

OVERVIEW OF CHURCH HISTORY IN 36 ILLUSTRATED LECTURES

LECTURE 18 – (1) MOVEMENTS FOR REFORM; (2) RENAISSANCE

We'll start with a prayer from the period to be studied.

Lord, give me grace to hold righteousness in all things, that I may lead a clean and blessed life, and prudently flee evil, and that I may understand the treacherous and deceitful falseness of the devil. Make me mild, peaceable, courteous, and temperate. Make me steadfast and strong. Also, Lord, help me to be quiet in words and to speak what is appropriate. Amen. John Wycliffe (c1329-1384)

1 MOVERS FOR REFORM – inside the Church

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Catherine of Siena (1347-80)
- 1.3 Julian of Norwich (c1342-1413)

2 MOVERS FOR REFORM – expelled from the Church

- 2.1 Peter Waldo (died c1215)
- 2.2 Response to Waldo – persecution
- 2.3 John Wycliffe (c1329-1384)
- 2.4 'Lollards'
- 2.5 John Hus (c1373-1415)

TOPIC THOMAS A KEMPIS (1380-1471)

3 RENAISSANCE

(French for 'rebirth'), cultural revival in Europe in C14-C16

- 3.1 Background - turmoil in Europe

4. HUMANISM

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Erasmus' printed Greek New Testament
- 4.3 Criticism of late medieval piety
- 4.4 Relation of Erasmus to the Reformers
- 4.5 Erasmus' legacy

5. PRINTING PRESS

- 5.1 Protestant use of printing
- 5.2 Printing in the language of the people

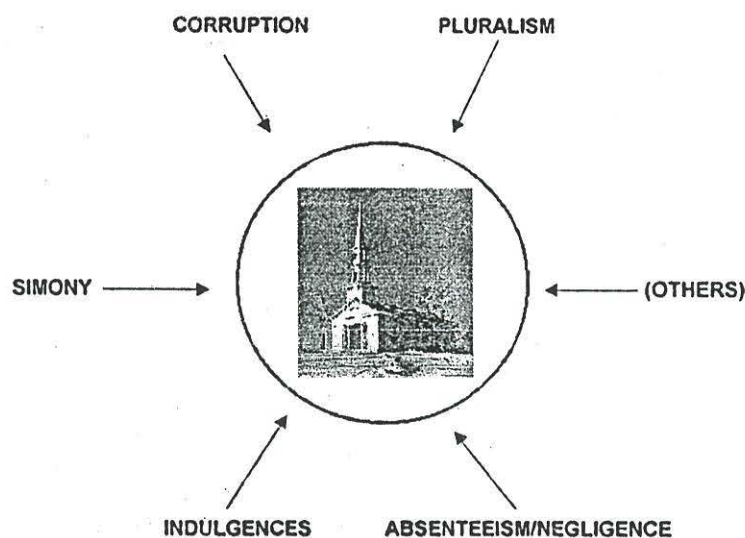
In preparation, read Cairns 221-2, 242-58, 252-8, 320;
Olson 348-9, 356-61;
Lion 252, 295, 327-9, 336, 344-6, 348-9, 354-9, 365, 396-9;
Vos 77-8, 81-84;
Lane 110-2, 112-4, 124-6;
Hanks, *Great Events*, 102-4, 135-42, 159-68, 167-73.

1 MOVERS FOR REFORM - who were allowed to stay inside the Church

1.1 Introduction

For over 300 years before the Protestant Reformation, which began in 1517 (Lecture 19), many in the Catholic Church were unhappy, especially with the leadership, and tried to reform the Church. What was wrong? (Cairns, 243-4; Lion, 252)

The Older view was that everything had been rotten for a thousand years (as in the chart below) and that it was suddenly put right at the Reformation. Going anti-clockwise round the chart, Pluralism meant one person holding several offices and receiving a salary for every office, when that person could not attend properly to all his duties and so neglected some of them. Corruption is self-evident.



Simony meant selling clerical office to the highest bidder, without regard to the fitness of the person for the office. We looked in Lecture 15 at selling Indulgences for sin, to raise money for the Church. Absenteeism followed from Pluralism, because if one person held different posts at a distance from each other, he couldn't attend both and so was called an 'absentee' from the one which he neglected.

Among 'others' was nepotism, which meant favouring your own family. For example, in 1451 there was a vacancy for the bishop of Geneva, and the Duke of Savoy, who had the right to make the appointment, appointed his own 8-year-old son.

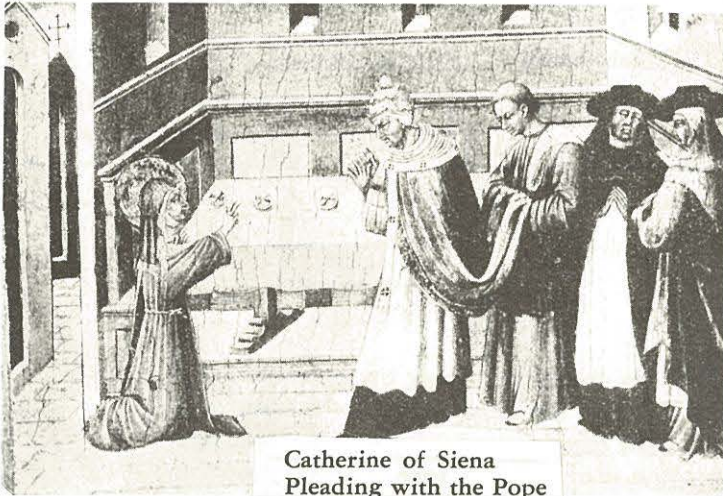
That chart represents the Older view. The Modern view is that the Catholic Church provided reasonably well for people's religious needs, but did not do well in its administrative, legal and moral duties. Many recognized that reform was needed, but they couldn't agree what to do, and since the Popes wouldn't and couldn't give a lead, the problems just got worse.

While the Church was inefficient and corrupt at the top, many at 'grass roots' were devout. They fall into two categories, those who were permitted to stay inside the Church and those who were expelled because they were a challenge to the Church. We'll look now at two examples of the former, and at another example in our Topic, at end of Notes.

1.2 Catherine of Siena (1347-80) (Cairns, 243; Lane, 110-11)

‘God will purify his Holy Church by awakening the spirit of the elect. This will lead to such an improvement in the Church of God and such a renewal in the lives of her holy pastors that at the mere thought of it my spirit exalts in the Lord.’

These are not the words of Luther or Calvin, but of Catherine of Siena, 250 years before Luther. (Siena is best known now for the annual bull race through the streets, graphically portrayed on television.) Catherine had a vision of Jesus, and gathered a circle around her, caring for the poor and doing pastoral work. She moved to Rome, working tirelessly for reform.



Catherine of Siena
Pleading with the Pope
to Return from
Avignon to Rome

You may remember (Lecture 11) that when Pope Benedict XI died in 1304, the powerful French king bullied the cardinals into appointing a Frenchman, Clement V (1305-14) and followed this up by bullying Clement to move the papal court from Rome to Avignon on the French border. The Popes appointed by the French cardinals made Avignon their headquarters for the next 70 years, while the Italian cardinals appointed someone else, of their choosing, to be a rival Pope and he lived in Rome. Then, in 1377, Pope Gregory XI (1370-78) moved back to

to Rome. It may have been in response to pleas from devout Catholics like Catherine - she lived from 1347 to 1380, and it was 1377 when Gregory moved back to Rome.

Some of those who urged conform are known as ‘Christian mystics’. Mysticism means a direct experience of God, which goes beyond intellectual understanding - the marriage of the soul to Christ and the best-known example is:

1.3 Julian of Norwich (c1342-1413) (Lion, 348-9)

Despite the name, Julian was a woman and an example of how influential Christian women could be in medieval times. She had visions of Jesus, which she recorded in her book *Revelations of Divine Love*, about God’s love for us through the passion (suffering) of Jesus. She was influenced by a C14 work called *The Cloud of Unknowing*, whose theme is that we cannot know God by human reason alone - God will break through the cloud barrier and reach out to everyone who seeks him. Both of these books are still read today, not least because Julian’s book is the earliest surviving work written in the English language by a woman.

These Christian mystics were influential because they wrote in the native language of their country (rather than in Latin, which few now understood) and they aimed their ministry at ordinary people, not at scholars and the clergy. They emphasised the importance of studying and knowing the New Testament Scriptures, and putting them into practice in daily living. Christ, they stressed, was immediately available to the believing soul - not locked up inside the priesthood or the sacraments which only priests and monks could administer. Mystics were therefore often opposed by the Church authorities, who feared they would undermine the official structures of the Catholic Church, but they were allowed to stay inside the Church.

2 MOVERS FOR REFORM - who were expelled from the Church

- 2.1 Peter Waldo (died c1215) - so this is more than three centuries before the Reformation under Martin Luther. (Cairns, 222; Lion, 327-9, Vos 77-8; Lane, 111-2; Hanks, *Great Events*, 135-42)

Peter Waldo was a wealthy merchant in Lyons, France. He made his fortune by money-lending until, like so many over the centuries, he was gripped by reading Matthew 19:21 ('If you would be perfect, go, sell, give to the poor, follow me'.) At the age of 36 he sold his possessions, provided for his wife and children and gave the rest to the poor. Others joined him, men and women, and they set off on itinerant ministries, preaching repentance. They wanted to return the Church to the Church of the New Testament. As good Catholics, they asked Pope for approval (remember Francis and Dominic, Lecture 12) but they were refused. Nevertheless, they continued to preach and so the Pope excommunicated them; nevertheless, they gained many followers and the movement spread through southern France, Italy, Spain, the Rhine Valley, and Bohemia, which shows how widespread was the dissatisfaction with the Church.

They took literally the Lord's direction to the Seventy in the Gospels, and went about two by two, wearing sandals, preaching repentance and living on gifts from others. They rejected the veneration of the saints, that relics had magical healing powers, indulgences, purgatory and Masses and prayers for dead; they encouraged the translation of Scripture into local languages - a French translation for the French people, etc. The Church permitted only the Latin Vulgate, which few could read, so people knew the Bible only through what the priest chose to tell them. This was perhaps their greatest contribution to reform in the Church, but they also insisted on the right of both laymen and laywomen to preach. They were well organised and when they were expelled from the Catholic Church, they became a formal non-Catholic Church, with their own pastors, etc.

2.2 Response to Waldo – persecution

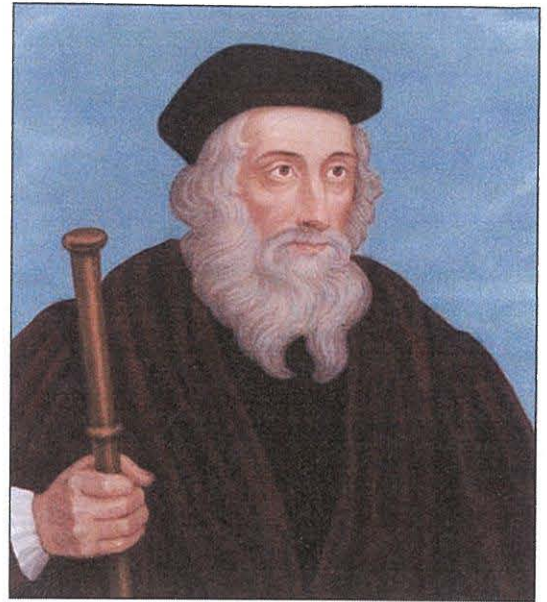
Many Waldenses were victims of the Inquisition - we'll come to that in Lecture 26 but briefly for now, the Catholic Church tortured anyone who did not conform to its teaching until the guilty person recanted unorthodox beliefs, and this was done through an institution called the Inquisition. However, the numbers of Waldenses in southern France became so great that not even the Inquisition could not stop them, so the Pope called in the army and for twenty years 'blood flowed like water'. The Waldenses took refuge in the high valleys of the Alps and at the Reformation, 300 years later, they accepted its teachings and became Protestants - hence this statue of Peter Waldo in Worms, the place where Martin Luther made his final break with the Catholic Church, as we'll see in Lecture 19. Of the Christians who broke away from the Catholic Church during the Middle Ages, they are the only group that has survived to the present time, and Waldenses are still found in many nations - e.g., 30,000 in Italy, still carrying on evangelistic work with considerable success, and Scottish admirers, who worship in other denominations, meet annually in Edinburgh and also visit historical sites in Italy associated with the movement.



Peter Waldo
From the Luther Monument at Worms, Germany

2.2 John Wycliffe (also Wyclif, Wycliff or Wicliffe) (1329-84)
(Cairns, 244-6; Lion 344-6; Vos, 78; Lane, 111-2; Hanks, *70 Great Events*, 102-4)

He was the first to translate the Bible from Latin into English and, as I've said several times, that's important because the Catholic Church insisted on using only the Latin Vulgate Bible, which only a few could understand. Wycliffe is honoured today by the missionary society known as the Wycliffe Bible Translators, who since 1935 have been making the Scriptures available in many cultures and countries.



John Wycliffe

He was born in Yorkshire in c1329 into a wealthy English family and educated at Oxford University, where he stayed on as a teacher until the age of 52. One of the ironies of Wycliffe's life is that while working for reform of the Church, he financed himself by one of the things the Reformation later attacked - he was an absentee rector, that is he had been appointed as rector (priest in charge) at two country churches in Yorkshire, so he drew the rector's salaries, but he lived in Oxford and did not look after his country churches. He left the curate (assistant) of the church in sole charge, but that was commonplace at the time.

In 1371, age 42, began to teach what he called 'dominion by grace'. 'Dominion' meant having power. In feudal society (? remember, Lecture 15) people thought that power could be received only from someone above them. Peasants could live on a farm because they worked for the farmer; the farmer could occupy his land because he did service to his local lord; the lord had the land because he served the king by providing military help and collecting taxes.

Wycliff began to teach that you were entitled to Dominion (power) only if you were in a state of grace - only godly people were entitled to have power. If they misused it, they should lose it. If Church leaders were not godly, judged by Bible standards, they had no right to the wealth and land owned by the Church. If bishops failed to live pure lives, the State should take away their position. If the State failed to govern justly, the people should take over. Wealth and power had so corrupted the Church that radical reform was necessary - in Wycliffe's view, this meant a return to the simplicity of apostolic times.

Everyone, except the bishops, loved this. Merchants loved it, because they were paying taxes to the Church, but if the Church was not practicing 'dominion by grace' (godly living, by Biblical standards), there was no need to pay taxes to it. The king loved it, because the Pope was French, and England was at war with France, so if the Pope wasn't practicing 'dominion by grace', there was no need to support him. The common people loved it, because Wycliffe read the Bible to them and they could see that religion in the Bible was different from the religion they saw round about them. Ordinary priests and friars loved it because they saw the higher clergy as corrupt, greedy and immoral. Above all, the nobles loved it, because the Church owned one-third of all the land in England, and if the Church was not practicing 'dominion by grace', they could confiscate the Church's land.

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This no picture of Wycliffe – 8 lines left here

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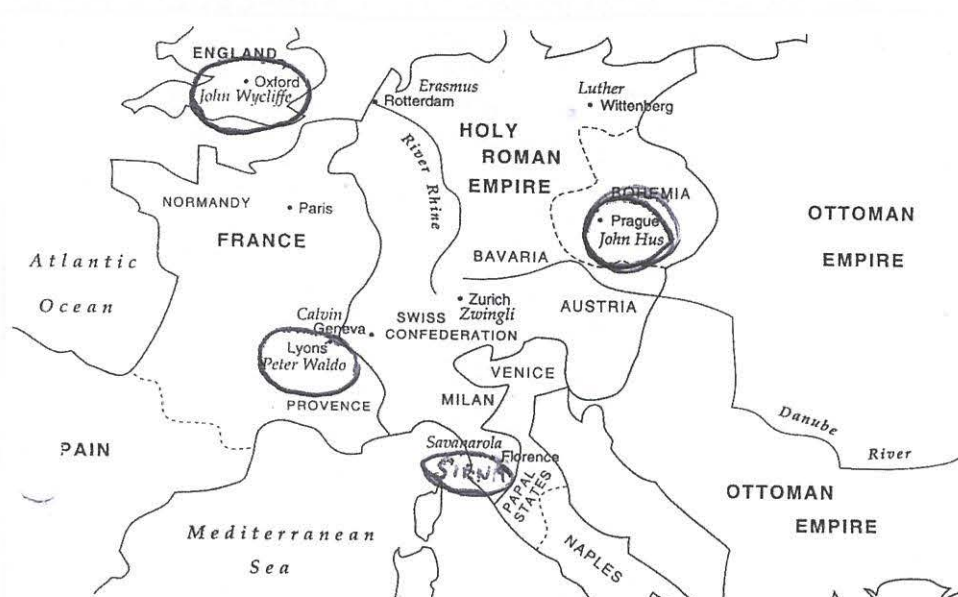
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For eight years, Wycliffe was a national hero, but as he continued to read the Bible, and to test everything by it, in 1379 he denounced the significance of transubstantiation, saying that there was no need for a priest to pronounce that the bread and wine had properties, which the Church alone could dispense. This was a reform too far, and the king and the nobility and his colleagues at Oxford University turned against him; in 1380 his Eucharistic views were condemned as heresy, and Wycliffe retired to a country church at Lutterworth in the English Midlands, where he became a genuine parish priest, after years as an absentee.

He died in 1384 from a stroke. His lasting contribution to the Church was that he and his friends produced the first English translation of the Bible - handwritten, of course, this is a hundred years before printing was invented - and his belief that ordinary people should read and be taught the Bible. To that end he encouraged people to do this, and they became known as 'Lollards' – section 2.4 below.



2.4 'Lollards' (Cairns, 320)

Wycliffe sent out preachers, wearing peasants' clothes, without money. The established Church laughed at them, calling them 'Lollards', meaning 'mumblers'. In the early days, they were negative - denying any value in the sacraments, denying the power of the clergy, rejecting images, pilgrimages. etc. Later, they became more positive - they carried written copies of the Bible, and read it aloud to crowds who



gathered round the market cross, or on the village green, teaching people to memorize the Lord's Prayer, or the Ten Commandments, or a Psalm, even the Sermon on Mount. For Wycliffe, the essence of ministry was preaching the Word, rather than celebrating sacraments.

The established Church persecuted them and many were martyred but others continued as an underground movement. As mentioned, Wycliff died peacefully, but not so his disciple in (what is) the modern Czech Republic, who was martyred for saying what Wycliff had said in England.

This chart tells us that from Waldo to Wyclif to Hus and through many others, not named there, Reformation was in the air long before Martin Luther became involved in 1517.

GROUP	CHARACTERISTIC TEACHINGS	NOTABLE FACTS
WALDENSIANS	simple communal lifestyle preached Scripture in vernacular emphasized Sermon on the Mount encouraged lay preaching permitted women preachers denied purgatory	Were founded by Peter Waldo (d. c.1215). Began in southern France. Were also called Poor Men of Lyons. Were anathematized for preaching without church's consent. Were persecuted in northern Italy, Austria. Accepted Reformation in 1532.
LOLLARDS	encouraged lay preachers denied transubstantiation encouraged use of Bible in English pacifistic condemned pilgrimages, auricular confession, veneration of images denied purgatory, priestly celibacy	Were followers of John Wycliffe. Some were martyred, but many recanted when put on trial.
HUSSITES	emphasized authority of Scripture over church demanded partaking of cup by laity denied transubstantiation, veneration of saints, indulgences, auricular confession read Scripture in vernacular	Were followers of John Huss. Later became known as Unitas Fratrum or Bohemian Brethren. Five crusades were directed against them. Council of Basel made compromise settlement with Hussites. Were influenced by Waldensians. Are perpetuated today in form of Moravian church.

2.5 JOHN HUS (1373-1415)

(Cairns, 246-7; Lion, 336; Vos, 78-9; Hanks, *70 Great Events*, 159-68; Lane, 112-4)

When the King of England (Richard II,) married into the royal family of Bohemia (today part of the Czech Republic), there was much coming and going between the Universities of Oxford and Prague (Bohemia's capital city). Czech students took Wycliffe's reforming ideas back to their own Church, where they were enthusiastically preached by John Hus.

Born of poor parents in Bohemia, educated at the University of Prague, he was made a priest in 1402 and became Professor of Philosophy and later Chancellor in 1409. He then came across Wycliffe's writings, and adopted most of them. He preached at Bethlehem Chapel (which you can still visit) in Prague from 1402. He preached 3,000 sermons during 12 years at Bethlehem, normally twice on Sunday, to overflowing congregations, and many times during the week.

He was supported by the Bohemian King Wenceslas (1373-1419), but when Hus attacked Indulgences, that is, selling pardon for sin, the Pope was stung into action because he was selling Indulgences on a massive scale. Many who had supported Hus's moral and spiritual reforms drew back when the Pope threatened the city with Interdict (remember, Lecture 11, the devastating effect of Interdict on a community). Hus moved to southern Bohemia, protected by friendly nobles, and continued to propagate his views. He argued that Church was entire body of elect in all ages, and of this Church, Christ alone was the head, not the Pope.

Another provocation to the Catholic Church was to give wine as well as bread to people at Mass.

John Huss administers Holy Communion in both the bread and the wine.



A Catholic Council was due to meet Constance in 1414 and Hus was summoned to appear before it. He was given a promise of safe-conduct by the Holy Roman Emperor, but when he got there, the Council said that heretics had no rights and that promises made to heretics should not be honoured; they ignored the promise of safe-conduct and after six months in prison, he was burnt at the stake on 6th July 1415. He was offered a last minute reprieve if he would abandon his beliefs, but he replied: 'I shall die with joy today in the faith of the Gospel which I have preached'. Hus's martyrdom made him a popular national hero and even under the Communist regime of 1948-89, he was hailed as a Czech national hero.



'John' Huss preached the Headship of Christ, not of St Peter.' He was summoned to appear before the Council of Constance, and was tried as a heretic. The Council condemned Huss, and in 1415 he was burnt at the stake. This seventeenth-century print depicts his martyrdom.

Another C14 movement for reform began in the Netherlands and Germany, known as the Brethren of the Common Life. They, and the best-known of them, THOMAS A KEMPIS (c1380-1471) was the TOPIC, taken at this point in the Lecture; here, it is printed at the end of the Notes for this Lecture.

(The Notes continue on page 10; page 9 is a full-page example of the artistic renaissance described in section 3 on page 10.

The next section of the Lecture, starting on page 10, is about the cultural revival known as the Renaissance. A spectacular example of the artistic revival is the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican, Rome. Michelangelo painted it, lying on his back on scaffolding, from 1508 to 1512.



MICHELANGELO'S VISION: THE CEILING OF THE SISTINE CHAPEL, VATICAN PALACE, ROME

Even the fiercest critics of the Renaissance popes must admit that they had good taste. Pope Sixtus IV rebuilt the papal chapel at the Vatican, henceforward called the Sistine Chapel. It was decorated by the foremost artists of the day – most

notably Michelangelo, whose work there, fired by his own deep faith, spans history from Creation to Judgment and remains one of the greatest artistic achievements. Such costly patronage was, however, a continuing drain on the papal treasury.

3. RENAISSANCE (Cairns, 252-8; Lion, 354-9 and 365 (Erasmus); Hanks, *Events*, 119)

3.1 Background - turmoil in Europe

We come now to three movements which paved the way for the Protestant Reformation in the 16 century - the Renaissance, Humanism (section 4) and invention of the Printing Press (section 5).

Renaissance (French for ‘rebirth’) is the term that historians apply to the cultural revival in Europe in C14-16. An example of the artistic renaissance is on the previous page, the world-famous ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican.

Throughout the C14 and C15, Nationalism was on the rise; the bubonic plague (Black Death) was killing millions and the Papacy moved to Avignon in France for most of the C14 (Lecture 11); civilisation seemed to be in chaos. People looked back nostalgically to ancient Greece and ancient Rome, their civilization and their literature, and began to study it and to copy it. The emerging middle-class merchants had money to spend on art, literature and education and there was a burst of new painting, sculpture, architecture, and writing. The Renaissance was not a single movement; it had no headquarters - it was a mood that began in Italy in the C14 and gathered strength in C15, especially when the Selduk Turks (? remember them, Lecture 15) finally captured Constantinople in 1453 and scholars fled to the west, bringing their precious manuscripts with them.

The Renaissance is importance for the Church because it encouraged what became known as Humanism, which we’ll look at next.

4 HUMANISM (Cairns, 256-8; Vos, 81-2)

4.1 Introduction

Today the word ‘humanist’ means someone who is anti-religious, but the humanists of the Renaissance were not anti-religious. A humanist then was someone who studied Greek and Latin literature in the original languages, without a thousand years of overlay from the Catholic Church. Humanists therefore stood in contrast to the Schoolmen (Lecture 16). Christian humanists looked to the New Testament and the Early Church for their theology. Humanists were Christians, operating within the Church, seeking the renewal of religion - ‘Christianity being born again’ as they often put it, born again by studying the original documents. In particular, they revived interest in the New Testament text, so:

4.2 Erasmus printed the Greek New Testament (Lion, 395; Lane 124-6)

A Dutchman called Desiderius Erasmus (1469-1536) published the first-ever printed Greek text of the New Testament in 1516, thus making it widely available. Remember that apart from a few translations like Wycliffe’s, which the Church condemned, the only available Bible was the Latin translation known as the Vulgate, dating from Jerome in the C4 (Topic 8). Erasmus accompanied his printed Greek New



INSPIRATIONAL SCHOLAR

Erasmus became the most famous scholar in Europe during his lifetime. He published an enormous amount of literature, including a new scholarly edition of the Greek New Testament in 1516.

Testament with his own Latin translation of the New Testament, because although educated people spoke Latin, few read Greek. People could now seek authentic Christianity by examining the earliest documents of their faith, either in the original Greek or faithfully translated into Latin. As it was put, ‘Humanism freed the Church from the shackles of Scholasticism and let the Old Testament and the New Testament speak for themselves.’

Erasmus also made changes from the Vulgate. He compared the Vulgate with Greek versions of the New Testament and he got a huge surprise. He realized the extent to which the Bible was being interpreted through the filter of the Church; for example:

Matt. 4.17 = ‘do an act of penance’, where Greek = ‘repent’

Luke 1. 28 = Mary ‘full of grace’, where Greek = ‘favoured’

The Vulgate made Jesus open his ministry in Galilee by saying: ‘do an act of penance’ (an outward act, the sacrament of penance) where the Greek states ‘repent’ (inward). The Vulgate made Luke describe Mary, the mother of Jesus, as ‘full of grace’, suggesting that Mary was an independent source of divine grace, so people could pray to her, asking for her grace, whereas it should be rendered ‘favoured’.

4.3 Criticism of late medieval piety

When Erasmus compared the contemporary Church with the Apostolic age of the Church, he was concerned that medieval piety centred on external practices such as pilgrimages, belief in the power of relics, veneration of the saints; how different from the Christ-centred worship of the early Church. So he wrote satirical books, to make people laugh at the abuses of the contemporary Church - the scandalous lives of the Pope and many of clergy, the state of the monasteries and the obscurities of Scholastic theology.

There is an example of the next page of a 1517 satire of Pope Julius II (Pope from 1503-21). When a rumour spread that the Sorbonne (the University of Paris) was about to banish books of religious satire, a Paris printer rushed through 24,000 copies of one and sold them all. Controversy was the best publicity - if you ban it, people want to read it.

4.4 The Relationship of Erasmus to the Reformers (Luther, Zwingli, etc)

Erasmus did not support the Protestant Reformation as such – he wanted to reform the Church from within, so both Catholics and Protestants were wary of him. Catholics saw him as subversive (which is understandable), whilst Protestants saw him as not ‘nailing his colours to the mast’ because his criticism of the Roman Church was always tempered by his concern for its unity – he saw schism as a great sin. When Erasmus heard it said that he had laid an egg which Luther had hatched, Erasmus retorted ‘I laid a hen's egg but what Luther hatched was a bird of a quite different sort.’

4.5 Erasmus' legacy (Lane, 124-5)

Incidentally, nothing to do with the Reformation, Erasmus coined many phrases still in use today – ‘a necessary evil’, ‘leave no stone unturned’, ‘God helps those who help themselves’, ‘grass is greener over the fence’, ‘putting the cart before horse’, ‘his heart was in his boots’, ‘to sleep on it’, ‘to call a spade a spade’, and ‘to blows your own trumpet’.

(The Notes continue on page 13 - page 12 is the satire, ‘Julius excluded from heaven’.)

‘Julius excluded from heaven’

Because Erasmus (sections 4.2 - 4.5) wrote books of satire, people thought that he was the author of this piece; it was by an English humanist, but Erasmus would have approved.

JULIUS: What the devil is going on here? The doors won't open, eh? It looks as if the lock has been changed, or tampered with, anyway.

JULIUS' GENIUS: You'd better check and see that you didn't bring the wrong key. You don't open this door, you know, with the same one that opens your money box.

JULIUS: I'm getting fed up. I'll pound on the door.

PETER: Well, it's a good thing we have a gate like iron. Otherwise this fellow, whoever he is, would have broken the doors down. It must be that some giant or satrap, a sacker of cities, has arrived. But, immortal God, what a sewer I smell here! Who are you?

JULIUS: Unless you're just plain blind, I trust you recognize this key, in case you don't know the golden oak [Julius' family crest]. And you do see the papal triple crown, as well as this robe shining all over with jewels and gold.

PETER: I recognize the silver key, more or less - although there is just one, and that quite unlike the one that the true shepherd of the church, Christ, once entrusted to me. But that arrogant crown you have, how, pray, would I be able to recognize that? Not even a barbarian tyrant has ever ventured to flaunt such a thing as that - still less anyone who expects to be admitted here. As for the robe, that impresses me not at all, since I have always trampled upon and despised jewels and gold as if they were rubbish

JULIUS: Why don't you cut out this nonsense and open the door - unless you would rather have it battered down? In a word - do you see what a retinue I have?

PETER: To be sure, I see thoroughly hardened brigands. But in case you don't know it, you must storm these doors with other weapons.

JULIUS: Enough talk, I say! Unless you obey right away, I shall hurl - even against you - the thunderbolt of excommunication, with which I once terrified the mightiest of kings, or for that matter whole kingdoms. You see the Bull already prepared for this purpose?

PETER: What thunderbolt, what thunder, what Bulls, what bombast are you talking to me about, pray? We never heard anything about these matters from Christ.

JULIUS: Well you'll feel them if you don't obey.

PETER: Maybe you terrified some people with that hot air before, but it means nothing here. Here you have to operate with the truth. This citadel is won by good deeds, not by evil words.

PRINTING PRESSES

Finally, as background to the Protestant Reformation:

5.1 Protestant use of printing

(Lion, 358-9, 396-99; Vos, 83; Hanks, *70 Great Events*, 167-73)

The Renaissance was a time of many inventions and one of these, important for the Church and indeed for mankind, was the printing press, invented in Germany c1450. Printing spread like wildfire - to Rome by 1467, to Paris in 1470, Cracow in 1474, London in 1477, Stockholm in 1483 and Madrid in 1499 - all before 1500. German printers were not just businessmen working to make money - they were craftsmen.

By time Luther was born in 1483, printing was well established throughout Europe. It is hard to imagine Reformation spreading as it did without printing to promulgate its ideas - there was no need for Luther or Calvin to go to England or Scotland or elsewhere to spread the Reformation - their books took their ideas for them. Sixty German cities published 390 editions of Luther's works in 1523 alone. By 1525 there were 3 million evangelical pamphlets circulating in Germany.

As the Apostles went through the world with the good news, so in our days the disciples of the new art (printing) spread themselves through all countries, and their books are the heralds of the Gospel and the preachers of truth and science.

In the first fifty years of the Reformation, there were more than a hundred editions of the Bible, which was the book in most demand. Previously, hardly anybody had books of their own, because, being hand-copied, they were expensive - so why bother to learn to read? In the late Middle Ages, less than 5% of people could read. Soon books became cheap - so it was worth learning to read - Bibles, prayers, advice to godparents etc., etc.

5.2 Printing in the language of the people

The next step was to put the Bible and other books, which were in Latin, into the language of the people. In many places, the Bible was the first book in their language.

I wish that they (the scriptures) might be translated into all the languages of Christian people, that they might be read and known, not merely by the Scots and the Irish, but by the Turks and Muslims. I wish that the farmer might sing parts of them at the plough, that the weaver may hum them at his shuttle, that the traveller may with their stories make the journey seem not so long.

(Erasmus of Rotterdam, *Works I*, 142, 202 ff.)

Johann Gutenberg shows his partner, Johann Fust, a proof from their press. Gutenberg (c1400 to 1468) was the first European to print with movable type cast in molds. He lived in Mainz, Germany.



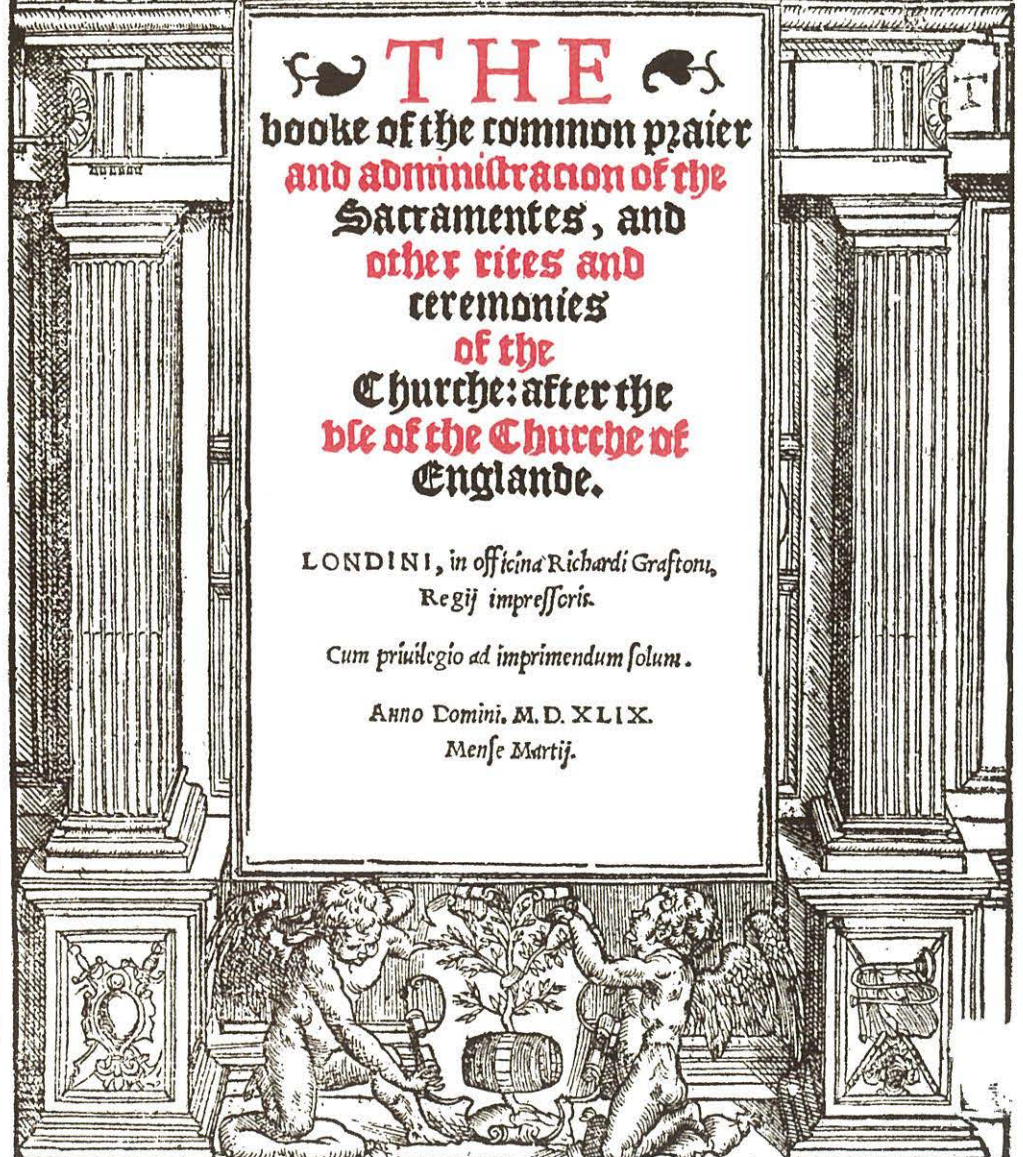


As well printing books for popular religious instruction, using text set with lines of type, woodcuts were common because of their appeal to illiterate and semi-literate people.

This is a (typical) Renaissance woodcut of Last Judgment; Christ is in centre, and his palm up (right hand) / palm down (left hand) determines whether those who come before him are saved (on his right) or damned (on his left).



The title page of the Book of Common Prayer, the official Prayerbook of the Church of England, printed in London in 1549.



THE
 booke of the common praier
 and administration of the
 Sacramentes, and
 other rites and
 ceremonies
 of the
 Church: after the
 vse of the Church of
 Englande.

LONDINI, in officina Richardi Grafton,
 Regij impressoris.

Cum privilegio ad imprimendum solum.

Anno Domini, M. D. XLIX.
 Mense Martij.

OVERVIEW OF CHURCH HISTORY IN 36 ILLUSTRATED LECTURES

TOPIC FOR LECTURE 18 – THOMAS A KEMPIS (c1380-1471)

Please tell us about the (probable) author of the classic Christian book *The Imitation of Christ*. Tell us first a little about the 14th and 15th century movement known as the ‘Brethren of the Common Life’, at whose school Thomas was educated. Tell us, chiefly, about Thomas’ life and influence and the impact of the book *The Imitation of Christ*.

Cairns mentions Thomas briefly at pages 243-4, and Olson does not mention him at all. Lion has a long section about his times at 359-63, and Lane 115-7 is also useful.



Translation of the inscription:

Above all things and in all things, O my soul, rest always in God, for He is the everlasting rest of the saints.

The inscription under this portrait of Thomas à Kempis reads *Super omnia, et in omnibus requiesces, anima mea in Domino semper, quia ipse Sanctorum aeterna requies* (Book III, Chapter 21 of *The Imitation of Christ*). There have been more than 3,000 editions of this famous work.