



# RENAISSANCE REBELS

# The Question of Periodization

- Renaissance vs Early Modern vs Medieval--what are the differences?
  - Italian Humanism                      Scholastic Philosophy
  - Reformation                      Counter-Reformation (Council of Trent)
  - Classicism--*ad fontes*              Vernacular
  - State sovereignty                  Feudalism
  - Printing press                      Censorship
  - Imperialism                      Holy Roman Empire
  - Individualism                      Corpus mysticum
  - Exploration                      Travel Journals/Ethnography
  - New science (heliocentrism, relativity, mathematics, experimentation, "corpuscular philosophy"--atomism)              Alchemy, Humours, Paracelsianism
- "Presentism", Secularization, Enlightenment, "Whig History"



# The Donation of Constantine (Lorenzo Valla)







"Adam, we give you no fixed place to live, no form that is peculiar to you, nor any function that is yours alone. According to your desires and judgment, you will have and possess whatever place to live, whatever form, and whatever functions you yourself choose. All other things have a limited and fixed nature prescribed and bounded by our laws. You, with no limit or no bound, may choose for yourself the limits and bounds of your nature. We have placed you at the world's center so that you may survey everything else in the world. We have made you neither of heavenly nor of earthly stuff, neither mortal nor immortal, so that with free choice and dignity, you may fashion yourself into whatever form you choose. To you is granted the power of degrading yourself into the lower forms of life, the beasts, and to you is granted the power, contained in your intellect and judgment, to be reborn into the higher forms, the divine." -- Pico della Mirandola, Oration on the Dignity of Man

“When evening comes, I return home and go into my study. On the threshold I strip off my muddy, sweaty, workday clothes, and put on the robes of court and palace, and in this graver dress I enter the antique courts of the ancients and am welcomed by them, and there I taste the food that alone is mine, and for which I was born. And there I make bold to speak to them and ask the motives of their actions, and they, in their humanity, reply to me. And for the space of four hours I forget the world, remember no vexation, fear poverty no more, tremble no more at death: I pass indeed into their world.” -- Machiavelli,







# Erasmus, *Philosophia Christi*, and 3rd Church

Trinitarian Verse: “There are three that bear record in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one” (1 John 5:7).

“You will not be damned if you do not know whether the Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son has one or two beginnings, but you will not escape damnation if you do not cultivate the fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, long-suffering, mercy, faith, modesty, continence, and chastity. . . . The sum of our religion is peace and unanimity, but these can scarcely stand unless we define as little as possible, and in many things leave each one free to follow his own judgment, because there is great obscurity in these matters” (Erasmus, Epistles)



# THE REFORMATION

## 95 Theses (Wittenberg)

- But Luther's movement was born in the context of a series of reformatory movements in 15th century Europe (conciliarism, spiritualism, Joachites)

## Three Kinds of Reformers

- Roman Catholic
- Magisterial: Lutheran / Reformed / "Anglican," (later) Arminian
- Radical: Anabaptists, Libertines, Antitrinitarians (Arians), Socinians





# The Protest

Papal Indulgences, Masses for the dead

Purgatory

What view of the soul does Purgatory presuppose?

- Florentine Platonism vs Paduan Aristotelianism [Marsilio Ficino vs Pietro Pomponazzi]



Leo X, Giovanni de' Medici

# Luther's Tower Experience, 1519

I hated that word, "justice of God," which I had been taught to understand philosophically as referring to that justice by which God is just and by which he punishes sinners and the unjust. But I, blameless monk that I was, felt that before God I was a sinner with an extremely troubled conscience. I couldn't be sure that God was appeased by my satisfaction. I did not love, no, rather I hated the just God who punishes sinners. In silence, if I did not blaspheme, then certainly I grumbled vehemently and got angry at God. I said, "Isn't it enough that we miserable sinners, lost for all eternity because of original sin, are oppressed by every kind of calamity through the Ten Commandments? Why does God heap sorrow upon sorrow through the Gospel and through the Gospel threaten us with his justice and his wrath?" This was how I was raging with wild and disturbed conscience.

I meditated night and day on those words until at last, by the mercy of God, I paid attention to their context: "The justice of God is revealed in it, as it is written: 'The just person lives by faith.'" I began to understand that in this verse the justice of God is that by which the just person lives by a gift of God, that is by faith. I began to understand that this verse means that the justice of God is revealed through the Gospel, but it is a passive justice, i.e. that by which the merciful God justifies us by faith, as it is written: "The just person lives by faith." All at once I felt that I had been born again and entered into paradise itself through open gates.

(Preface to the Complete Edition of Luther's Latin Works)

"This art was given to me by the Holy Sprit on this Cloaca [toilet] on the tower." (Table Talk)



# The Theology of Works and *Sola Fides*

Luther's Paradox: What is the freedom of a Christian?

What are works? What is faith?

- Commandments and promises (7-8)

What is idolatry? Should we not do works? (13)

The New Adam ("restored to Paradise" 14)

The Priesthood of all believers--and the kingship (11)

"If you wish to use your freedom, do so in secret" (19)

## *Schwärmer*

“Finally, something must be added for the sake of those for whom nothing can be said so well that they will not spoil it by misunderstanding it. There are very many who, when they hear of this freedom of faith, immediately turn it into an occasion for the flesh and think that now all things are allowed them. They want to show that they are free men and Christians only by despising and finding fault with ceremonies, tradition, and human laws; as if they were Christians because they did not fast or eat meat when others fast....” (18)



“Throw these godless witches from the tower”:  
The Peasants’ Revolt, 1524



# Sebastian Lotzer's 12 Articles

1. Every municipality shall have the right to elect and remove preachers if he behaves improperly. The preacher shall preach the gospel simply, straight and clearly without any human amendment.
2. The preachers shall be paid from the great tithe. A potential surplus shall be used to pay for the poor and the war tax. The small tithe shall be dismissed, for it has been trumped-up by humans, for the Lord has created the cattle free for mankind.
3. Serfdom to be abolished, given that Christ redeemed all of us with his precious bloodshed, the shepherd as well as the highest, no one excluded. Therefore, it is devised by the scripture, that we are and that we want to be free.
4. Universal right of hunting and fishing.
5. Universal right of taking wood from the forest.
6. The matter of excessive services demanded of us should be looked into as we are only required to serve according to God
7. The nobility shall not force more services or dues from the peasant without payment.
8. Many properties are not worth the rent. Honest men shall inspect these properties and fix a rent in accordance with justice
9. It is our opinion that we shall be judged according to the case's merits, and not with partiality
10. Several have appropriated meadows and acres (community land that was at the disposition of all members), that belong to the municipality. Those we want back to our common hands.
11. The "Todfall" (a sort of inheritance tax) shall be abolished altogether and never again shall widows and orphans be robbed contrary to God and honour.
12. It is our decision and final opinion that if one or several of the articles mentioned herein were not in accordance with the word of God, those we shall refrain from if it is explained to us on the basis of the scripture.



# Protest and Rebellion--Diet of Worms 1521



Catholicism

The Pope

Pedoaptism

Eucharist: transubstantiation

Episcopacy: Possible

Purgatory: Yes

Salvation: Good Works

Protestantism

Luther

“

Real presence

Presbyter

No

Sola fides

Calvinism

Calvin

“

“

Presbyter

No

Sola fides

Anabaptism

Michael Servetus/Zwingli

Adult baptism

Symbolic

No

Sola fides



TOTAL DEPRAVITY  
UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION  
LIMITED ATONEMENT  
IRRESISTIBLE GRACE  
PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS



# Montaigne and the French Wars of Religion

Huguenots -- St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre -- Monarchomachs

The Essays -- from *essayer*, a form virtually invented by Montaigne

- The influence of the upheavals caused by the Reformation is present throughout the *Essays*
- Of Repentance is from Book 3, written 1581-1587.

What is Montaigne's notion of freedom and how does it differ from Luther's?



“I set forth notions that are human and my own, simply as human notions considered in themselves, not as determined and decreed by heavenly ordinance and permitting neither doubt nor dispute; matter of opinion, not matter of faith; what I reason out according to me, not what I believe according to God” (Montaigne, Of Prayers, 284)