

Politics of the Protestant Reformation

Charles V, the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, was also the King of Spain. The HRE and Spain were Catholic. Increasingly, the German princes feared the political influence of Charles V.

Charles V was preoccupied with war outside the HRE and responded to the Protestant Reformation by temporarily allowing German princes to decide their own religious matters.

In 1530, Charles V assembled the Diet of Augsburg and ordered all Lutherans to revert back to Catholicism.

The Protestant princes responded by forming a defensive alliance called the Schmalkaldic League in 1531.

Civil War in Holy Roman Empire

The German territories fought a civil war between Catholic cities and Lutheran cities.

Peace of Augsburg (1555) ended the war and declared each prince sovereign in religious matters within their territory.

There was no religious toleration within a territory. The prince decided if his territory was Lutheran or Catholic and citizens either complied or relocated.

Result #1: De-centralized German territories become even more fragmented due to religious differences.

Result #2: The Calvinists do NOT receive any religious rights from the Peace of Augsburg and they begin to organize with the intention of leading national revolutions to shape society according to their beliefs.

English Reformation

Background: 1) John Wycliffe and the Lollards
2) Christian Humanism
3) Anti-clericalism

William Tyndale translated the New Testament into English in 1526 and Lutheran ideas had already spread to England from continental Europe.

Henry VIII defended the Seven Sacraments in opposition to Luther, and Thomas More rejected the ideas of the Protestant Reformation. Henry VIII was even called the “Defender of the Faith” by Pope Leo X.

Henry VIII

Henry VIII was in many ways a “Renaissance Man.” He was also a ladies man...

Henry VIII married Catherine, the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, after his brother unexpectedly died.

This marriage produced Mary, who was not a male, which means she didn't count!

Henry VIII had to get extra-special papal approval to marry Catherine in the first place and had to seek extra-special papal approval in order to divorce her. The pope did NOT cooperate!

For better or for worse...

Cardinal Wolsey failed to secure the annulment that Henry VIII desired so he was replaced by Thomas Cranmer (a Lutheran!). He suggested that Henry simply break from the Roman Catholic Church and then make his own decisions about divorce.

Henry, a good Renaissance man, embraced the idea.

Thomas More, a good Catholic, rejected the idea. Thomas More was executed...

The Act of Supremacy made Henry VIII the supreme head of the Church of England (Anglican Church).

Desperate Housewives of Henry VIII

Henry married Anne Boleyn and the Act of Succession declared that Anne's children would be legitimate heirs to the throne.

But...Anne produced another girl...Elizabeth.

16th century Henry VIII: "These women keep denying me a son...or perhaps God is punishing me."

20th century Science: "It's not the women or God...it's you, sir."

Third wife is the charm: Jane Seymour gave birth to a male heir, Edward.

Okay...here's the list: Catherine, Anne, Jane, Anne, Catherine, Catherine!

Okay...here's the gist: Divorced, beheaded, died, divorced, beheaded, survived!

“Catholic Protestantism” of Henry VIII

Ten Articles of 1536: Made mild concessions to Protestant tenets, but upheld many Catholic doctrines and traditions within the new Church of England.

Six Articles of 1539: Reaffirmed the Catholic doctrines most rejected by Protestants.

Real Protestantism

1547, Henry's son, Edward VI, succeeded to the throne at the age of 10.

A small group of genuinely Protestant regents ruled the country for Edward and they fully implemented the Protestant Reformation with guidance from John Calvin.

They passed the Act of Uniformity (1549), which imposed Thomas Cranmer's "Book of Common Prayer" on all English churches.

Edward VI died in 1553 and was succeeded by his sister Mary.

Back to Catholicism!

Mary I (reign 1553-1558) married Philip, a Catholic who would later become Philip II of Spain, and restored Catholicism as the official religion in England.

Mary I received the name “Bloody Mary” for burning over 250 Protestants and executing Thomas Cranmer during her reign.

Some Protestants fled to the European continent and became more radicalized, which really meant more *Calvinist*.

Catholic Counter-Reformation

Renaissance Popes resisted reform due to the history of having their power limited by the councils of Constance and Basel, which had embraced conciliar theory.

In the 16th century, during the Protestant Reformation, many new lay and clerical movements were founded by Catholic reformers who wanted to revive piety within the Church.

Mysticism and monasticism were revived and popularized in Spain by Saint Teresa of Avila and Saint John of the Cross.

The most influential movement was the Society of Jesus, whose members were called Jesuits.

Ignatius of Loyola

Ignatius of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises* (1524) promoted moral self-discipline, religious study, and obedient devotion to the Church.

Loyola founded the Society of Jesus in 1540.

Loyola's enthusiasm and loyalty brought many Protestants back to Catholicism.

The Jesuits were formally recognized by Pope Paul III.

Council of Trent

The success of Protestantism led Emperor Charles V to insist that Pope Paul III convene a council to devise an official Catholic position on the new Protestant teachings.

Attempts were made to reform internal church discipline and improve the quality of parish priests, but no doctrinal concessions were made to the Protestants.

Result #1: The council reaffirmed scholasticism, the role of “good works,” the Seven Sacraments, transubstantiation, clerical celibacy, purgatory, and indulgences.

Result #2: Parish life was revived under a more devout and more educated clergy. New seminaries were formed to train priests.

Reformer Popes: Paul III and Paul IV

The Roman Inquisition had been created by Paul III, but Paul IV increased its power such that liberal cardinals no longer voiced their beliefs.

Under Paul III, educational and philanthropic missionary work increased overseas.

Paul IV also created the Index of Forbidden Books in 1559, a list of works that Catholics were instructed not to read (not abolished until 1966).

Paul IV, the Council of Trent, and the Jesuits are the symbols of the Catholic Reformation.

Catholic Doctrine

The Council of Trent took place over three separate meetings:
1545-1547, 1551-1552, and 1562-1563.

After the Council of Trent ended in 1563, it was not until the First Vatican Council in 1869-1870 that church doctrine was changed in any significant manner.

It was not until the Second Vatican Council in 1962-1965 that some of the main decisions at the Council of Trent were modified.

Back to Anglicanism!

While it may have seemed like Catholicism was making a comeback, Mary I died in 1558 and was succeeded by her sister.

Elizabeth I (reign 1558-1603) was a *politique* who resolved the ongoing religious disputes within England by combining moderate Protestant doctrine with traditional Catholic rituals in the Church of England.

In 1563, the Thirty-Nine Articles established a moderate Protestantism as the official state religion.

This may seem like a reasonable approach today, but such religious toleration, pluralism, and reconciliation had not been tried before.

Compromise is the DEVIL!

Catholics were the majority in England and they hated the fact that Elizabeth embraced a moderate Protestantism.

Catholic extremists, aided by the Jesuits, plotted to assassinate Elizabeth.

Meanwhile, the Puritans were unhappy with how “Catholic” the Church of England was under Elizabeth’s leadership.

The Puritans rejected the hierarchical organization of the Church of England in favor of more independent congregations.

“I’m more pure!” vs. “No, I’m more pure!”

The Puritans worked through Parliament to create *semi*-autonomous congregations governed by representative presbyteries (Presbyterians)

Well, the reality of representative congregations wasn’t “pure” enough for some extreme Puritans who insisted on having *entirely* autonomous congregations (Congregationalists)

Elizabeth rejected the Congregationalists as subversive and they would later found colonies in North America.

Religious Wars in France

Early 16th century: Lutherans and Zwinglians secure rights and freedoms within Holy Roman Empire.

Late 16th century: Calvinists struggle for official recognition in France, the Netherlands, and England.

After the Council of Trent (1563) the Catholic Church began a Jesuit-led counteroffensive against Protestantism.

Calvinism, under the leadership of John Calvin in Geneva, became *equally dogmatic* and aggressive as the Catholic Church.

Calvinism won support from people who favored political decentralization as opposed to monarchy.

Failure of Politics?

The civil conflicts within the Holy Roman Empire and the Peace of Augsburg (1555) indicated that religious pluralism and toleration may be more conducive to peace.

Among intellectuals, a new skepticism, relativism, and individualism became a respectable response to the fact that various religious groups were claiming the right to worship freely.

“To kill a man is not to defend a doctrine, but to kill a man.”

However, politics and public policy typically lag behind intellectual advances in philosophy and social science.

Promise of *Politiques*

Rulers who subordinated theological differences to political unity were able to avoid extreme civil unrest.

Rulers who promoted tolerance, moderation, and compromise were known as *politiques*. Ex: Elizabeth I

The influence of Machiavelli: Rulers embraced religious toleration as a means to an end. Even if the ruler thought that a specific group's religious beliefs were "incorrect," that group was tolerated in order to avoid constant conflict.

Challenge of Religious Pluralism

Question: Is religious toleration self-evidently good? How will this contribute to social and political stability?

The ruler embraces toleration as a means to civil peace, but sacrifices the idea of “Absolute Truth,” of the notion that one group is “correct” and the others “incorrect.”

Paradox of Pluralism: The government enforces religious toleration in order to allow religious pluralism and protect freedom of worship. However, the religious groups themselves still believe that their version of the “truth” is the “Absolute Truth;” and some of these groups cannot tolerate other “truths” receiving equal recognition or protection within society. Some of these groups, also in a Machiavellian manner, embrace whatever means necessary (sometimes violence) in order to achieve their end (defending the “Absolute Truth”).

Protestantism in France

French Protestants are referred to as “Huguenots” and they were persecuted by the Catholic monarchy throughout the early and mid 16th century. From 1534 – 1560, over 10,000 Huguenots fled France.

However, many aristocrats and townspeople were Huguenots and they hoped for local religious sovereignty similar to that in the Holy Roman Empire. Thus, they embraced Calvinism specifically as a politics of decentralization. Calvinism justified and inspired political resistance.

In 1562, the French monarchy under the influence of Catherine de Medici attempted to grant freedom of worship to Protestants outside of town limits, but the duke of Guise, part of a pro-Catholic aristocratic faction, massacred a congregation of Protestants that same year.

Guise vs. Bourbon

The pro-Catholic Guise faction exercised considerable influence on the monarchy of Catherine de Medici and war broke out in 1562 between Catholic forces and Protestant forces.

The Huguenots had military assistance from outside France and the war ended in 1570 with the Peace of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, which granted religious freedom to Huguenots within their own territories.

After 1570, the monarchy was heavily influenced by the pro-Protestant Bourbon faction and Catherine de Medici responded to this Protestant influence by supporting the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre.

Confusing stuff: In 1547, Henry II succeeded Francis I as King of France. Catherine de Medici was Henry II's wife and the Queen of France. Henry II died in 1559 and his son Francis II succeeded at age 15. He was very ill and also a minor, so his mother Catherine essentially ruled France. Francis II died in 1560 and his brother, only 10, succeeded. Thus, Catherine's power increased even more. Catherine's third son would also become the King of France, but throughout these years she was really "in charge."

St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre

On August 24, 1572, the French king Charles IX, convinced by his mother Catherine de Medici that a Huguenot coup threatened his reign, ordered a mass assassination of Huguenots within Paris.

The result was the massacre of 3,000 Protestants within Paris and the news of this event resulted in more massacres throughout the country.

A total of 20,000 Huguenots were killed in France and Pope Gregory XIII responded with religious celebrations.

The event expanded the Guise vs. Bourbon, Catholic vs. Huguenot battle into a European-wide Protestant fight for survival.

Political or Protestant Resistance?

Initially, Protestants tried to practice the biblical teaching of obedience to worldly authority.

Both Luther and Calvin condemned willful disobedience and rebellion against lawful governments as un-Christian.

However, Calvinism promoted a form of self-government and popular sovereignty that was at odds with higher spiritual authority; and rejected the official Catholic hierarchy.

With a lack of legal rights and the birth of violent persecution, Calvinists increasingly transferred their rejection of Catholic hierarchy into a rejection of political hierarchy itself. Throughout the 1570s, *resistance to political tyranny was gaining religious justification* and legitimacy.

Henry of Navarre

Henry of Navarre, a pro-Protestant heir to the French throne, became Henry IV in 1589 after Henry III was assassinated.

Pope Sixtus V and Philip II of Spain were horrified that France may become Protestant and they sent troops to France.

However, the French people supported Henry IV as a rightful ruler and they rallied to repel the foreign armies.

Henry IV ruled as a *politique* in that he sought political peace above religious unity. He believed a tolerant Catholicism, being the dominant religion, would be the best for his country. He converted back to Catholicism insisting that, “Paris is worth a Mass.”

Edict of Nantes

On April 13, 1598, Henry IV proclaimed a formal religious settlement with the Edict of Nantes.

The edict officially recognized minority religious rights within what would remain an officially Catholic country.

In 1610, a Catholic fanatic assassinated Henry IV.

Henry IV's political and economic policies laid the groundwork for the political absolutism of Louis XIV.

Philip II of Spain

Philip II ruled Spain during a period of religious wars and overseas exploration. He enjoyed a steady flow of wealth from the New World and taxed his peasantry more than any other monarch in Europe.

During his reign Spain was a military superpower that, in addition to New Spain, controlled much of the Mediterranean and the Portuguese colonies in Africa, India, and Brazil.

Philip II sought to check the influence of Protestantism within the Netherlands (Spanish territory) by establishing a centralized, pro-Catholic government under Spanish control.

William of Orange

The people of the Netherlands were historically accustomed to toleration and local autonomy. Naturally, they resisted the Spanish move towards conformity and hierarchy.

William of Orange, a *politique* who resisted Spanish domination, placed the preservation of local autonomy and religious toleration above uniformity.

Orange was originally a Catholic who had converted to Lutheranism. However, after the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre in France in 1572, he became a passionate Calvinist.

Orange organized the Dutch nobility in opposition to Spanish control and Calvinism continued to spread within the cities.

Conflict in the Spanish Netherlands

In 1566, it appeared that French Huguenots and German Lutherans would militarily support the Protestant cause in the Netherlands and produce a full-scale rebellion against Spain.

However, the rebellion did not materialize and Philip II sent a combined Spanish and papal army led by the duke of Alba to regain control.

Alba publicly executed thousands of people declared heretics and Spain increased taxes within the Netherlands in order to finance the suppression of the rebellion. The people were financing their own political and religious oppression. Many people fled the Netherlands during Alba's six-year rule.

The influence of Calvinism within the Netherlands increasingly merged with the idea of political resistance to political tyranny.

Conflict in the Spanish Netherlands

The duke of Alba was replaced by a new leader, but he unexpectedly died leaving the Spanish army leaderless.

On November 4, 1576, the Spanish army killed 7,000 people in Antwerp in an event referred to as the “Spanish Fury.”

Result: Catholic southern provinces unite with Protestant northern provinces to drive out the Spanish. This union was referred to as the Pacification of Ghent and the provinces agreed to regional sovereignty in matters of religion.

In 1577, the Netherlands became independent and united behind religious pluralism under the leadership of William of Orange...happy ending!

JK...More Fighting!

1579, the Catholic southern provinces formed the Union of Arras and made peace with Spain.

The Protestant northern provinces formed the Union of Utrecht.

The Union of Utrecht formally declared that Philip II was no longer their ruler and they received military aid from both England and France.

Ultimately, the Protestant northern provinces would gain their independence from Spain in 1609. The northern provinces became the Dutch Republic (Netherlands), while the southern provinces remained Spanish territory, but ultimately became Belgium.

Elizabeth I proves that women are incapable of effectively ruling a military superpower...

1570, Pope Pius V excommunicates Elizabeth I.

After the St. Bartholomew's Massacre, Elizabeth I is the only Protestant ruler openly protecting Protestants in France and the Netherlands.

Result: Philip II of Spain absolutely hates Elizabeth I.

Mary, Queen of Scots, was a legitimate heir to the English throne and a symbol of a possible Catholic England. The Spanish eventually plotted with Mary to assassinate Elizabeth.

1587, Elizabeth executed Mary and Pope Sixtus V endorsed a Spanish invasion of England. Philip II sent his famous Armada...

English or Protestant Victory?

The English defeated the Spanish Armada and Spain's naval power never recovered.

Spanish forces in France and the Netherlands continued to lose ground and Spain continued to lose influence.

By the end of the 16th century, France dominated the Continent and England dominated the sea.

Spain would never recover the military, political, and religious influence that it had during the 16th century.

France and England would increasingly dominate the New World.