



St. Francis Virtual House of Studies

Readings In **THE HISTORY OF EARLY MODERN CHRISTIANITY**



This bibliography and the one to follow on the Modern Era will be significantly longer than the others. It is not so much that the “Era of the Reformation” and following deserves more treatment. It is more the case that over the last five centuries have been increasingly embroiled in the politics of the division that took place in the 16th century and the related processes of secularization following. We have all but lost sight of the similarities and continuities, thus we have a great deal to rethink. That is best done by revisiting the “Reformation” (which we will do in this bibliography) and “Secularization” (which we will do in the next). Previous generations of scholars, mostly apologists and polemicists, made sharp distinctions between “Catholic/Protestant” and “Religious/Secular” dichotomies. A more recent group over the past few decades has raised serious questions about such a neat package. Thus, in this bibliography we will include works that will point to the continuity in a wide variety of these movements of that which was considered Catholic by both the Early and Medieval Church.

For this bibliography we will have individual sections for the divisions that take place in the 16th through 18th centuries. We will generally try to avoid the generic word “Protestant” and will instead use terminology that refers to identifiable traditions with distinctive theologies and ecclesiologies. These include those who considered themselves collectively as reform movements in the Church Catholic and those who sought a return to what they called the “Primitive Church” and are often referred to as the Radical Reformation or the Free Church Tradition. The reforming Catholic groups were/are: Lutheran, Anglican (including the 18th-century Methodist variation), Reformed (Zwinglian and Calvinist), Tridentine (aka Roman Catholic Church), and Old Catholic traditions. The Free Church Tradition

includes: Anabaptists (aka Baptists), Mennonites (including the Amish) and the Society of Friends (aka Quakers).

In this bibliography and the one to follow on the Modern Period we will continue to deal with these groups because so much of the history of Western Christianity over the past five centuries has been conditioned by these continuing divisions. That is to say, each of these groups defined themselves in large part by their differences from the others. While the Ecumenical Catholic Communion has a great desire to transcend these divisions, it is necessary to recognize their historical reality. In order to facilitate getting beyond the divisions, I hope the annotations will occasionally suggest what contributions these divided histories might make to a future that is both ecumenical and Catholic.

1. Prelude

The Reformation of the 16th Century is a firmly fixed epoch in our historical consciousness. Obviously there were significant divisions, but we need to modify our understanding of what happened. The idea of a singular reformation is simply not supportable by the evidence. Not only were there different reformations, but within each there were serious internal disagreements. In this section we will see that “The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century” has antecedents that go back to at least the thirteenth century.

John Bossy, ***Christianity in the West 1400-1700***. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Bossy traces trends in theology, the use and application of Canon Law, liturgy and popular culture, and offers an analysis of the dynamic economic and social structures that changed those components of religious life prior to and during the period of reformation.

Marcia L. Colish, ***Medieval Foundations of the Western Intellectual Tradition***. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999.

Not all reforms in the 16th century were generated out of universities (that of Luther was) but all were influenced by the intellectual currents of the High Middle Ages. This book is an excellent introduction to that constant ferment during the previous three centuries.

Steven Ozment, ***The Age of Reform, 1250-1550: An Intellectual and Religious History of Late Medieval and Reformation Europe***. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980.

*Ozment offers insightful analyses of the roles the Franciscans, various mystics, humanism, **Devotio Moderna**, the Conciliar Movement, and various secular trends played in creating the context and dynamic background for the 16th century movements. He then looks at how these influences are played out in the careers of Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, the Radical Reformers, and the Tridentine reformers.*

2. General Works on the Early Modern Period

Maurice Ashley, *The Golden Century: Europe 1598-1715*. London: Phoenix Press, 1969.

In this general overview one can see the continuing impact of the 16th-century movements on political, economic, social and cultural trends as well as religious life.

William J. Bouwsma, *The Waning of the Renaissance: 1550-1640*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.

Bouwsma clearly and masterfully shows the rootedness of the Renaissance in the Medieval world and the extent to which it is intertwined with the various reformations. Thus while both Renaissance and Reformation certainly influenced what we call "modernity," they both need to be understood as something other than "modern."

Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Reformation: A History*. New York: Viking, 2003.

In size and scope this book is encyclopedic. In style it is superb analytical narrative. (The opening sentence of the first chapter is, "Lurking in a little English country church, at Preston Bissett in Buckinghamshire, is an object lesson in the difficulty of understanding the religious outlook of past generations." Not many readers will be able to resist going further into the following 700 pages.) MacCulloch begins with a brief overview of the state of Western Christendom prior to the 16th century, takes the reader through detailed and insightful accounts of the various reform movements of that century, and gives a hint of the perpetuation of those movements into the 17th century. There are other good one volume accounts, but I know of none better.

Alister McGrath, *Christianity's Dangerous Idea: The Protestant Revolution—A History from the Sixteenth Century to the Twenty-First*. New York: HarperOne, 2007.

According to McGrath, the radical idea is that individuals can interpret the Bible for themselves. He begins with the "Accidental Revolutionary" Martin Luther and takes us on through the more general cultural implications of that idea, as well as more historically recent movements such as Pentecostalism.

Dorinda Ouatram, *The Enlightenment*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

This tightly argued book will give the reader an overview of the intellectual life of Eighteenth Century Europe. The implications of alternative cosmologies and the implications for various Christian traditions will be clear.

3. Luther and the Wittenberg Reformation

David V. N. Bagchi, ***Luther's Earliest Opponents: Catholic Controversialists 1518-1521***. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991.

Bagchi offers a cogent analysis of Luther's earliest critics and concludes that none of them established compelling theological arguments because they could not get beyond the issue of Papal authority.

Richard Marius, ***Martin Luther: The Christian Between God and Death***. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999.

*Four decades after Erik Erikson put Luther on the psychiatrist's couch in **Young Man Luther**. Marius places him there again. This highly valuable study of the root of Luther's famous theological dichotomies and his dialectical method in the reformer's life-long personal conflicts is more the result of Marius' own insightful intelligence rather than a tribute to the use of psychoanalytical theory in historical analysis.*

Heiko A. Oberman, ***Luther: Man between God and the Devil***. New York: Image Books, 1990.

Although almost twenty years old (even older in the German edition) this book remains in this compiler's opinion the best single volume on the life and times of Luther. While many previous authors have asserted Luther as one of the first of truly modern historical figures, Oberman convincingly argues that both he and his movement need to be understood primarily as Medieval phenomena.

Jaroslav Pelikan, ***Spirit Versus Structure: Luther and the Institutions of the Church***. New York: Harper Row, 1968.

Although you are more likely to find this book in a good academic library than in a used book store (even on Amazon), it continues to be the most suggestive book in unpacking the most underdeveloped (or perhaps obscured) elements of Luther's theology and Lutheran theology after him, ecclesiology—the nature of the Church. Most writers observe, quite correctly, that Luther's ecclesiology was essentially that of his Early and Medieval predecessors prior to the increased claims of Papal authority. Pelikan's analysis of Luther's struggle with issues of vocation, monasticism, infant baptism, the difference between Church Law and Divine Law, and the Sacramental System suggests that Luther had a clearly Catholic ecclesiology.

Union with Christ: The New Finnish Interpretation of Luther, Edited by Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1998.

In this series of essays by five insightful Finnish Historical Theologians, and responses by four American theologians this book recreates the excitement of a variety of conferences in the mid-1990s offering the most exciting approaches to both Luther and Lutheran theology in decades. For all the nuanced differences in the essays and responses, the core of these works is a concern for demystifying the doctrine of justification by reminding the readers that for Luther "Christ is really present in faith itself." Thus, Luther can easily be understood in conversations with Franciscans and the Eastern Orthodox tradition.

4. The English Reformation

G. W. Bernard, ***The King's Reformation: Henry VIII and the Remaking of the English Church***. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007.

The title of this major reinterpretation suggests a narrow monographic study, but this book is a nuanced and sustained 700 page sweeping analytical treatment. Bernard rejects two major mono-causal traditions in the historiography of the English Reformation: 1) the libidinous and power-craving monarch, and 2) the rise of the merchant class. To his credit, Bernard does not reject these factors, but places them in a complex matrix of theological, political, and cultural considerations. The detailed notes and the ten page bibliography are wonderful guides to further reading in this field.

Eamon Duffy, ***The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, 1400-1580***. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992.

*Duffy presents a rich tapestry of the interplay between liturgy and social reality in 15th-century England as a prelude to the upheaval that was the Reformation. This excellent historical work is enhanced by an anthropological sensitivity to the relationship between symbol, ritual and meaning. Nine years later, Duffy explored the implications of his general observations for the religious life of a specific community in ***The Voices of Morebath: Reformation & Rebellion in and English Village*** (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).*

Antonia Fraser, ***Cromwell: Our Chief of Men***. London: Phoenix Press, 2002.

In this update of her 1973 study Fraser deftly explores the complex political leader who emerged from the English Civil War and Puritan Revolution of 1642-1651. This period, and the overlapping interregnum (1649-1660) shed light on the continuing lack of resolution in the ongoing English Reformation.

Christopher Haigh, ***English Reformations: Religion, Politics, and Society under the Tudors***. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.

The references to the older less nuanced interpretations of Dickens and Elton are useful and those who consult these works can determine whether Haigh's use of the plural "Reformations" and his insistence that the movements continue well into the twentieth century are warranted. As an undergraduate a half-century ago I was well served by the works of Dickens and Elton, but I'll put my money on Haigh.

John Kent, ***Wesley and the Wesleyans: Religion in Eighteenth-Century Britain***. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Kent places the rise of Methodism in the context of what he perceives as a failure of the Church of England to follow the lead of 17th and 18th-century British intellectuals into the realm of emotion and experience. A handful of Anglican divines did take this plunge, Kent argues, and thus effected a second Reformation.

Michael Walzer, *The Revolution of the Saints: A Study in the Origins of Radical Politics*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982.

Walzer argues that the English Civil War was both political and religious. In contrast to the work of the late Christopher Hill, who considered Puritanism the social religion of the merchants, Walzer considers Puritanism the political religion of intellectuals, including the clergy.

5. Zwinglian and Calvinist Reformations

Though different in dynamics and substance, these two are linked together as the result of subsequent history.

William G. Naphy, *Calvin and the Consolidation of the Genevan Reformation*. Louisville: Westminster / John Knox Press, 2003.

This is a useful study of the most thorough integration of Church and State in the 16th century.

Graeme Murdock, *Calvinism on the Frontier 1600-1660: International Calvinism and the Reformed Church in Hungary and Transylvania*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

This is a good addition to the all-too-sparse literature on the spread of Calvinism to Eastern Europe.

Margo Todd, *The Culture of Protestantism in Early Modern Scotland*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002.

Todd presents an excellent analysis of both change and continuity in the Christian culture of Scotland during and after the reforms under the leadership of John Knox.

Kilian McDonnell, OSB, *John Calvin, the Church, and the Eucharist*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967.

McDonnell understands Calvin's ecclesiology and Eucharistic Theology as Catholic. The nuances are distinctly different from that of Rome and that of Calvin's senior Catholic reformer Luther, but he has more congruence with both than he has with Ulrich Zwingli, who dismissed any notion of Real Presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper. Thus, this work in Historical Theology is as relevant to ongoing ecumenical conversations in the 21st century as it is for understanding the mentality of a mid-16th century Christian thinker.

Charles Partee, *The Theology of John Calvin*. Louisville: Westminster / John Knox Press, 2008.

Partee is a rare and valuable scholar. He is a Calvinist who seems able to encounter and unpack the works of Calvin without projecting the later developments of Calvinists onto the 16th-century documents. As a result, we have an excellent analysis of a Catholic reformer named Calvin who did exist instead of an historical reconstruction of a generic Protestant who did not exist. This is an excellent entry book for understanding this often misunderstood theologian and ecclesiologist.

W. Peter Stephens, ***Zwingli: An Introduction to His Thought***. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.

This is a solid and accessible one-volume introduction to this reformer.

6. The Radical Reformation

William Roscoe Estep, ***The Anabaptist Story: An Introduction to Sixteenth-Century Anabaptism***. 3rd Revised Edition. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1996,

This is the best one-volume introduction to the subject matter.

Franklin H. Littell, ***The Origins of Sectarian Protestantism: A Study of the Anabaptist View of the Church***. New York: the Macmillan Company, 1952, 1964.

This older work is still a useful introduction to the movement in the 16th century that radically broke from the previous 15 centuries of Christianity and attempted to recover and restore what they perceived as the radical egalitarianism of early Christian communities. Littell also explores the strange ecumenism between Roman, Lutheran and Reformed Christians who seemingly could agree on nothing except the persecution of the Anabaptists.

7. The Roman Reformation

Robert Bireley, ***The Refashioning of Catholicism, 1450-1700: A Reassessment of the Counter Reformation***. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1999.

While Bireley recognizes that the Bishop of Rome and those who gathered around the perpetuation of Papal office in the 16th century were in some ways reactive/responsive to the massive upheavals of that period, he argues that one must go back to the 15th century to recover the essence of various reform movements of which the Council of Trent was a culmination.

William J. Callahan and David Higgs, ***Church and Society in Catholic Europe of the Eighteenth Century***. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979.

The authors argue that the encounter with both the Enlightenment and the French Revolution constitutes a second Roman Catholic Reformation. Neither doctrine nor liturgy significantly changed, but there was a profound shift of the place of the Roman Catholic Church and the Papacy in the new emerging order by the end of the 18th century.

R. Po-chia Hsia, ***The World of Catholic Renewal 1540-1770***. 2nd Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

This brief book gives a remarkably detailed account of the Council of Trent, subsequent doctrinal developments up to the late 18th century, the relationship of Roman Catholic Reform and Iberian global expansion, and the changing social composition of the Roman Curia.

John W. O'Malley, ***The First Jesuits***. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995.

The Counter-Reformation did not create the Jesuits. The Jesuits were not quite the singular engine that put the Counter-Reformation in action. But neither phenomenon can be understood without reference to the other. This book does an admirable job of showing the intimate relationship between the two without falling into historical reductionism by conflating them.

John W. O'Malley, ***Trent and All That: Renaming Catholicism in the Early Modern Era***. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002.

O'Malley points out that the more than two centuries between the Council of Trent and the French Revolution are referred to by historians of the Roman Catholic church by a variety of names: Counter-Reformation, Catholic Reformation, the Baroque Age, the Tridentine Age, and the Confessional Age. He proposes the phrase "Early Modern Catholicism." O'Malley argues that this period is neither exclusively nor primarily a reaction of the Roman Catholic Church against the various reform movements, but is a time of adjustments to rapidly changing economic, social, intellectual, cultural and political realities.

8. Special Topics

The Catholicity of the Reformation, edited by Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1996.

The authors of these essays suggest that the continuity of Catholic faith can be seen in the early Lutheran liturgies, concepts of preaching authority, discussions of the pastoral office, and piety. Each treatment is based on solid research.

Barbara B. Diefendorf, ***Beneath the Cross: Catholics and Huguenots in Sixteenth-Century Paris***. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

This is a detailed and thorough study of the notorious massacre on St. Bartholomew's Day in 1572. Diefendorf places the event in the context of the matrix of religious, social and political conflict of the previous decade and a half.

Richard S. Dunn, ***The Age of Religious Wars, 1559-1715***. 2nd Edition. New York: W. W. Norton, 1979.

This is a useful overview of the subject matter.

Elizabeth Eisenstein, ***The Printing Press as an Agent of Change***. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980.

In concept, implications, and number of pages, this is a huge book. Eisenstein carefully and brilliantly explores the impact of printing on the culture of the Early Modern period. She avoids both the all too easy dismissal of this technological achievement while steering clear of the facile and erroneous claim the printing press was the primary cause of the Reformation.

Karen Liebreich, ***Fallen Order: Intrigue, Heresy, And Scandal in the Rome of Galileo and Caravaggio***. New York: Grove Press, 2004.

The Poor Clerks Regular of the Mother of God of the Pious Schools (more popularly known as the Piarists) was founded in the early 17th century as a teaching order. Over the past few

centuries they educated several prominent figures in a variety of fields: Mozart, Goya, Schubert, Hugo and Mendel. However, less than a century after the sweeping reforms of the Council of Trent and only three decades after the founding of the order the Piarists were the cause of a scandal within the Roman Catholic Church. There were accusations of persistent sexual abuse of students. Although the order was suspended for a decade, it was restored after the public scandal had faded. Pope Innocent X appointed a man known to have been guilty of abusing students in charge of the order.

Peter Matheson, ***The Imaginative World of the Reformation***. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001.

Matheson argues the period of the Reformation was one of a significant shift in the world of imagination, from the “enchanted world” of the Medieval period (with more than a Platonic hint that enchantment was the reality) to a world in which the dichotomies, paradoxes and contradictions of human existence were the bases of reality. Thus the timeless sense of eternity underlying the illusion of the present gave way to the dialectic of history as we live toward the eternity to be ushered in at the end of time.

C.B. Moss, ***The Old Catholic Movement: Its Origins and History***. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1948; rev. editions 1964 & 1977; reprinted by Apocryphile Press, 2005.

Moss gives a sympathetic overview from an Anglican perspective. He provides a brief background to the early 18th-century developments leading to the secession of the Archdiocese of Utrecht (Holland) and then provides considerable detail on the development of both polity and doctrine. His chapters on the prelude to the First Vatican Council, the Council itself, and the outcome of the Council are particularly detailed and insightful. The revised edition provides a perspective on Vatican II by Michael J. Woodgate.

Jaroslav Pelikan, ***The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine, Vol. 4: Reformation of Church and Dogma (1300-1700)***.

Pelikan places the doctrinal nuances of the Reformation era in the context of a long period of change starting two centuries before the 16th century and continuing into the next century.

Andrew Pettegree, ***Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion***. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

The sermons, songs, woodcuts, pamphlets and books produced by the reformers give evidence of several techniques of persuasion from logical argument to slogans in order to present an alternative to the rhetoric of conservation of received practices. In so doing, Pettegree argues, the reformers transformed passive audiences into convinced and committed communities.

Bernard M. G. Reardon, ***Religious Thought in the Reformation***. 2nd Edition. London: Longman, 1995.

This is a concise but highly useful overview of the theological divisions of the 16th century.

Reformation Christianity: A People's History of Christianity, edited by Peter Matheson. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006.

This collection of essays by excellent social historians of Christianity is the best single volume available on the impact of the various reformations on daily life and the significance of changes in the patterns of life during the 16th century for understanding the social origins of those reformations.

Kirsi Stjerna, *Women of the Reformation*. Malden, MA: Wylie-Blackwell, 2009.

This book contains a series of biographical sketches of women who made substantive contributions to the various reformations. These include (but are not limited to) matriarch Katharina von Bora Luther, Queen Jeanne d'Albret, prophetess Ursula Jost, and the classic scholar Olympia Fulvia Morata. These profiles are rendered even more useful by the use of social history to provide context and theological analysis to more fully understand their significant roles.

9. Primary Sources

The following are affordable and accessible samplings of the primary sources for this period. There are multivolume collections that carry a hefty price tag, but can be consulted in most academic libraries.

The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, Edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy H. Wengert. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000.

This collection of 16th century confessional statements and position papers constitutes the manifesto for the Evangelical Catholic reform movement of Martin Luther and his University of Wittenberg colleagues (particularly Philip Melancthon. As a test of effective reading, see if you can find anywhere in these writings a reduction of the sacraments to two.

Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent, Edited, Translated and Introduced by H. J. Schroeder. Charlotte, NC: TAN Books, 2009.

This is a reprint of the standard English translation of the basic documents of the Council of Trent.

The Complete Works of Menno Simons. Ann Arbor: Scholarly Publishing Office, University of Michigan Library, 2005.

The Michigan Historical Reprint Series makes out-of-print books of enduring scholarly utility available at affordable prices. The collected writings of the most important of the Radical Reformers is a valuable resource.

Documents of the English Reformation, Edited by Gerald Bray. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994.

The copious documents were well chosen. Documents originally in Latin are presented with both Latin and English texts. James Clarke Publisher in Cambridge, England, published this work in 2004, but I have not yet seen a copy and can't comment on any changes that have been made.

John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Edited by John T. McNeil and Translated by Ford Lewis Battles. Westminster / John Knox Press, 1960.

Both Luther and Calvin wrote a great deal. Luther was more of an essayist. Among other writings (including biblical commentaries) Calvin wrote this large—1800 page—systematic theology. This translation is the best I have seen. In it one may encounter Calvin the Catholic reformer. Westminster / John Knox has reprinted the two-volume 1960 edition originally published by Westminster Press

Martin Luther: Selections from His Writings, Edited by John Dillenberger. New York: Anchor, 1958.

The documents are well chosen to indicate the variety of the great reformers writings and they are introduced with helpful insights.

The Radical Reformation, Edited by Michael G. Baylor. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

This is a well chosen collection of writings by a variety of radical reformers in the 16th-century. They vary widely in a number of ways but they all reject the “Magisterial Reformation” (Lutheran and Reformed) as serving only the interests of the social elites.

A Reformation Reader: Primary Texts With Introductions, Edited by Denis Janz. 2nd Edition. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008.

If one is looking for a one volume collection with writings from across the spectrum of reformations, this is the one I would recommend.