

Martyrdom

Punishable by Death

- in 1526 rebaptism was made punishable by death
- first imprisonment of Ana in Europe - Feb 1525
- torture was the standard procedure
- March 1525 life in prison imposed
- Imperial Diet of Speyer, The Anabaptist Mandate, in 1529
- Good for protestants because it said that political authorities did not have to submit to religious constraints
- Bad for Ana because it declared rebaptism a criminal offence = death
- Not fully followed – each prince wanted to exert his own authority in these manners

- The crime of rebaptism was seen in two ways:
 - 1) Rebellion against the state**
 - Many were tried for sedition, for upsetting the balance in the empire, for inciting riots, disobedience
 - “fostered enmity, rebellion and disobedience to the government and the seduction of the common man”
 - Death was the appropriate punishment because they were trying to overthrow the government.
 - 2) Heresy against God**
 - Less were tried on this
- Luther stated “although it seems cruel to punish them with the sword, they themselves are being even more cruel in damning the ministry of the Word, following uncertain doctrines, attacking correct teaching and attempting to destroy temporal authority” - here heresy and sedition came together
- But he also said “ it is not right, and it pains me greatly that people kill murder and burn these poor folk so horribly. They should let them believe what the want. If the err in their faith they will be punished enough in eternal hellfire. Why the do they want to torture them now?”

- But added ‘as long as they only err in matters of faith and are not also rebellious or otherwise hostile to the authorities”

Tauferjager

- Archduke Ferdinand of Austria/Hungary organized ‘Taufejager” (baptism killers/hunters) to find and kill Anabaptists,
- A citizen of Augsburg wrote “It is such a misery that the whole city of Augsburg is saddened. They are daily beheading some, at times four or six and at times ten persons”
- Possibly 715 definite Ana executions and 130 more probable from 1525-1618

Grebel group wrote “true-believing Christians are sheep among wolves, sheep to the slaughter, and must be baptised in fear and danger, affliction, persecutions, suffering and death, the must stand the test of fire...and if you must suffer because of this, you know well that there is no alternative. Christ must suffer even more in his members. However, he will strengthen you and keep you firm until the end”

Anabaptists anticipated martyrdom and accepted it as a true mark of the church

Martyrs Mirror of the Defenseless Christians

- a collection of testimonies and letters of 16th century Anabaptist martyrs,
- compiled by Thieleman J. van Braght a Dutch Mennonite pastor around 1660
- van Braght saw that his fellow Anabaptists were sinking back into the complacency their spiritual forefathers had left.
- 800 names listed
- Last Anabaptist martyr in Europe was Hans Landis in 1614

Felix Manz 1498-1527

illegitimate son of a Catholic Priest

- received a classic education of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew

- part of Zwingli's original reforms.
- repeatedly arrested for preaching
- condemned to die, Jan 5 1527, drowned
- first Anabaptist martyr at the hand of the Protestant state authorities

Michael Sattler - 1495-1527

- prior, German monastery.
- left the order because of 'being nauseated with the carnality of the monks and priests'
- In Zurich associated with Anabaptists and banished with them in November 1525
- Presided over the Schleitheim Confession February 24, 1527
- Arrested in 1527 and in prison for 11 weeks
- May 1527 tried in Rottenburg

Charges	Defense
1)- acted contrary to mandates of Emperor	-denied, claimed fidelity to God's word not Lutheranism
2)-taught against transubstantiation	-admitted
3) -taught against infant baptism	admitted; faith alone, not baptism, can save
4) -rejected sacrament of extreme unction	"pope's oil" is not what James mentions (James 5:14)
5) -condemned the mother of God and the saints	Denied form of accusations, but claimed Mary was not a mediator and all Christian are 'saints'
6) -taught men were not to swear oaths	Based non-swearing of oaths on works of Christ (Matthew 5:34)
7) -new and unheard of custom in the Lord' supper	Did not respond
8) -left the order and married	Great carnality of celibate clergy and God's command led him to marry
9) -said that if the Turks should invade, no resistance should be offered- he would rather fight for the Turks than against	admitted to teaching should not resist evil but cry to God for protection

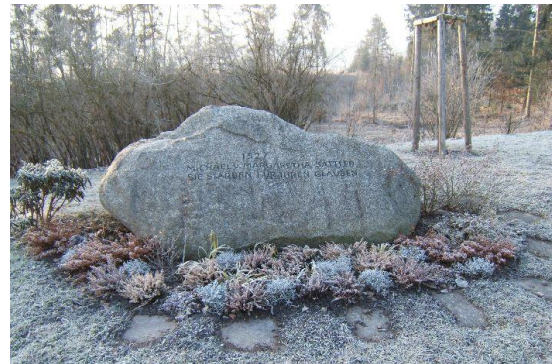
Execution

- May 21, 1527 – age 37
- tongue cut out, body torn twice with red hot tongs, brought without the gate and torn 5 more times, burned to ashes

The Baptist Michael Sattler was executed by burning after severe torture on the 20th of May, 1527 here on the "Gallows Hill". He died as a true witness of Jesus Christ. His wife Margaretha and other members of the congregation were drowned and burned. They acted"

- *for the baptism of those who want to follow Christ*
- *for an independent congregation of the faithful*
- *for the peaceful message of the Sermon on the Mount*

Michael Sattler's final words were: "...I have not been sent to judge the word of God. We have been sent to bear witness to it. That is why we will submit to no other law...in that we cannot escape the judgment of this court we are ready to suffer the suffering that is our lot for the good of the Word of God.



Other Anabaptists Deaths

- Conrad Grebel - plague, 1526 - age 28
- George Blaurock - burned, 1529 - age 37
- Willem Reublin - recanted. Died naturally 1559
- Balthazar Hubmairer - burned, 1528
- Melchoir Hoffman -died naturally in prison,1543 - age 48
- *Jan Matthys - died in battle - 1535
- *Jan van Leiden - died in captivity, 1536
- Hans Denck - plague, 1527
- Hans Hut - burned in prison, 1527
- Jacob Hutter - tortured and burned, 1535
- Menno Simons - natural causes, 1561 - age 65