

CLASSICS
OF THE
RADICAL
REFORMATION

The Writings of Dirk Philips, 1504–1568



Dirk Philips

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*Do not extinguish the Spirit [out]
Do not despise prophesy
Test everything and keep what is good
Avoid every evil appearance*

1 Thess. 5:19-22

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the writings of
Dirk Philips

1504-1568

Translated and edited by

Cornelius J. Dyck
William E. Keeney
Alvin J. Beachy



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To our spouses

*Wilma Regier Dyck
Willadene Hartzler Keeney
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Classics of the Radical Reformation

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Preface to the New Edition

Dirk Philips (1504–1568) was born at Leeuwarden, the capital of the Dutch province of Friesland (also Menno Simon’s native land).¹ Dirk was the son of a Dutch priest and a concubine, which was not uncommon in those pre-Reformation times of the Roman Catholic Church.² Nothing is known about his childhood and education. He may have joined a Franciscan monastery in Leeuwarden, most likely as a layperson since – being an “illegal” priest’s son – he would not have had permission to join any monastic order as a monk. We will never know whether he was taught in the classical languages, although some of his writings include Latin and Greek quotations. Dirk’s elder brother Obbe Philips, a man of importance for early Anabaptism and Mennonitism in the Netherlands, was a barber and a surgeon – an ordinary combination of professions that suggests a lower level of intellectual education.

Around 1533 or 1534, Obbe and his younger brother Dirk manifested themselves as radical reformers during the turbulent era of the apocalyptic preaching of Melchior Hoffman, the founder of Dutch Anabaptism. After Hoffman’s imprisonment in Strasbourg, his successor, Jan Matthys, resumed the enthusiastic preaching of Christ’s coming to earth. This resulted in the occupation of the bishopric town of Münster, on the eastern border of the Netherlands, by some three thousand Anabaptist fanatics who were convinced that Christ would return to establish the New Jerusalem. Both Obbe and Dirk were baptized by missionaries of Matthys. Dirk was baptized by Pieter Houtsager, one of the three Münsterites who sometime later were arrested in Amsterdam as they were running down the

streets with drawn swords. Later, when Obbe turned away from the Anabaptist-Mennonite movement, he stated that neither he nor Dirk had ever sympathized with violent Münsteritism. Whether this is truly the case is hard to determine. There is evidence that Obbe attended the Münsterite mass meeting at 't Zandt, in the province of Groningen, in early 1535; later he expressed his regrets over being ordained a preacher by one of Matthys's apostles. Soon after his baptism, Dirk was ordained an elder by Obbe. Dirk then lived in or near Appingedam, a flourishing town in the eastern part of the province of Groningen, where—in contrast to neighboring Friesland—persecution of the Anabaptists was hardly felt. In the aftermath of Münster, both Obbe and Dirk played a modest role in Melchiorite Anabaptism; some people referred to Obbe's following as the Obbites. However, David Joris, the Spiritualist leader of the so-called Jorists—who proclaimed himself a prophet, the third David—took the prime position in divided Dutch Anabaptism. Neither Dirk nor Obbe was present at the Bocholt meeting of 1536, which had been initiated by Joris and where the remaining leaders tried to reach consensus on how to move on in peaceful unity.

In 1537 Dirk had a dispute with the Lutheran pastor Joachim Kukenbieter at Hamburg, northern Germany. When interrogated in 1538, the captured post-Münsterite and violent leader Jan van Batenburg confirmed that Dirk was the third in line of Anabaptist leadership. Around 1539 Dirk became Menno Simons's loyal coworker, just as Menno finally came forward with his important *Foundation* book and presented himself as the new peaceful leader of the movement. Dirk was active predominantly in the northern areas of the Low Countries, Germany, and in and around Gdansk, Poland (formerly known as Danzig). Around the same time, Obbe, a man gifted with leadership skills, left the Anabaptist-Mennonite movement out of frustration over its divisiveness.

Like Menno, Dirk embraced the much-debated theory on the incarnation of Christ, which they had adopted from Hoffman. In this theological concept, Jesus's flesh had human qualities, such as the ability to bleed and to die, but its origin was in heaven. Thus, when the Word became flesh (John 1:14), it could be nourished and pass through Mary without inheriting sin—analogous to the way

seed is nourished by soil without taking on its characteristics. This incarnation theory, rejected by Swiss Anabaptism, would eventually become a cornerstone of Dutch Mennonite orthodoxy. It formed the solid ground for strict Mennonite church discipline – including the ban, shunning, and (marital) avoidance – in order to keep the congregation, the Bride of Christ, pure, without spot and wrinkle, like the sinless flesh of Christ. However, time and again the Melchiorite incarnation theology caused disagreement. This became apparent in 1546 when the Mennonite elders – not only Menno and Dirk but also Adam Pastor, Gilis van Aken, and Lenaert Bouwens – held a meeting with Joris’s representative and son-in-law, Nicolaas Meyndertsz van Blesdijk. The main topic was how to avoid persecution; however, the issue of Christ’s incarnation caused the most trouble. Pastor, in particular, held antitrinitarian views, denying Christ’s divine nature. The following year discussions about the proper features of Mennonite orthodoxy continued. It was Dirk who rejected infant baptism and who favored the ban and avoidance, including marital avoidance. At the 1547 meeting at Goch, Germany, Pastor defended his antitrinitarian position once more and was banned by Dirk. A reconciliation effort by Menno and Dirk at Lübeck, Germany, did not bring about any change, so Pastor’s ban was never reversed.

Around 1554 Dirk likely moved to Emden, in northern Germany. That same year he was present at the important meeting in Wismar, Germany, where the regional elders – including Menno, Lenaert Bouwens, Gillis van Aken, Herman van Tielt, Hans Busschaert, and Hoyte Renix – tried to come to an agreement on a number of congregational matters. The *Besluyt tot Wismar* (Wismar Resolutions) included nine articles, including five articles on the ban and avoidance and single articles on issues like mixed marriages, judicial procedures, nonresistance, and the ministry. Despite the Wismar Resolutions, matters regarding church discipline – especially the ban and shunning – caused local disagreements time and again. The most notorious case was the 1557 dispute, which was caused by the refusal of Swaen Rutgers – a female member of Lenaert Bouwens’s Emden congregation – to accept the measure of marital avoidance as a result of the banishment of her husband. Franeker Mennonites sided with Swaen and begged for tolerance. This resulted in a meeting of the

elders at nearby Harlingen, Friesland, to settle the quarrel. Menno, then living at Bad Oldesloe in northern Germany, was invited as a middleman in order to prevent a schism. The invitation was in vain: Dirk sided with Bouwens in favor of the strict application of the ban, and they both forced Menno to take their side. This would be Menno's last visit to his homeland, and, tragically, not only was the outcome the first major division – a division that would last for centuries – but the dispute also brought about the end of Menno's leadership. A substantial number of Mennonites separated from the main body – not only from Holland and Friesland (called Naelde-mans-people, Frankeraers, and later better known as Waterlanders) but also from Southern Germany and Switzerland (the so-called High-Germans), who all opposed the strict banners. Out of this division (in addition to Menno's health problems; he would pass away in 1561), not only did the leading role of Dirk rise, but so too did Bouwens's importance. Indeed, Bouwens baptized over ten thousand people in the Low Countries in the following years. Meanwhile, Dirk, then likely residing in Gdansk (1561–1567), intensified his writing of theological tracts and also published a volume of collected works, *Enchiridion or Small Handbook* (1564).

In 1561 Dirk baptized some forty people in a private home at Utrecht, the Netherlands. On that occasion Dirk was described as “an old man, not very tall, with a gray beard and white hair” (32). Then, around 1565, Dirk got involved in yet another dispute – this time about the issue of whether Bouwens should be dismissed, as some of his church members demanded. This personal matter also coincided with an ethnic and social clash in Franeker (yet again) between native Frisians and Flemish refugees from the southern Netherlands. The latter were in favor of appointing a Flemish instead of a Frisian minister, which contravened a secret agreement of four major Frisian congregations. In 1567 Dirk traveled from Gdansk to Emden to settle the matter, but he refused to come to Franeker. He sided with the Flemish minority, who at once banned the Frisians, while the Frisians, whom Lenaert had joined, consequently banned the Flemish. And so this separation of the Flemish and Frisian Mennonites became the second major division in Dutch Mennonitism, which divided the Mennonites all over the country

and beyond. In both dramatic events, Dirk, though striving for the biblical ideal of the true church, played a harsh but prominent role (see texts 14, 15, and 16 in bibliography below).³

As a self-made theologian, Dirk is generally considered more skilled than Menno. When making this comparison, we must remember that Dirk had more time and opportunity to reflect on Mennonite theology. In contrast to Dirk, Menno was often forced by his opponents to defend his “heretical” views due to his position as a “leader on the run.” This resulted in a substantial number of polemical writings in which Menno developed a non-scholarly, somewhat ready-made theology, which echoed the dynamics of intolerance and persecution expressed by his adversaries. In contrast, Dirk’s more modest position in the background of Dutch Mennonitism allowed him to develop an intellectually more coherent theology. This may explain why Dirk’s writings received more appreciation in nineteenth-century North America than Menno’s works, which found a wider audience in the Low Countries.

On Dutch soil Dirk’s *Enchiridion*, which included twelve tracts, found its final reprint in 1627 in a small octavo size (I–VI). In contrast, Menno’s collected *Opera Omnia* appeared in 1646 and 1654 in a larger quarto-size and in 1681 in a huge folio edition (reproduced in facsimile in 1985). Quite remarkable is the French *Enchiridion* edition of 1626, printed in Amsterdam (VII), likely intended for a French-speaking audience in southern Belgium (Wallonia) and neighboring France. Since the times that the Swiss and South-German Amish and Mennonites were no longer tolerated in Europe and set sail to North America with the generous aid of their wealthy Dutch brethren, German *Enchiridion* translations were also produced (VIII–XI). An English edition appeared as late as 1910 (XII).⁴ The scholarly and annotated edition of the complete *Geschriften van Dirk Philips* by F. Pijper – published in 1914 as volume X of the monumental series *Bibliotheca Reformatoria Neerlandica* (referred to as BRN X) – forms the basis of the present English translation of *The Writings of Dirk Philips (WDP)*.⁵ Also included are two hymns of Dirk, of which “Ghy Christen Broeders te samen” (You Christian brethren all together) seems to have been quite popular.

Since the 1990s the Dutch scholar Paul Valkema Blouw, a specialist of sixteenth-century printing history, discovered where and by whom Dirk's writings had been printed in secrecy.⁶ In the days of inquisition and persecution, these anonymous printers and publishers risked confiscation of their businesses, as well as capital punishment, when producing and distributing Anabaptist/Mennonite books. Previous scholars assumed that Emden was the primary location for illegal Mennonite book production. It was indeed such a center for the large and illegal Dutch Reformed book market of the sixteenth century. However, the bulk of Dutch Anabaptist and Mennonite books, including those of Menno and Dirk, came from different presses elsewhere. During his lifetime Dirk's major works had been illegally produced by Nicolaes (I) Biestkens van Diest, who owned a print shop not in Emden, as was generally assumed, but in Groessen (east of Arnhem, in the province of Gelderland) (see 5, 7, 10, and 11). Franeker, a Frisian town of key importance in the history of early Dutch Anabaptism and Mennonitism, had its own Mennonite publishing house, owned by printer Jan Hendricksz van Schoonrewoerd and his heirs. For more than fifteen years (from 1555 to 1570), this secret press produced not only works by Menno and Dirk but also Biestkens Bibles and Testaments, hymnbooks, and the first book of martyrs, *Offer des Heeren*. Hendricksz published the first complete edition of Dirk's *Enchiridion* (see its translation in this volume) and four smaller tracts (II.1d, 2, 4, and 6).

Valkema Blouw also discovered copies of formerly unknown first editions of three of Dirk's shorter works (14, 15, and 16), printed around 1566/1567 on a still unknown press, as well as the first 1567 edition of the second ban book (19a), printed by Gillis Coppens van Diest in Antwerp. Since the text renderings of these writings in this volume are based on later editions than the ones subsequently discovered by Valkema Blouw, they should be considered somewhat less accurate.

Dirk wrote about the major theological themes of the day: baptism (II.1c), the Lord's Supper (II.1d), the incarnation of Christ (II.2, 3), rebirth (II.9), ban and avoidance (II.6; 16, 19, 20), marriage (18), and church leaders (II.5). In all his writings, Dirk's biblicism is apparent. For his early writings, he most likely used the so-called

Dutch Liesvelt Bible (1526, based on Luther's German translation), whereas for his later writings he would have used the specially Mennonite Bible version, the Biestkens Bible (1560), as well as the textually differing Biestkens [New] Testament (1556).

While he hardly made any distinction between the canonical and apocryphal biblical books, Dirk's exegetics were Christocentric: Christ's coming was prefigured in the Old Testament – a view that matched Melchiorite incarnation theology. Like Menno, Dirk preached the doctrine of nonresistance, though there is not much in his writings on this subject. Against Pastor he upheld the doctrine of the Trinity. Unlike his brother Obbe, he always stressed the visible church, without spot or wrinkle. This implied a strict application of the ban and avoidance because the church of God, consisting of the elect, should be pure and holy. In his book on the church (II.11), Dirk deals with seven ordinances of the church of God: pure doctrine, scriptural use of the sacraments, washing the feet of the saints, separation (ban and avoidance), the command of love, obedience to the commands of Christ, and suffering and persecution.

Although Dirk's pen was less polemical than Menno's, he did write a tract against the Münster ideologist Bernhard Rothmann (II.10). He also attacked the Spiritualistic views of Sebastian Franck in a tract from around 1541, of which only a printed version of 1602 has survived (13). Dirk's 1556 tracts *Explanation of the Tabernacle* (II.8) and *Brief Admonition on Rebirth* (II.9) were also directed against Spiritualists such as Franck and Joris, who opposed the visible church and its outer sacraments. Around 1560 this last tract was contested by the Rhineland Spiritualist Matthijs Weyer. While tendencies of Spiritualism – so relevant for the development of early Dutch Anabaptism and Mennonitism – can also be detected in Dirk's views on baptism and the Lord's Supper,⁷ on the whole his theology is marked by a certain moralism, biblicism, and legalism.

When compared to Menno, Dirk was a strict and even obstinate person and a proud elder, which can best be seen in Dirk's conflict (together with Bouwens) with Menno, resulting in the split of the Waterlanders and the High-Germans, and his subsequent disagreement with Bouwens, followed by the tragic division of the Frisians and the Flemish in 1566–1567. Despite these personal qualities, his

writings continue to be used and valued by Anabaptists and Mennonites around the world – and particularly among North American Old Order Amish communities.⁸ For this reason, the republication of this English translation of his writings is a welcomed development.

Piet Visser

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I. *A Short Confession and Statement* / Een korte bekentnisse ende belydinge (Deventer: S. Steenberghe, 1564) [Dutch; Keyser 1; a pirated edition of II].

II. *Enchiridion or Small Handbook* / Enchiridion of Hant-boecxken (Franeker[?]: Mennonite Press, 1564) [Dutch; Keyser 2]. Includes twelve collected works. This 1564 edition was used for the 1914 Dutch annotated edition of Dirk's writings, which in turn has been translated into the present English edition (cf. BRN X, 55–469, and *WDP*, 51–440). The volume starts with a confessional tract (without a separate title page), which is subdivided into four sections (cf. the title of the previous pirated 1564 edition: *A Short Confession and Statement*). All subsequent tracts, 2–12 below, have separate title pages:

1a. *A Confession of Our Faith, Including the Confession of God* / Bekentnisse onses gheloofs [BRN X, 55–64 / *WDP*, 57–68].

1b. *Our Confession of Creation, Redemption, and Salvation* / Onse bekentnisse vander scheppinge, verlossinge, ende salichmakinghe des menschen [BRN X, 65–68 / *WDP*, 68–71].

1c. *About the Baptism of Our Lord Jesus Christ* / Vander Doope Onses Heeren Christi [BRN X, 69–111 / *WDP*, 72–111]. Other editions: Middelburg: Jeronimus Wullebrechts / printed by Richard Schilders, 1589 [Keyser 18]; Middelburg: Bernaert Langhenezs, 1589 [=1597] [Keyser 19].

1d. *Our Confession of the Supper of Our Lord Jesus Christ* / Van dat Auontmael des Heeren Iesu Christi, onse Belijdinghe [BRN X, 111–34 / *WDP*, 112–33]. An earlier edition, including 1a–1d: Franeker: Jan Hendricksz, 1557 [Keyser 17].

2. *A Brief Confession of the Incarnation of Our Lord Jesus Christ* / Van der Menschwerdinghe ons Heeren Iesu Christi . . . een corte bekentnisse [BRN X, 135–53 / *WDP*, 134–51]. An earlier edition: Franeker: Jan Hendricksz, 1557 [Keyser 20].

3. *A Brief Admonition of the True Knowledge of Jesus Christ* / Vande rechte kennisse Iesu Christi . . . een corte vermaninge [BRN X, 155–78 / *WDP*, 152–72]. An earlier edition: [?], 1564 [Keyser 20b].

4. *An Apology, or Justification that We . . . Are Neither Rebaptizers, Nor Sect Makers* / Een Apologia, ofte verantwoordinghe, dat wy . . . gheen wederdoopers noch sectemakers zijn [BRN X, 179–203 / *WDP*, 173–97]. An earlier edition: Franeker: Jan Hendricksz, 1563[?] [Keyser 32].

5. *On the Mission of Preachers or Teachers* / Van der Sendinge der Predicanten oft Leeraers [BRN X, 205–248 / *WDP*, 198–237]. An earlier edition: Groessen, Nicolaes Biestkens, 1559 [Keyser 24].

6. *A Lovely Admonition [on the Ban]* / Een liefelijcke vermaninghe [van den Ban] [BRN X, 249–65 / *WDP*, 238–54]. An earlier edition: Franeker, Jan Hendricksz, 1558 [Keyser 23].

7. *A Nice Admonition . . . about the True Knowledge of God* / Een Schoone vermaninghe . . . van de warachtige Kennisse Gods (Groessen: Nicolaes Biestkens, 1558) [Keyser 21] [BRN X, 267–77 / WDP, 255–63].

8. *A Very Nice . . . Explanation . . . of the Tabernacle or Tent of Moses* / Een seer schoone . . . verclaringhe . . . des Tabernakels ofte der Hutten Moysi [BRN X, 279–311 / WDP, 264–92]. An earlier edition: Emden: Steven Mierdman, 1556 [Keyser 16].

9. *A Brief Admonition on Rebirth and the New Creature* / Van der wedergeboorte en[de] nieuwe Creatuere een corte vermaninge [BRN X, 313–37 / WDP, 293–315]. An earlier edition: Emden: Steven Mierdman, 1556[?] [Keyser 22].

10. *About Spiritual Restitution* / Van de geestelijke Restitution [BRN X, 338–76 / WDP, 316–49]. Earlier editions: Emden: Willem Gailliart[?], 1559[?] [Keyser 26]; Groessen: Nicolaes Biestkens, 1562 [Keyser 27].

11. *A Short Confession of God's Church*¹⁰ / Vande Gemeynthe Godts . . . Een corte Bekentenisse [BRN X, 377–414 / WDP, 350–82]. An earlier edition: Groessen: Nicolaes Biestkens, 1562 [Keyser 28].

12. *Three Sincere Admonitions or Letters* / Drie grondighe Vermaningen ofte Sendtbrievien [BRN X, 415–59 / WDP, 383–426].

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VI Enchiridion of Hantboecxken (Haarlem: Hans Passchiers van Wesbusch, 1627) [Dutch; Keyser 6].

VII Enchiridion ou Manuël (Amsterdam: Abraham Biestkens, 1626) [French; Keyser 8].

VIII Enchiridion oder Hand-Büchlein ([?]: C. J. Conert [a pseudonym?], 1715) [German; Keyser 9].

IX Enchiridion oder Hand-Büchlein (Basel: Gebrüder Von Mechel, 1802) [German; Keyser 10].

X Enchiridion oder Hand-Büchlein (Lancaster, PA: Joseph Ehrenfried, 1811) [German; Keyser 11].

XI Enchiridion oder Hand-Büchlein (Elkhart, IN: John F. Funk & Brother, 1872) [German; Keyser 12].

XII *Enchiridion or Hand Book* (Elkhart, IN: Mennonite Publishing Co., 1910) [English; Keyser 13].

α *De geschriften van Dirk Philips* [BRN X], edited by F. Pijper (The Hague, 1914) [Dutch; Keyser 7].

β *The Writings of Dirk Philips* [WDP], translated and edited by Cornelius J. Dyck, William E. Keeney, and Alvin J. Beechy, Classics of the Radical Reformation 6 (Scottsdale, PA: Herald, 1992).

Separate Titles (not in Enchiridion)

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511-34 / WDP, 468-88]. Other editions: [?], 1567/1568 [Keyser 34]; Haarlem: Vincent Casteleyn, 1619 [Keyser 35].

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*16. *An Appendix to Our Booklet about the Conflicting Acts in Friesland / Een Appendix aen ons Boecxken van den twistigen handel in Vr[iesland]* (Amsterdam: Nicolaes [II] Biestkens, ca. 1580) [Dutch; Keyser 40; BRN X, 585-613 / WDP, 522-43]. Other editions: [?], 1567/1568 [Keyser 41]; Haarlem: Vincent Casteleyn, 1619 [Keyser 42].

17a. *A Copy of a Letter . . . to Hoijte Reinicks, an Elder from Friesland* (7 June 1567) / Een copije van een brief . . . an Hoijte Reinicks, in Vriesland een oudste, in J. ten Doornkaat Koolman, *Dirk Philips. Vriend en medewerker van Menno Simons* (Haarlem: Tjeenk Willink, 1964), 200-205 [Keyser 36; BRN X, 689-90 (a fragment only) / WDP, 544-48].

17b. *A Letter to Jan Willems and Lubbert Gerrits* (30 June 1567) [BRN X, 690-91 and 692-93 / WDP, 548-50].

17c. *A Letter to the Congregation at Hoorn* [BRN X, 691-92 / WDP, 550].

18. *About the Marriage of Christians / Van die Echt der Christenen* (Emden: Willem Gailliart[?], 1569) [Dutch; Keyser 49; BRN X, 617-49 / WDP, 552-77]. Another edition: Haarlem: Passchier (I) van Wesbusch, 1602 [Keyser 50].

*19a. *A Posthumous Writing about the Evangelical Ban and Avoidance* [The second ban book] / Naeghelaten Schrift Van den Euangelischen Ban ende Mijdinghe; a Dutch translation by C[arel]. V[an]. M[ander], in Van die Echt der Christenen (Haarlem: Passchier [I] van Wesbusch, 1602) [Dutch; Keyser 50a; BRN X, 653-66 / WDP, 578-88]. An earlier edition: Antwerp: Gillis Coppens van Diest, 1567.¹¹

19b. *A Clear and Manifest Exposition of Evangelical Excommunication / Claire et Manifeste Remonstrance de l'Excommunication Evangelique* [from the French edition of Enchiridion, VII] (Amsterdam, Abraham Biestkens, 1626), in facsimile in J. ten Doornkaat Koolman, *Dirk Philips. Vriend en medewerker van Menno Simons* (Haarlem: Tjeenk Willink, 1964), 207-223 [French; Keyser 48; WDP, 590-610]. The content of this text is quite similar to the Dutch version of 19a, although style and phrasing differ.

20. *A Confession about Separation Briefly Summarized / Eine bekenentnisse van der afsonderinghe int korthē vervatē* (ca. 1549), in J. ten Doornkaat Koolman, *Dirk Philips. Vriend en medewerker van Menno Simons* (Haarlem: Tjeenk Willink, 1964), 193-99 [WDP, 611-17].

21. *A . . . Christian Epistle . . . to the Wife of I[oachim]. den. S[uyckerbacker]. Who Lay Imprisoned at Antwerp / Een Christelijcken Sendtbrief . . . aen die Huysvrouwe van I. den S. die welcke tot Antwerpen gheuanghen lach* (Leeuwarden: Pieter Hendricksz, 1579) [Dutch; Keyser 25; BRN X, 675-88 / WDP, 618-31].¹²

22. *A Letter to the Rhineland Brethren about God and the Incarnation of Christ / [No Dutch title]* (ca. 1547-1550), published by J. ten Doornkaat Koolman in *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis N.S.* 43 (1959): 15-21 [WDP, 631-35].

23a. "You Christian Brethren All Together" / "Ghy Christen Broeders te samen" (hymn) [Keyser 61a; BRN X, 693-97 / WDP, 638-42].¹³

23b. "Rejoice Now and Be Glad" / "Verheucht nu en weest verblijt" (hymn) [Keyser 61b; BRN X, 697-99 / WDP, 642-46].¹⁴

Notes

1. The sixteenth-century Dutch spelling of Dirk Philips's name would have been *Dirck* (spelled with *ck*) *Philipsz*, the common Dutch abbreviation of *Philipszoon* (Philip's son). The common spelling *Dirk Philips* is an Anglicized and/or Germanized adaptation, which disrespects its Dutch roots. However, I am afraid that it now is too late to correct this historical neglect of the original spelling of Dirck Philipsz's name.

2. Unless stated otherwise, I generally refer to "*Dirk Philips: A Biography*," included in this volume (19–47), which the editors note in their introduction is predominantly the work of William Keeney (12). Except for some bibliographical details, this sketch of Philips's life, works, and relevance is still accurate. In addition to the bibliographical references provided in this volume, the following articles and books should also be included: Keith Ian Conant, "The Marriage Views of Hans Denck, Dirk Philips, and Menno Simons" (MA thesis, Northeast Missouri State University, 1994); Jacobus ten Doornkaat Koolman, "Een Onbekende Brief Van Dirk Philips," *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis / Dutch Review of Church History* 43, no. 1 (1961): 15–21; Jacobus ten Doornkaat Koolman, *Dirk Philips: Friend and Colleague of Menno Simons, 1504–1568*, translated from Dutch by William E. Keeney and edited by C. Arnold Snyder (Kitchener, ON: Pandora; Scottdale, PA, Herald, 1998); Gerke van Hiele, "'De duivel verzaken': Onderzoek naar de doopleer van Bernhard Rothmann, Menno Simons en Dirk Philips," *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* 19 (1993): 53–80; Marja Keyser, ed., *Dirk Philips, 1504–1568: A Catalogue of His Printed Works in the University Library of Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: University Library of Amsterdam, 1975); John D. Rempel, *The Lord's Supper in Anabaptism: A Study in the Christology of Balthasar Hubmaier, Pilgram Marpeck, and Dirk Philips* (Scottdale, PA: Herald, 1993), 165–95; Paul Valkema Blouw, "Een onbekende vertaling van Dirk Philips: Traicté de quelques poinctz (1567)," *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* 15 (1989): 149–50; Paul Valkema Blouw, "Drukkers voor Menno Simons en Dirk Philips," *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* 17 (1991): 31–74; also in English as "Printers for Menno Simons and Dirk Philips," in Ton Croiset van Uchelen and Paul Dijkstra, eds., *Dutch Typography in the Sixteenth Century: The Collected Works of Paul Valkema Blouw* (Boston: Brill, 2013), 455–94; Dirk Visser, "Interview met Alvin J. Beachy: de herwaardering van Dirk Philips," *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* 7 (1981): 92–96; Piet Visser, "Zes onbekende martelaarsbrieven van Jeronimus Segers (†1551)," *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* 29 (2003): 198–201; Sjouke Voolstra, "Innerlijk en uiterlijk vertoon van Christus: De verhouding tussen spiritualisme en dopendom toegelicht aan de hand van de reactie van Matthijs Weyer (1521–1560) op een traktaat over de wedergeboorte van Dirk Philips (1504–1568)," in *Van masker tot aangezicht: Opstellen over bijbelse, theologische en kerkelijke confrontaties*, edited by Karel Deurloo and Alle Hoekema (Baarn: Ten Have, 1997), 53–71; also in *Beeldenstormer uit bewogenheid: Verzamelde opstellen van Sjouke Voolstra*, edited by Anna Voolstra, Alle Hoekema, and Piet Visser (Hilversum, Verloren, 2005), 99–104; Gary K. Waite, "Philips, Dirk," in *Mennonitisches Lexikon V*, online: www.mennlex.de/doku.php?id=art:philips_dirk.

3. All in-text citations below refer to numbered references in bibliography.

4. It is noteworthy how formative the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Dutch Mennonite theological, educational, and edifying literary output in print has been for many generations of the Swiss and South-German settlers in the New World. See, for instance, Robert Friedmann, *Menonite Piety through the Centuries* (Scottdale, PA: Herald, 1980), esp. 105–26; David Luthy, *A History of the Printings of the Martyrs' Mirror: Dutch, German, English, 1960–2012* (La Grange, IN: Pathway, 2013).

5. See Sjouke Voolstra's review of the first edition of the present volume in *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* 18 (1992): 145–49, esp. 145.

6. See Valkema Blouw, “Drukkers voor Menno Simons en Dirk Philips” (English: “Printers for Menno Simons and Dirk Philips”); Valkema Blouw, “Een onbekende vertaling van Dirk Philips.” During the 1980s and 90s, Valkema Blouw, an expert of analytical bibliography at the University of Amsterdam, identified some 85 percent of the places of production and/or the names of the printers and publishers of all clandestinely and/or anonymously printed books and tracts from the sixteenth-century Low Countries, including those of the Anabaptists and Mennonites.

7. Voolstra, “Innerlijk en uiterlijk vertoon van Christus”; Rempel, *Lord’s Supper in Anabaptism*, 176–78; Aart de Groot, “Dirk Philips,” in *Biografisch Lexicon voor de Geschiedenis van het Nederlandse Protestantisme*, edited by J. van den Berg et al. (Kampen: Uitgeverij Kok, 1998), 4:119–21, esp. 120.

8. As noted in Nanne van der Zijpp, “Dirk Philips (1504–1568),” *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*; [https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Dirk_Philips_\(1504-1568\)&oldid=145802](https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Dirk_Philips_(1504-1568)&oldid=145802).

9. For title identification, Keyser refers to Keyser, ed., Dirk Philips; BRN X refers to F. Pijper, ed., *De geschriften van Dirk Philipsz*, Bibliotheca Reformatoria Neerlandica X (The Hague: 1914); and WDP refers to the present volume, *Writings of Dirk Philips*. The names of places and printers of sixteenth-century editions are based on the findings of Valkema Blouw, “Printers for Menno Simons and Dirk Philips.” Title numbers with an asterisk indicate methodologically inadequate text renderings in this volume since the discovery of older/first editions by Valkema Blouw.

10. Although the former editors of this English edition, Keeney, Beachy, and Dyck, made an accurate translation of the original Dutch versions, it should be noted that their rendering of the Dutch “Ghemeynte” as “Congregation” is contextually inaccurate in most cases. Dirk was incidentally referring to the local congregations, but more frequently he referred to the “general Church of God” or “the Apostolic Church of Christ.” Therefore, a translation of “church” would have been more adequate than using the modern Mennonite equivalent of “congregation.” See Voolstra’s review of *Writings of Dirk Philips*, 147.

11. Of the original French version of this text, which had been translated by the Old-Flemish Mennonite poet and artist Carel van Mander from Haarlem in 1602, a first edition was discovered by Paul Valkema Blouw in the holdings of the Herzog August Bibliothek at Wolfenbüttel, Germany. It came from the Antwerp press of Gillis Coppens van Diest in 1567. See Valkema Blouw, “Een onbekende vertaling van Dirk Philips.”

12. A handwritten version of this letter, with striking textual variations, is included in an older sixteenth-century manuscript volume of the Doopsgezinde Bibliotheek, Amsterdam University Library. See Piet Visser, “Zes onbekende martelaarsbrieven van Jeronimus Segers,” 201–202.

13. Included in eight Mennonite hymnbooks, between 1556 and 1629; see Keyser 61a.

14. Included in only one 1618 edition of a Mennonite hymnbook; see Keyser 61b.

GENERAL EDITOR'S PREFACE

For many years a committee of German and North American historians known as the *Tauferaktenkommission* (TAK) has published source materials of the sixteenth-century Anabaptist movement under the title *Quellen zur Geschichte der Taufer* (QGT). Recently a similar organization has begun work in the Netherlands with Dutch source materials. It is known as the *Commissie tot de Uitgave van Documenta Anabaptistica Neerlandica* (CUDAN). These developments have been deeply rewarding to scholars and others, as the many articles and books using these documents testify.

There are, however, still relatively few sixteenth-century Anabaptist materials available in the English language, though their number is increasing. The Classics of the Radical Reformation (CRR) series was begun some years ago to meet this need. The CRR series goal is to offer, in English, scholarly and critical editions of the primary works of major Anabaptist and free church writers of the late fifteenth, sixteenth, and early seventeenth centuries. The list of these volumes appears on page five. The present volume is sixth in the series. Additional volumes are in process.

It has not been considered essential to the purposes of the CRR series to include every known document of the writers under translation. Nor has it been considered essential to pursue at length critical textual issues, except when this would contribute to a fuller understanding of the text. Those scholars interested in the details will, in any case, turn to the original language text. Where a choice had to be made between clarity and awkward literalism, the translators were encouraged to favor readability but without compromising the text.

Appreciation is due to the Institute of Mennonite Studies (IMS) and its sponsoring institution, the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries (AMBS) of Elkhart, Indiana. In addition, gratitude is due to Herald Press for its continuing commitment to the work and needs of the church, as the publishing of this series testifies.

*Cornelius J. Dyck, Editor, CRR
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EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

Dirk Philips ranks second only to Menno Simons in his influence on Dutch Anabaptism during the first decades of the movement. Dirk wrote less polemically than Menno. His treatises on baptism, the sending of preachers, the new birth, spiritual restitution, the congregation [church], marriage, and the ban are articulate and comprehensive. His knowledge of the Scriptures was phenomenal. It is time that his thoughts enter more fully into believers church dialogue.

Many of Dirk's writings have been long available in Dutch, German, and English editions, some also in French.¹ The 1910 English edition by Kolb has been used most in North America.² It was prepared from an earlier German translation, inserted King James Scripture quotations rather than translating Dirk's own Scripture quotes, and contained only three of the documents included in Part B of the present volume. No attempt was made to annotate or contextualize the documents within the framework of Dirk's life and thought. Still, it has served well for many years. In 1957, George H. Williams included Dirk's treatise on the congregation [church] in his *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers* volume in the Library of Christian Classics series.

In 1914, Frederik Pijper, professor at the University of Leiden, published all of Dirk's writings available to him as Volume X of the BRN [Netherlands Reformation Library].³ This volume and the entire set was prepared in the best scholarly tradition of that time. It had extensive annotations, commentary, and bibliographical references. It was based on the 1564 edition Dirk himself had prepared.

The present translation is based in equal parts on the original 1564 edition and on Pijper's 1914 one. The two copies lay at either side of the final editor's computer, supplemented by the IDC microfiche of Dirk's writings where necessary.⁴ Documents B 5, 6, and 7 were translated from J. ten Doornkaat Koolman, *Dirk Philips, 1505-1568: Vriend en Medewerker van Menno Simons*.⁵ Some notes and introductory materials are particularly indebted to the BRN volume as will be indicated.

The Translating and Editing Process

This translation project has been on the CRR agenda for many

years. Following Alvin J. Beachy's retirement in 1978, he began a first draft translation, using both the BRN and 1564 documents. After several years, when he had sent about one-half of the manuscript to Dyck, failing health forced him to terminate his work. Following a two-year interval, he asked to be relieved of further involvement in the project. We mourned his death in 1986. He had, however, made a final contribution by suggesting several possible sources of funding for the project.

In due course William E. Keeney was able to continue the project part-time. He reviewed Alvin's work in a second draft process and completed the translation. It remained for C. J. Dyck then to prepare the final draft, checking every line, editing and retranslating as seemed best, footnoting, writing some of the introductions and, in general, preparing the volume for the press. The // page identification is correlated with the BRN text. The biography is basically the work of Keeney.

The translators-editors hope that this corporate process will have helped to achieve the goal of the CRR series, namely to prepare a readable volume still reasonably faithful to the original. Many sentences and paragraphs could easily have been made more readable by paraphrasing them, but that would have violated the integrity of the text. A certain literalness has been found acceptable, even preferable, to undue smoothness.

As translators-editors we resonate with Martin Luther (1483-1546). In commenting on Jerome's (d. 420) preparation of the Vulgate, he added that it "would have been quite as well had he called to his aid one or two learned men, for the Holy Spirit would then have more powerfully manifested itself to him, as it is written ' . . . for where two or three are together. . . .' [Matt. 18:20]. Interpreters and translators should not work alone; for good and appropriate words do not always occur to one mind."⁶ In translating the Waldensian catechism he wrote, "For I have found in my translating that it takes luck to make a precise rendering even when the original is perfectly clear and certain."⁷ We believe the volume has benefited from our joint work.

One of the challenges of translating Dirk's writings are his long sentences and paragraphs. We have carefully modified them. The reader should also note that upper case spelling of key words now and then, like GOD, JESUS CHRIST, LORD, and others were so placed by Dirk and retained to communicate his intended emphasis. Among the many words for which several translations might be appropriate is *Heyligen*, which has been translated *saints*, though *holy ones* would

also be correct. So also *wedergeboren* has been translated as *born again*, though reborn would also convey the meaning. These are given as examples of many words. Dirk always speaks of *Gemeynte/Ghemeynte* which is *congregation*. He reserves *Kerk*, that is *church*, for Protestant and Roman Catholic institutions. He did not encourage people to go to a *church*.

Annotations have been kept to a minimum in keeping with CRR policy, but some were essential to correct understanding. They have been placed as *Endnotes* with each document. The division of the documents into Parts A and B follows Dirk's own division which treated the *Enchiridion* (Handbook) as a unitary collection.

Dirk's Use of Scripture

Dirk seems to have known Scripture exceptionally well and used it constantly, as the following pages show. Following the accepted practice of the day, however, he often quoted from memory. Because of this it became important to translate the text as he had it rather than to insert a given modern, or other, version. This procedure meant that quotation marks could be added to a given text only when we were certain that it was a fairly literal quote.

Dirk's quotation from memory also means that Scripture references translated from his own wording are, by nature, not quite the same as in a given modern Bible. However, all quotations of Scripture can be checked through the references, which are placed within the document itself—not in the margin as the 1564 and BRN X editions have them.

Although we checked these texts as we translated and edited the documents, further verification was needed. Wilma Regier Dyck undertook the task of checking every text, locating where they seemed to belong, verifying their accuracy as well as finding and placing in brackets [] many of the citations of the texts Dirk seemed to have had in mind.

It must be remembered that, while chapter divisions had been made, versification was just beginning in Dirk's time. Many of his references do not give a verse but rather an *a*, *b*, *c*, or *d*. These were sections within a given page and chapter to which he was referring. Often only a chapter reference is given and some have had to remain that way.

Related to this pattern was another problem. Dirk made heavy use of Scripture, in keeping with the primacy of its authority for him.

Sometimes, however, the given text does not really seem to support the argument. Where the intended text could not be definitely identified, the one listed by Dirk was left as given. The only Dirk texts changed were corrections of chapters, verses, or books, including the Apocrypha, where his intention and meaning was clear. And, as indicated, all of these are in brackets [].

Which Bible(s) did Dirk use? This becomes a particularly difficult question when, as indicated, he quoted from memory. Some references seem to be based on the Latin Vulgate text. He used Latin more often in his writings than Menno did. It would be surprising if Dirk, as a Frisian, would not have used the East Frisian Bible published by Bugenhagen in 1545, based on Luther's German Bible. It may also be assumed, though a detailed analysis was not made by us, that he used the famous Zurich or Christoffel Froschouer version, of which there were many editions and of which the Anabaptists were very fond.⁸ It would certainly have been available to him. It is likely that he also used the Greek New Testament of Erasmus.

Editor Dyck determined that, for our purposes, the differences between the different editions of the Nicolaes Biestkens Bibles were not significant. Then as he worked with the documents, Dyck compared texts from Dirk's writings with the 1560 Biestkens edition and the 1560 Jacob van Liesveldt Bible, of which there were many editions after 1526.

It was originally assumed that Dirk, being long inclined towards the Flemish and given the early availability of the Liesveldt version, might have favored this Bible printed in Antwerp. However, this did not seem to be the case. Without making a definitive claim, these editorial comparisons have led to the conclusion that both direct and indirect quotations were generally taken from the Biestkens rather than the Liesveldt Bible. The Biestkens Bible was an improved version of the Liesveldt Bible. It was the first to provide versification. Still, as mentioned above, he also drew on other resources available to him.⁹

Acknowledgments

The translators-editors express appreciation to their spouses, to whom this book is dedicated, for their continuing moral support and encouragement. We are grateful for the financial support which came from many Beachy Amish congregations and for their patience in waiting for the finished volume. Daniel S. Bontrager, Beachy Amish minister and lay historian, was always encouraging and supportive.

The generosity of Lake S. Clemmer, John S. Keller, Gerald Hartzel, Ernest Landis, and Elvin R. Souder of Pennsylvania also did much to make the project financially possible. The work of our late mutual friend Harry E. Martens in coordinating the latter funds is not forgotten.

The members of the former CRR Editorial Council—Walter Klaassen, John S. Oyer, John H. Yoder and Jarold K. Zeman—were most helpful in the initial stages of the project, as was the Institute of Mennonite Studies and its officers, including the new CRR editor H. Wayne Pipkin. Joe Springer of the Mennonite Historical Library and other staff members are thanked for their efficient and expert help. Word processor operators Sue DeLeon and J. Kevin Miller are thanked for their competent and cheerful work with the manuscript.

Cornelius J. Dyck
William E. Keeney
Advent 1990

ENDNOTES

1. See Keyser.
2. Kolb. The last three documents of this volume are not part of Dirk's *Enchiridion*.
3. *Bibliotheca Reformatoria Neerlandica*. Geschriften uit den Tijd der Hervorming in de Nederlanden. Tiende Deel. De geschriften van Dirk Philipsz. 's-Gravenhage [The Hague]: Martinus Nijhoff, 1914. Samuel Cramer (1842-1913), professor at the Mennonite seminary in Amsterdam, worked with Pijper in the series, preparing three other Anabaptist volumes (II, V, and VII), but his illness and death prevented his working extensively on Vol. X.
4. Inter Documentation Company, AG. Zug, Switzerland has prepared microfiche copies of many Anabaptist and Mennonite source documents up to 1600.
5. Sub-title: "Friend and co-worker of Menno Simons."
6. Hazlitt, *The Table Talk of Martin Luther*, pp. 2-3. [Cf. *Weimar Ausgabe*, TR Vol. I, p. 486, No. 961].
7. *Luther's Works*. Vol. 36. *Word and Sacrament*, ed. Abdel R. Wentz, general ed. Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1959), p. 276 [WA 11, 417-418].
8. The 1536 edition was reprinted by Amos B. Hoover of Denver, Pennsylvania, in 1975. See also "Froschauer Bibles and Testaments," ME II:415-16 and S. Muller, "Het Ontstaan en het Gebruik van Bijbelvertalingen," *Jaarboekje voor de Doopsgezinde Gemeenten*, (1837), pp. 56ff.
9. For a helpful discussion of Bibles used by Menno Simons, see Poettcker, pp. 73-78.

The Writings of Dirk Philips
1504–1568

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DIRK PHILIPS: A BIOGRAPHY

Introduction

Dirk Philips was born in 1504, probably in Leeuwarden. He was the younger son of a priest named Philips, so most properly he should be called Dirk Philipszoon, or the son of Philips.¹ His older brother was Obbe. They were both sons of a priest, thus nothing is known about their mother and not much more about their father. The practice of a priest having a concubine, or somewhat legal wife, was common enough in Friesland that the sons could inherit property from their fathers. Two of the leading humanists of the period were also sons of priests, Rudolf Agricola (1443-1485) and Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536). Schools were set up for these boys, and they were sometimes employed making copies of the Scriptures before printing made that labor unnecessary.

Little is known about the early life of Dirk. He probably attended school, for he had a better than average education, as attested by his later writings. He no doubt knew Latin and gave some evidence of a knowledge of Greek and possibly Hebrew, though his usage of some words and phrases from each would not require extensive knowledge of the languages.² His brother Obbe was a barber and a surgeon, a common combination in that time. It would indicate that Obbe also had a fairly good education.

Dirk apparently was related to the Franciscans, perhaps being in the cloister Nieuw Galilea, which had recently been moved from outside the city into Leeuwarden. One of his opponents referred somewhat disparagingly to Dirk as being from that "crowd of Franciscans."³ Otherwise we know nothing of his early life before he joined the Anabaptists.

We do know that Dirk was born and raised in a time of much change and unrest. The fifteenth century saw new developments in several areas. In the middle of the century moving type was invented and printing became increasingly common. Earlier a renewed discovery of the Greek language and philosophy resulted in changes in philosophical thinking and more critical examination of the Scriptures. Scholars went back behind the Latin Vulgate, which was the standard text in the medieval church, and began studying the original Greek and Hebrew texts.

In addition, through the Moslems in Northern Africa and Spain, then the Jews in Spain and other parts of Europe, Aristotle was rediscovered. This raised questions about the Neoplatonic philosophical forms in which most of Christian theology was cast from the early period until the medieval time. These linguistic and philosophical trends challenged some of the generally accepted theological thoughts upon which church practice was based.

The fifteenth century was also a time of geographic discovery for Western Europe. Marco Polo had made his trips to the East, including China, and had brought back new ideas and practices. Columbus had sailed West to try to find a quicker route to the East but instead opened up exploration of the Americas.

Travel and trade also brought changes in the economy. Medieval feudalism based on an economy of localism and barter was breaking down. A new mercantilism based on money and international trade was emerging. That change caused a considerable disruption in society. As usual, it was the poorer people who were suffering from inflation and a demand for money payment for goods and taxes—even as they waited for payment for their services.

Inflation was rampant. Prices for rye, a staple for the common people, increased threefold between 1510 and 1532.⁴ Prices in general increased 30 percent during the period.⁵ Speculation and monopolies drove prices up. Even the church contributed to the difficulties, since it owned 35-40 percent of the land in the Netherlands and had monopolies of goods in certain areas.⁶

A number of natural disasters aggravated the conditions described above. Floods raged through the Netherlands, which has always had a battle with the seas. In 1502 salt water covered most of Friesland. Another flood in 1505 was followed by a drought. A mild flood occurred in 1508, followed by a severe flood in 1509 in which many people and cattle drowned. Again in 1511 a flood took lives and destroyed hundreds of houses. Then in 1516 came the worst flood in a hundred years. In 1530 a tragic flood occurred in Zeeland and another in 1532.

All of these events led people to feel that they lived in a time of despair. They looked for solace to the church. But the church suffered corruption despite periodic movements of internal reform. The church had become subject to much political machination. Cornelius, a church historian from Münster in Germany, writes that the election of the shepherd depended less on his “piety, scholastic ability and spiritual gifts” than on his political advantage or the use which could

be made of his military abilities and personal or family connections.⁷

The immorality found among some of the priests and religious was notorious. Idleness was common. Drunkenness and whoredom were also frequent enough to make some wary of priests and monks. Mention has already been made of the practice of concubinage and the acceptance of the children as legal heirs of priests.

Martin Luther (1483-1546) arose in Germany in 1517 as a reformer of the church. His teachings were known in the Netherlands, though Lutheranism never gained a wide following. A movement called the Sacramentarians arose in the 1520s, and, indeed, Dutch views of the Lord's Supper were adopted by Zwingli and later by Calvin in the Swiss reformation.⁸ That is perhaps one reason why, at a later time, Calvinism was to become the predominant reformation movement in the Netherlands.

Sacramentarianism prepared the way for the opposing Anabaptist movement. In fact, some of the martyrs of the Sacramentarians were claimed by the Anabaptists, such as Weynken Claes Dochter of Monnickendam. She was arrested in November of 1527 and executed on November 20 of that year.⁹ That was about three years before any movement identified as Anabaptist entered the Netherlands. When her examiners questioned her about the sacraments, she replied, "I take your Sacrament for bread and meal, where your members take it for a God, I say that it is your devil."¹⁰

After the invention of printing and the recovery of the Greek and Hebrew texts of the Bible, the next step was to translate the Bible into the common languages of the people. In the Netherlands alone, thirty printings of different translations appeared between 1522 and 1530, according to Kühler.¹¹ Twenty-four were of the New Testament wholly or in part. Four contained the Old Testament wholly or in part. Two were of the complete Bible. Blaupot ten Cate states that over one hundred editions of Dutch translations of the Old and New Testaments appeared between 1522 and 1543. Most followed Luther's translations.¹²

The availability of the Bible in the language of the people gave them a base for a new look at the teachings of the medieval church. It prepared the way for a religious revival out of which came the Reformation as a whole, and the Anabaptist movement in particular.

ANABAPTISM COMES TO THE NETHERLANDS

Melchior Hoffman was a furrier or tanner (*bontwerker*) from

Schwabisch-Hall in Germany.¹³ He first became a Lutheran preacher in Livonia but was driven out by the Teutonic Knights. He went to Wittenberg to meet with Luther and others in June 1525, and then to Dorpat, apparently with Luther's endorsement. After a conflict with Lutheran preachers there, he proceeded to Sweden and began his writings based on allegorical interpretation of the Scriptures. They had a great influence on lay people.

After some controversies in Sweden, he was expelled and traveled to the Holstein area where the Danish king, Frederick I, supported him as a general evangelist. In Holstein, Hoffman moved theologically from Luther to Zwingli and possibly became aware of the issue of infant baptism. After a period of popularity, he came into conflict with the Lutherans and eventually engaged in debate with them on April 8 and 9, 1529. After this his goods were confiscated and he was banished.

Hoffman was briefly in Emden, East Friesland, with Karlstadt, Luther's former colleague. From there he traveled to Strasbourg, arriving by June 30, 1529. He soon came into contact with the Anabaptists and engaged in active rebaptizing, which he supported in his writing of "The Ordinance of God."¹⁴

In 1530, Hoffman returned to Emden and established an Anabaptist congregation. Among his converts was Jan Volkertszoon, or Trypmaker, who became the leader. He probably also traveled into the Netherlands. There one of his converts was Sicke Freerks, or Snyder, a tailor, whose martyrdom for rebaptism aroused Menno Simons to consider the issue of infant baptism.¹⁵

Upon Hoffman's return to Strasbourg in December 1531, he became increasingly enamored with prophecy and the millennium. He announced that Strasbourg was the New Jerusalem and that 144,000 prophets would proclaim the coming of the kingdom. He believed the time was ripe for the coming of the kingdom, that it would take place in Strasbourg, and that it would be done in some nonresistant fashion by God's direct intervention.

In the meantime in the Netherlands, Jan Volkertszoon was banned from Emden. He went to Amsterdam to form an Anabaptist congregation. Believing that no harm would come to him, he gave himself up to the authorities in November 1531. He also gave them the names of the other leaders of the Anabaptists. He and seven of his followers were arrested and executed on December 6, and another of the leaders was executed on May 11, 1532. When Hoffman heard of the executions, he was so horrified he declared a two-year moratori-

um on baptism, justifying it on the basis of Ezra 4:24, where the Jews ceased work on the temple for two years.

Hoffman had traveled to East Friesland but returned again to Strasbourg in 1533. He was arrested and imprisoned, spending the rest of his life there as far as is known but still expecting the coming of the kingdom and his deliverance.

After Jan Volkertszoon's execution and Melchior Hoffman's imprisonment, the Anabaptists in the Netherlands were at first in confusion. Jan Matthys, a baker from Haarlem, claimed a revelation by which he was to assume the leadership in Amsterdam. He proceeded to organize the followers of Hoffman. He sent twelve apostles to resume baptism and to ordain bishops (elders) in various parts of the country.

Münster was one of the destinations to which the apostles traveled. Because of the reception they received, including the support of the preacher Bernhard Rothmann who had already instituted a reform, Matthys came to assume that Münster, and not Strasbourg, would be the New Jerusalem.

Another location to which the apostles traveled was Leeuwarden in Friesland. Bartel de Boeckbinder and William Cuiper baptized Obbe Philips.¹⁶ He and Hans Scheerder were commissioned to the office of preacher—to baptize, teach, and lead the congregation. The two of them immediately set out on a trip around Leeuwarden to carry out their task.

While Obbe and Hans were gone, another of the apostles sent by Jan Matthys, Pieter Houtsagher, appeared. Sometime between Kerstmis (Christmas) and Lichtmis (thus between December 25, 1533, and January 2, 1534), he baptized Dirk Philips, Obbe's younger brother.¹⁷ Houtsagher came into conflict with the Sacramentarians and had a debate with them through which the Anabaptists came to the attention of the authorities. When Obbe returned to the city he had to go into hiding.

Obbe had another shock on March 22, 1534. That day the three apostles who had come to Leeuwarden, Bartel de Boeckbinder, William Cuiper, and Pieter Houtsagher, ran through the streets of Amsterdam. Waving swords and proclaiming that the day of the Lord had come, they called people to repentance. They were promptly arrested and executed shortly thereafter in Haarlem. The authorities placed their heads and the heads of others executed at the same time on posts as examples to the people. Obbe, with a traveling companion, probably Hans Scheerder, went to Haarlem to see if they could dis-

cover which of the three was among those who had baptized them and announced the great mission and promise. The heads were so disfigured by the fire and smoke that Obbe could not recognize them.¹⁸

The shock of the events in Leeuwarden, Amsterdam, and Haarlem probably started Obbe Philips on a different course from the followers of Jan Matthys. He continued to travel, going to Leiden where he baptized and apparently later ordained David Joris as bishop. Joris came out of the earlier Sacramentarian movement. In fact, he had a hole bored through his tongue for disrupting a procession on Ascension Day in 1528.

Obbe Philips was back in Amsterdam in the fall of 1535 where he had a critical discussion with the Anabaptist bishop in that city, Jacob van Campen.¹⁹ They disagreed over the interpretation of Scripture. Jacob van Campen used a typological interpretation of the Old Testament, following the figure of a split hoof given by Melchior Hoffman. He contended that the Old Testament types must have both a literal and a spiritual fulfillment in the Christian era. The literal fulfillment was the justification for setting up a kingdom at Münster.

Obbe insisted instead on a spiritual application of these types. This interpretation was to be more fully developed and applied in the writings of Obbe's brother Dirk at a later time.²⁰ At any rate, that difference seems to have resulted in a definitive separation between Obbe, the leader of the more quietistic Anabaptists, and the more revolutionary Anabaptists who supported the occupation of Münster. It seems Obbe returned to the northern part of the country, for the next trace we have of him is in the northeastern province of Groningen.

About this time Obbe came into contact with Menno Simons, who left the Roman Catholic church in January 1536.²¹ Obbe probably baptized him and later, with others, recruited him as a bishop of the Anabaptists. It seems that Menno was placed in Groningen, Dirk as bishop in Appingedam, and David Joris in Delft. Further evidence of the break with the revolutionary Anabaptists was Obbe's insistence that he and Dirk did not participate in an attack on the Old Cloister (*Oude Klooster*) near Bolsward in March 1535.

In the meantime, the revolutionary Anabaptists had taken over the city of Münster under the leadership of Jan Matthys. They were besieged by the Catholic bishop, Franz van Waldeck. Jan Matthys was killed in a foray against the bishop's army and his body placed in a basket before the city walls. He was succeeded by Jan Boekholtszoon from Leiden. Under the extreme severity of conditions brought on by the siege, Jan van Leiden introduced communism, polygamy, and

harsh treatment of any dissenters. These practices brought scandal on the whole movement for many years to come.

Münster eventually fell to the forces of the bishop. The three leaders who survived were captured, put on public display, and eventually executed, their bodies hung in iron cages from the cathedral tower as an example to others who might consider similar attempts.

Some efforts were made after the fall of Münster to reconstitute the movement. For a time a remnant under Jan van Batenburg continued to use militant tactics, but eventually he was captured and executed, and the revolutionary Anabaptist movement came to an end. The more quietistic, nonresistant Anabaptist movement survived, though not without trials and difficulties of a different sort.

A TRANSFER OF LEADERSHIP

Dirk's activities and location after the fall of Münster are not well known. Aside from his functions as bishop in Appingedam, about the only clear record is a debate he had with a Joachim Kukenbieter (Nossiophagus) in Hamburg in 1537.²² He probably was active in the general area around Emden. The problem of tracing the activities of all the Dutch Anabaptists during this period is complicated by the fact that they only used initials in their writings and apparently also took other names at times to prevent the authorities from identifying them. They also at times changed their clothing, as suggested by Kukenbieter.²³

After his capture in 1538, Jan van Batenburg made a confession in which he placed Dirk third on his list of Anabaptist leaders. He put David Joris at the head of the list, above Obbe, who was second, and Dirk next. He apparently did not mention Menno Simons.²⁴

In the latter part of the 1530s, Obbe Philips became disillusioned with his baptism and ordination as bishop and left the movement. He apparently took the name of Albrecht and became a spiritualist while feigning membership in the state church at Rostock. In 1560 he wrote a confession which is a primary source for understanding his position and why he left the movement.²⁵

With the defection of Obbe from the movement and the disarray following the defeat at Münster, it was not clear if the movement would survive. The work and writing of Menno Simons was the primary factor in the survival and spread of the movement, but the work and writing of Dirk were second only to Menno's.

Dirk probably participated with Menno in the ordination of two

new elders, Gillis van Aken and Adam Pastor, in about 1542. The years following were to be ones of differences with Adam Pastor and David Joris over the direction the movement should go.

The next clear trace of Dirk's activities was in a dispute with Nikolaas Meyndertsz van Blesdijk. Nikolaas was at first a follower of Menno but later became convinced that David Joris had a special revelation. This led to a disputation near Lübeck in 1546. Menno Simons, Gillis van Aken, Leenaert Bouwens, and Adam Pastor also participated in it.

The issue was over the form of baptism and the church. David Joris contended that for the sake of avoiding persecution one could let children be baptized and could participate in the services of the Roman Catholic, Lutheran, or Reformed churches while still holding contrary views. Joris assumed that the external forms were of no real consequence since only internal faith mattered. Indeed, he had already gone to Basel in 1544. There he took on a new identity and lived under a cloak of respectability within the Reformed church, while continuing to write and foster his own movement secretly.

During the course of the disputation with Nikolaas, certain other differences between the Anabaptist leaders and Adam Pastor apparently came to the surface. Adam Pastor tended to unitarian views which questioned the divinity of Jesus Christ. As a consequence, a series of debates were held with him. The first was in Emden in 1547 where Menno and Dirk attempted "to blow out the spark" as put by the author of *Successio Anabaptistica*.²⁶ The issues included the incarnation of Christ, the rejection of infant baptism, and the place of avoidance in marriage. Since no agreement could be reached at the time, the participants agreed not to preach openly on these issues.

A second disputation was held at Emden in 1547. In addition to those Anabaptist leaders present at Lübeck, Hendrik van Vreden, Antonius van Keulen, and Gillis van Aken were present. The question of avoidance of those under the ban was discussed. On November 12, 1556, Menno wrote a letter to the congregation at Emden. It suggests that Menno and Dirk agreed it was best to avoid the banned person, even if the banned person was your spouse. If, however, a person's conscience did not require avoidance, the person was not to be compelled by a legal code.²⁷

A second issue was the question of marriage outside the faith (*buitentrouw*). Dirk refers to it in the last of his writings, "About the Marriage of Christians."²⁸ Published in 1569, it makes reference to a discussion of "more than twenty years ago," which Nicolai guesses

was about 1547.²⁹ The final question was about the incarnation. Adam Pastor was apparently the main opponent of the position taken by Menno and Dirk.

A further disputation was held at Goch in Cleve in the same year. It was by then clear that Adam Pastor denied not only the divinity of Christ but the trinitarian view as well. The conclusion of the debate was the banning of Adam Pastor, with the sentence being announced by Dirk Philips. It is likely that Dirk was at that time acting as the elder or bishop in the area and thus was given responsibility on behalf of the others to pronounce the ban against Pastor.

Adam Pastor continued to preach and attract a following in the area. He no doubt prepared the way in the area for the coming of Socinianism, with its unitarian doctrine, at the end of the century. Dirk Philips wrote a poem or hymn of twenty-two stanzas against the teachings of Adam Pastor.³⁰ One letter, which was generally unknown until recently rediscovered by ten Doornkaat Koolman, was also written at the request of Dirk's followers to offset the teachings of Adam Pastor.³¹

The conference in Emden and Goch probably led Dirk to write his short treatise on "Confession About Separation."³² In any event it was written in or before 1549, for Menno refers to it in 1549 in his *A Clear Account of Excommunication*.³³

Sometime between 1547 and 1553, Menno and Dirk ordained Leenaert Bouwens as an elder, according to a report in *Successio Anabaptistica*.³⁴ Blaupot ten Cate gives the date as 1551.³⁵ Others would give a date as late as 1553, about the time Menno Simons wrote a letter to the wife of Leenaert Bouwens to console her in the face of the risks the office of bishop entailed in those times.³⁶ Ten Doornkaat Koolman believes that Dirk may actually have been the person who ordained Leenaert Bouwens as bishop.³⁷

Adam Pastor seemed to feel he was not given an adequate hearing at the meeting in Goch in 1547 where he was banned. Upon his request another discussion was held with him at Lübeck in 1552. Participants included Menno Simons, Dirk Philips, Gillis van Aken, Heinrich Ebbink, and Leenaert Bouwens—all introduced only with initials preceded by B., which probably indicated bishop.³⁸ The result of the meeting was no more satisfactory than the previous ones since Adam Pastor persisted in his unitarian tendencies.

Another important meeting occurred in 1554 in Wismar, which probably indicates a relocation of Dirk from the area around Goch and Cleve to the northern part of Germany. Menno was living in Wis-

mar at the time as he mentions in a letter to Emden in 1556.³⁹ Seven leaders were present, including Menno, Dirk, Leenaert Bouwens, and Gillis van Aken. The principal subject was the ban, but other topics included marriage outside the church, the bearing of arms, the use of courts, and problems related to the activities of unauthorized itinerant preachers. Out of the conference emerged a statement of nine articles, though the various reports have some discrepancies which make the exact content of the articles uncertain.⁴⁰

A secret meeting was held in Mecklenburg in 1554. Whether or not it was the meeting where the nine articles were drafted is not certain. The occasion for the meeting was that Gillis van Aken had committed adultery with some of the newly baptized women members. He was banned about the time of the earlier meeting at Lübeck in 1552, and perhaps even at that conference. At the meeting in Mecklenburg, Gillis repented and promised to reform. The leaders restored him to his office.

DIVISIONS INSIDE THE ANABAPTIST MOVEMENT

Divisions had occurred prior to the mid-1550s, but they had largely been in movements outside of the main Dutch Anabaptist movement, such as the Münsterites, the Jorists, and Adam Pastor. In the mid-1550s divisions began which split the movement within groups that retained a similar Anabaptist orientation but differed over some issues, generally of practice rather than theology.

The first major evidence of the subsequent divisiveness occurred in 1555, a year after the conference at Wismar which had established the articles about which differences arose. Leenaert Bouwens had banned the husband of Swaen Rutgers in Emden for unknown reasons. He also insisted that Swaen Rutgers should avoid him. Yet she “would not shun her husband at the bed and table.”⁴¹ Leenaert Bouwens proceeded to pronounce the ban upon her, even though otherwise she was a pious woman.

Henrik Naeldeman and Joriaen Heyns of Franeker defended her and were joined by Jacob Jan Scheedemaker of Emden. Menno was called on and replied in a letter to three brothers at Emden on November 12, 1556.⁴² He referred to a decision which he and Dirk had arrived at in 1547 and to the articles drawn up at Wismar.

Menno was invited to a conference at Harlingen to try to resolve the matter, probably early in 1557. He traveled by way of Dokkum where Nette Lipkes, a minister, joined him, and also to Leeuwarden

where Apollonia Ottes joined them. They went to Franeker for the conference with Naeldeman and Heyns.

They disagreed on three major points: (1) The question of shunning in the family and marriage relationship (*echtmijding*); (2) keeping sins confessed in confidence a secret; and (3) the requirement that the three admonitions of Matthew 18 be omitted in case of heinous or criminal offense and the ban be instituted immediately. Menno conceded on a moderate interpretation of the third. It is reported that when he left the meeting Menno said, "If I also find them in the same way at Harlingen, I will jump for joy upon my crutch."⁴³

Menno went on to Harlingen where a meeting was held which included Leenaert Bouwens, and Dirk Philips. Apparently Dirk was in agreement with Leenaert Bouwens and a different spirit from Franeker prevailed. Menno was overruled and the ban was pronounced against Naeldeman, Heyns, and Scheedemaker. According to a report attributed by Alenson to Apollonia Ottes, Menno was intimidated by Bouwens with the threat of the ban and further division.⁴⁴ The point of continuing contention was whether avoidance and shunning should be practiced within the family. The official decision favored the stricter position.

In despair over the continuing divisions and ruthless banning, a new and separate group known as the Waterlanders (after the low region where they were located in the province of North Holland) emerged. The Swiss and South Germans also raised questions when the report of the actions reached them. At conferences in Strasbourg in 1555 and 1557, they discussed and acted on questions of the ban, the incarnation, and other issues. As a result a delegation composed of Zylis and Lemke was sent to see Menno in April 1556. Subsequently a meeting of more than fifty bishops at Strasbourg resulted in adopting a more moderate view on the ban, but this did not include the Dutch.⁴⁵

Menno and Dirk both published works on excommunication in 1558 in which they defended a stricter view than the South German conference had accepted. Menno's tract was entitled "Instruction on Excommunication." Dirk's is entitled "The Ban."⁴⁶

It is ten Doornkaat Koolman's view that Dirk and Leenaert Bouwens were sent to meet with Zyles and Lemke at Cologne to try to resolve the issue between the Dutch-North Germans and the South German-Swiss.⁴⁷ Apparently the effort was not successful and Dirk and Leenaert proceeded to pronounce the ban on the South Germans and to refuse to recognize their baptism as valid. This probably

occurred in 1559. Ten Doornkaat Koolman also speculates that Dirk at the same time wrote his letter to Adriaentgen, the wife of Joachim the Sugarbaker, and sent it to her with elders who attended the meeting in Cologne.⁴⁸

Sometime in the period after 1555, Dirk probably had relocated from Emden to Fresenberg, where Menno was located. There Dirk would have had access to a printer. More of his writings began to appear in print about this time, though some of them had probably earlier circulated in handwritten form. In 1555 a trial of seven people took place in Amsterdam. Among them was a certain Otto Barentszn. from Zutphen who knew Latin. He was not baptized nor had he partaken of communion. He had received a book from the wife of Henrick Janssen. At first he thought Henrick had written the book, but then he heard that Dirk Philips was the author.⁴⁹ Thus some indication is given that some of the writings of Dirk had circulated in handwritten form by 1555.

A pamphlet exists with three treatises of Dirk Philips, written in seventeenth-century handwriting. It contains the letter to the brothers about Christ's divinity and incarnation, "Confession of Our Faith (Concerning) God," "Concerning Spiritual Restitution," and "The Congregation of God."⁵⁰

It is likely that, after the meeting at Harlingen in the spring of 1557, Dirk traveled to North Holland where he ordained Jan Willems as elder for the congregation at Hoorn. He may have again traveled to North Holland from Cologne in 1559 and ordained Lubbert Gerrits.

Other writings of Dirk Philips can be dated from this same period. "The Tabernacle of Moses" was printed in 1556. "Confession of Our Faith" appeared in 1557. "The True Knowledge of God" appeared in 1558. In the same year the admonition about "The Ban" was completed on February 5th. "The Sending of Preachers" appeared in 1559. J. ten Doornkaat Koolman believes that "The Incarnation of Our Lord Jesus Christ" and "Concerning the True Knowledge of Jesus Christ" appeared about 1557.⁵¹ "The New Birth and the New Creature" appeared before 1560 since it was opposed by Matthijs Wijer who died on April 25, 1560.⁵²

PRUSSIA AND UTRECHT

The area around Danzig in Prussia early became a place of refuge for Anabaptists from Flanders and the Netherlands. The shipping trade to the Hanseatic cities afforded transportation to the area. The

rulers were at the time fairly tolerant of diverse opinions and needed industrious workers to make use of the land. The experience of the Dutch with diking and making use of swamp land was useful for settlement and development of the Vistula Delta.

Dutch settlers had traveled to the area as early as 1527 to 1530, when the Sacramentarians fled persecution. Jacob van Campen was planning to flee to the area at the time of his capture in Amsterdam in 1535.⁵³ Vos gives a report from a captured Anabaptist in 1550, in which he says that many of the Melchiorites fled to the area after the revolt in Amsterdam in 1535.⁵⁴ The refugees were not allowed to settle inside the city of Danzig but instead located in the “garten” or suburbs.

In the summer of 1549, Menno Simons visited the area according to a letter he addressed to them on October 7, 1549. He wrote:

To the elect holy children of God in the land of Prussia, grace and peace. You know . . . what grievous solicitude, care, trouble, labor, and sorrow we experienced in your midst this past summer, as well as how it ended; a matter that still at times causes us to be greatly troubled at heart on your behalf, fearing lest the disturber of all peace and Christian love, that is, that ancient coiled serpent which never ceases his raging, might by means of the past transaction once more sow his seed among many, and by means of all that follows, these might fall in God's sight and come to shame and our services of some weeks expended in your behalf be lost again; a thing which even though I write this, I nevertheless hope not.⁵⁵

Menno had apparently settled some discord and possible division among the Anabaptists in Prussia. Mannhardt believes that Dirk Philips and Hans Sikken accompanied Menno on this trip to the Danzig area.⁵⁶ It is certain that Dirk was located in Danzig, but the time of his move there is debated. Kühler places the time as early as 1550, but that seems unlikely, given the number of conferences in which Dirk participated in the 1550s.⁵⁷ He could not have traveled back and forth from Danzig to the Netherlands that frequently. Mannhardt would place it after Menno's death, which would make it as late as 1561 or later.⁵⁸ Again, that may be too late.

The evidence for Dirk's location in Schotland, a suburb of Danzig, is fairly firm. In the church records from Danzig, the following is found:

The year 1567. Dirk Philips had been an elder here at Danzig, who in the time of division in Friesland was sent there and died there in the following year.⁵⁹

In *The Beginning of the Divisions among the Doopsgezinden*, the author says that Dirk Philips “had also come from Danzig to Emden.”⁶⁰ J. ten Doornkaat Koolman also finds confirming evidence in the fact that about this time Dirk apparently translated his writings, “Concerning Spiritual Restitution” and “The Congregation of God” from the Dutch into the Lower Saxon dialect. He also cites a report from 1627 that Dirk was in Prussia from 1561-1568.⁶¹

Dirk’s stay in Prussia was not continuous. In 1561 he appears to have traveled to Emden to confer with Leenaert Bouwens, perhaps on the occasion of Menno’s death in January of that year. He may have gone on to Friesland by way of Appingedam, where he formerly was an elder and where he met Hoyte Renix in Bolsward. From there he apparently traveled to Hoorn, then baptized Willem Janszen in Waterland.

A court record establishes that Dirk was in Utrecht in late December 1561. He baptized and served communion to the congregation of thirty to forty people gathered in the basement of a fairly well-to-do citizen, Cornelius van Voordt. According to Willems Willemsz, a participant, they gathered about four o’clock in the morning and remained until about seven o’clock in the evening when it was again dark.⁶² They hoped thus to escape notice as they gathered and departed.

One report suggests Dirk spoke Brabants, though that might have been because he had been so long in northern Germany and his Dutch was affected. The source was an unlettered household worker, Beatris, who would not be very reliable as an expert on dialects. She also said that he was clothed in black and had an ordinary round hat.⁶³

Another witness, Anna Heinrick Emkens described him as “an old man with a gray beard with white hair, a medium built man.”⁶⁴ This is about as full a description as we have of Dirk Philips. J. ten Doornkaat Koolman guesses that Dirk waited until spring shipping started along the coast again before returning to Danzig.⁶⁵

Dirk probably had the time and security during his stay in Prussia to revise previous writings and put them in publishable form. They appeared in “Handbook” form in 1564 as *Enchiridion* or *Handbook*.⁶⁶ It was probably printed in Emden.

THE COVENANT OF THE FOUR CITIES

About 1560 the church councils and ministers of four congregations in Friesland, Franeker, Dokkum, Leeuwarden, and Harlingen,

entered into a *Verbond* or covenant. They kept it secret, so the exact details are not fully known. The four congregations agreed to cooperate on programs covered in nineteen articles. Kühler lists the three major areas of agreement.⁶⁷

(1) If a dispute within a congregation could not be settled, the other congregations would assist. If they were unable to settle it, outside ministers would be called to help.

(2) Because of a large influx of refugees from the severe persecutions in Flanders, a financial aid program was carried out by the congregations. They agreed to cooperate in the program and appointed two deacons to supervise the program in all four cities.

(3) Ministers should serve all four congregations. No congregation would choose its ministers separately. Ebbe Pieters was appointed to divide the preaching assignments in all four congregations and to handle the discipline problems.

In 1565 two events occurred which led to division within the congregations and to Dirk Philips' bitter disappointment over the condition in the congregations. The first involved the choosing of Jeroen Tinnegieter as minister at Franeker. He was a refugee from Flanders, which some took to be the reason why Harlingen objected to his appointment.

In the dispute that followed, a gathering of ministers, including Dirk Philips, was held at Harlingen to try to resolve the matter. In the course of the dispute, the existence of the covenant had come to light. Dirk objected to it because he considered it a human addition to the Scriptures—and Scriptures alone should be the basis for actions in the Christian congregation. Some writers have suggested that Dirk's motives were not entirely pure but arose partly from his fear that Leenaert Bouwens was gaining more authority in the congregations than he.

The second event involved Leenaert Bouwens directly. It occurred as Dirk was on his way from Harlingen back to Prussia. He stopped in Emden where Leenaert was in conflict with his congregation. The main grievances seemed to be that Leenaert was absent too often from the congregation because of trips made to Friesland. He was also accused of drinking excessively. He enjoyed the hospitality of the cordial Flemish in the area; this offended the more stolid Frisians. Leenaert's own severity in cases of the ban, such as the one involving Swaen Rutgers and his wife described earlier may have added to resentment of him.

Seven ministers, including Hoyte Renix, Ebbe Pieters, and Dirk

Philips, sat in judgment on the case. They decided to suspend Leenaert Bouwens as an elder but not ban him. Probably out of fear of banning, Leenaert accepted the judgment and moved to a place near Harlingen. There he was well received, not by the Flemish, but strangely enough by the Frisians.

Ebbe Pieters apparently dissociated himself from the judgment by at least refraining from participating in the decision. Hoyte Renix at first concurred, but later retracted his decision to suspend Leenaert, as appears in a letter he wrote later to Dirk Philips.⁶⁸

The next step in the dispute occurred when Jeroen Tinnegieter called a hasty meeting. With only about thirty out of the three hundred members of the congregation at Franeker present, they rejected the “Covenant of the Four Cities.” The majority tried in vain to have that decision reviewed and reversed. Ebbe Pieters emerged as the leader of the Frisians who objected to the decision. The dispute began to harden along cultural and personal lines.

The Flemish people in general cared little about their household appearances but did like to wear fine clothes. They were also more temperamental than the Frisians, being quick to show anger but just as quick to change. The Frisians, on the other hand, cared more about their household appearances and less about clothing. They were also more reserved and slow to anger, but more likely to persist once aroused. These cultural differences contributed to the intensity and polarization of what seemed on the surface just a churchly dispute.

Hoyte Renix attempted to mediate the dispute, but he was suspected by the Flemish of being too favorable toward the Frisians. Ebbe Pieters further heightened the antagonisms when he presented seven accusations against Jeroen Tinnegieter on May 1, 1566. Mutual recriminations and suspensions proceeded. By August 1566, the different groups had mutually banned each other.

Dirk Philips learned about these events. On September 19, 1566, he addressed an “Epistle to Four Cities.” To it he added an *Appendix* on the appointment of ministers.⁶⁹ The ministers who suspended Leenaert Bouwens in 1565 had drawn up the statement at that time. It also suggests that Dirk believed Leenaert Bouwens was active in the dispute behind the scenes. The letter expresses Dirk’s great concern for the congregations and is nostalgic about his regard for the fatherland. Some writers believe that two others whose names are not known, V. B. and J. H., also signed the letter, but the initials are probably an abbreviation of “Your brother in the Lord,” (*Uwe broeder inden Heeren*).

The dispute occurred at a time when the Calvinist reform movement, which would eventually surpass the Anabaptists as the major reform group in the Netherlands, was gaining headway. Dirk no doubt felt that the dispute would affect the reputation of the Anabaptist movement and cause persons to defect to the Calvinists. He offered to help resolve the conflict.

Instead of accepting Dirk's offer at that time, the congregations agreed upon an arbitration committee. It was headed by two ministers from Hoorn whom Dirk had ordained earlier. They were Jan Willems and Lubbert Gerrits. They were to choose ten others to collaborate with them. Before they began the task, they required the parties to sign a *Compromis* or commitment which in effect bound them to accept the decision of the committee.

The committee held hearings, then called a meeting to effect the reconciliation. It was held at Harlingen on February 1, 1566. Both parties were required to kneel, to confess their guilt, and to ask forgiveness. The Frisians were then permitted to rise. When the Flemish also began to get up, they were told they must be lifted by the hands of the Frisians because their guilt was greater.

The Flemish were incensed by what they considered a humiliation and thought the committee had tricked them. Furiously they denounced both the *Compromis* and their confession of guilt. The situation was much worse than it had been before. Now it involved the committee, as well as the congregations in the four cities originally parties to the dispute.

The Frisians now felt compelled to call on Dirk Philips to use his office and prestige to bring about a reconciliation. Hoyte Renix wrote a letter of invitation on behalf of the Frisians on April 17, 1567.⁷⁰ The tone of the letter was ingratiating but implied that if Dirk did not decide in favor of the Frisians he would not be welcome. Nevertheless, Dirk obtained a commission from his congregation. With two companions, Hans Sikken and a Geert H[arms], he journeyed to Emden to seek a solution to the dispute.

The Frisians probably knew of Dirk's unfavorable opinion of both the covenant and the *Compromis*, since he considered them human additions to the Scripture and therefore not valid. He also considered the two ministers from Hoorn too young and inexperienced to undertake arbitrating the dispute. He suspected them of being too tolerant since they had accepted into the congregation at Hoorn, without waiting for word from Prussia, a man whom the Prussians had banned.

At Emden, Dirk and his two companions sent a request to the

parties involved to appear before him to present their cases. Jan Willems and Lubbert Gerrits sent word that their congregation would not give them permission to be gone again. Dirk responded with letters to Hoyte Renix, Jan Willems, Lubbert Gerrits. He also sent a letter to the congregation at Hoorn which was to be read in all the congregations in North Holland.

Dirk was likely modeling his approach on the tactic Paul used when he wrote to Philemon and the churches in the area about the return of Onesimus. In the letter Dirk suspended the men from their office as ministers until they had appeared before him and were cleared of any guilt. Dirk insisted that the only fair way to deal with the situation was to have the parties appear before him in each other's presence.

The Frisians eventually did send a delegation of nine persons, four from North Holland and five from Friesland, to consult with Dirk. They met with Dirk and the others at Emden, but Dirk insisted that Jan Willems and Lubbert Gerrits be heard in the presence of the Flemish before he would act. He again suspended all the ministers from their office.

In the meantime the ministers of North Holland had met and decided to send a delegation of four, including Jan Willems, Lubbert Gerrits, Hoyte Renix, and Pieter Willems Bogaert. These four met the nine who were returning from Emden. They decided that all thirteen should go to Emden to meet with Dirk.

Dirk was adamant about meeting with them only in the presence of the Flemish and so refused to see them. They in turn refused to concede the point. Kühler believes that Dirk then issued an ultimatum which in effect would ban the entire group, or at least was so interpreted by them. Whether in anticipation of the ban or in retaliation against it, the delegation from Friesland and North Holland met and on July 8, 1567, pronounced the ban upon Dirk Philips. Four days later they announced it to the congregation at Groningen.

The situation was now completely polarized. No further reconciliation was possible. This resulted in some strange alignments of groups. Leenaert Bouwens, who got into trouble with his congregation because of the cordiality he had received from the Flemish, was now allied with the Frisians. Dirk, who represented a strict application of the ban, was now aligned with the more moderate Flemish.

Dirk remained at Emden and apparently was joined by his family, which is the only indication we have that he was married and probably had children (though we know nothing about any of them). He

spent his last days at Emden writing and publishing his defense of the actions in the Frisian-Flemish controversy.

Dirk also wrote a final tract "About the Marriage of Christians" in which he continued to struggle with the issue of marriage to persons outside of the Anabaptist congregations. In the preface he does express his feeling of failing strength, "In addition, we are aged [63], weak and ill in the body, and are looking to the Lord for our deliverance that we may enter into the blessed rest."⁷¹

The treatise was finished on March 7, 1568. Dirk Philips died shortly thereafter at a place called Het Faldern near Emden and was buried in Emden at the Gasthuys Kerck-hof.⁷²

DIRK PHILIPS' CHARACTER

Dirk never wrote an autobiographical account as Menno Simons did in his "Conversion, Call, and Testimony."⁷³ We have to infer much of his character from his activities and his writings. Some accounts from others may also give clues to his character.

Being the younger brother of Obbe and eight years younger than Menno, Dirk probably did not exercise much leadership in the early stages of the Anabaptist movement. He probably stood in the shadow of these older colleagues. He did show a persistence and steadiness that made them value his support and cooperation. Both Obbe and Menno at points indicated their agreement with Dirk and did so in a way which pointed to the value they placed on his collaboration.⁷⁴

In later years, particularly as Menno's health and vitality diminished and especially after his death, Dirk assumed a larger responsibility for the direction of the movement. He did not always do so with the greatest success, which is indicative of other characteristics. Still, we must remember what the late Roland H. Bainton said about his work with Martin Luther: "It is a grave problem to psychoanalyze the dead."

Dirk appears not to have been as warm and outgoing a person as Menno. He was much more a systematic thinker than a person oriented to pastoral concern for people. Only his letter to the wife of Joachim the Sugarbaker shows a warm regard for persons. Otherwise his writings show some detachment and coolness.

As a theologian, Dirk was more a systematic and clear thinker and writer than Menno Simons. His writings are well organized and do not appear as roundabout and tedious as Menno's sometimes do. They do at times become repetitious because of his frequent citing or paraphrasing of Scripture passages.

Dirk's writings show his great command of Scripture. He makes constant reference to Scripture in his writing, either by direct quotation or paraphrase. He also refers in many marginal references to supporting texts. He ranges widely in the Old and New Testaments and includes many citations from the Apocrypha of the Old Testament.

Dirk does not show the tendency to vitriolic condemnation and name-calling of opponents common among other writers of the period. His style contrasts sharply in that respect with Luther and Calvin, and even with Menno Simons. Dirk rarely makes reference to other writers. He does refer to Erasmus, Luther, and earlier classical writers on several occasions, but always to indicate that he is not taking them as a greater authority than the Scriptures.⁷⁵

Though he is obviously refuting some of the writings and thinking of persons such as David Joris and Adam Pastor, Dirk does not refer to them directly, but deals only with their positions. Sebastian Franck is the only adversary whom Dirk directly refutes (in answer to letters of Sebastian Franck long after Franck's death).

Dirk's firmness and tenacity in the face of the opposing forces he faced throughout his adult life seems sometimes to have degenerated into brittleness and inflexibility in dealing with controversy. His pursuit of an ideal church and the demand for moral perfection on the part of others probably contributed to the splits which occurred within the church. This was particularly true from the early 1550s on and in the controversy between the Frisians and the Flemish. Conflict mediation does not seem to have been his primary gift.

Dirk's contribution to his labors and his writings were probably equal to Menno's in bringing into existence and maintaining the Anabaptist movement during the difficult years of struggle and oppression. Some of his writings are still the best expression of the positions which led to the founding and survival of the church. If anything, he has been neglected unduly because he stood in the shadow of Menno, whose writings and labors have been more fully recognized.

DIRK'S THEOLOGY⁷⁶

Dirk's theology tended to have a double focus: one focus was on the words of Scripture and the other on the Word incarnated in Jesus Christ. Because of that double focus, he sometimes had difficulty separating the letter from the spirit of the law. However, he generally resolved any conflicts between the two with a Christocentric interpretation of the Scripture. He gave Christ preeminence in his theological thinking.

A major problem for all the reformers was how to deal with the Old Testament. As noted earlier, Hoffman tried to resolve the problem with the metaphor of the split hoof. The Old Testament was to be fulfilled literally and spiritually. Dirk agreed with Obbe in finding the Old Testament figures and symbols as types to be fulfilled spiritually in the New Testament.

Dirk found support for this view primarily in Hebrews 1 and 10. The preeminence of Jesus Christ came from Hebrews 1 where it recognizes that God spoke in diverse ways in times past through the prophets but now through Jesus Christ. It was further explained by Hebrews 10, where Jesus Christ is seen as the true reality of which the Old Testament types were only shadowy images. In Christ, Dirk believed, one can now more fully understand what the Old Testament types were intending to reveal, though inadequately in comparison with the fuller revelation offered by Christ. He shows great skill in using Old Testament and apocryphal texts, as well as typology, in supporting a given point.

The incarnation became a central concept in Dirk's theology because it was the Word become flesh. Another theological problem which arose early in the Christian church and persisted among the reformers was how Jesus could be truly a person, yet escape original sin. Hoffman resolved the problem by the concept of the "celestial flesh." The Word came down into Mary and was born out of her—but did not partake of her substance. Hoffman used the figure of heavenly dew deposited in an oyster, out of which came a pearl. The pearl did not partake of the nature of the oyster.

Dirk accepted the process though he did not use the crude metaphor from Hoffman. Jesus was conceived in Mary by the Holy Spirit. His nature was not from her, but from the Father. She nurtured him and he was born out of her but did not partake of her nature and so was free of original sin. He was, however, truly human in that he partook of the nature of Adam *before the fall*; he was created a true human being as was Adam. Thus he became the second Adam. At the same time, because his substance was from God and not from Mary, he remained truly divine in a way other human beings could not be.⁷⁷

Because Christ was the second Adam and free from the taint of original sin, he could offer himself for the salvation of other persons. Through his sacrificial death he offered freedom from original sin.

Salvation is in a certain sense the reverse process of the incarnation. Just as Christ became human in Jesus, so human beings could partake of the divine nature in Christ (cf. Irenaeus, d. 202). If they

repented and believed, the Holy Spirit could work in them a new creation. They could partake of the nature of Christ and grow in likeness to him through trust and obedience. But because they did not have their substance from God, they could never share fully in the divine nature. They were always subject to sin, even though in principle sin, hell, and death had been overcome through the second Adam, Jesus Christ.

In this conception of salvation, the Anabaptists differed from the other reformers. The other reformers saw salvation as a change in status. Through justification by faith, the person's status was changed from guilty to innocent. This "forensic change" was brought about by God's acceptance of the person. The Anabaptists saw the transformation as a real and continuing change in nature. It was not simply a change in status. For the Anabaptists justification began a dynamic process by which the believer partook of the nature of Christ and so was enabled to live increasingly like Jesus.

The work of the second Adam also resolved the problem of infant baptism. Since the Anabaptists held that the sacraments did not have a magic ability to directly produce change in the person, they had to deal with original sin in infants. Dirk resolved the problem by accepting the work of the second Adam as covering the innocence of infants. While they have original sin, which is the tendency to rebellion against God, it does not become actual sin until they reach the age where they know they rebel and consciously choose to do so. At that point original sin becomes actual sin. Jesus' death on the cross as the second Adam takes care of the innocence of children.

Dirk did not accept that sacraments worked in and of themselves. He understood them to symbolize spiritual realities which occurred in the life of the believer but were invisible. The sacraments, which he preferred to call ordinances, served two functions. They were a manifestation of the readiness of the believer to be obedient to Jesus Christ as Lord. Jesus had commanded that they be done. If the believer was obedient, the Holy Spirit was enabled to create the new nature in the believer.

The ordinances were also needed to make visible to other believers the spiritual reality which was within the believer. Through the visible witness, the believers could recognize one another and be gathered into a fellowship which was the church.

Baptism was the symbol of the death of the old nature and its cleansing by the Holy Spirit. It was the beginning of the new creature or new life in the believer. That was a once-and-for-all experience.

The Lord's Supper was the symbol of the continuing trust and obedience through which the believer grew to the fullness of the maturity of Jesus Christ. That was an ongoing process within the nurturing fellowship of the church. So it was repeated. It was symbolic of the reality that Christ was present in the believer rather than in the signs of bread and wine.

John 6 was an important passage for Dirk. It talked about the process of trusting and obeying by which the spirit of Christ grew in the believer. This was analogous to the physical process of eating and drinking by which the fleshly body grew.

The church was for Dirk the fellowship of "holy beings" (saints). It had a prehistorical beginning, was transferred into history, and would have a posthistorical fulfillment. Dirk tended not to use the term *Kerk* (church) which he applied to the established groups, such as the Roman Catholics, Lutherans, and Calvinists. They had added human traditions and practices to the words of Scripture. They could even be "Churches of Satan" though he recognized the possibility of "Churches of God" existing.

Dirk preferred to use the term *Gemeente*, best translated as congregation or fellowship. He also referred to certain groups as sects. They were ones which held to heretical views, such groups as led by David Joris, Sebastian Franck, and Adam Pastor.

The congregation or fellowship of saints was established in prehistory in heaven. Because of rebellion, a conflict began between the "Church of Satan" and the fellowship of saints who remained faithful to God. The conflict was transferred to history in the fall of Adam and Eve and the resultant conflict between Cain and Abel. In history, wherever the faithful fellowship of saints arises, its counterpart arises in opposition to it. That explains the absolute separation which exists between the congregation or fellowship of saints and the world.

The congregation will know persecution and martyrdom as it persists in opposition to the world. The world in its disobedience uses the outward or external sword to bring conformity among the disobedient people. The church does not use the external or outward sword but only the internal sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God. The church is not to force persons against their conscience. Neither is it to root out the false prophets with the outward sword. Thus, because the true church is separated from the world, it is not to use worldly methods. In this principle was found a basis for religious liberty.

The congregation is to be made up of saints separated from the world. This concept led to the search for the pure church. The church

is in a real sense the extension of the incarnation of Christ, since it is made up of believers who share his divine nature. It does not have the external sword to maintain its purity. It does have the power of the keys to the kingdom, that is the power to forgive sins and also to bind.

Out of this power comes the practice of excommunication, more commonly called banning and shunning. As believers are separated from the world into the congregation of saints, so those nonbelievers need to be returned to the world. They demonstrate by their life and words that they are not ready to be obedient and trusting in Jesus Christ.

There are three reasons to separate persons from the congregation. The original statement gives the reasons in this order: (1) To bring the person to awareness of the person's true condition so that the person may repent and be restored to the fellowship; (2) To protect the fellowship against the infection that would come from having unbelievers in the congregation; (3) To protect the congregation's reputation in the world. The latter became increasingly important after the Münster debacle. As a result, the Anabaptists were charged with being revolutionaries engaging in all kinds of abhorrent practices, such as occurred in Münster and among such groups as the Batenburgers.

As the Anabaptist movement developed, the emphasis was reversed. Protection of the church's reputation came to be placed first and redemption of the person third. That occurred in part because of the rapid growth in popularity of the Calvinist movement, which became the ascendant Protestant group in the Netherlands after 1560. The reversal of priorities led to the use of the ban for punishment rather than redemption. This shift helps explain the schisms which arose in the 1550s and later within the Anabaptist movement in the Netherlands as well as northern Germany.

Dirk had an apocalyptic view of history. Because of the absolute opposition between the church and the world, persecution and martyrdom were to be expected. Dirk was convinced that the persecution the Anabaptists experienced from the beginning was an indication that the church was living in the last and fearful time. At some point the church would be fulfilled by the intervention of God. God would establish the New Jerusalem, the kingdom of heaven. Dirk did not try to establish any timetables or schedules for this to happen. The Melchiorite and Münsterite attempts to do so had led to disasters and taught Dirk to avoid anticipating God's timetable.

Until the fulfillment of history, the believers are to expect perse-

cution. Martyrdom then becomes a seal of faith to be accepted with thanksgiving. Only those enabled by the Holy Spirit and worthy to undergo martyrdom will be subject to it. It is not something to be sought, but when it comes can be accepted with rejoicing.

This understanding of the meaning of martyrdom gave Dirk and others the endurance to persist and remain faithful despite the daily dangers which they faced. They could live victorious lives even in the midst of such terrible times.

