

History 209/Religion 310
Christendom Divided: Reformation and Religious Conflict in Early Modern Europe
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M/W/F 10-11AM, CAS 213
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Course Description:

In this course, we will explore the series of religious and political conflicts that are commonly known today as “The Reformation.” While the traditional narrative of these events starts with Martin Luther and his posting of the Ninety-Five Theses on the door of a Wittenberg church in 1517, we will begin earlier, by examining the internal crises and external events that shaped the Catholic Church in the later Middle Ages. We will then move to an examination of the major figures who led the sixteenth-century religious reform and their distinctive ideas, as well as analyzing the strains of Catholic reform that began independently of Protestant critiques and culminated in the Council of Trent and the program of Catholic missions that marked the early modern Church. The course will also look critically at the role of the state in determining the course of reform, the influence of radical social aspirations on the various programs for religious change, and the limits of (in)tolerance in the era of the Reformation.

In our exploration of all these topics, this class will be guided by several essential questions: Why did people change their religious affiliations? What ideas (or social, economic, or political pressures) were particularly influential in those decisions? How did religious leaders communicate those ideas to the laity? What aspects of public and private life did people understand their religious identity to encompass? In answering these questions, our goal will be to understand the many variables that influenced ostensibly “religious” decisions, and how tightly the political, religious, and social spheres were intertwined in early modern Europe.

Although much of our reading will comprise the work of contemporary scholars, our attention will be primarily devoted to engaging in dialogue with those who inspired and enlivened the Reformation. We will spend considerable time working through the thought of major reformers, but we will also work to recover the voices of the burghers, peasants, and nearly anonymous priests who made up the core of the Protestant and Catholic reformations. In doing so, we will try to embed ourselves in the conflicts, passions, and sincere religious aspirations that drove the complementary processes of transformation and retrenchment that helped create the nations and faiths that defined modern Europe.

Structure and Requirements:

This course is structured as a hybrid lecture and discussion; class meetings will feature lectures that, along with the course's secondary readings, frame the essential issues. The course will also require student participation, as we will spend considerable time discussing primary sources and images. In some weeks we will have discussions during all of our class meetings; in others, we will spend one day in lecture and the other meetings in discussion. As such, students will need to be prepared to discuss the materials listed for each specific week! This course is reading intensive – reading will average about 100 pages per week, and will require more reading on certain weeks; for class meetings, however, we will typically focus on the primary sources – please be sure to have access to them in class for the purpose of our discussions.

Because of the structure of this course, attendance is essential for your success. If you know you will miss a class, please inform me ASAP to find out about missed assignments. Class participation is graded, so be aware that absences will affect your final grade.

Beyond attendance/participation, students will be evaluated based on four components: three papers (3-4 pp.), due on October 3, November 14, and December 5; and a take-home exam. Paper topics will be distributed to students two weeks before the papers are due. Guidelines for the final exam will be distributed on the final day of class.

Assignments are Weighted as Follows:

Paper 1: 20%	(Due October 3rd)
Paper 2: 20%	(Due November 14th)
Paper 3: 20%	(Due December 5th)
Take-Home Exam: 25%	(Due December 15th)
Class Participation: 15%	

Required Texts:

Students are required to purchase three texts for this class at the BU Barnes & Noble Bookstore. All are recent, and are also available on Amazon.com and other online book retailers:

**Philip Benedict, *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed: A Social History of Calvinism*
(Yale UP, 2002)**

Barbara Diefendorf, *The Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre: A Brief History with Documents* (Bedford/St. Martins, 2009)

**Scott Hendrix, *Recultivating the Vineyard: The Reformation Agendas of Christianization*
(Westminster John Knox Press, 2004)**

Along with these texts for purchase, many readings for the class will be posted as pdf's on the course website. Readings available on the Blackboard site are marked as such in the syllabus. Other readings are available either from large Internet databases (such as ATLA or JSTOR) or the Fordham University Medieval and Modern Sourcebook websites. These are also marked, and links to them are provided on the course Blackboard site.

Academic Conduct and Etiquette:

Students are expected to comply with the spirit and letter of the CAS Academic Conduct Code (available at: <http://www.bu.edu/cas/students/undergrad-resources/code>). Any findings of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of "F" for the semester. While I do not expect any cases of academic misconduct to occur during the semester, dishonesty or plagiarism will not be tolerated in any form. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism during the course of the semester, please ask! It is always better to be safe than sorry.

I highly recommend that you take advantage of office hours or email to ask any questions that arise during the course of the semester. I will do my best to respond to all emails within 24 hours, but it might take slightly longer during high-volume periods of the semester. I ask that all students write emails formally (think of it as practice for the post-college world), with a proper salutation and closing, correct punctuation, and appropriate capitalization. I will prioritize emails written in this manner.

Course Schedule:

Readings: O = Online readings linked through the course Blackboard site
 BB = PDFs on the course Blackboard site

Week 1 (9/3 and 9/5) Introduction – In our first meeting, we will try to unpack the term "Reformation" and analyze our preconceptions about what it means: what are its connotations? How does it resonate in contemporary culture? How does it relate to the modern world? This conversation will set the stage for our historical examination of what the European reform movements of the sixteenth century sought to accomplish in terms of their religious and broader social agendas.

Readings: Hendrix, *Recultivating the Vineyard*, xv-xxiii and 1-35.

Week 2 (9/8, 9/10, and 9/12) The Late Medieval Church and State – In this week, we will examine the intellectual trends, ecclesiastical developments, and royal institutions that characterized Europe on the eve of the Reformation. Our goal will be to understand the tensions and aspirations that enabled the outbreak of reform from the mid-1400s and into the sixteenth century, and to describe the practices that characterized popular Catholic piety.

Readings: John Van Engen, “Multiple Options: The World of the Fifteenth-Century Church” [O]; Berndt Hamm, “Normative Recentering in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries” [O]; “The Reformation of the Emperor Sigismund,” and “The Grievances of the German Nation against Rome.” [BB]

Week 3 (9/15, 9/17 and 9/19) Martin Luther, The German Hercules – In many ways, Martin Luther was the father of the Reformation. Although his importance can be overstated, his celebrity cannot. For this week, we will examine his theological agenda and the ways in which it was communicated to the German public through the early modern equivalent of social media and social networking. Ultimately, we will try to discover the nature of his reforming goals, and to consider how radical they really were.

Readings: Hendrix, *Recultivating the Vineyard*, 37-67; Bernd Moeller, “What was Preached in German Towns in the Early Reformation?” [BB]; Martin Luther, selections from: *The Freedom of a Christian*, *Address to the German Nobility* and the *Invocavit Sermons* [all BB]

Week 4 (9/22, 9/24 and 9/26) Beyond Luther: The Urban Reformation – For this week, we will explore how Luther’s university protest against indulgences spread across the German lands, and in how his message was transformed through its transmission across cities and nations through the vehicle of print. In particular, we will focus on the vital disagreements that formed over matters of biblical interpretation, sacramental doctrine, and church discipline.

Readings: Hendrix, *Recultivating the Vineyard*, 69-96; Benedict, *Purely Reformed*, 9-48; Ulrich Zwingli, *Commentary on the True and False Religion* [BB]; Martin Bucer, “How to Live for Others and Not for Oneself” [BB].

Week 5 (9/29 and 10/1 – no class on 10/3) The Fragmenting Reformation – In the mid-1520s, a revolution inspired by Luther’s message broke out in central Europe. Luther, however, disavowed the social upheaval and appealed to the princes to put down the peasant revolt. For this week, we will assess how competing visions of reform proliferated in the first decade of the Reformation, and how the leaders of reform movements sought to rein in what their protests had begun.

Readings: Hendrix, *Recultivating the Vineyard*, 97-120; Peter Blickle, “A Great, Unprecedented Upheaval” [BB]; Thomas Muntzer, “The Prague Manifesto” [BB] and “Sermon to the Princes” [O]; and “The Twelve Articles of the Swabian Peasants” [O].

PAPER #1 DUE IN PROFESSOR HABERKERN'S BOX 10/3

Week 6 (10/6, 10/8, AND 10/10) From Schleithem to Münster: Early Anabaptists – In this week, we will examine the early development of Anabaptism, which culminated (according to the Anabaptists' opponents) in an episode in Reformation history that has been widely studied, but only poorly understood: the establishment of the messianic and apocalyptic "Kingdom" of Münster in 1534-1535. In particular, we will try to understand how this political experiment can be understood as a bizarre but logical extension of the mainstreams of Reformation thought.

Readings: James Stayer, "Swiss and South German Anabaptism, 1526-1540" [O]; HC Erik Midelfort, "Madness and the Millennium at Münster" [BB]; *The Schleithem Confession* [O]; Melchior Hofmann, *The Ordinance of God* and Bernhard Rothmann, *The Restitution* [BB].

Week 7 (10/14, 10/15, and 10/17 – NOTE: WE MEET ON TUESDAY THIS WEEK, NOT MONDAY!!!) A Disciplined Reform: Geneva – During this week, we will turn our attention to John Calvin and his reform program for the city of Geneva; we will see how this French lawyer differed from Luther, and how his insights into Christian theology, discipline, and civil society offered an alternate path to reform that proved to be massively influential in the Netherlands, France, and the British Isles.

Readings: Benedict, *Purely Reformed*, 77-120; John McNeill, "Calvin and Civil Government" [BB]; John Calvin: *Letter to the King (On the Clergy)* [O]; and excerpts from *The Institutes of the Christian Religion* [BB].

Week 8 (10/20, 10/22 and 10/24) The Politics of Reformation: Great Britain – For this week, we will head to the western extreme of Europe and the British isles. We will focus on the function of royal prerogative in determining the progress of religious reform, and on the difficulties (impossibilities?) of legislating belief. We will also cover the question of whether we need to speak of plural English reformations, or if the stages of this drama comprise a unified whole.

Readings: Benedict, *Purely Reformed*, 230-254; Peter Marshall, "Henry VIII's Reformation, 1525-47" [O]; *The Act of Supremacy* (1534) [O]; Preface to the *Book of Common Prayer* and *The Act of Uniformity* (1552) [BB].

Week 9 (10/27, 10/29 and 10/31) Roman Catholic Responses and Reform – In our discussions for this week we will look substantially at Catholic responses to the outbreak of the Reformation, and relate changes in Catholic spirituality to both long-term developments within the Church and immediate changes outside it. Particular attention will be made to new religious orders, changes in education, and the efforts to convene a reform council.

Readings: Hendrix, *Recultivating the Vineyard*, 121-147; Robert Bireley, “Redefining Catholicism: Trent and Beyond” [BB]; John O’Malley, “Was Ignatius Loyola a Church Reformer? How to Look at Early Modern Catholicism” [O]; Reform Decrees of the Council of Trent [BB]; St. Ignatius Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises: “To Have the True Sentiment Which We Ought to Have in the Church Militant”* [O]; and Pope Pius VI, *The Tridentine Creed* [O].

Week 10 (11/3, 11/5, and 11/7) The Politics of Reformation: France and the Netherlands – For this week we will shift slightly west, to observe how imperial and royal politics affected the course of reform in Holland and France. In both places, shocking degrees of violence accompanied the struggle for religious change, and we will use them in order to ask about the [im]possibility of tolerance and coexistence during the Reformation.

Readings: Benedict, *Purely Reformed*, 121-151 and 173-201; Diefendorf, *The Saint Bartholomew’s Day Massacre*, “Introduction” and primary sources (TBA).

Week 11 (11/10 and 11/12 – no class on 11/14) Creating Confessional Cultures – The goal of the Reformation was to transform not just formal religion, but kingdoms and cultures. During this week’s meetings we will begin to explore how religious and political leaders employed education and legislation to attempt to accomplish this ambitious goal, and how this process led to the increasing entanglement of secular and sacred, as well as the (unintentional?) empowerment of the state.

Readings: Readings: Hendrix, *Recultivating the Vineyard*, 148-174; Wolfgang Reinhard, “Pressures Towards Confessionalization? Prolegomena to a Theory of the Confessional Age” [BB]; Excerpts from: *The Augsburg Confession* (1530) and *The Heidelberg Catechism* (1563) [BB]; text of *The Peace of Augsburg* [O].

PAPER #2 DUE IN PROFESSOR HABERKERN’S BOX BY 11/14

Week 12 (11/17, 11/19, and 11/21) Piety and Popular Culture in the Reformation – For this week, we will examine how political and institutional change in the European churches affected the everyday practices of religious life. Some historians have challenged the notion that the Reformation changed much of anything at all – for this week and the next, we will take that contention seriously in an effort to understand the realities on the ground during the tumultuous sixteenth century.

Readings: Robert Scribner, “Reformation, Carnival, and the World Turned Upside Down,” and “Incombustible Luther: The Image of the Reformer in Early Modern Germany” [O]; “Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, 207-234 [BB].

Week 13 (11/24 – no class 11/26) On the Margins of Reformation? – In these two classes, we will look at women in the Reformation. Although excluded from the leadership of both the Catholic and emerging Protestant churches, women found a number of ways to exert their influence as moral authorities throughout the sixteenth century. For these discussions, then, we will examine how gendered ideologies both limited and enabled women in their efforts to be leaders of religious reform.

Readings: Kirsi Stjerna, *Women and the Reformation* [BB]; Alison Weber, “Little Women: Counter-Reformation Misogyny” [BB]; Argula von Grumbach, “Open Letter to...Adam von Thering,” [BB]; The Latter Examination of Anne Askew [BB]; and St. Teresa of Avila, *The Way of Perfection*, Prologue and chs. 1-3 [O].

Note: Our discussion of this topic will extend to 12/1

Week 14 (12/1, 12/3 and 12/5) The Reformation’s “Others” – For this week, you will get to choose what we cover. There are a number of possibilities that would make interesting extensions/ conclusions for the class, and I would like you all to decide what note we will finish on. Possibilities include (but are not limited to):

Readings: Susan Boettcher, “Insiders and Outsiders,” [BB]; Alice Eckhardt, “The Reformation and the Jews” [BB]; and John Bohnstedt, “The Infidel Scourge of God” [O].

PAPER #3 DUE IN PROFESSOR HABERKERN’S BOX BY 12/5

Week 15 (12/8 and 12/10) Summing up – In our last meeting of the semester, we will step back and consider exactly what the Reformation was, what it accomplished (if anything), and explore the “modernity” of the religious and cultural reforms of the long sixteenth century. In doing so, we will use two recent articles by eminent Reformation historians as lenses through which to view “The Reformation” as an historical and intellectual concept.

Readings: Hans Hillerbrand, “Was there a Reformation in the Sixteenth Century?” [O]; Geoffrey Parker, “Success and Failure During the First Century of the Reformation” [O].

TAKE-HOME EXAM: DUE IN PROFESSOR HABERKERN’S BOX BY 2PM ON DECEMBER 15TH