

THE REFORMATION

The main period of the Reformation (reform of the church) was the 16th century but to understand the origins of the Reformation we have to look at the 15th century.

TASK 1: Which events/developments/inventions of the 15th century influenced the beliefs most?

The role of the church:

In the 16th century the majority of Europeans were Christians (Roman Catholic Church-Pope, Orthodox Church – Greece+Russia). Most people truly believed in God, they wanted to establish a close personal relationship with God. Church played an essential role in everyday life: registered marriages, births, deaths..., the year was organized according to church holidays, Sundays. Church played an important role in education and public opinion.

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- Church leaders becoming corrupt - indulgences (to be saved from purgatory), simony (selling church posts, relics), nepotism(jobs to relatives).
- Several really bad Renaissance Popes (Alexander VI.- womanizer, Julius II. – general, Leo X. – patron of arts) Quarrels between popes and rulers (e.g. Henry VIII.).
- Criticism of the corruption of church – **Erasmus of Rotterdam** (he attacked Church leaders for bad behaviour and made fun of them and people who opposed the new way of learning).
- In 1514 Albert of Mainz (Hohenzollen family) became archbishop (paid money for it to Leo X.- to pay his debt he arranged that **indulgences** were sold - a Dominican monk **Johann Tetzel** was in charge of it), he bargained with Leo that ½ of the money would go to St. Peter's Basilica.

= reformation was not an attack on faith, actually its aim was to reinforce one's faith and to reform the institutions

Main reformers and their ideas

TASK 2: There had been reformers before Luther (Wycliffe, Hus). Can you remember what their main ideas were and what way they tried to reform the Church?

Martin Luther (1483-1546)



- came from wealthy family, studied
- an Augustinian monk, professor of studies at the University of(Saxony)
- deeply concerned with the idea of salvation – often depressed by the huge gap between the ideal of the Gospel and the reality of everyday life
- saw a huge difference between the Bible and the lifestyle of the Pope (Leo X.) and many other high officials
- provoked by the sale of indulgencies by



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- October 31, **1517 he nailed “95 Theses”** –to the door of the main church in **Wittenberg**, 95 complaints on the practice of the Church, aimed for academic discussion, not revolutionary, quite moderate, but thanks to **printing press** (it was published without his permission and spread) it became a public affair.
- The Pope summoned Luther to Rome to explain everything but he refused. He found a strong protector **of Saxony** (one of the seven Electors). Luther was then summoned to more disputations but the only result was that the refusal of his ideas and pressure to take back his thesis made him more radical.
- main idea **salvation by alone** (sola fide), you can save yourself, you don’t need church for it, opposed traditional church rituals, argued against the necessity of doing acts of mercy, refused sacraments, acknowledged only those mentioned in the Bible – the **Bible above tradition** as the only authority, not the Pope, not the bishops
- 1520 published “**the Babylonian Captivity of the Church**”(he accused the Pope of betraying the Christian faith in it)
- 1520 Pope excommunicated him by a bull → Luther burned it publicly.
- 1521 Luther was summoned to the **Diet of Worms** (meeting of the Emperor and the leaders of the Holy Roman Empire) → Luther refused to take things back and despite the effort of his supporters, by the **Edict of Worms** his books were ordered to be burned and Luther outlawed in the Holy Roman Empire
- To protect him prince Frederick sent Luther secretly to **castle**→Luther **translated The New Testament** here to German – it became the basis of the modern German language
- 1525 Radical **Thomas Muntzer** influenced by Luther’s ideas wanted to apply them in society, wanted a new classless society - the **Peasants’ Rebellion** (War) in Thuringia, Luther did not agree with them and supported the nobles, demanded strict punishments for the leaders
- **Evangelic (Protestant) Church** formed – no connection with Rome, the Pope, accepted Eucharist in both kinds, collective leadership, local administration, no hierarchy, pure church, pure sermons and masses, only two sacraments left (Baptism and Eucharist), the Bible is the most important, priests can marry, no celibacy, monasteries closed down
- **1530 Diet of Augsburg** – the Emperor wanted to stop Protestant ideas, **Philip Melanchton** to defend Luther’s ideas and added some more → he wrote the **Augsburg Confession** –set down the ideas of Lutheran Protestants, basis for Protestant unity, a compromise.
- 1531 Protestant German princes united in **Schmalkaldic League** (Brandenburg, Prussia,Saxony...)
- 1546 war Charles V and Catholics vs Protestant Schmalkaldic League → Protestants defeated at Mühlberg, but not persecuted
- 1555 **Peace of Augsburg** was signed. The compromise made was that the ruler (prince, nobleman) decides on the religion of his subjects (*cujus regio, eius religio*), the civil war in German lands ended, but the Empire was divided. Most of the northern states were Protestant whereas the southern states were Catholic.

Lutheranism in Europe

spread from German lands mainly to the **Baltic area, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, Hanseatic cities (Tallinn, Riga) , The Order of the Teutonic Knights** (Albrecht of Hohenzollern) and other areas and cities

TASK 3: *What factors made the Emperor Charles V. of Habsburg (1516-1556) not act more radically against Luther at the beginning? Think about the international situation. Habsburg priorities and ambition.*

TASK 4: *Compare the ideas and fate of Jan Hus and Martin Luther. Can you find similar events in Luther's life? How come that one was burned and the other respected?*

Jan Hus

Preacher in the Bethlehem Chappel

Head of Prague University

Attack on indulgencies

Outlawed

Hiding in castles of noblemen

Summoned to Church council

Burned as a heretic

Martin Luther

Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531) – ‘Urban Reformation’



- **Zurich**, Switzerland
- did not believe in **transubstantiation** (claimed that Christ was not in the bread and wine but in the heart of the believer)
- much more tolerant of other ideas than Luther, but advocated the use of violence
- morality, confiscation of the property of the Church
- against celibacy, monasteries
- believed that each canton should choose its own religion
- tried to unite the cantons against the Habsburgs → died in Battle of Kappel in 1531

Anabaptists

- radical, **Anabaptists** – did not believe in child baptism – the child cannot freely decide
- personal faith, adult baptism, free interpretation of the Bible
- lived in peaceful self sufficient communities, against violence
- shared property, refused private ownership
- opposed education – only the knowledge of the Bible is important
- one of the main Anabaptist ideologists was **Balthasar Hubmair** (1480-1528)

♣ **John of Leyden and the Münster Commune (1534-1535)**

- The only example of a violent Anabaptist regime. John of Leyden declared Münster the New Jerusalem, himself a king. He preached that only this city was going to be saved. A cruel, strict regime was introduced – death sentences for almost anything (eg. wives disagreeing with their husbands). All books except the Bible were burned, money abolished. In the end the city was conquered, John of Leyden executed, his body put to a cage and left to rot on the church spire.

Jean Calvin (1509-1564)



- **Geneva, Switzerland – theocratic republic** – rule of 12 elders and 5 ministers
- French origin, had to leave France as reformers were outlawed there
- Based on Calvin's book '*Institutes of Christian Religion*' (1536-1559) (1st edition 6 articles – last 6 books)
- main idea of **predestination**/predetermination (every person is predetermined to reach salvation in heaven or be condemned to hell) but because nobody knows who that is (even though Calvinists considered themselves to be predestined for salvation in general), everybody has to live according to God's instructions
- success in business may reveal if you were predestined → **emphasis on hard work, frugality, modesty, strictly moral life**
- supported mainly by merchants in towns
- approved the right of subjects to rebel against their lords (if they don't respect Christian rules) - even approved the use of violence
- prohibition of public entertainment, decorations in churches (paintings, statues, priest's attire), singing only allowed in church, pubs closed and replaced by reading rooms for reading the Bible
- special council overlooking public manners entitled to enter any household to check on them without warning
- Eucharist in both kinds
- intolerant of other ideas
- **1566 Helvetian Confession** – final statement of belief

Calvinism in Europe

Calvinism spread very quickly, especially in western Europe –Switzerland, northern Netherlands, France (**Huguenots**), England (**Puritans**), Scotland (**Presbyterians**), North America

TASK 5: *Can you compare Calvin's regime to any modern regime of the 21st century?*



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Reformation in France

- **Francis I** (1515-1547) introduced the **Gallican Church** – the king appointed bishops, but the connection with Rome, the Pope, was kept
- Henry II (1547-1559) died at a tournament (nickname ‘the last knight’)
His wife **Catherine of Medici** ruled as a regent instead of their young sons
Troubles with **Huguenots** (French Calvinists)
- **Huguenot Wars** (1562-1589)
- 1572 **St Bartholomew Day Massacre** of the Huguenots gathered for the wedding of their leader **Henry of Navarre** (prince from the French royal family) Henry escaped but 3,000 Huguenots killed
- 1589 **Henry of Navarre** (1589-1610) became French king as the closest relative
He converted to Catholicism
1598 Edict of Nantes – on religious toleration in France – end of Huguenot Wars

The Dutch Revolution – reformation in the Netherlands

- Prosperous, merchant land, under the Spanish rule
- 17 provinces (nowadays Belgium and the Netherlands) ruled by a Spanish governor
- Reasons for the revolution
 - *Political*: **Philip II of Spain** (1556-1598) introduced absolutism
 - *Economic*: heavy taxation due to Spanish wars against France, protestants in HRE
 - *Religious*: Calvinism in the Netherlands
- 1562 Inquisition under cardinal **Gravanela** sent to the Netherlands
- 1566 Calvinist uprising against the inquisition, ransacking catholic churches
- **Duke of Alva** sent to get the situation under control, but actually his brutality stirred the revolution
- 1572 Revolution in the northern provinces, open war starts, the Dutch rebels called **Sea Beggars** or **Forest Beggars**
- 1579 **Union of Utrecht** northern provinces unite against Spain, **1581 declare independence**
- **William of Orange** becomes **Staadholder**, head of the state the **Dutch Republic**, appointed by the provinces
- 1609 a truce arranged for 12 years
- 1648 only at the end of the 30 Years War the independence of the Netherlands was recognized by Spain

The impact of the Reformation

- confiscation of the Church property → feudalism ending
- individualism, more confidence in individual actions
- frugality → way to capitalism
- national languages used in sermons and masses → stronger national cultures
- belief in the right to rebel against bad rule → easier way to revolutions as solutions to social tensions (the Netherlands, England, USA, France)
- the end of unity of the western church – religious conflicts, wars

THE CATHOLIC REFORMATION

TASK 6: *Imagine that you are the Pope in the 16th century? What would you do to counter the Reformation and win back the support of the people?*

There were many reformers within the Catholic Church throughout the centuries, fighting against the corruption that came hand in hand with secular power of the Church. The most famous were **The Cluniacs** (10th/11th century), **St. Francis of Assisi** and **St. Dominic** (13th century) and the **Devotio Moderna** movement stressing the individual relationship with the God, reform yourself first (14th/15th century Charles IV participated, **St. Thomas á Kempis** ‘*The Imitation of Christ*’)

Mysticism

Mysticism develops Devotio Moderna. Mystics had religious revelation or experience, visions of God or angels

St. Theresa of Avila (she wrote about her religious experience)

St. John of the Cross

Both helped to reform monasteries, devotional life



New religious orders

The Jesuits

- full name **The Society of Jesus**
- founded in 1540 by **Ignatius of Loyola** (1491-1556), former soldier, he felt called by God to serve Christ, wrote ‘*Spiritual Exercises*’ (Roman Catholic should be obedient to God and the Pope), missionary activities, 1622 proclaimed Saint



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- clear rules for members, division into provinces, strict discipline
 - serving Jesus Christ
 - total obedience to the Pope
 - swore to own nothing
 - celibacy

- three main areas of interest of the Jesuits were:
 - preaching - to preach to non-Christians, to oppose the Reformation
 - schooling - established many schools, universities –it helped to spread Catholic ideas, especially for children and young people
 - missions - all over the world, e.g. Japan, China, North and South America

Education and Schools

Schools - to spread Catholic doctrines and influence children, very effective and providing good quality education
Jesuits, Piarists and other orders

Reform of Papacy

There were several excellent popes in the second half of the 16th century returning credit to the papacy and reformed the institutions eg. Paul III (1534-1539), **St. Pius V** (1566-1572), Sixtus V (1585-1590)

The core of the reforms was agreed at the **Council of Trent** (1545-1563)

- codified the Catholic state of belief
- Seven sacraments kept (**Bonus TASK:** *Can you name the seven sacraments*)
- One priest to hold only one benefice (parish) – especially bishops
- Many bishops, cardinals replaced
- Hierarchical organization kept
- Theological seminary in every diocese to improve the education

the Inquisition renewed – “**the Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office**”

list (**Index**) of forbidden books (non-Catholic authors)

TASK 7: *What do you think was the role of the renewed inquisition?*

Why did they agree on a list of prohibited books?



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Baroque Art

Came little bit later but played an important role in the growing popularity of Catholicism

1582- Pope Gregory XIII - **correction of the Christian calendar** (they used the Julian calendar before)

→10 days cancelled (so after 4th October 1582 there was 15th Oct.)

In Czech lands – in 1584, In England 1752, in Russia 1918

Used in most countries nowadays

TASK 8: *Study the following extracts and match them with the authors below:*

Extract 1:

‘...I do not complain so much of the loud cry of the preacher of Indulgences, which I have not heard, but regret the false meaning which the simple folk attach to it, the poor souls believing that when they have purchased such letters they have secured their salvation, also, that the moment the money jingles in the box souls are delivered from purgatory, and that all sins will be forgiven through a letter of indulgence...’

Extract 2:

‘...whoever desires to become useful to the heretics of this age must be solicitous to bear them much charity and to love them truly, excluding from his mind all thoughts which tend to cool his esteem of them. Secondly, it is necessary to gain their good will, so that they may love us and keep a place for us in their hearts. This we can achieve by familiar intercourse with them, speaking of the things which we have in common and avoiding all contentious argument...’

Extract 3:

‘...by predestination we mean the eternal decree of God, by which he determined with himself whatever he wished to happen with regard to every man. All are not created on equal terms, but some are preordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation; and, accordingly, as each has been created for one or other of these ends, we say that he has been predestined to life or to death....’

Extract 4:

‘...that the sacrament does not the real body of Our Lord Jesus Christ, that we admit; for the Scripture says thus: Christ ascended into heaven and sits on the right hand of his heavenly father where he will judge the quick and the dead. It follows that if he be in Heaven and not in the bread, he cannot be eaten corporally...’

... concerning baptism we say: infant baptism is not useful for salvation...’

1. Jean Calvin – The Institutes of the Christian Religion, 1536
2. Martin Luther – a covering letter sent along with a copy of the 95 Theses to the Archbishop of Mainz
3. Defence of an Anabaptist
4. Ignatius Loyola – an instruction on how to deal with protestants