ANABAPTISTS AFTER 1525 PEASANT WAR (see Handout #8 Anabaptists & #10 Peasant War) HO #12
Pattern of increasing social experiments, radical agendas leading to the Kingdom of Münster

BALTHASAR HUBMAIER: Lutheran pastor, most socially “respectable” of Anabaptists --
Doctorate in Theology, Catholic priest at Regensburg, Germany, then influenced by Swiss
1525 On the Christian Baptism of Believers -- best statement on adult baptism
arrested in Zurich as Anabaptist, recants after torture, then escapes to Moravia in east
one of the few Anabaptists to advocate armed resistance to the state
1528 arrested by Hapsburg authorities, tortured, burned at the stake in Vienna

HANS HUT: follower of Thomas Müntzer (see Peasant War Handout #10)
Millenarian – predicts the return of Christ in 1528, when the “separated Saints” will
take up the sword and establish Kingdom of God on Earth
followed Hubmaier to Moravia, arrested, died while attempting escape

MELCHIOR HOFFMAN:  became a Lutheran, then a Zwinglian, then an Anabaptist
1530 Ordinance of God – treatise on adult baptism
Millenarian: predicts end of the world for 1533 in Strasbourg (Reformer = Martin Bucer)
arrested by Strasbourg Reformation authorities, sentenced to life imprisonment
Melchiorites: his followers move to Münster (see below) and radicalize that city

JAKOB HUTTER: Anabaptist leader in Tyrol (Alpine area western Austria) Hutterites now in Canada & US
COMMUNITY OF GOODS: rejects private property, against commerce and moneylending
MARRIAGE: reverts state control of marriage, valid marriages are only between believers,
“believers’ marriage” is indissoluble, but Hutter supports divorce in other cases
DIVORCE is required when believer is married to a non-believer; women may initiate divorce

CULMINATION OF RADICAL TENDENCIES IN REFORMATION GERMANY:

MÜNSTER (northwest Germany) – see article by Ronnie Hsia, link from course webpage
Ecclesiastical state (Prince-Bishopric) until urban revolt against the Bishop in 1533
1533 Lutheran Reformation established, meanwhile Melchiorites gather for Millennium

1534-1535 ANABAPTIST KINGDOM OF MÜNSTER
Leaders:
JAN MATTHYS: Melchiorite preacher, former baker expelled from Netherlands, begins re-baptisms
urges need to “hasten the end,” the elect must take up the sword against the ungodly;
exile of all Catholics and Lutherans; Matthys assumes dictatorial powers, executes resisters
community of property (no cash), no private kitchens, burns all books except Bible
1534 died during siege, his widow Divora is married by

JAN BOCKELSON (John of Leiden) 25 years old, takes power after Jan Matthys’ death
visions and voices give him instructions on the reform of the city
1534 declares himself King John of New Jerusalem: throne, royal court, Queen Divora
community of property, communal dining halls (compare Thomas More’s Utopia)
community of women through forced polygamy
1535 killed in the siege of the city led by the exiled Bishop, who restores Catholicism
after six month siege (which led to famine and cannibalism in the city)

PACIFIST ANABAPTISTS after Münster
MENNO SIMONS (d. 1561) founder of the MENNONITES
rebuilds Anabaptist after debacle at Münster; rejects violence, no resistance to authority
pacifism as central doctrine, but withdrawal from mainstream society & established churches
adapting to Mennonites leads to some degree of toleration, especially in Netherlands
modern groups such as Amish, Pennsylvania Dutch are in Mennonite tradition