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## CHRISTIANITY AT THE CROSSROADS: THE REFORMATIONS OF THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES COURSE GUIDE



Professor Thomas F. Madden  
SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY

# **Christianity at the Crossroads: The Reformations of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries**

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Professor Thomas F. Madden

Saint Louis University



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Christianity at the Crossroads:  
The Reformations of the  
Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries  
Professor Thomas F. Madden



Executive Producer  
John J. Alexander

Executive Editor  
Donna F. Carnahan

**RECORDING**

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Director - Matthew Cavnar

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Design - Edward White

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## About Your Professor

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### Thomas F. Madden

Thomas F. Madden is a professor of history and chair of the Department of History at Saint Louis University. His numerous scholarly publications include *The New Concise History of the Crusades* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2005), *Enrico Dandolo and the Rise of Venice* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), and *The Fourth Crusade: The Conquest of Constantinople* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), coauthored with Donald E. Queller. He is a recognized expert on pre-modern European history, frequently appearing in such venues as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *USA Today*, National Public Radio, the Discovery Channel, and the History Channel.

#### **The following books provide an excellent supplement for the lectures found in this course:**

Cameron, Euan. *The European Reformation*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Chadwick, Owen. *The Reformation*. Reprint ed. New York: Penguin, 1990.

Tracy, James D. *Europe's Reformations, 1450–1650: Doctrine, Politics, and Community*. 2nd ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005.

Martin Luther monument in front of the Frauenkirche in Dresden, Germany.



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## Introduction

Esteemed history professor and widely published author Thomas F. Madden explores the reformations that swept across Christendom in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The impact of these reforms affected government, popes, and kings as well as commoners, for at this time the Church was an omnipresent part of European identity—and the import of Church reforms on every level of life at this time simply cannot be underestimated.

With the panache of a skilled storyteller and the learned insight of a dedicated historian, Professor Madden explores the tempestuous, high-stakes intrigue of religion and politics being shaped at the highest level—and in turn molding world history and the modern age that will follow.

Involved in this fascinating era are such notable personages as King Henry VIII, Martin Luther, and John Calvin. Through every aspect of this remarkable process of reformation, Professor Madden captures the essence of the era—and imparts a true, studied understanding of just what this time period meant to the course of human events.

## Lecture 1: Christianity after 1500 Years

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Joseph H. Lynch's *The Medieval Church: A Brief History*.

In order to understand the reformations and upheavals that swept across Europe in the sixteenth century, we must first consider the state of Christianity and Christian life after the first fifteen centuries of the faith. Religion in the Middle Ages and Early Modern period was not something that one simply did on Sunday. It was at the core of Europeans' identity. It was their defense against a capricious world and their hope for eternal salvation. Equally important, it was one thing—the Body of Christ, the seamless garment of Christ, Christendom—to which almost all Europeans belonged.

The Catholic Church, founded by Christ and His Apostles, was the source of the Sacraments necessary for the salvation of the faithful. Christianity was not something that one could do by oneself. It required the institution of the Church, with its bishops, who received their authority, it was believed, by an unbroken succession of laying on of hands from the Apostles themselves. The Church was the conduit of God's grace, the protector of His truth, and the shepherd of His flock. The chief shepherd, who was himself the successor of the Prince of the Apostles, St. Peter, was the pope.

The Catholic Church recognized seven sacraments. In baptism the newborn Christian was absolved of the stain of original sin, thus opening for him or her the gates of Heaven. The sacrament of confirmation, which was part of the elaborate initiation ritual of the early Church, could only be administered by a bishop or his delegate, and therefore only a minority of Christians ever received it. The Most Blessed Sacrament was the Eucharist, celebrated at Mass. It was in this Sacrament that the priest took on the role of Christ at the Last Supper, changing the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ, just as He had commanded them. Because only those who had fasted and were in a state of grace could receive communion, most Christians did so rarely. At the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, the Church decreed that all of the faithful must receive communion, and thereby also the sacrament of confession at least once per year at Easter. This provided a means of pastoral care, whereby clergy could inquire into the spiritual health of the faithful in the confessional. Christians have always believed that certain grave sins, known as mortal sins, were deadly to the soul. Sins like murder, adultery, or blasphemy, if unconfessed and unabsolved, led to eternal damnation. Confession provided the means for private confession, absolution, and a declaration of penance in order to pay the temporal penalty of the sin.

The remaining three sacraments were related to passages of life. Unlike the Eucharist or Confession, no priest was needed for the sacrament of marriage. It was effected by God through the agency of the couple, who exchanged their

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vows and consummated the union. The Catholic Church's insistence on the mutual and freely given acceptance of the marriage was unique in the world, for it gave to women a veto over a marriage and placed the authority of parents behind that of the couple. Although marriage was effected by the couple, it was nevertheless usually celebrated at a church where the union was blessed and a Mass was sung. Clergy received their positions and authority through the sacrament of Holy Orders, which itself precluded the sacrament of marriage. Finally, Extreme Unction was an anointing of the sick in order to prepare them for the passage into the next life. In practice, this sacrament saw little use among common people, many of whom believed that it brought death. All Christians, however, made frequent use of various rituals and sacramentals that were not themselves sacraments.

The theology of the Church had become increasingly sophisticated during the Middle Ages. The rediscovery of Aristotle led scholastics in the universities to train the tools of logic on matters of faith. Behind this research was the firm belief that, although man could never fully know God, he could approach him more closely through reason. Universities became the seats of knowledge in the Middle Ages. However, at the same time new developments in government were allowing secular authorities to rival the power of the Church, threatening its independence.

## FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



### Questions

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1. What are the seven Sacraments of the Catholic Church?
2. What role did reason play in the theology of the Middle Ages?

### Suggested Reading

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Lynch, Joseph H. *The Medieval Church: A Brief History*. London: Longman, 1995.

### Other Books of Interest

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Bossy, John. *Christianity in the West, 1400–1700*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Hamilton, Bernard. *Religion in the Medieval West*. 2nd ed. London: Hodder Arnold, 2003.

## Lecture 2: On the Eve of Reformation

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Robert N. Swanson's *Universities, Academics, and the Great Schism*.

The idea of reform was nothing new for the Catholic Church. Indeed, one of the institution's greatest strengths was its ability to adapt, reform, and renew when necessary. Although many people in the fifteenth century advocated reform, they did so within the context of previous reforms. No one envisioned a shattering of Christian unity. However, ultimately, that is what came of the Protestant Reformation. That is because two very new factors played a role in the sixteenth-century reform. First, secular lords had achieved levels of power that dwarfed those of ecclesiastical leaders. Because the Church was an international institution based in Rome, secular powers attempted to bring the local branches more within their power. Second, the coming of the printing press to Europe dramatically altered the religious and intellectual landscape. Ideas, whether good, bad, or absurd, could cheaply be transmitted across great distances. What had once been local heresies would no longer be local. Cheap pamphlets and books also led to an increase in literacy, which would itself feed the Protestant Reformation.

In 1500, the Church was in need of reform on two related fronts. The first was the problem of clerical corruption. From the pope on down the clergy were increasingly criticized for their wealth, corruption, and arrogance. As members of the clergy, these men paid no taxes and were not subject to local authorities. As the beneficiaries of a complex system of tithes and fees, they were the appointees of faraway prelates or the pope. In other words, the clergy, particularly the higher clergy, were increasingly seen as foreigners, whose only interest was in fleecing their flock. Aside from this general feeling of resentment, there was also a widespread belief that a corrupt clergy would bring down the wrath of God on His people.

The second need for reform was concerned with the indulgence market. Christian belief from the earliest times was that when someone committed a sin, he or she must do penance for that sin after absolution. The penance was called the "temporal penalty" because it did not involve eternal damnation. If one died with all sins absolved but without having done penance for all sins, then Christians believed that they would go to Purgatory, where they would remain until the penalty was paid. No one knew precisely what Purgatory was like, but most people assumed it was a place of pain. In order to avoid that, Christians would seek to do all penances before death. The Church could help. Drawing on the Treasury of Merit, the pope could define certain acts of piety as penitential acts that would serve to diminish time in Purgatory. These acts could be pilgrimages, relic veneration, crusading, and

the like. The remission of the temporal penalties of sin was called an indulgence. By the sixteenth century, the popes had decreed that one could obtain an indulgence for oneself, as well as others both living and dead.

Recognizing the need for reform, a number of movements sprouted up in Europe in the fifteenth century. Conciliarism, which came out of the universities, sought to rein in the power of the pope, putting increasing authority over the Church into the hands of councils. By 1500, however, conciliarism was spent. Instead, the momentum seemed to be with new lay piety movements. Groups like the Brotherhood of the Common Life sought to embody the piety of the monastic life into the everyday lives of the laity. Lay piety, coupled with an increase in wealth and education in Europe, led also to the endowment of preacherships. These new preachers were well educated and had their ears close to the latest developments in reform. These would be the conduits of the Protestant Reformation. It is not surprising, therefore, that preaching would become the new centerpiece of the reformed religions.

Reformers in 1500 did not agree on much, but they did all agree that the medieval approach to theology was wrongheaded. The *via moderna* criticized the notion that God could be explained or restrained by reason. This unmooring of God led to anxious questions, though, regarding salvation. Answers began to come from a group of learned men, who were referred to as the Humanists. These scholars eschewed the traditional university professors, focusing instead on oratory and philology. They uncovered the Greek New Testament, and with it criticized centuries of theological treatises and clerical abuses. The most famous of the humanists, Erasmus of Rotterdam, urged a new focus on Scriptures and the peeling away of the ritualistic accretions that distanced God's Church from the people.

## FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



### Questions

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1. Which factors played a role in sixteenth-century reform?
2. Which new reform movements arose in the sixteenth century?

### Suggested Reading

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Swanson, Robert N. *Universities, Academics, and the Great Schism*. New ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

### Other Books of Interest

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Huizinga, Johan. *Erasmus of Rotterdam*. London: Phaidon Press, 1952.

Tierney, Brian. *Foundations of Conciliar Theory: The Contribution of the Medieval Canonists from Gratian to the Great Schism*. New ed. Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 1997.

## Lecture 3: The Hatched Egg: Martin Luther to 1519

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Bernhard Lohse's *Martin Luther: An Introduction to His Life and Work*.

Just as no one could have predicted that reform would bring a shattering of Christian unity, no one could have imagined that it would come from an unknown friar on Europe's periphery. Born in 1483, Martin Luther was the son of a miner in Saxony, a member of the new burgeoning middle class that sought upward mobility for their children. After receiving his B.A. at the University of Erfurt, Martin planned to attend law school. However, a religious experience led him to instead become a member of the Augustinian friars in 1505. From his earliest days in the monastery, it was clear that Martin had a problem with scrupulosity. Even after six-hour confessions, he could never fully accept that his sins were forgiven. If remorse was necessary for forgiveness, he asked, how could he ever know that he was truly remorseful? Above all, Martin was certain of his unworthiness. When he was ordained a priest in 1507, he trembled all over as he celebrated his first Mass, fearful that an angry God would strike him down.

In 1508, Luther was sent to the newly opened University of Wittenberg to study theology. There he was infused with the *via moderna* and pointed toward the writings of St. Augustine, as opposed to "recent" theologians like St. Thomas Aquinas. Luther was struck by Augustine's later writings, which referred to predestination. He embraced the idea that the Elect are saved not by their merit, but because they were predestined so. He remained certain, however, that he was not of the Elect.

Luther's ideas were not new, but they were about to acquire a wide audience. When Johan Tetzel came to Germany to sell indulgences for the building of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome in 1517, Luther posted his 95 Theses, which were a scholarly call for debate on what he saw as an abuse. The event itself was lackluster; however, the theses were translated and published. He became an overnight sensation, bringing humanist ideas to a wider audience. Indeed, Erasmus was fond of saying that he had laid the egg, while Luther had only hatched it. His lower class background and willingness to criticize the powerful clergy made him a favorite of high- and low-born Germans alike. Seizing the opportunity, Luther continued to write more pamphlets and treatises, keeping three presses busy at all times. Sometime in 1518 Luther was struck by Romans 1:17, "The just shall live by faith." For him, this was the key. Salvation was by faith alone: *fidem solam*. This one idea would be the keystone for all that came after.

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As a university professor, Luther was allowed some leeway. However, he was expected to debate his ideas. In 1519, Luther debated the celebrated theologian Johann Eck. Luther lost the debate, but he learned from it that his ideas must naturally lead to a rejection of all authority outside of Scriptures. Thus the second pillar of the Protestant Reformation, *sola scriptura*, was set.

## FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



### Questions

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1. Why was Martin Luther a central figure in the Reformation?
2. What are the first two pillars of the Protestant Reformation?

### Suggested Reading

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Lohse, Bernhard. *Martin Luther: An Introduction to His Life and Work*. Trans. Robert C. Schultz. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 1986.

### Other Books of Interest

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Dickens, A.G. *The German Nation and Martin Luther*. London: Fontana, 1976.  
Spitz, Lewis W. *The Protestant Reformation, 1517–1559*. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2003.

## Lecture 4: Luther and Lutheranism

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Bernhard Lohse's *Martin Luther: An Introduction to His Life and Work*.

During the next few years, Luther continued lecturing and writing under the protection of Elector Frederick the Wise. His pamphlets made clear that he was breaking with the Church. He rejected five of the seven sacraments, accepting only baptism and the Eucharist—and he claimed that Christians had misunderstood the latter. He rejected the independence of the Church, the apostolic succession, the authority of the pope—indeed, the whole concept of the Catholic Church as it was understood.

Although the popes generally had patience with professors, Luther's ideas and their widespread acceptance across Germany could not be allowed to continue. In June 1520, Pope Leo X gave Luther sixty days to recant his heresies. Luther responded by burning the pope's letter amid the cheers of his supporters. He then wrote a vitriolic treatise against the pope. On January 13, 1521, Leo excommunicated Martin Luther.

According to canon law and secular law, an excommunicate was an outlaw—someone outside Christian society and therefore not protected by it. Luther, however, was no regular heretic. He was supported by three of the seven Electors of the German emperor—something that did not go unnoticed by the candidates. Although the new emperor, Charles V (1519–1558), had no love for Luther, he nevertheless promised that no one would be executed in his domain without a hearing. Charles was the last of his kind: an emperor who saw himself in the medieval mold as the defender of the faith and secular leader of Christendom. He was determined to deal with the problem of Luther.

In 1521, Charles called a Diet at Worms, where he planned to gather the financial and military support from the German princes that he required to defeat his two enemies, King Francis I of France and Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent of the Ottoman Empire. Martin Luther was summoned to Worms with the promise of safe passage. Although he suspected that his passage would not be so safe, he had little choice because the princes who supported him wanted him there.

On April 17, Luther was ushered into the Diet, which was presided over by Charles himself. When asked if he would recant all or part of his copious writings, Luther was clearly flustered. He asked for twenty-four hours to consider the matter. On the following day, now more assured, Luther confidently entered the room and refused to recant. The emperor stormed out. He had hoped to defuse the situation by bringing Luther back into the Church, yet

that was clearly impossible. Although the emperor would have much preferred to burn him, he knew that he would lose the support of the Lutheran princes if he did so. Luther left Worms, but he was spirited away by Frederick, who hid him at Warburg Castle until things cooled down. A few weeks later Charles, who like many assumed that Luther might be dead, placed him under the ban.

## FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



### Questions

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1. How was Luther protected from Papal retribution after breaking with the Church?
2. What position did Charles V take in respect to Luther?

### Suggested Reading

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Lohse, Bernhard. *Martin Luther: An Introduction to His Life and Work*. Trans. Robert C. Schultz. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 1986.

### Other Books of Interest

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Dickens, A.G. *The German Nation and Martin Luther*. London: Fontana, 1976.  
Spitz, Lewis W. *The Protestant Reformation, 1517–1559*. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2003.

## Lecture 5: The Splintering of the Movement

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Ulrich Gähler's *Huldrych Zwingli: His Life and Work*.

While Luther was in hiding, working on a new German translation of the New Testament, his movement spread quickly across Germany. Preachers and pamphlets were everywhere, appealing to all sectors of German society. Princes and other secular lords embraced ideas that allowed for new ecclesiastical authority and gave them leave to seize ecclesiastical property. As often happens with new movements, its adherents were more vehement and radical than the founder. At Wittenberg, the movement was taken over by Luther's student, Andrew Karlstadt. Karlstadt abandoned his habit, wearing secular clothes, and his vow of celibacy, taking a wife. He urged all clergy to do the same. He led and encouraged image-breaking excursions in which church windows and statues were destroyed. When three prophets arrived, claiming direct communication with God, Luther decided he must return. The prophets and Karlstadt were expelled and iconoclasm stopped.

Behind all of Luther's theology was the idea that the Bible was the beginning and end of faith. Everything that was not plainly laid out in the Bible was man-made, and therefore either superfluous or evil. The Catholic Church, in his view, had covered over the truth, keeping it out of the hands of the faithful and substituting arcane rituals, convoluted theology, and man-made law for the simplicity of the Gospel. Luther believed that if people read the Bible for its plain meaning, they would come to the same conclusions as he had. But once the authority of the Church was toppled, there was no reason that others should follow Luther's reading.

Affected by the same ideas and culture, Huldrych Zwingli was led to many of the same conclusions as Luther. A city preacher in Zurich, he quickly accepted Luther's new ideas and spread them in his sermons. He met with strong opposition, although he worked through the city government to enact his measures, such as the outlawing of the Hail Mary in 1520. Zwingli believed that faith sanctifies life, which means that the works of Christians are pleasing to God. He also believed that the Mass was only a remembrance—nothing more, nothing miraculous. In both areas he ran afoul of Luther, who held that works were irrelevant and that the bread and wine became the essence of the Body and Blood of Christ. A pamphlet war—something that would be a staple of the Reformation—raged between Zurich and Wittenberg.

Reformers who supported Luther or Zwingli watched closely Erasmus, who was widely seen as the father of the movements. This was not a position that Erasmus enjoyed. Although he had been critical of the popes and orders, he had never wanted schism. He sympathized with the reformers, but he came

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to believe that they had gone too far. In a treatise of 1524 he criticized Luther's doctrine of predestination, approaching him as a teacher toward a student. Luther responded with an angry publication in which he accused Erasmus of atheism.

## FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



### Questions

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1. In what directions did Luther's followers shift the movement?
2. How did the teaching of Zwingli differ from those of Luther?

### Suggested Reading

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Gäbler, Ulrich. *Huldrych Zwingli: His Life and Work*. Trans. Ruth C. L. Gritsch. Edinburgh, Scotland: T&T Clark Publishers, Ltd., 1999.

### Other Books of Interest

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Lohse, Bernhard. *Martin Luther: An Introduction to His Life and Work*. Trans. Robert C. Schultz. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 1986.

Spitz, Lewis W. *The Protestant Reformation, 1517–1559*. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2003.

## Lecture 6: The Radical Reformation

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is George Huntston Williams's *The Radical Reformation*.

Luther and Zwingli were only the two most famous reformers of the time. Once they had broken with the church, the flood gates were opened. Both Luther and Zwingli urged Christians to read the Bible, certain that doing so would bring them to their own conclusions. This was naïve, as centuries of Christian history had clearly shown. Without the authority of the Church to interpret, to bind and loose, all could interpret, all could bind, all could loose. And they did. As new interpretations and doctrines began to spread they became more and more eccentric. Those farthest from the mainstream are referred to by historians as the Radical Reformation.

Radical beliefs, like those of the mainstream Protestants, started with preachers with their own ideas about Christianity and the Bible. They disagreed strongly with Luther and Zwingli, and of course the Catholics. But they also disagreed with each other. In general, the only thing the radicals had in common was their rejection of the idea that the state and the church were complementary, each working hand in hand. This was a firmly held belief in Europe for more than a millennium and one that the Protestants too embraced. Both Luther and Zwingli had risen to prominence with the active support of secular authorities. Radicals, though, believed that the church was simply the community of the Elect who were in this world, but not of it. States, with their sinful use of force, existed only to keep order and restrain the natural sinfulness of the non-Elect. The fact that states, whether Protestant or Catholic, routinely persecuted them, was only evidence to the Radicals that they indeed were the true church.

Radical preachers appeared almost from the very beginning of the Reformation. Thomas Müntzer was a city preacher in Germany who was affected by the same intellectual and religious currents that swept along Luther. Indeed, some of his ideas were adopted by Luther. In his fiery sermons, Müntzer insisted that Scripture must not only be read, but it must be truly experienced. He told his followers that they must first feel the horror and pain of Hell, before they ascend to the joy of salvation through Christ. An early proponent of *sola scriptura*, Müntzer produced the first German New Testament and first German hymns. Luther did the same, but it was irritating for him to be second. In 1523, Müntzer moved to Allstedt in Saxony, where he rivaled Luther in popularity. Indeed, some in Wittenberg began defecting to Allstedt. Luther was upset, complaining that Müntzer reaped where he had sown.

As the animosity between Luther and Müntzer became stronger, the latter began to claim that Luther was afraid to go where his teaching would natu-

rally lead him. If the Christian man was free, then he should overthrow those placed over him. Luther, who Müntzer called Dr. Softlife, had been bought and paid for by the task masters. He called for violent revolution. Peasant rebellions had already begun in parts of Germany, and Luther had seemed to support them. Müntzer placed himself at the forefront of them. As the Lutheran princes organized against the rebellions, Luther was forced to side with them and against the peasants. As a result, Lutheranism lost much of its popular appeal.

Perhaps the largest group of Radicals were the Anabaptists. Not a union, but a variety of separate groups, the Anabaptists believed that infant baptism was wrong. They saw themselves as small communities of Elect, living in common as the first Christians had done. In 1533 a militant group took up arms and took control of the city of Münster. The government and practices in the city had little in common with the Heavenly Jerusalem they deemed it. Catholic and Protestant forces combined to crush the rebellion and Anabaptism was persecuted across Europe. A pacifist version, under Menno Simons (Mennonites), survived.

## FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



### Questions

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1. How did Thomas Müntzer influence the decline of Lutheranism?
2. Who were the Anabaptists?

### Suggested Reading

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Williams, George Huntston. *The Radical Reformation*. 3rd ed. Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2000.

### Other Books of Interest

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Goertz, Hans-Jur. *The Anabaptists*. London: Routledge, 1996.

Mullett, Michael A. *Radical Religious Movements in Early Modern Europe*. London: Unwin Hyman, 1981.

## Lecture 7: Charles V, Suleiman the Magnificent, and the Lutheran Movement

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Manuel Fernández Álvarez's *Charles V*.

By any standards, Charles V was a remarkable man. Through the marital foresight of his Hapsburg forebears he came to inherit the largest empire in human history at that time. Aside from various archaic titles such as King of Jerusalem and Duke of Athens, he was the Duke of Burgundy since the age of six and the King of Spain since the age of sixteen. He became the Holy Roman Emperor at the age of nineteen. Charles was every inch a medieval emperor, a ruler who saw himself in the line of Charlemagne. For him, as for all medieval rulers, there could be only one God, one Church, and one Empire. Although Luther and his followers hoped to sway Charles, he never saw their religion as anything more than a vile heresy. Like the popes, he believed that only a united Christendom could defend against the power of the Ottoman Turks.

For his part, Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent continued his empire's push deep into Europe, with the object of conquering the last remnants of Christendom. He had already captured Rhodes in 1522 and expelled the Knights Hospitaller and was making preparations to move his armies directly into Hungary and the Empire. Suleiman's armies played an important role in the well-being of Lutheran reform, for Charles was kept from moving against the heretics while defending his lands. Suleiman, who was pleased to see turmoil among the infidels, once offered to protect Luther, although the latter declined. In a real way, though, Suleiman was Luther's protector.

In 1525, Charles had defeated France and captured the king. In a position of unrivaled power in Europe, he ordered the ban of Worms to be imposed and called a Diet at Speyer. Lutheranism seemed finished. However, before the meeting was held, Suleiman defeated Christian forces at the battle of Mohács and conquered all of Hungary. Desperate for support from the German princes, Charles backed off, allowing each lord to act according to his conscience for the time being. The subsequent Sack of Rome in 1527 by Lutherans and the Siege of Vienna by Suleiman in 1529 only made things worse for Charles. However, the sultan's failure to capture Vienna gave him the breathing room he needed. In 1529, the majority at the Diet of Speyer agreed to outlaw the spread of Lutheranism, attempting to contain it until a reform council could deal with the matter.

Charles's improved position focused the minds of the Protestants in Germany. They tried first to forge a union between Luther and Zwingli and, when that failed, between the Lutherans and the Catholics. Charles was willing to find a compromise that would avoid bloodshed. Philip Malanchthon, one of Luther's lieutenants, brought to Augsburg a confession of faith that

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stressed common ground with the Catholics. But the attempt failed and when Charles moved to enforce the Edict of Speyer the Protestant princes formed a defensive alliance called the Schmalkalden League. Thus the battle lines were drawn. The Protestants, who had courted support from France, were declared traitors and the Catholic princes prepared for war. But once again the Turks posed a danger, and so Charles was forced to divert his attention.

As late as 1541, Charles continued to press for a compromise between Lutheran and Catholic theologians. But the talks, so full of optimism at first, failed. After again defeating France in 1544 Charles saw to it that the pope called an ecumenical council at Trent to deal with the matter of reform. But the council only hardened Protestant resolve to remain outside the Catholic Church. With no options left, Charles attacked the Protestant princes in 1547, defeating them and imposing a compromise Catholicism that he hoped the faithful would accept. They did not. War again broke out in 1552, and although Charles again defeated the Protestants, he realized that peace could only be obtained by allowing princes to determine the religion of their region. The Peace of Augsburg in 1555 codified this into law.

## FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



### Questions

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1. What factors allowed the Lutheran Movement to survive under Charles V?
2. What was the Edict of Speyer?

### Suggested Reading

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Fernández Alvarez, Manuel. *Charles V*. London: Thames & Hudson, Ltd., 1976.

### Other Books of Interest

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Brandi, Karl. *The Emperor Charles V: The Growth and Destiny of a Man and of a World-empire*. New York: Vintage, 1969.

Tyler, W. Royall. *The Emperor Charles V*. New York: Essential Books, 1956.

## Lecture 8: John Calvin

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is François Wendel's *Calvin: Origins and Development of His Religious Thought*.

With the exception of Martin Luther, few of the Protestant reformers would have had much impact on the history of the West as John Calvin. In many ways, he was very typical of reformers of the time. Trained in theology at the University of Paris, he switched from studying law at the University of Lyons. These two elements would be woven together into his evolving religious beliefs. When he returned to Paris to pursue advanced theological study, he was filled with the humanist ideas circulating there. He was energized by the publication of Erasmus's Greek New Testament, which held for him the promise of wiping away centuries of error. He was also taken with Luther's theology, particularly his insistence that all were utterly dependent on Christ for salvation. Nevertheless, as with so many other reformers, Calvin would come to very different conclusions than Luther.

When his ideas crossed the line into heresy, Calvin was banished from Paris. He made his way to Basel, where reformers were everywhere. In 1536, he wrote his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, laying out for the first time his own religion. This was a work that was to grow and change as Calvin's own views did, becoming a work of great importance by 1555. He agreed with Luther that ultimate authority lay only in Scriptures and that God's commandments are impossible to fulfill properly. However, he took Zwingli's side on the debate concerning works, arguing that those whose faith will save them can use the commandments as an avenue toward holiness. He also agreed with Zwingli on the rejection of images and in the construction of the Lord's Supper as merely a remembrance. In his early years, therefore, Calvin was not unlike most followers of Zwingli.

In 1536, Calvin was hired as Geneva's city preacher. At once he began giving sermons on the Reformed Church. With the help of the city government, he led attacks on the Catholics, smashing images and chasing clergy out of town. After two years there, Calvin became upset when the city council adopted a French worship service for the city that was based on Zwinglian services in Bern. He did not believe that secular authorities should have any authority over worship or morals. The church, he believed, should be independent of the state—something that made Calvin more like the Catholics than Martin Luther.

After settling in Strasbourg, Calvin met Martin Bucer, who was the leading Protestant preacher there. Bucer was similarly discontent with the secular authorities, who refused to enforce the reformed church's moral codes or even

to banish excommunicates. Although Bucer agreed that God's commandments were impossible to fulfill, he also believed that the invisible Church should be made manifest by visible works. It bothered him that although the true Gospel was now preached, the morality of the citizens had not budged.

Observing what worked and what didn't, Calvin brought a new scheme of church organization with him when he returned to Geneva in 1541. He began by having a long list of Catholics, clergy, lawyers, and others expelled. He then organized reformed churches around what he believed were early Church practices, creating overseers, elders, and a pastor as part of a consistory. The consistory's charge was to govern the church and enforce the morality of the congregation. The government's job was to enforce the consistory's decisions. Because almost all human activity was considered to be under moral jurisdiction, and because all were required to be members of the church, this gave Calvin and his consistories solid control over the city. By any standards, Calvin's morality was austere.

By 1555, Calvin's theology had crystallized into a "double predestination." He believed that human beings cannot earn heaven, since they are predestined to be Elect. But more importantly, he also believed that the Elect could not avoid heaven, no matter their works. It was right and proper for the Elect to do good works, but it was not necessary. Calvin had nothing but scorn for Lutherans, who kept churches richly decorated and who still placed the Mass at the centerpiece of worship. Calvinist churches were white, with no decoration save pews and a pulpit. This was clearly the ultimate victory of the preachers.

Geneva became a Mecca for reformers, who flocked there from across Europe, but particularly from Francophone areas. Calvin's careful organization was evident, for he opened an academy to train preachers who were then sent back home to build churches on the Calvinist models. Again following Catholic precedent, Calvin was training and sending out the missionaries. It worked. Calvinism firmly rooted itself in France, the Netherlands, and Scotland. In each area it became associated with rebellion. War would be the outcome.

## FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



### Questions

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1. How did Zwingli's teachings influence Calvin?
2. How did Calvinism differ from Lutheranism?

### Suggested Reading

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Wendel, François. *Calvin: Origins and Development of His Religious Thought*. Trans. Philip Mairet. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1997.

### Other Books of Interest

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Prestwich, Michael, ed. *International Calvinism, 1548–1715*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985.

## Lecture 9: The Reformation in France

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Mark Greengrass's *The French Reformation*.

Calvinism spread quickly in France, largely because Calvin wrote in French and actively sent missionaries into the kingdom. Soon almost every city had a large Calvinist, known in France as Huguenot, population. The large majority of the country, however, remained Catholic, as did the monarchy. But unsettling times were approaching. In 1559, King Henry II died and his oldest son quickly followed him into the grave. The next oldest son, Charles IX, was only nine years old and under the control of his mother, the regent, Catherine de Medici. Catherine was an exceptionally strong woman whose interest above all was power and the well-being of her children. Religion was of little interest to her. As often happens, leaders of various factions arose to challenge Catherine, each hoping to gain control of the king. In France, these political maneuverings took on a religious character. The main players were Antoine de Bourbon, who was closest to the royal line and a Huguenot; Anne de Montmorency, a powerful landholder who was a moderate pre-Tridentine Catholic, and Francis, Duke of Guise, who was Henry II's military commander and a staunch supporter of Tridentine Catholicism.

The history of the Protestant Reformation in France is one of repeated and bloody wars. The frequent shift of the political and religious landscapes meant that both Catholics and Huguenots were quick to take advantage when the opportunities arose. When Charles IX finally came to power he did so as a friend to Coligny, a Huguenot noble. Coligny convinced Charles that the best way to restore unity in France was to wage war against Catholic France. Catherine, who hated Coligny for his influence on her son, strongly disagreed with this plan. It was, she believed, too expensive. Deciding to rid herself of Coligny, Catherine and her Guise allies attempted to assassinate Coligny while he and all of the other Huguenot nobility were attending the marriage of the king's sister and Henry of Navarre, a Huguenot. Catherine then convinced Charles that the bullet was meant for him and that they must move against the Huguenots. Almost all of them were executed and the French people poured into the streets on August 24, 1572, for the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre.

Charles was succeeded by his younger brother Henry III, who was very unpopular and clearly sympathetic with Huguenots. When he gave an overly generous treaty to the Huguenots, Guise organized a Catholic League, which, with Spanish backing, scored impressive victories against Protestants. In 1584 the king's younger brother, and last male heir of the Valois, died. This meant that Henry of Navarre was heir to the throne. The Catholic League was ener-

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gized, becoming so powerful that it constituted a shadow government in many parts of the country, including Paris. At the head of the league was Guise, whose power now rivaled the king. When Henry assassinated Guise and his brother, Paris erupted. A new war broke out between the league and the king, now allied with Henry of Navarre. In 1589, the king was assassinated. Henry subsequently converted to Catholicism and issued the Edict of Nantes, which granted freedom of conscience to Huguenots. Although it brought peace, Nantes sowed the seeds of later problems for Louis XIII and his advisor, Cardinal Richelieu. It would not be until the reign of Louis XIV that Nantes would be revoked and Catholic unity restored to France.

## FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



### Questions

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1. Why did Calvinism spread in France?
2. Describe the character of the Protestant Reformation in France.

### Suggested Reading

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Greengrass, Mark. *The French Reformation*. London: Blackwell Publishers, 1987.

### Other Books of Interest

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Briggs, Robin. *Early Modern France, 1560–1715*. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Phillips, Henry. *Church and Culture in Seventeenth-Century France*. New ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

## Lecture 10: The Reformation in England: Henry VIII (1509–47)

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is J.J. Scarisbrick's *Henry VIII*.

Across the Channel, England was not unaffected by the currents of Reformation that swept across Europe. Lutheran and other reform pamphlets and books made their way to English bookshops and were discussed among the academics at Oxford and Cambridge. But the message never resonated with the English the way that it did with the Germans, Swiss, and French. In general, the English were content with their faith and the Church. Their king, Henry VIII, had been trained in theology and strongly opposed Luther and his ideas. Indeed, he even wrote a treatise against Luther that he dedicated to Pope Leo X. In this work, Henry declared that “the whole church not only is subject to Christ, but, for Christ’s sake, to Christ’s only vicar, the pope of Rome.” To deny this, he said, was nothing but blasphemy.

Henry’s familiarity with theology was intentional. As a youth, he had been prepared for a career in the Church. However, when his older brother, Arthur, died at the age of fifteen, Henry was the next in line for the throne. Arthur had been married to Catherine of Aragon, the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, but the marriage remained unconsummated. With a dispensation from Pope Julius II, Catherine and Henry were married. Henry was crowned king in 1509. From the beginning, he was a champion of the faith, working to bring about a great crusade and handing over much of England’s foreign policy to Cardinal Wolsey, whom he named Lord Chancellor. Wolsey grew in power until 1525, when “the king’s great question” arose.

By 1525, it was clear that Henry had a problem. He and Catherine had had only one child who survived childhood: a girl named Mary. Henry’s family, the Tudors, had only come to power under his father, Henry VII, and only after years of bloody civil war during the War of the Roses. Henry needed a male heir, yet Catherine was nearing the end of her childbearing years. Henry came to believe that Leviticus 20:21, in which the taking of one’s brother’s wife is forbidden, was causing God to punish him with no son. Julius, he began to argue, had been wrong to allow the marriage and it must now be annulled. He proposed marrying Anne Boleyn, a lady-in-waiting in Catherine’s court and the young sister of his long-time mistress. Henry charged Wolsey with getting the annulment.

Cardinal Wolsey’s task was a difficult one, for in 1527 Pope Clement VII was a prisoner in Rome of Charles V. The emperor did not favor having his aunt deposed and ejected. Realizing that the pope would never grant his request willingly, in 1529 Henry began threatening the pope. If he would not grant the

annulment, Henry made clear that he would use a disgruntled Parliament to remove England from the Church. The pope did not budge.

In 1529, Henry had Cardinal Wolsey arrested and appointed the speaker of the House of Commons, Sir Thomas More, as the new Lord Chancellor. More, who was a renowned humanist, was meant to signal Henry's new direction. But when Henry moved in that direction, More balked. When Henry named his friend, Thomas Cranmer, as the new Archbishop of Canterbury, More resigned. A year later, Henry had Parliament pass the Act in Restraint of Appeals, which forbade any appeal to Rome, and in 1534 the Supremacy Act, which placed the monarch, rather than the pope, at the head of the church in England. When More would not endorse the supremacy, he was arrested and imprisoned in the Tower of London. One year later he was executed for refusing to accept the break with the Catholic Church in Rome.

Henry was unwilling to embrace Protestant ideas, but wary about crushing all hope. Instead, he allowed a middle way, in which disputes were passed over in silence. Although he had nothing against monastic vows, he nevertheless dissolved the monasteries of England, forcing the monks and nuns to marry, so that he could seize their property and gain their revenues. During much of his life different sides, both Protestant and Catholic, attempted to gain advantage. When Henry died, he insisted that the English accept his Six Articles, which held to the Catholic faith.

## FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



### Questions

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1. What was the character of the Reformation in England?
2. What are the reasons for Henry VIII's break with the Church?

### Suggested Reading

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Scarisbrick, J.J. *Henry VIII*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972.

### Other Books of Interest

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Duffy, Eamon. *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, 1400–1580*. 2nd ed. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005.

Kelly, Henry A. *The Matrimonial Trials of Henry VIII*. London: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2004.

## Lecture 11: The Reformation in England: The New Order

**The Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Susan Doran and Christopher Durston's *Princes, Pastors and People: The Church and Religion in England, 1500–1700*.

In order to obtain a male heir, Henry VIII set into motion forces that would wreak havoc across English society for more than a century. It is ironic, then, that his only son, Edward VI, would scarcely live to see his sixteenth birthday. Edward, who had always been sickly, came to the throne at the age of nine, surrounded by nobles eager to bring the full measure of Protestant Reformation to England. They were led by Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset and great-uncle of the king, and John Dudley, the Earl of Warwick. Both men saw the founts of reform at Zurich and Geneva far more so than at Wittenberg.

Almost immediately after Henry's death, the young king was made to repudiate the Six Articles. Royal decrees went out banning all "superstitions," which included such things as altars, images, candles, and the like. Although royal officials were sent to parish churches, they met with stiff opposition across the country. Some refused to allow them entry, others simply hid the offending items. In order to acquire more money, the crown confiscated all endowments for chantries, colleges, confraternities, and religious guilds.

There was no doubt that a religious revolution was underway. In 1549, the Book of Common Prayer was issued and subsequently revised in 1552. This book would become the touchstone of the Anglican Church, providing prayers and liturgy in English, yet avoiding touchy questions regarding the real presence of the Eucharist. Shortly thereafter the crown endorsed Archbishop Cranmer's Forty-Two Articles, which kept the episcopal church organization and courts, but rejected a host of Catholic doctrines such as transubstantiation, purgatory, indulgences, relic veneration, and the invocation of the saints. Protestants from Germany and France began to flock to England, where they urged the government to bring the fullness of Reformation to the country.

For Dudley, the reforms were always about power. He used his authority over the king and the church to propel his family to greatness and greatly enrich them at the same time. Unwilling to share power, he even had Seymour executed for treason. Yet the bottom was about to drop out of his plans. In 1553, Edward died and the next in line for the throne was Mary Tudor, the daughter of Catherine of Aragon, and a Catholic. Dudley attempted to spark a coup against her, but it failed and he was sent to the Tower, where he claimed to embrace Catholicism and preached against the heresies of Reformers. Unconvinced, Mary had him executed.

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Queen Mary rescinded the laws against Catholics and restored the Church to England. This provoked some resistance, but no greater than the original Supremacy Act of her father. Most Protestants fled, but around three hundred were executed. Although this was extremely light compared to earlier and later executions of Catholics, later Protestant writers coined the term "Bloody Mary" to characterize her. The queen married Philip II of Spain in 1554, which in better times would have signaled a great new empire. But Mary was ill, and before she could conceive a child, she died in 1558.

Mary's half sister, Elizabeth I, was the daughter of Anne Boleyn and therefore a Protestant. She immediately restored the Supremacy Act, the Book of Common Prayer, and the Forty-Two Articles (which she subsequently pared down to thirty-nine). Elizabeth's early reign was characterized by an attempt to find compromise. That ended in 1570 when the pope excommunicated her and ordered Catholics to no longer obey her. From her perspective, this meant that all Catholics were by definition traitors. She ordered the mass arrest of all Catholic priests and in 1582 decreed that all priests and Jesuits in England were automatically guilty of treason and would be executed. Many thousands were killed.

Elizabeth was able to keep religious peace because of the strength of her character, the great affection that all English had for her, and the growth of the British Empire. Her successor, James I, did not have those advantages. He immediately angered Puritans when he refused to dismantle the Church of England. His policy of absolute monarchy angered the middle class and nobility. Although he sponsored a new translation of the Bible, his other efforts to calm religious strife met with failure.

## FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



### Questions

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1. What was the significance of Cranmer's Forty-Two Articles?
2. How was Queen Mary different than Queen Elizabeth I?

### Suggested Reading

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Doran, Susan, and Christopher Durston. *Princes, Pastors and People: The Church and Religion in England, 1500–1700*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2003.

### Other Books of Interest

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Hoak, Dale E. *The King's Council in the Reign of Edward VI*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976.

Richardson, Walter Cecil. *Mary Tudor: The White Queen*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1969.

## Lecture 12: The Reformation in England: Revolutions

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is John Spurr's *The Restoration Church of England, 1646–1689*.

Charles I inherited his father's attitude toward the power of kings. He was certain of his divinely given authority to rule the state and the church in England without the meddling of middle-class upstarts in the House of Commons. The fact that most of the members of Commons were Presbyterians who believed that the Church of England was an unreformed remnant of Catholicism, only led to further friction between the king and Parliament. He refused to call it. Instead, like James, Charles relied on customs duties to fund his wars and government. To forestall criticism he forbade Puritans to preach or publish, which only made them more angry.

Charles and his mostly Catholic advisors believed that they had hit upon a happy solution to England's religious problems. In churches the altar was moved to the East side and surrounded by a communion rail. In this way, they could restore an ancient Christian practice, allow Catholics or those close to it to receive communion, but still remove the altar from the center of the church. They attempted to employ the same strategy in Scotland, where the king in 1637 imposed the Book of Common Prayer. Scotland was Presbyterian and the Scots revolted, refusing to have papist trappings or doctrine in their churches. Charles fought the Scots to a standstill, but he soon ran short of funds to pay his troops. Desperate, he called Parliament. He believed that British pride and instinctive dislike for the Scots would carry the day, but instead the members of Commons made common cause with the Scots. Unwilling to give in to their demands, Charles dissolved Parliament only weeks after calling it. But the Scots would not withdraw from British soil until they were paid, so the king was finally forced to call Parliament again. The so-called "Long Parliament" would sit in one form or another for the next two decades.

The House of Commons, now in a position of authority, began systematically dismantling royal authority as well as the position of the nobility. To make matters worse for Charles, revolts spread across Ireland as the native Irish resisted the implantation of English protestant settlers on their lands. Hysteria swept through England, leading to Parliament's issuing of the Grand Remonstrance, which claimed that the Irish Revolt was only the most recent example of a vast popish conspiracy. Charles was losing London, and was finally forced to flee. He organized the nobility and prepared for war.

The English Civil War would rage from 1642 until 1648. At stake was not only the monarchy, but also the religious direction of England. Now free of the king, Parliament at once began to implement a Presbyterian agenda,

reforming the Church of England into a Calvinist church with no bishops, no popery, and plenty of Puritan austerity. Yet the leader and many of the officers in Parliament's army were Congregationalists or other Independents. Oliver Cromwell, a member of a lesser noble house, led the forces to victory in 1648. Having defeated the king, Cromwell planned to do the same with the Presbyterians of Parliament. He removed or barred large numbers of Presbyterian members, forming the "Rump Parliament," which proceeded to abolish the monarchy, the Church of England, and the House of Lords.

Theoretically the Commonwealth of England was ruled by Parliament, but it was really the army that held power, and that meant Cromwell. This was nowhere more evident than when Parliament crossed him in 1653. He forcibly took it over and had the new friendly Parliament declare him Lord Protector of England. As a military dictator, Cromwell instituted a strict policy of persecution of Catholics and toleration for independent Protestant sects. In good Puritan fashion, he imposed many Calvinist austerities on London, which began to wear thin. When he died in 1658, his government died with him.

Charles II, the son of Charles I, was brought back to England amid great rejoicing. The status quo in 1642 was restored. It soon became clear, however, that Charles had deep Catholic sympathies and indeed he was secretly determined to restore England to the Church. After his death in 1685, his brother, James II, took the throne. James was a Catholic and with the birth of his son in 1688 it was clear that the British monarchy had become permanently Catholic. This was unacceptable to Parliament. With the invasion of William of Orange, a new constitutional monarchy was established along Protestant lines. The Glorious Revolution brought settlement to the question of reform in England. The answer was midway between continental Protestant reform and Catholicism.

## FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



### Questions

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1. What events led to the English Civil War?
2. What were the results of the English Civil War?

### Suggested Reading

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Spurr, John. *The Restoration Church of England, 1646–1689*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992.

### Other Books of Interest

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Doran, Susan, and Christopher Durston. *Princes, Pastors and People: The Church and Religion in England, 1500–1700*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2003.

## Lecture 13: Catholic Reformation: Popes and New Orders

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is R. Po-Chia Hsia's *The World of Catholic Renewal, 1540–1770*.

It is important to remember that it was the Catholic Church itself that gave birth to the Protestant Reformation. During its fifteen centuries of life, the Church had repeatedly demonstrated its ability to rethink and reform when the situation required it, while still holding to the central truths of the faith. Luther's movement grew out of the larger Erasmian humanist reform movement and there was no reason to believe that it would not remain there. What set the Lutheran movement apart was not its ideas or calls for reform, but rather that it proceeded to enact those reforms outside of the Catholic Church. Rather than a symptom of an unyielding Church, the Protestant Reformation is actually the result of an intellectual and theological environment so multifaceted and sophisticated that new ideas were not only expected but encouraged.

But Luther went too far—and he was only the first. Although we have explored various strands of what came to be called Protestant reform, it is important to note that the majority of Europeans rejected these reforms, remaining instead within the Catholic Church. Nor did the Protestant Reformation signal the end of reform in the Church. Instead, it continued in what historians refer to as the Catholic Reformation. The vitality of the Church was evident in the myriad of ways that it pursued reform and sought to deal with the multiplying schisms brought on by Protestantism.

The religious orders had taken the lead in previous Church reforms and the same was true in the sixteenth century. Reforms of the Dominicans and Franciscans led to a new spirit of evangelization. The “spiritual” Franciscans found expression in the creation of the Capuchins, who preached and ministered to the common people. Oratories of secular clergy and lay people in the Italian cities formed themselves into charitable organizations. Among the most prominent of these was the new order of the Theatines, who devoted themselves to purifying the clergy and laity.

The greatest of the new orders of the Catholic Reformation, however, was founded by an unlikely man. Ignatius Loyola (1492–1556) was a Basque nobleman and soldier who was badly wounded by a cannonball. While laid up, he read the lives of saints and other religious tracts and decided to devote his life to God. Like Luther, Loyola was troubled by his inability to conform his will to that of the will of God. Yet unlike Luther, Loyola did not conclude that it was impossible. Instead, he developed the Spiritual Exercises, a month-long regimen of intense meditation on the life of Christ. Loyola believed that the will could be trained, could be armed with an arsenal of images and lessons that could be used against temptation and to bring one

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to a life worthy of salvation. After acquiring a theological education at various schools, including the University of Paris, Loyola and his friends went to Rome with their new ideas. Pope Paul III recognized them as a new order, the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) in 1540.

The Jesuits were from the start an order of elite men, highly trained, and centrally commanded in a military fashion. Yet they were not a military order. Instead, they were theologians, preachers, and clergy with a strict military discipline determined to bring the Gospel to the corners of the earth and to undergo any hardship in order to win salvation. As a missionary order they went to the Far East and to the Americas and changed those worlds. They also worked to re-Catholicize Protestant Europe, founding hundreds of schools and training priests in every nationality.

The papacy used the Jesuits to good effect, turning back Protestantism in many regions and holding onto Catholicism elsewhere. Reform popes like Paul III still held out the hope, though, that the schism could be repaired. By the failure of Regensburg in 1541, however, it was clear that that would not happen. It was time for the Church to stop the shattering of Christendom. They did so with the Inquisition and the Council of Trent.

## FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



### Questions

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1. How did the reforms of the Dominicans and Franciscans lead to a new spirit of evangelization?
2. How was Luther similar to Loyola, and how was he different?

### Suggested Reading

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Po-Chia Hsia, R. *The World of Catholic Renewal, 1540–1770*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

### Other Books of Interest

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Bireley, Robert. *The Refashioning of Catholicism, 1450–1700*. New ed. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1999.

O'Malley, John W. *The First Jesuits*. Reissue ed. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005.

## Lecture 14: Catholic Reformation: Inquisition and Council

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Martin D.W. Jones's *The Counter Reformation: Religion and Society in Early Modern Europe*.

As we have seen, the initial response of the papacy to Martin Luther was to ignore him, debate him, and then order him to be quiet. No one, least of all Luther, expected him to be the focus of a large movement. As Lutheranism spread, Catholic leaders naturally viewed it as a schismatic heresy. Since the secular authorities in Lutheran areas supported the movement, there was no means by which the Church could combat the heresy through the traditional use of Inquisition. It was, instead, treated as a schismatic movement, much like the Greek Orthodox Church. The various meetings between Catholic and Protestant theologians up to 1541 were an attempt to heal the schism. The attempt failed and the increasingly fragmented nature of Protestant reform was spreading into more Catholic countries. It was time to contain that spread.

The Inquisition was a product of ancient Roman law, which had outlawed heresy as a form of treason. After the fall of the Roman Empire in the West, medieval rulers still considered heresy to be a dangerous crime deserving of death, but they lacked the legal customs or knowledge to competently evaluate charges of heresy. In the twelfth century, Pope Lucius III ordered bishops to take an active role in heresy trials, particularly with regard to the investigation phase, or the inquisition. The purpose was to discern whether the accused was guilty and if so whether that guilt was voluntary or simply the product of ignorance. By the thirteenth century, the Church was having to contend with organized heresies like the Cathars of southern France and therefore needed a more organized inquisition. The judicial apparatus of the inquisition was therefore given over to the mendicant orders, in particular the Dominicans, who were answerable only to the pope.

By the time of the Protestant Reformation, the growth of secular authority had broken up the inquisition into various national tribunals, although in practice they were seldom used any more. Heresy was still a worry of secular leaders, but they tended to take care of the problem themselves. It was the weakness of the inquisition in sixteenth-century Europe that allowed Protestantism to take root and spread in the first place.

The exception to this rule was the Spanish Inquisition. Established in 1478, the original purpose of the Spanish Inquisition was to investigate conversos, Christians of Jewish ancestry who were accused of being crypto-Jews. Although the problem was almost nonexistent, the methods of the Spanish Inquisition led to a hysteria that seemed to find crypto-Jews everywhere. The final result was the expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492. The Spanish Inquisition was well organized and by 1500 employed the best legal practices

in Europe. It was also an institution of the crown, whose purpose was to ensure the spiritual health of the Spanish people. When Protestant ideas began to filter into Spain they were dealt with quickly and efficiently by the Spanish Inquisition. For that reason, the Protestant Reformation had almost no impact on Spain, which continued to see itself as the champion of Catholicism.

After the demise of the Regensburg talks in 1541, it became clear that some in the hierarchy with Lutheran sympathies were considering the possibility that Luther was right—that the true Church was the one he had founded in Wittenberg. The head of the Capuchin order converted to Lutheranism and Protestant preachers began appearing in many Italian towns. Noticing the success of the Spanish Inquisition, in 1542 Pope Paul III established the Roman Inquisition, which was given the task of rooting out Protestant ideas from the papal states but also to oversee the various inquisitions in other Italian cities. Like the Spanish Inquisition, the Roman Inquisition was so successful that by 1600 it was able to turn its attention to matters of clerical discipline and superstition.

For more than a century the great tool of reform was seen as a Church Council. Luther and his followers had for years demanded a council to deal with the issues raised by them and to deal with the corruption in the Church. By the 1530s, however, Luther paid only lip service to a council, saying that only a council like that of Jerusalem in the first century would be truly valid. Regardless, the Council of Trent met in 1545 to deal with doctrinal issues raised by Protestants, but for which there were no clear pronouncements. After several years of work the council was recessed, meeting again in 1551 after the victories of Charles V over the Lutherans. Although Lutheran leaders attended the council, they could not move it. The teachings of the Catholic Church held for centuries were reaffirmed. By the time of the third session in 1561 the tables were turned. The Peace of Augsburg in 1555 meant that Lutheranism was not going away. The council, therefore, turned its attention to the reform of the Church and its clergy. For all of its problems, Trent was a reform council and would be the blueprint that future popes would use to enact reform on the Church.

## FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



### Questions

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1. What was the purpose of the Council of Trent?
2. Why was Protestantism thwarted in Spain and Italy?

### Suggested Reading

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Jones, Martin D.W. *The Counter Reformation: Religion and Society in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

### Other Books of Interest

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Mullett, Michael A. *The Catholic Reformation*. New York: Routledge, 2005.  
Po-Chia Hsia, R. *The World of Catholic Renewal, 1540–1770*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

**Suggested Readings for This Course:**

- Cameron, Euan. *The European Reformation*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Chadwick, Owen. *The Reformation*. Reprint ed. New York: Penguin, 1990.
- Tracy, James D. *Europe's Reformations, 1450–1650: Doctrine, Politics, and Community*. 2nd ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005.

**Suggested Readings for Individual Lectures:**

- Doran, Susan, and Christopher Durston. *Princes, Pastors and People: The Church and Religion in England, 1500–1700*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Fernández Alvarez, Manuel. *Charles V*. London: Thames & Hudson, Ltd., 1976.
- Gäbler, Ulrich. *Huldrych Zwingli: His Life and Work*. Trans. Ruth C. L. Gritsch. Edinburgh, Scotland: T&T Clark Publishers, Ltd., 1999.
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