petri and G. Droege, *Rheinische Geschichte* (Düsseldorf: Schwann, 1976), 2:1-217, 52-53.

36. H. D. Wessels, “Een proces tegen enige van doperse gezindheid verdachte Zutphenaren. Het optreden van Adam Pastor in het kwartier Zutphen,” *DB* 7 (1981), 66-81, 67.

37. Vos, “Adam Pastor,” 112, 109.

38. De Hoop Scheffer, *DB* 1890, 55.

39. Vos, “Adam Pastor,” 125.

40. Wessels, “Het optreden van Adam Pastor in het kwartier Zutphen,” 67 fn 5.

41. Peter B. Berggrath, “Das Müllenamt [The guild of the wool weavers] zu Goch Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Industrie und des Zunftwesens im Herzogthum Geldern,” *Annales des historischen Vereins für den Niederrhein* 6 (1859), 40-83, 62. Jan ten Doornkaat Koolman, *Dirk Philips. Friend and Colleague of Menno Simons 1504-1568* (Kitchener, Ont.: Pandora Press 1998), 25 provides no convincing evidence for the assumption that Dirk Philips would have lived in the land of Kleve at the time.

mistake for Ro[e]lof[f] [M]eertens[s]—“is a prominent Anabaptist.”⁴² In 1549 Hinrich ton Oestendorp declared “that he [Adam Pastor] did tend to stay in the land of Jülich and in the principality of Cologne.”⁴³ That same year, Anabaptist prisoners in Ahaus in the Münsterland referred to him in interrogations as an itinerant bishop who baptized and “shared that night meal.”⁴⁴ Anabaptist suspects in Zutphen declared that Adam Pastor “taught beautifully from the gospels” and that “he spoke like an angel.”⁴⁵

Adam Pastor is thus a prototype of a small number of Anabaptist regional leaders who had been working in the Netherlands, northern Belgium, and northern Germany since the end of the 1530s and who were connected to a very widespread and interwoven network of committed supporters.⁴⁶ These networks were more diverse and dynamic than they were cohesive or uniform; and they were especially susceptible to disagreements about “the truth” in doctrinal matters. Hence, Menno’s position in the early Anabaptist movement was not as central as traditional Mennonite historiography would have us believe.⁴⁷ His growing popularity was due less to his missionary work than to the success of his *Fundamentboeck* (*Foundation Book*) of 1540⁴⁸ and the growing influence of other writings that slowly penetrated into the corners of the Dutch and German language areas.⁴⁹ It is almost certain, for example, that the *Fundamentboeck* was known in the Lower Rhine before Menno himself was.

42. Albert F. Mellink, *Documenta Anabaptistica Neerlandica* (Leiden: Brill 1975) [hereafter cited as DAN], 1:159. Hence Roelof Martens changed his name to Adam Pastor after 1539.

43. Karel Vos, “Anabaptisten te Ahaus in 1549,” *NAKG* 11 (1914), 257-270, 262.

44. Vos, “Anabaptisten te Ahaus in 1549,” 266.

45. Wessels, “Een proces tegen enige van doperse gezindheid verdachte Zutphenaren,” 78-79.

46. Albert F. Mellink, “Het Nederlandse anabaptisme na Münster”, *De Historie herzien: vijfde bundel ‘Historische avonden’ uitgegeven door het Historisch Genootschap te Groningen ter gelegenheid van zijn honderdjarig bestaan* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1987), 113-123, 123: “how a very widespread organization of fellow believers was formed by a small framework of elders.”

47. Knottnerus, “Menno als tijdverschijnsel,” 112. Knottnerus argues that Menno’s “success” was limited to those areas where “Anabaptist movements” already existed; before 1540, approximately thirty baptizers were actively baptizing, of whom at least sixteen were still alive in 1540 (pp. 105-106).

48. Cf. Menno Simons, *Dat Fundament des christelycken leers (1539-1540). Opnieuw uitgegeven en van een engelstalige inleiding voorzien door H.W. Meihuizen* (Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1967); Cornelius Krahn, “Menno Simons’ *Fundament-Boek* of 1539-1540,” *MQR* 13 (Oct. 1939), 221-232, 223.

49. Knottnerus, “Menno als tijdverschijnsel”, 104; Mellink, “Het Nederlandse anabaptisme na Münster”, 113; Nissen, *Polemiek*, 107.

Adam Pastor first entered the literary debate around 1540, when he published a booklet about the Lord's Prayer.⁵⁰ In 1542 he published *Dit zijn die Articulen van Davidt Jorisz Leere* (The Articles of David Joris's Teaching) a widely-read refutation of David Joris in which he summarized Joris's views in twenty-five articles, pretending that Joris was the author of the text.⁵¹ Although the work itself has been lost, most of its content can be reconstructed through David Joris's rebuttal, *Onschuldts David Joris* (The Innocence of David Joris), which appeared a year later.⁵² In the controversy, Pastor accused Joris of personal messianism; mystical spiritualism; the spread of polygamy; the rejection of the resurrection, heaven, and hell; and a retreat to safety under the mantle of Catholicism.⁵³

Adam Pastor's *Dit zijn die Articulen van Davidt Jorisz Leere* met with a wide reception. The text was well known in Holland, Brabant, and West and East Frisia, but also at the Imperial Court in Brussels, in Strasbourg, Wittenberg, Hesse, England, and even Livonia. There were French and Latin translations.⁵⁴ The work also seems to have set the agenda for the 1544 conversation in Emden between Menno Simons, Nicolaas van Blesdijk (1520-1584), who was a supporter of David Joris, and Johannes à Lasco (1499-1560), the superintendent of the reformed church in East Frisia. Whether readers recognized that Pastor was the author rather than David Joris is unknown. It also remains a mystery why not a single copy of the printed text has survived, despite its wide distribution.

In the early 1540s Adam Pastor and Menno Simons both distanced themselves from the Münsterites and Batenburgers, and they especially opposed the opportunism (Pastor calls it the "pretending") of David Joris, who began his polemics against them both around 1542.⁵⁵ In fact, the cooperation between Pastor and Menno Simons seems to have mostly resulted from their shared resistance to Davidjorism. In any case, the publication of these mutual polemics, which probably circulated in manuscript before they were printed, shows that Pastor had assumed an

50. *Een boecxken darinne dat Pater noster wert wtghelecht unde verclaert* (s.l., s.a. [1540]). According to Paul Valkema Blouw, this print was produced by the Petreius press in Leeuwarden.—"The First Printer in Leeuwarden: Johannes Petreius", *The Collected Works of Paul Valkema Blouw* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 809-818, 817.

51. Nikolaas Meyndertsz. van Blesdijk refers to this tract, which is said to contain twenty-five articles, in *Weder-antwoort . . . op zekeren brief by Gellium onderteckent . . . Geschreven in 't Jaer 1545* (s.l. 1607), fol. 23r-v; in *Christelijcke Verantwoordinghe* (s.l. 1607) Van Blesdijk refers to 24 articles, fol. 29v-23r. Cf. J. Stayer, "Davidite vs. Mennonite," *MQR* 58 (Oct. 1984), 459-476, 463.

52. A 22 article-by-article summary of this writing by Deventer to the magistrate of Zutphen.—Zijlstra, *Blesdijk*, 38, 247.

53. *Ibid.*, 52-53.

54. *Ibid.*, 37-38.

55. Visser, "Ick vreesse uwer sielen seer," 51-52.

important role within the post-Münster Anabaptist movement. It is likely that he had joined the circle of Menno and Dirk Philips as a bishop during or even before their arrival in the Lower Rhine with the intention of expanding their movement by inviting other Anabaptist leaders of this region to join them.⁵⁶ Heinrich Forsthoff, in his *Rheinische Kirchengeschichte* (1929), states that while Menno Simons was traveling in the Archdiocese of Cologne and probably also in the land of Jülich, Adam Pastor—"the other well-known Anabaptist apostle"—confined himself to the land of Kleve.⁵⁷

Whatever the case may be, the attempt to expand Menno's circle to the Lower Rhine by involving local Anabaptist leaders did not ultimately produce the desired result. After meetings of Anabaptist bishops in Emden and Goch in 1547, and then in Lübeck in 1552, four of the five new bishops left the brotherhood before 1550, either voluntarily or because they had been forced to do so. The ban was applied for the first time in 1547 against Adam Pastor, presumably by Dirk Philips in agreement with Menno Simons, and Pastor was definitely set aside in 1552.⁵⁸ Only Gillis of Aachen remained connected with Menno and Dirk until he was captured and executed in Antwerp in 1557.

The "Resolution of Wismar" of 1554, which summarized in nine articles the "true doctrine" of Menno Simons and Dirk Philips and tightened their exercise of authority, seems to have been a sequel to the meeting in Lübeck in 1552. Besides Menno Simons, Dirk Philips, and Gillis of Aachen from Antwerp, Leenaert Bouwens (1515-1582) from Emden, Hans Busschaert (d. after 1598) from Ghent, Hoyte Rienx (d. after 1600) from Bolsward, and Herman van Tielt, who was originally from Flanders but then living in Wismar, were present.⁵⁹ This suggests that after the break with Pastor a new generation of leaders was brought forward with a geographical shift from the Lower Rhine to Flanders. A year later, the "High Germans" in their *Verdragh ghemaect by de Broeders en Ousten tot Straesborg, vergadert vanwege de wetenschap van de herkomst des vlees Christi* [Agreement Made by the Brothers and Elders at Strasbourg, Assembled because of the Question of the Origin of the Flesh of Christ] (1555) decided not to ban each other

56. Doornkaat Koolman, *Dirk Philips*, 25-26. Dates when Menno and Dirk visited the Lower Rhine are not clear. Evidence from the sources only mention 1544, however there must have been connections more early.

57. Heinrich Forsthoff, *Rheinische Kirchengeschichte*, 1: *Die Reformation am Niederrhein* (Essen: Lichtweg-Verlag, 1929), 340. Unfortunately, Forsthoff fails to cite a source for this claim.

58. Nissen, *Polemiek*, 107.

59. Jan ten Doornkaat Koolman, "Die Wismarer Artikel 1554," *MGB* 17 (1965), 38-42, 38.

on the basis of their differences regarding the incarnation of Christ.⁶⁰ The Dutch historian Sytze Hoekstra argued in 1863 that this ruling was directed specifically against Dirk Philips's decision around 1547 to ban Adam Pastor, who denied the deity of Christ.⁶¹ The phrase "we servants and elders were invited by the brothers that are called Hofmanites [followers of Melchior Hoffman], and by the brothers in the Netherlands" could indeed refer to what took place around Pastor between 1547 and 1552. The discord generated at the meeting in Lübeck in 1552 could have prompted this meeting in Strasbourg in 1555.⁶² The 1555 gathering in Strasburg was clearly a response by German Anabaptists to the previous meetings led by Dirk Philips and Menno Simons in Emden, Goch, Lübeck, and Wismar regarding "true doctrine." However, the *Verdrag* must also be interpreted as support for the "Lower Rhine" understanding of banning and avoidance, which had led to the actions against Pastor for his views on the incarnation.

In 1909 Samuel Cramer concluded that contemporaries considered Adam Pastor as an influential leader through the end of the sixteenth century.⁶³ However, with the emergence of a more "confessional" Dutch Anabaptist-Mennonite historiography focused on Menno Simons, Pastor has mostly been ignored because of his alleged anti-trinitarianism.⁶⁴ In 1658, an early history of the Dutch Anabaptist movement (*Het Beginsel en voortganck der geschillen, scheuringen, en verdeeltheden onder de gene die Doopsgesinden Genoemt worden*) claimed that "Adam Pastor speculated so high to diminish the deity of Christ he departed with a small heap [of followers]."⁶⁵ This perception, however, cannot be reconciled with the image evoked by sixteenth-century writers. Anastasius Veluanus (c. 1520-1570), for example, in his 1544 *Der Leken Wechtwyser* (The Layman's Guide),

60. H. Aleson, "Tegen-Bericht op de voor-Reden vant groote Martelaer Boeck (1630)," *BRN* 7:139-266, 226-228. For an English translation of this document, see *Later Writings of the Swiss Brethren, 1529-1592*, ed. C. Arnold Snyder (Kitchener, Ont.: Pandora Press, 2017), 81-83.

61. Sytze Hoekstra, *Beginselen en leer der Oude Doopsgesinden vergeleken met die van de overige protestanten* (Amsterdam: P. N. Van Kampen, 1863), 134, 247.

62. *BRN* 7:227.

63. *BRN* 5:317-359, 317.

64. Cf. Mirjam van Veen, "Dutch Anabaptists and Reformed Historiographers on Servetus' Death: Or How the Radical Reformation Turned Mainstream and How the Mainstream Reformation Turned Radical," *Radicalism and Dissent in the World of Protestant Reform*, ed. Bridget Heal and Anorthe Kremers (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2017), 162-172, 171.

65. "Want Adam Pastor speculeerde soo hoogh tot verkleyninge der Godtheydt Christi dat hy met een klein hoopken hem alleene begaf."—[Carel van Ghendt,] *Het Beginsel en voortganck der geschillen, scheuringen, en verdeeltheden onder de gene die Doopsgesinden Genoemt worden*. In dese laetste Eeuwe van hondert Jaren herwaerts tot op den Jare 1615" (Amsterdam, 1658), *BRN* 7:489-564, 520.

regarded Pastor on equal footing with Menno Simons as the head of the dissenters.⁶⁶ In 1551 Gellius Faber (ca. 1490-1564) noted that although all are Anabaptists, “one is Mennonite, the other is Adam Pastorite, the third is Obbite, the fourth is Dirckite. . . .”⁶⁷ Marten Micron (1523-1559), in his report on the public debate with Menno Simons in Wismar in 1554, mentioned an Adam Pastor “sect,” which has “an appearance of holiness.”⁶⁸ The Catholic scholar Georgius Cassander (1513-1566), writing from the Lower Rhine, conveyed this same notion in 1555 when describing Menno Simons and Adam Pastor as two leaders in a civil war,⁶⁹ and connecting them with Schwenckfeld (1489-1561) as major culprits of a revival of anti-Trinitarian errors.⁷⁰ In 1556, the Reformed pastor Bernardus Buwo from East Frisia named Pastor alongside Menno as an Anabaptist writer opposed to child baptism; he did not mention Dirk Philips.⁷¹ And Nicolai, in his *Inlasschingen* of 1569, described Pastor as having a large following.⁷² All these references clearly demonstrate that sixteenth-century contemporaries considered Adam Pastor to be a leading Anabaptist bishop alongside Menno Simons.

In addition to Adam Pastor's *Dit zijn die Articulen van Davidt Jorisz Leere*, we know of several other texts by Pastor. In the *Inlasschingen*, Nicolai identified Pastor as the author of *Van de barmhartigheid Gods* (On the Mercy of God), which has not survived,⁷³ as well as a text identified as *Disputation mit Dirk Philips* (Disputation with Dirk Philips).⁷⁴ Nicolai also refers to

66. BRN 4:333.

67. Gellius Faber, *Eine antwert vp einen bitterh oischen brief der Wedderd oper* (Magdeburg 1551), fol. J2v. Cf. *Opera omnia theologica, of alle de godtgeleerde wercken van Menno Simons* [hereafter cited as *Opera omnia*] (Amsterdam, 1681, reprint Amsterdam 1989), “Over een Schrift tegen Gellium Faber,” 311, which is moreover the only place in Menno Simons's collected works where Pastor is mentioned by name.

68. M. Mikron, “Een waeraechtigh verhaal der t'zammensprekinghe tusschen Menno Simons en Martinus Mikron van der Menschwerdinghe Jesu Christi” (s.l., 1556), DAN 3:34.

69. Maria E. Nolte, *Georgius Cassander en zijn oecumenisch streven* (Nijmegen: Centrale Drukkerij, 1951), 12.—referring to Cassander's *Opera Omnia* ([Parisiis, 1616]), 577.

70. Nissen, *Polemiek*, 165 and Peter Arnold Heuser, “Netzwerke des Humanismus im Rheinland, Georgius Cassander (1513-1566) und der j ulich-klevische Territorienverband,” *Herrschaft, Hof und Humanismus. Wilhelm V. von J ulich-Kleve-Berg und seine Zeit*, ed. Guido von B uren et al. (Bielefeld: Verlag f ur Regionalgeschichte, 2018), 501-530, 518.

71. *Een fruntlyke thosamensprekenge van twee personen, von der D ope der yungen unmundigen Kynderen* (Emden, 1556), A4r-v.

72. BRN 7:464.

73. [Of the mercy of God] BRN 7:410.

74. BRN 7:408. Cf. BRN 5:322, fn 5 in which Cramer refers to Cristophorus Sandius, *Bibliotheca Anti-trinitariorum* (Freistadii, 1684), 40, mentioning this work under Pastor's writings, but probably treading on heels of Nicolai. This work has not been preserved, however it could also be a reference to Pastor's *Disputation*. Cf. Nicolai, BRN 7:470 where in his reference to “the Disputation (kept secret within Goch),” Nicolai made no distinction between what took place in Goch in 1547 and in L ubeck in 1552.

Pastor's *Onderscheytboeck* (Book of Distinctions), a text to which we shall soon return. In the *Vnderscheit/Onderscheet* texts Pastor himself mentions a book that he published sometime before 1551 titled *Van menschegebaden* (Of Human Commandments).⁷⁵ And in 1559, a printer in Emden by the name of Gaillaert published *Een Concordantie oft register der gangschen Bibel: . . . gecolligeert door Adam Pastor* (A Concordance or Register of the Entire Bible . . . Gathered by Adam Pastor) in 1559, implying that Pastor is the author of the first concordance of Dutch/Northern German Anabaptism.⁷⁶ Thus, there appear to be at least three or four publications by Pastor that have not survived or have not yet been found. Although the writings of Adam Pastor were known, they were not included in the papal Index of "forbidden books" until 1596.⁷⁷

THE DISCOVERY AND RELEVANCE OF THE *VNDERSCHEIT TUSSCHEN RECHTE VNDE VALSCHE LEER*

One key to a fuller understanding of Adam Pastor and his significance in the consolidation of the Dutch Anabaptist movement can be found in the text that Nicolai identified as the *Onderscheytboeck* (Book of Distinctions). Around 1830 a Mennonite minister and gifted amateur historian, A. M. Cramer (1805-1894), discovered a booklet titled *Vnderscheit tusschen rechte vnde valsche leer . . . dorch A. P.* (The Distinction between True and False doctrine . . . by A. P.) beneath a pile of books in the Doopsgezinde Library in Amsterdam. The library had not yet been fully catalogued and the book was a significant find. Cramer collated the text and referred to it in his biography of Menno Simons, which he published in 1837.⁷⁸ Cramer's son, Samuel, a well-known Mennonite professor, and the historian Jacob Gijsbert de Hoop Scheffer also noted the text. In 1909 Samuel Cramer included the book in the fifth volume of the *Bibliotheca Reformatoria Neerlandica*, a massive collection of Dutch Anabaptist primary sources, which he edited.⁷⁹ In his introduction to the

75. [Of human commandments] BRN 5:509.

76. *Een Concordantie oft register der gangschen Bibel: . . . gecolligeert door Adam Pastor* ([Emden, 1559]). This honor is often mistakenly attributed to the Mennonite pastor Pieter Janszoon Twisck (1565-1636), whose *Concordantie der Heyligher Schrifturen* appeared in Hoorn in 1614.

77. Pastor's work only appears in the revised version of the Trent Index by Pope Clement VIII in 1596.—Franz H. Reusch, *Der Index der verbotenen Bücher* (Bonn, 1883, reprint Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1967), 1:536.

78. Alle M. Cramer, *Leven en verrigtingen van Menno Simons* (Amsterdam: J. Müller, 1837), 92-93. His notes "Uit het boek van A/dam P/astor" are stored in the University of Amsterdam, Archief Algemene Doopsgezinde Sociëteit, HS 65-114.

79. Samuel Cramer, however, overlooked that Hoekstra quotes from it several times in his *Beginselen en leer der Oude Doopsgezinden*, referring to the pagination of Alle Cramer.

Vnderscheit, Cramer noted that despite his efforts, no other copies of the book could be found.

Historians since then have assumed this to be the case—that is, until recently, when I discovered a previously unknown edition in the Franckesche Stiftungen Library in Halle.⁸⁰ The pamphlet, titled *Onderscheet tusschen rechte vnde valsche leer . . . dorch A. P.* (The Distinction between True and False Doctrine . . . by A. P.) and with a publisher's date of 1551, was donated to the orphanage in Halle in 1704 or 1705 as part of the library of Friedrich Breckling (1629-1711), a mystical spiritualist who had lived in the Netherlands since 1660.⁸¹ It is unknown how the book came into Breckling's hands, though he likely drew on it as a source for one of his publications.⁸²

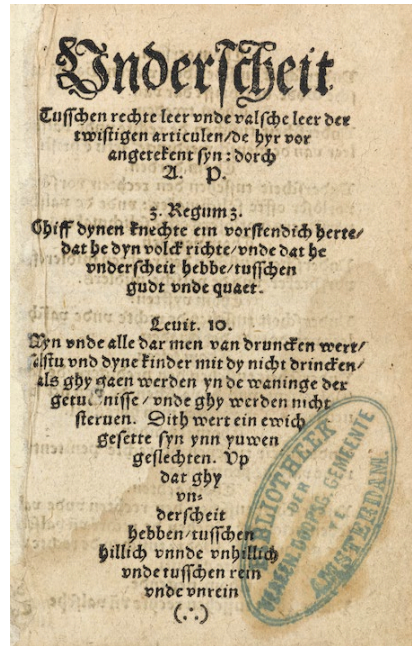
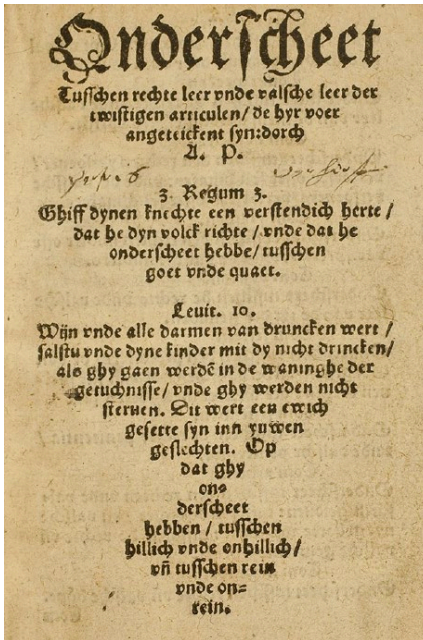
The content of the two texts is virtually identical with three major differences. First, the newly-discovered *Onderscheet* is clearly dated as published in 1551, whereas the *Vnderscheit* appears without a date. Second, the *Onderscheet* was written in a distinctive dialect. Third, the *Onderscheet* is lacking a report that the *Vnderscheit* includes immediately after chapter thirteen regarding the 1552 meeting of Anabaptist bishops in Lübeck.

The discovery of the *Onderscheet* raises once more the question of the significance of Pastor's role in early Anabaptism. The historiography until now has been based on the copy of the *Vnderscheit*, which includes the report on the Lübeck Disputation of 1552. The possibility that there was a separate edition of the text—possibly published prior to 1552 since it did not include reference to the disputation—is a new consideration. This essay will argue that the differences between the two versions of the book are relevant to our perception of Adam Pastor. Indeed, the recent appearance of the *Onderscheet* makes it necessary to revise our understanding of this text in the history of early Dutch/Northern German Anabaptism and thereby the position and influence of Pastor.

80. The work was discovered during my investigation of the catalog of the Library of the Franckesche Stiftungen in Halle, which has been included in the World Catalog since 2014. Although the book (OCLC no. 255801797) was known to the library staff, its rarity and uniqueness was not clear. This previously unknown print was therefore not included in (digital) academic bibliographies.

81. "Libri Brecklingici," *Verzeichnis der Bücher aus dem Besitz Friedrich Brecklings in der Bibliothek des Waisenhaus Halle* (Halle, s.a.); Brigitte Klosterberg, "Provenienz und Autorschaft. Die Quellen von, zu und über Friedrich Breckling in Bibliothek und Archiv der Franckeschen Stiftungen," *Pietismus und Neuzeit. Ein Jahrbuch zur Geschichte des neueren Protestantismus*, 33 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007), 54-70.

82. Probably his *In den Name Jesu! Proeve Der hedensdaeghs also ghenoeemde Quackers, Collegianten, Socinianen, Zwickersche, Felgenhouwerschende aller andere Gheesten. Of deselve uyt Godt zijn ofte niet* (Amsterdam, 1661).



[Left] Title page of the *Onderscheet tusschen rechte leer unde valsche leer der twistigen articulen* by Adam Pastor (1551) (Library of the Franckesche Stiftungen in Halle)

[Right] Title page of the *Vnderscheit tusschen rechte leer unde valsche leer der twistigen articulen* by Adam Pastor (ca. 1554) (Library of the Universiteit of Amsterdam)

THE CONTENT OF THE TEXT

Like Menno's *Fundamentboeck*—a first revised edition of which was published in 1554⁸³—the *Onderscheet/Vnderscheit* deals systematically with Anabaptist topics such as conversion, faith, baptism, supper, the preacher's mission, the "false brethren," and "the age of grace." And, as with Menno, Pastor addresses believers not primarily as individual Christians, but as members of the brotherhood.

The *Onderscheet/Vnderscheit* text consists of thirteen chapters with a large number of biblical references, in which Pastor describes his "true

83. Valkema Blouw, "Printers for Menno Simons and Dirk Philips," *Collected Works*, 466, fn 46; Krahn, "Menno Simons' *Fundament-Boeck*," 223. This edition was written in the "Eastern" German dialect.

doctrine" in the form of an inward, intuitive faith based on the Bible. Merging biblical texts with his own views, Pastor's goal was to introduce a call and guideline for the "betterment of life," through obedience to Christ. The book is mild in tone and does not polemicize against other views. It is framed more in response to Catholic beliefs than to Lutheran convictions. Between the lines Pastor is also defending himself against associations with the teachings of David Joris. He addresses governments in a "Supplication" preceding the thirteen chapters, in which he argues that spiritual matters can be settled only with the Word of God. In oblique language, but clearly as a reference to Münster, he distanced himself from "riot, multitude of wives or similar atrocities."

However, he also did not want to "quiver and do everything that governments would like in order to not to be prosecuted"—likely a reference to Joris. Rather, his conscience must be confirmed and convinced by the Bible. Finally, Pastor asked the authorities to allow him to speak freely with scholars about his faith and the faith of his brothers and sisters so that those who would now betray him and think they are doing God a service by threatening to kill him will find it possible to love him.⁸⁴

The thirteen chapter headings offer an overview of his Anabaptist convictions:⁸⁵

1. Distinction between the true God and false God, and the relevant scripture.
2. Distinction between the true and false doctrine of the incarnation of Jesus Christ.
3. Distinction between the true reconciler, redeemer or savior and the false conciliators, redeemers or saviors.
4. Distinction between the true mediator or advocate and the false mediators.
5. Distinction between the true and false doctrine of the time of grace.
6. Distinction between the true preachers—those of God—and the false ones, or those who have elevated themselves.
7. Distinction between true penance (*penitentia*) and false penance.
8. Distinction between true and false faith; between the real and false new birth from God; between the real and false people of Christ.
9. Distinction between true and false baptism.
10. Distinguish between the true and false supper.
11. Distinction between God's ordinances and human ordinances.

84. *BRN* 5:370-371.

85. *Onderscheet*, A1v-A2r and 'Vnderscheit', *BRN* 5:362-363,

12. Distinction between the doctrines of the true and false brethren; also from empire, king, polygamy, and other false freedoms.
13. Distinction between the true and false books, and why this book was mentioned.

The *Vnderscheit* version is supplemented with an additional text regarding “the disputation on the deity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, as A. P. and his followers in previous years in Lübeck have addressed both verbally and in writing with M. S. and his followers.”

The *Onderscheet/Vnderscheit* cites scripture passages from more than eight different Bibles, sometimes noting the specific edition—e.g., the *Zuricher*, the *Strasburger*, old Latin Bibles and “Düsche” [German] Bible.⁸⁶ According to Cramer, Pastor had more biblical knowledge than Menno Simons and Dirk Philips, which is evident from his explication of Hebrew and Greek texts.⁸⁷ The text did not refer to verses, since verse divisions in the Bible only appeared in the Netherlands after 1560.⁸⁸ Pastor indicated that he had copied quotes in particular from the *Chronicle* of Sebastian Franck.⁸⁹ Another work he frequently cited was the *Summa der godliker scrifturen oft een Duytsche Theologie* from 1526.⁹⁰ The *Summa* not only taught justification through faith and Christian freedom, but also provided guidelines for public and personal life. As a practical handbook for questions of faith and life, the *Summa* was unique for the period and is considered one of the most characteristic expressions of the early Reformation in the Netherlands.⁹¹ Pastor was one of the few contemporaries who openly referred to this “ancient Dutch forbidden book,” quoting from it to argue that “it was ‘ordinanced’ [i.e., commanded] in past times, that no one be baptized until he had come to a mature understanding.”⁹² Pastor’s references to other authors are limited: Erasmus (via Franck); theologians or contemporaries such as Beatus Rhenanus (1485-1547), Leo Jud (1482-1542), Georg Rhauw (1488-

86. *Onderscheet*, B5v.

87. *BRN* 5:357.

88. The first complete Bible with verse division in the Low Countries is the “Biestkens Bible” of 1560.—cf. Valkema Blouw, “An Unknown Mennonite Press in Friesland,” *Collected Works*, 387-413, 388.

89. *BRN* 5:476-477.

90. J. Trapman, *De Summa der Godliker Scrifturen* (1523) (Leiden: Vincit, 1978), 121 shows that Pastor used the second edition of 1526.

91. Trapman, *Summa*, “Inleiding”; H. Isaak, “The Struggle for an Evangelical Town,” *The Dutch Dissenters. A Critical Companion to their History and Ideas*, ed. Irvin B. Horst (Leiden: Brill, 1986), 66-82, 68-71.

92. “...dat jdt in verleden tyden was yngeset, dat men nemandt dopen solde ehr he tho synen vorstande gekamen was.”—*BRN* 5:476.

1548), and Johan Spreter (1490-ca. 1547); and Luther (1483-1546) and Bullinger (1504-1575) (though only once). Missing in this list is any explicit mention of Anabaptist texts.⁹³

THE CONTEXT: GROWING TENSIONS WITH MENNO SIMONS

In a book published in 1861 and, more extensively, in an 1894 article, De Hoop Scheffer has called attention to the fact that the *Successio Anabaptistica* (1603)—which describes the meetings of the Anabaptist bishops in 1547, first in Emden and later in Goch—referred mainly to a debate about the incarnation.⁹⁴ “Menno argued mightily against the Incarnation of Christ . . .” but, noting that he had not persuaded Pastor, then asked “for the love of unity” in order to keep the matter quiet and not to reveal disagreements among the “brothers.”⁹⁵ This account strikes a very different tone than that offered by Nicolai who, in the *Inlasschingen*, had Dirk Philips arguing with Pastor at the 1547 meeting in Goch that he would “prove the Deity of Christ.”⁹⁶ Indeed, it was Dirk Philips who particularly sought to refute Pastor’s emphasis on the humanity of Christ,⁹⁷ saying that he had “surrendered [him] to the Devil” in Goch.⁹⁸ Dirk Philips’s letter (c 1547-1550) to the “brothers” in the area of the Lower Rhine shows traces of the turmoil caused by the meeting in Goch. The content of this letter suggests the after-effect of the dispute with Adam Pastor and the ban that was pronounced against him.⁹⁹ According to Dirk Philips, the true church can be formed only by believers who confessed the Melchiorite view on the immeasurable love of God in Christ —namely, that God himself suffers.¹⁰⁰ Any weakening of this religious insight, such as Pastor’s insistence that God cannot suffer,¹⁰¹ would have disastrous

93. Voolstra, *Het woord is vlees geworden*, 160, notes there is no profound influence from Hoffman.

94. Jacob Gijsbert de Hoop Scheffer, *De Doopsgezinde Broederschap in Nederland, voor vervloeiing en ondergang bewaard* (Amsterdam, 1861), 29f., fn 1; De Hoop Scheffer, *DB* 1894, 18-23.

95. “Successio Anabaptistica,” *BRN* 7:50.

96. *BRN* 7:464.

97. Dirk Philips’s writings *Bekentnisse onses gheloofs* (1557), *Onse bekentnisse van der schepping* (1558), *Van der Menschwerdinghe ons Heeren Iesu Christi* (1557) and *Van de rechte kennisse Iesu Christi* (1557).—*BRN* 10:60-64; 65-68; 135-153 and 155-178 can therefore be regarded as an attempt to refute Pastor’s views from the *Vnderscheit*.

98. *BRN* 7:50.

99 Cf. “An Unknown Letter of Dirk Philips.” —*The Writings of Dirk Philips, 1504–1568*. Translated and edited by Cornelius J. Dyck, William E. Keeney, and Alvin J. Beachy (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1992), 631-634.

100. *BRN* 10:150-151, 169.

101. *BRN* 7:377-378, 385.

consequences for salvation and sanctification, as well as with the exercise of authority, including shunning and banning.¹⁰²

The primary purpose of Pastor's *Onderscheet* in 1551 was to serve as a guideline for a wide circle of fellow believers, including "my brothers who are also in the faith. . . ." ¹⁰³ In it, Pastor identified Menno's Melchiorite doctrine of the incarnation as an "error," a "failure" which he acknowledges that he himself initially shared.¹⁰⁴ But the text also had a second goal—namely, to present ideas that would enable the magistrates and learned theologians of the time to reflect more deeply on their biblical mandate.¹⁰⁵ Like Menno with his *Fundamentboeck*, Pastor imagined, perhaps against his better judgment, that doing so could prevent persecution and encourage greater tolerance of his followers.

This context helps to explain more thoroughly the difference in content and tone between the original *Onderscheet* manuscript of 1551 and the *Vnderscheit* with its added *Disputation*, which were published together in one edition sometime around 1554. The evidence suggests that Pastor wrote the *Onderscheet* after the meetings of the Anabaptist bishops in Emden and Goch in 1547 as a "public" representation of his views. The structure of the argument is reminiscent of Menno's *Fundamentboeck* from 1540, with only one exception— Pastor deviates substantially from Menno's Melchiorite understanding of the incarnation.¹⁰⁶

A COMPARISON OF THE *ONDERSCHEET* (1551) AND THE *VNDERSCHEIT* (CA. 1554)

A comparison between the recently-discovered *Onderscheet* and the later *Vnderscheit* helps to further illuminate the growing division between Pastor and Menno. The *Onderscheet* is printed in octavo (5 5/16" x 3 15/16") with a continuous signature and concludes with the date 1551.¹⁰⁷ Four more pages with errata follow.¹⁰⁸ The printer's name is missing. In the 1550s, there was no established printer of illegal editions in the northern Netherlands.¹⁰⁹ It is therefore plausible that the writings of Pastor were printed at the expense of his supporters since he, like Menno Simons and

102. Voolstra, *Het woord is vlees geworden*, 160-163.

103. *BRN* 5:364.

104. *BRN* 5:379.

105. *BRN* 5:371.

106. Hoekstra, *Beginselen*, 19, has so far been the only one to point to a resemblance between the *Fundamentboeck* and the *Vnderscheit*.

107. Fol. S2v. Cf. Valkema Blouw, "Printers for Menno Simons and Dirk Philips," *Collected Works*, 455-494, 459.

108. Fol. A1r-S2v, with a subsequent erratum fol. S5r-S6v.

109. Valkema Blouw, "Printers for Menno Simons and Dirk Philips," *Collected Works*, 464.

Dirk Philips, likely had no means to afford the expense.¹¹⁰ The printing history of Menno Simons's work suggests that Anabaptists at the time were actively searching for printers.¹¹¹ The printer of the *Onderscheet* likely was located in the Lower Rhine to escape the restrictions imposed in the Habsburg Netherlands.¹¹² The text was printed with greater care than the *Vnderscheit*, with fewer printing and typesetting errors.

The *Vnderscheit*—the edition discovered by Cramer in Amsterdam around 1830—also appeared in octavo (5 8/16" x 3 9/16"), with a continuous signature comprising two texts, but without the year or name of the printer.¹¹³ The table of contents lists thirteen chapters followed by an additional text that is missing in the *Onderscheet*: "Further is hereby printed the disputation on the deity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, as A[dam] P[astor] and his followers in previous years in Lübeck have addressed both verbally and in writing with M[enno] S[imons] and his followers."¹¹⁴ This additional text confirms that the printing of the *Vnderscheit* together with the report on the disputation in Lübeck in 1552 is not a composite of several pamphlets, but a single original publication. According to Paul Valkema Blouw, an expert in sixteenth-century Dutch typography, the *Vnderscheit* was printed by Johann Ossenbrügge in Münster.¹¹⁵

The *Vnderscheit* is printed in "Eastern" or "Low" German with some Dutch influences. "Eastern" German was a kind of literary language evident in printed documents in the sixteenth century. It was not,

110. Cf. Valkema Blouw, "Printers for Menno Simons and Dirk Philips," *Collected Works*, 457, mentions that David Joris wrote in 1543 that the printing costs for his *Wonderboeck* had risen to 425 or 430 guilders; almost € 30,000 in 2019.

111. P. Valkema Blouw, "Van Friese herkomst: de Chronyc Historie, Noortwitz 1579," *Philologia Frisica; anno 1984* (Ljouwert, 1986), 96-112, 111. This note refers to the "Neipetear" [review], which is not included in the *Collected Works*.

112 Cf. Valkema Blouw, "Printers for Menno Simons and Dirk Philips," *Collected Works*, 473f.

113. The *Vnderscheit*, fol. A1r : T7r, and the *Disputation* T7v : Dd6v. Cf. P. Valkema Blouw, *Typographia Batava 1541-1600* [hereafter cited as *TB*] (Nieuwkoop, 1998), no. 3829; Online Computer Library Center (OCLC), no. 65530769. This work does not appear in the register of printed works from the 16th century published in German-speaking countries (VD16).

114 *Onderscheet*, A2r.

115. *TB* 3829. This assumption was subsequently adopted in most catalogs. For Johannes Ossenbruggen / Johann Ossenbrügge / Ioanus Ossenbrug: J. Benzing, *Die Buchdrucker des 16. Und 17. Jahrhunderts in deutschen Sprachgebiet* (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 1963), 228; two prints from Cologne are known from 1554-1555 (p. 319); A. Bömer mentions 4 prints from the period in Münster (1562-1570)—"münsterische Buchdruck von zweitem Viertel zum Ende des 16. Jahrhunderts," *Westfalen* 12 (1924), 25-76, 38-42. The *Vnderscheit* does not, however, belong to these six editions. Apart from what his book fund shows, we know almost nothing about Johannes Ossenbrug. The typesetter often used the wrong letters and, in the event of breakdowns, sometimes omitted the second part of the word or repeated the first part.—See for example *BRN* 5:385, 436, 454-455, 476. "Obadiah" from the *Onderscheet*, fol. D8r, becomes "Obadzah" in the *Vnderscheit*, 397 and "Abel," fol. M2v, becomes "Adam," 462.

however, a direct transcription of the language spoken in these particular areas. There are certainly small regional differences in how this Eastern dialect was written, but its overall uniformity proved useful across a very large area, even extending to the Baltic Sea.¹¹⁶ From a linguistic point of view, the “Eastern” text used in the *Vnderscheit* is probably older than that of the *Onderscheet*.¹¹⁷ The *Vnderscheit* uses predominantly Low Saxon forms, with a little Westphalian and Dutch mixed in. Samuel Cramer has identified Flemish words.¹¹⁸ The language is consistent with the dialects of the areas in which Adam Pastor grew up and worked. It seems likely, therefore, that the text of the *Vnderscheit* can be traced back to the manuscript originally written by Adam Pastor.

This Dutch structure of the *Onderscheet* is explained in the table below:

<i>Vnderscheit</i>	<i>Onderscheet</i>	<i>Vnderscheit</i>	<i>Onderscheet</i>
vnder, vns	onder, ons	darvan	daervan
vm, vmme	om, omme		
sullen	sollen	veerden	vierden
sunder	sonder	teinde, derteinde	thiende, derthiende
ouerst, ouerst	auer, auerst	gemeinte	gemeente
worumme	waerumme	gein	geen
		nemant	niemant
desse, dusse	dese, deese	mit	met
gewest	geweest		
tweede	tweede	vorspreker	voerspreker
		predigers	predikers

This suggests that the text of the *Onderscheet*—the 1551 version of the book—was a conversion of a manuscript originally written in “Eastern”

116. Valkema Blouw, “Van Friese herkomst,” 111-112. Herman Niebaum calls this the Middle Low German writing tradition, “Het Nederduits.” —*Handboek Nedersaksische Taal- en Letterkunde*, ed. Henk Bloemhof (Assen: Van Gorkum, 2008), 430-447, 433.

117. The author would like to thank Dr. Robert Peters of the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster, Niederdeutsche Sprache und Literatur, who generously compared both texts.

118. *BRN* 5:358. “Saxon” here refers to a group dialect that has no tribal affinity with the Saxons.

dialect. The target language of the *Onderscheet* was clearly Dutch, though this goal was only partially achieved since the text itself is a mixture of Low German with an equal share of Dutch. This process is reminiscent of a very similar approach taken by Dirk Philips, whose writings regularly circulated first in manuscript form in “Eastern” German before they were translated into Dutch for printing.¹¹⁹

Thus, it appears that the *Onderscheet* was an attempted translation of the original manuscript of the *Vnderscheit*, and might therefore be considered as a later edition of this text. But if this was the case, then why omit the reference to the disputation and cite 1551 as the year of publication? A more likely explanation is that an earlier edition of the text, written in “Eastern” German, was published or distributed as a manuscript prior to the publication of the *Onderscheet* in 1551.

The undated *Vnderscheit* clearly appeared after the *Onderscheet*, since the table of contents refers to the period 1547-1552 as “in previous years,” and since it contains a report—the *Disputation*—of the 1552 gathering in Lübeck.¹²⁰ Thus, it seems plausible that the original text was written after 1547 as a manuscript in “Eastern” German titled the *Vnderscheit* and may even have been printed, although without the *Disputation*. Then, the “translated” Low German/Dutch version, the *Onderscheet*, appeared in 1551 before the meeting in Lübeck of 1552, followed by a version of the *Vnderscheit* that included the *Disputation*, which was printed at some point after the gathering in Lübeck. Since Cassander in 1555 described the christological differences between Pastor and Menno Simons based on a version of the text that included the *Disputation*, it can be assumed that the publication of the *Vnderscheit* and *Disputation* took place around 1554.¹²¹ It may also be that the *Disputation* had already been circulating in manuscript before its appearance in print.

All of this also raises the question of the dating of Menno Simons’s writings about the Triune God, which were clearly directed against Pastor’s views on the humanity of Jesus and his understanding of the Holy Spirit as a tool of the one God. When it first appeared in print in 1597, Menno’s letter on the topic (“Confession of the Triune God”) was dated September 9, 1550.¹²² In the letter, Menno referred to the “pernicious arguing and bickering about the divinity of Christ and of the Holy Ghost”

119. Doornkaat Koolman, *Dirk Philips*, 59.

120. BRN 5:319, *Vnderscheit*, 363 [table of contents] ‘yn voerjaren’ [in previous years]; *Disputation*, 517 ‘ynn vorgangen Jaren’ [in previous years].—De Hoop Scheffer, *DB* (1894), 20, fn2 is too certain about identifying the publication date as 1553.

121. Nissen, *Polemiek*, 165-166, 169-172.

122. “Een Vermanende Belydinge van den Drie-Eenigen, Eewigen, ende waren Godt, Vader, Zoon, ende Heyligen Geest” [1597], *Opera Omnia*, fol. 383-392.

that had occurred “during the last four years,” likely meaning the period between the conferences at Goch (1547) and Lübeck (1552), and not four years before 1550. Menno complained about “these fifteen years” that have been filled with disputes. If we assume that he is referring to when he entered the public domain as an itinerant bishop between 1537 and 1539, it would suggest that this writing on the trinity actually originated *after* the 1552 meeting in Lübeck, with the intention of refuting Pastor’s views, rather than in 1550.¹²³

The publication of the *Onderscheet* in Dutch reflected an effort to reach a larger audience in the aftermath of the discussion of 1547. By contrast, the publication of the *Vnderscheit/Disputation* in Low German around 1554 was an effort to reach out to his supporters. Pastor presented the *Disputation* as a report on the 1552 meeting in Lübeck, the moment in which his relationship with Dirk Philips and Menno Simons, which had already cooled in 1547, became a clear separation. His account of the event suggests that in Lübeck his doubts about “the deity of Christ and the Holy Spirit”—which he had already expressed in Goch in 1547 and which Menno Simons noted obliquely in 1556¹²⁴—had now become a certainty. Pastor could only discern one eternal God in Scripture, namely the Father. Thus, he avoided references to the trinity.

This same basic sequence of events is also noted in the *Successio Anabaptistica* (1603), where the Catholic author explained Pastor’s breach with Menno and Dirk as a sign of his favorable inclination toward the Catholic Church. He continued his reasoning that Pastor,

who had been on the right track in returning to true faith [through the denial of Menno’s Melchiorite view of the incarnation], has so struggled with the spirit of unbelief that he has once again lost the light of truth [in the *Disputation*], and has gone astray from one heresy into the other. He took the writing so deeply into his own wisdom that he lost all wisdom, and the light of the Holy Trinity has obscured his sick face, because he would rather be a master in his own knowledge than a disciple of simplicity in the faith of his forefathers.¹²⁵

In a section in the *Inlasschingen* headed “In what manner does Adam Pastor call Christ God,” Nicolai wrongly accuses Pastor of denying “the

123. *Opera Omnia*, fol. 385. V.G. Doerksen and H. Joldersma, “Menno Simons on the Triune God; the Hamburg Manuscript,” *MQR* 60 (Oct. 1986), 509-547, 516, rightly conclude that the particular date of the original manuscript cannot be proven from sixteenth- and seventeenth-century manuscripts.

124. Letter of Nov. 12, 1556 to “zijne heymelicke Ghemeynte te Embden.” — *BRN* 7:448-450.

125. *BRN* 7:50.

eternal deity of Christ" in the *Vnderscheit*.¹²⁶ Nicolai, and later also Cramer, assumed, incorrectly, that Pastor's views expressed in the *Disputation* (of ca. 1554) also apply to the larger text.¹²⁷ Cramer argued that Pastor's resistance against Menno's Melchiorite incarnation doctrine was a consequence of his anti-trinitarian ideas evident in the *Disputation*. Cramer arrived at this conclusion because he assumed that the *Vnderscheit* and the *Disputation* form a unity.¹²⁸ However, a better explanation is that Pastor pondered over his opinion of the incarnation of Christ that he expressed at the 1547 conference at Goch, finding in the Bible "...that he [Christ] has taken his flesh from Mary's flesh."¹²⁹ Thus, Christ came into the world as a human being and is therefore not part of one divinity. According to Pastor there is no evidence of Christ's divinity in the Bible: "We must always believe no less than what the Scripture says."¹³⁰ But Pastor came to this insight gradually: first he rejected Menno's Melchiorite doctrine at Emden and Goch in 1547, and then, reasoning from that point of view, he drew a Unitarian conclusion as expressed in Lübeck in 1552. This position may also have been prompted by the definitive break with Menno Simons and Dirk Philips and the perceived need to give a sharper profile to his own views. The sequence of these events seems to substantiate Hans-Jürgen Goertz's suggestion that it was the polemical argument with Adam Pastor that enabled Menno's Melchiorite Christology to penetrate into Mennonitism as an important principle of faith.¹³¹

The *Onderscheet/Vnderscheit* can be characterized as a symbiosis of biblicism and individual rationalizing spiritualism. It was Pastor's powerful expression of Anabaptist ideas to his contemporaries that Cramer and Dosker appreciated at the beginning of the twentieth century. In 1909, Samuel Cramer wrote in the introduction to the critical edition of the *Vnderscheit*: "Many a contemporary reader would do well to encounter in his [i.e., Adam Pastor] writings almost continuous words of truth and common sense."¹³² Cramer went on to describe it as a "memorial" of "a religious direction that, through Pastor, is evident with us for the first time. . . ."¹³³ implying that this text was more in line with contemporary unorthodox "Doopsgezinde" ideas than those of other forefathers such as

126. BRN 7:408, especially fn 3.

127. It is not clear which edition of text that Nicolai used.

128. BRN 7:447.

129. BRN 5:383.

130. BRN 5:336.

131. Hans-Jürgen Goertz, "Der fremde Menno Simons. Antiklerikale Argumentation im Werk eines melchioritischen Täufers," *The Dutch Dissenters*, 160-176, 172, also see fn 3.

132. BRN 5:318.

133. BRN 5:359.

Menno Simons and Dirk Philips. In 1921, Henry E. Dosker argued that in Pastor we find all the boldness and self-assurance of later Dutch “moderns” and a forerunner of later Mennonite beliefs.¹³⁴

But Pastor’s Unitarian theology was also the reason why his thought was later discounted and ignored. Pastor intended the *Onderscheet/Vnderscheit* primarily as an overview of “true doctrine”; it consequently presented itself as a rival of Menno Simons’ *Fundamentboeck*.

The discovery of the *Onderscheet* does not in itself confirm Adam Pastor’s role as a leading Anabaptist bishop alongside Menno Simons and Dirk Philips or “Lower Rhine” influence on their thought. But it does offer additional evidence for his broader significance in Dutch and Northern German Anabaptism in the 1540s.

134. Henry E. Dosker, *The Dutch Anabaptists: The Stone Lectures, Delivered at the Princeton Theological Seminary, 1918-1919* (Philadelphia: Judson Press, 1921), 58-59. The quality of this book is underestimated in the Dutch historiography of Anabaptism, cf. Visser, *Menno’s Manco’s*, 294-295. Cf. Georg Harinck, “‘The Tares in the Wheat.’ Henry E. Dosker’s Calvinist Historiography of Dutch Anabaptism,” *Religious Minorities and Cultural Diversity in the Dutch Republic*, ed. August den Hollander (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 268-279, neglects the fact that Dosker appreciated the writings of Pastor above those of Dirk Philips.