

## 1 Early Swiss and German Anabaptist Leaders

### 2 Swiss Anabaptist Leaders

- Conrad Grebel
  - He worked successfully as an evangelist until being arrested in October 1525.
  - He escaped from prison in March 1526, but died of illness that summer.
  - Grebel is significant for standing firmly for the authority of the Bible and against all use of violence.

### 3

- Felix Manz
  - Manz also worked as an evangelist, and was arrested several times before being executed on January 5, 1527.
  - The Zurich city council had passed a law making drowning the punishment for adult baptism.
  - Under this law, Manz was drowned in the Limmat River, praising God and preaching to the observers as he was carried to his death.
  - Manz was one of the first Anabaptist martyrs, and the first to be executed by other reformers rather than by Catholics.

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- George Blaurock also became an evangelist, and was arrested many times before leaving Switzerland for Austria, where he evangelized and pastored.
  - In 1529, he was arrested, tortured, and burned at the stake by Austrian authorities.
  - Blaurock was instrumental in spreading Swiss Anabaptism beyond Switzerland.

### 5

- Michael Sattler
  - In late 1525 he was arrested and forced to swear an oath not to associate with Anabaptists.
  - He soon changed his mind and was baptized in 1526.
  - Sattler worked as an evangelist in southern Germany.
  - He led the meeting at Schleithem in February 1527, and was probably the main author of the Schleithem Confession.
  - He and his wife were captured by German Catholic authorities in May 1527.
    - They were tortured and executed with unusual cruelty.
    - Sattler was well known and highly respected in the area, and his death caused protests by many non-Anabaptists.

### 6 Influences on Early German Anabaptism

- Late medieval mysticism emphasized the direct relationship between God and the believer.
- Many central German Anabaptists were followers of Müntzer.

- Like him, many central Anabaptists tended towards preoccupation with the end times and judgment of the ungodly.
- They emphasized the role of the inner Word.
- They preached the importance of suffering.

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- Many central Germans met Swiss Anabaptists, both in their own travels to Switzerland and as Swiss travelers came to Germany.
  - Along with Karlstadt, Swiss Anabaptists stressed the need for changed, righteous living.
  - Along with Karlstadt and Müntzer, Swiss Anabaptists spread opposition to infant baptism.

8  **Balthasar Hubmaier**

- Balthasar Hubmaier was a Catholic preacher, then a follower of Zwingli before becoming an Anabaptist in 1525.
- He continued to follow Zwingli's model of cooperation between church and government as leader of the church in the Austrian town of Waldshut, near Zurich.
- He also supported the peasants in their rebellion.
- Austrian Catholic authorities seized control of Waldshut, and Hubmaier fled, spreading Anabaptist ideas before being executed in 1528.

9  **Hans Denck**

- Hans Denck was a German scholar and schoolteacher expelled from his town by the Lutheran authorities for his sympathies toward radical reform.
- Denck spent the rest of his life wandering through Germany and Switzerland.
  - At some point he was baptized, perhaps by Hubmaier in 1526.
  - He spread Anabaptism until he became ill and died in November 1527.

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- Denck emphasized discipleship and the inner Word.
  - "No one may truly know Christ except one follow Him in life. And no one can follow Him, except he first know Him."
- Denck rejected the sword.
- Denck was suspicious of legalism and dogmatism.
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11  **Hans Hut**

- Hans Hut was a bookbinder and traveling bookseller.
- He was a follower of Müntzer, and kept many of Müntzer's teachings.
  - Hut did not completely reject the sword.
  - He stressed the inner Word.
  - He emphasized suffering.
  - He was convinced that Christ's second coming was at hand.

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- Hut was baptized by Denck in 1526.
- He was an extremely successful missionary, founding many Anabaptist congregations throughout central Europe before dying in prison in late 1527.

13  **Pilgram Marpeck**

- Pilgram Marpeck was an Austrian and a highly skilled and successful mining engineer.
- In 1528 he was removed from a position as a mining official, evidently because he had become an Anabaptist.
- He died of natural causes in 1556, having worked as an engineer in various parts of Germany.

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- Marpeck expressed concern about troubling trends in Anabaptism.
  - An overemphasis on the inner Word
  - Trends toward legalism
  - Disunity

15  **Melchior Hoffman**

- Melchior Hoffman was born in southern Germany about 1495.
- He traveled throughout Northern Europe as a Lutheran preacher.

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- Hoffman's teachings soon led to a break with Lutheranism.
  - He was influenced by Karlstadt, and stressed the importance of holiness.
  - He interpreted much of the Bible figuratively.
  - He was deeply interested in biblical prophecy and continuing revelations from God.
  - Hoffman developed a strange doctrine of Christ's humanity.
    - He said that Christ did not receive His humanity from Mary, but had a "heavenly flesh" that came purely from God.
    - Hoffman and his followers were accused of Docetism, and this view remained problematic for many decades.

17  **In 1529 Hoffman visited Strasbourg, and he became an Anabaptist there.**

- He continued traveling and preaching, and many people became enthusiastic followers of Hoffman's brand of Anabaptism.
- His interpretation of biblical prophecies and the visions of some of his followers convinced Hoffman that Christ's return was very near, Strasbourg was to be the new Jerusalem, and he himself was the prophet Elijah, sent to proclaim God's message in the last days.
- He returned to Strasbourg in 1533 and allowed himself to be imprisoned, which he thought was part of the prophecy.
- Hoffman died in prison about ten years later.