

DAS HEILIGE RÖMISCHE REICH (1648)

- nach Abschluss des „Westfälischen Friedens“
- |   |                             |                               |                          |
|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| ■ Grenze des Heiligen Römischen Reiches | AC = Abtei Corvey           | GR = Grafschaften Reuß        | LH = Land Hadeln         |
| <b>Habsburg</b>                         | AE = Abtei Essen            | GS = Grafschaften Schwarzburg | LO = zu Hzm. Lothringen  |
| ■ Österreichische Linie                 | BR = zu Bistum Brixen       | GV = Grafschaft Vaduz         | MB = zu Mgt. Baden       |
| ■ Spanische Linie                       | FB = Reichsstadt Friedberg  | MZ = zu Erzbm. Mainz          | PE = Probiat. Ellwangen  |
| <b>Hohenzollern</b>                     | FI = Fürstentum Isenburg    | SO = Grafschaften Solms       | SY = Grafschaften Sayn   |
| ■ Brandenburgische Linie                | GB = Grafschaft Bentheim    | WD = zu Wied                  | WI = zu Hzm. Württemberg |
| ■ Fränkische Linie                      | GL = Grafschaft Lippe       | HH = Hansestadt Hamburg       | WU = zu Bistum Würzburg  |
| ■ Schwäbische Linie                     | GM = Reichsstadt Gelnhausen | HK = Hansestadt Lübeck        | KÖ = zu Erzbm. Köln      |
- Schraffierte Flächen = Kondominate

- Oldenburg**
- Dänemark & Oldenburg
  - Linie Holstein-Gottorp
- Wettiner**
- Albertinische Linie
  - Ernestinische Linie
- Wittelsbacher**
- Bayerische Linie
  - Pfälzische Linien
  - Geistliche Gebiete
  - Reichsstädte
  - Nicht darstellbare Kleinsterritorien
- 0 50 100 150 200  
Kilometer



The Protestant  
Reformation  
in the  
Holy Roman  
Empire  
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# Introduction

- We begin a series of four lectures today that will focus on the most sensitive subject of religion and the impact this invisible force has on the visible aspects of human relationships with God in Europe.
- We will discuss the Protestant Reformation and its impact individually on three major components of Europe: the dissolved Holy Roman Empire (962-1806), France, and England.
- The scale is massive in the birthplace of the movement, the Holy Roman Empire, and the tremors it generated there.
- Developments in France and England are equally intense but more specifically defined, with England standing apart in terms of the circumstances that triggered the phenomenal change in the religious landscape. We will combine offshoots of Protestantism separately with them.



# Introduction

- In our fourth lecture, we will discuss how the Catholic Church responded to the massive transformations in the faith and practices of a vast cross-section of its flock. We will try to understand how the Catholic Church had historically reacted to the dissent and reform movements and why sixteenth-century Protestantism posed it a different and lasting challenge, despite Catholic initiatives that history termed the Catholic or Counter-Reformation.

# Reformation, What is it?

- The Reformation—whether Protestant or Catholic—represented a profound expression of Europe's enduring engagement with God and a deep concern with the role, if any, of intermediaries in what had long been regarded as the most sacred of human relationships, worth every sacrifice.
- Though such questions had been raised for centuries, Martin Luther's intervention in 1517 transformed them into a defining fault line, setting his followers apart from a Church that had commanded the spiritual loyalty of Europeans for over a thousand years.
- Above all, the Reformation profoundly shaped European politics, as rulers and princes chose to align themselves with either Catholicism or Protestantism, a decision that had far-reaching consequences for the geopolitical order.

# Reformation, the Crux.

- Martin Luther (1483-1546) launched a reformation movement in 1517 that we now know as Protestantism. The immediate trigger was a church campaign to sell indulgences in the German-speaking areas. Luther raised ninety-five objections to the practice, defying the most revered offices and functions of the Church. In his [\*Address to the Nobility of the German Nation\* \(1520\)](#), referring to the church, he said, “they are in truth the communion of Antichrist and of the devil, and have nothing at all of Christ except the name” (7).
- The table on the screen sums up the fault lines between the Catholic Church and Luther’s objections. Two world historians compiled it. If you have ideas beyond it, share them so that we can make it more comprehensive.
- Briefly, Luther and his followers denied any role whatsoever to an intermediary between God, his word, the Bible, and his creation, the humans. Sinners, their only chance for salvation was in God’s mercy.

# CATHOLIC/PROTESTANT DIFFERENCES IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

Issue	Catholic	Protestant
<b>Religious authority</b>	The Bible and church tradition as defined by pope and church councils	The Bible alone
<b>Role of the pope</b>	Leader of church	Authority of the pope denied
<b>Ordination of clergy</b>	Apostolic succession: direct line between original apostles and all subsequently ordained clergy	Apostolic succession denied; ordination by individual congregations or denominations
<b>Role of clergy</b>	Priests are generally celibate; sharp distinction between priests and laypeople; priests are mediators between God and humankind	Ministers may marry; priesthood of all believers; clergy have different functions (to preach, administer sacraments) but no distinct spiritual status
<b>Salvation</b>	Importance of church sacraments as channels of God's grace	Importance of faith alone; God's grace is freely and directly granted to believers
<b>Status of Mary</b>	Highly prominent, ranking just below Jesus; provides constant intercession for believers	Less prominent; Mary's intercession on behalf of the faithful denied
<b>Role of saints</b>	Prominent spiritual exemplars and intermediaries between God and humankind	Generally disdained as a source of idolatry; saints refer to all Christians
<b>Prayer</b>	To God, but often through or with Mary and saints	To God alone; no role for Mary and saints

Source: Robert W. Strayer and Eric W. Nelson, *Ways of the World with Sources, Combined Volume*, 5th ed. (New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2020), 647.

# Reformation, the Crux.

This is how Luther further explained his thoughts in the [Smalcald Articles](#) (1535), Article IV (In German original, the name of the city is Schmalkalden):

“For all his bulls and books are extant, in which he roars like a lion (as the angel in Rev. 12 depicts him), [crying out] that no Christian can be saved unless he obeys him and is subject to him in all things that he wishes, that he says, and that he does. All of which amounts to nothing less than saying: Although you believe in Christ, and have in Him [alone] everything that is necessary to salvation, yet it is nothing and all in vain unless you regard [have and worship] me as your god, and be subject and obedient to me. And yet it is manifest that the holy Church has been without the Pope for at least more than five hundred years, and that even to the present day the churches of the Greeks and of many other languages neither have been nor are yet under the Pope. Besides, as often remarked, it is a human figment which is not commanded, and is unnecessary and useless; for the holy Christian [or catholic] Church can exist very well without such a head, and it would certainly have remained better [purer, and its career would have been more prosperous] if such a head had not been raised up by the devil. And the Papacy is also of no use in the Church, because it exercises no Christian office; and therefore it is necessary for the Church to continue and to exist without the Pope.”

# Reformation: The Essence

- Why did Luther dissent? The answer is in the complex ways in which human beings perpetually wrestle with the mysteries of life after death. By the time Luther nailed his 95 theses to the door of the Church of Wittenberg, human beings had struggled with those questions for some four and a half thousand years of recorded history.
- Here are two examples:
- The first comes from the second most ancient civilization of the river valleys, Egypt.



# Reformation: The Essence

- The Egyptians of the Old Kingdom (2575 to 2134 BCE) believed that the afterlife was a domain alone of the Pharaohs. The pyramids were their homes afterlife. You had to prepare for it during your lifetime. The pharaohs would therefore ensure that their afterlife abodes would be gorgeously ready by the time they died and then went through the essential transitional formalities with Osiris.
- The Middle Kingdom, 2040 to 1640, extended the privilege of an afterlife to the social elite as well.

# Reformation: The Essence

- The governing principle was that you should prepare yourself during your lifetime according to a methodology that the priests would define for you. In chapter [125 of the Book of the Dead](#) (CXXV of the hyperlinked document), the deceased appears before a tribunal consisting of Osiris and 42 divine judges. Facing the court, the deceased makes a public confession, during which he avows innocence concerning 82 commandments prohibiting criminal acts, taboos, or professional improprieties. Then the divine council either purifies the deceased, enabling him to enjoy the afterlife, or condemns him to oblivion.

# Reformation: The Essence

- The Zoroastrians, dating back to 700 BCE, believed that the good and evil in our lives would determine our lives after death.
- A Zoroastrian sacred text, the Vendidad (“Against the Demons”), written down between the third to seventh centuries CE, expands upon earlier indications given in the Gathas dating back to 1500 to 1000 BCE. This work describes how the breath-soul of a dead person proceeds on the third day to the Account-Keeper’s Bridge. A maiden there will guide righteous souls across the bridge to the House of Good Thought, while a malodorous hag leads evil souls to the House of Lies.

# Reformation: The Essence

- The Catholic Church fully developed and believed in the existence of purgatory en route to the Day of Judgment. How the sins could be purged became a major concern for the church. The possibilities were enormous through confession, penance, and absolution, all facilitated by the Church and the community of Christians.
- The believers valued the prospect of alleviating the burden of evil in exchange for the promise of a rewarding afterlife. The Church offered indulgences to open one more pathway, in addition to confession, penance, and absolution, to help sinners in purgatory.
- The Church claimed that no believer would have to face God alone in the afterlife, and there was no salvation outside the church.

# Reformation: The Essence

- The indulgence system linked together several assumptions about sin and the afterlife.
- First, any wrong requires an act of restitution to the injured party. So, God demands an action on the part of a sinner to prove repentance for a sin.
- Second, the Church located a treasury of merit in the good works and sacrifices of Christ, the saints, and the Virgin Mary, which could be made available to assist in the work of a faithful Christian's repentance. The Pope could make this treasury of merit accessible to the anxious Christians on earth. The treasury of merit could thus be granted to the faithful to shorten the time spent doing penance in purgatory. That grant is an indulgence.



# Reformation: The Essence

- In 1343, Pope Clement VI had issued a papal bull to rationalize the system, the foundational grounds for which were already well established. The thank-offerings of the pious Christians as gratitude for the acts of charity on the Church's part became effectively a payment for the indulgence.
- In 1476, the church also extended indulgences to help the souls of people already dead and presumed to be in Purgatory, as well as living people who sought and received an indulgence; A papal bull followed to implement the extended system.

# Reformation: The Essence

- In 1517, Pope Leo X issued a special indulgence to fund the construction of a new Saint Peter's Church in Rome, replacing the old, smaller one. A key figure in the Papal plans to build Saint Peter's Basilica was the Archbishop of Mainz, named Albrecht, who was also a prince-elect. His main agent in the indulgence system was a Dominican friar, Johann Tetzel, who sold indulgences in the German lands and sent the money back to Rome.
- Contemporary observers like Luther recognized that the archbishop promoted the Pope's indulgence in collaboration with a financial plan worked out by the Fuggers, an Italian banking family.

# Reformation: The Essence

A contemporary of Tetzel, Friedrich Myconius, a minister in the town of Gotha, not far from Wittenberg, commented on his campaign, saying that his preaching raised enormous sums of money which were sent to Rome. “... he said that ...the pope had power in heaven and earth to forgive the sin, as long as money was put into the indulgence coffer, and, if he forgave it, God must do so also. ...He claimed that in the very moment the coin rang in the coffer, the soul rose up to heaven. The indulgence was so highly prized, that when the commissary entered a city, the Bull was borne on a satin or gold-embroidered cushion, and all the priests and monks, the town council, schoolmaster, scholars, men, women, maidens, and children, went out to meet him with banners and tapers, with songs and procession....(Cited in Sherman and Salisbury (*The West in the World*, 2014) 331).

# Reformation: The Essence

Luther found the idea of purgatory, indulgences, and Tetzel's methods unacceptable. In his [ninety-five theses](#), he struck at the core of the up-for-sale indulgence system. This is part of what he said,

“27. They preach man who say that so soon as the penny jingles into the money-box, the soul flies out [of purgatory].

28. It is certain that when the penny jingles into the money-box, gain and avarice can be increased, but the result of the intercession of the Church is in the power of God alone.

32. They will be condemned eternally, together with their teachers, who believe themselves sure of their salvation because they have letters of pardon.”

# Reformation: The Essence

- Luther continued,
- “84. Again: -- "What is this new piety of God and the pope, that for money they allow a man who is impious and their enemy to buy out of purgatory the pious soul of a friend of God, and do not rather, because of that pious and beloved soul's own need, free it for pure love's sake?"
- 86. Again: -- "Why does not the pope, whose wealth is to-day greater than the riches of the richest, build just this one church of St. Peter with his own money, rather than with the money of poor believers?"
- 87. Again: -- "What is it that the pope remits, and what participation does he grant to those who, by perfect contrition, have a right to full remission and participation?"
- 88. Again: -- "What greater blessing could come to the Church than if the pope were to do a hundred times a day what he now does once, and bestow on every believer these remissions and participations?"



# Reformation: The Essence

- Luther's theses exposed differences not only on indulgences but also on a whole range of theology and church practice.
- Luther eliminated the transitional phase of purgation and emphasized that penance was a function of God's grace, not of works or expensive indulgences. People were saved only through God's mercy, not through their efforts to live as good Christians.
- Faith alone, not ritual, could save their souls.

# Reformation: The Essence

- In the run-up to 1517, Luther had been teaching at the University of Wittenberg and, in recent years focused on the parts of the Bible such as Romans in addition to Augustine's message about salvation.
- Another scholar of this era, Erasmus of Rotterdam, had been working on the translation of the New Testament. Neither was aware of the other's work. We will talk about Erasmus in our last lecture of the Unit.

# Reformation: The Essence

- In his lectures, Luther emphasized that all righteousness comes from God. Interpreting Romans, central to his presentation of the message of salvation was the doctrine of predestination. Only God's grace can save humans. Faith had a key role in salvation, based on Romans 1:17, i.e., “the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith, as it is written, he who through faith is righteous shall live.”
- God imputes the merits of the crucified and risen Christ through grace to a fallen human being, who remains without inherent merit and who, without this “imputation,” would remain unrighteous. He considered it the ultimate revealed truth in the Bible and saw the Bible through new eyes. He said, “At this, I felt myself straight away, born afresh and to have entered through the open gates into paradise itself.”

# Reformation: The Essence

- The central point of Luther's belief was "justification by faith." It meant that Christ's sacrifice had been complete and for all time, so humans did not have to do anything else for their salvation.
- Each person stood alone before God throughout his or her life and on judgment day. The salvation was by Scripture alone, the principle of *sola scriptura*.
- Luther also denied five of the seven Catholic sacraments, retaining baptism and Eucharist. He rejected transubstantiation, which meant that through an ordained priest, the bread and wine offered up at mass were transformed into the actual body and blood of Christ.

# Reformation: The Essence

- Luther also laid the fundamental principles of the Protestant faith, which remained common to various offshoots of the Reformation:
  - Salvation by faith, not works
  - The Bible as the sole authority; and
  - A "priesthood" made up of all believers.
- The Reform movement also viewed the sacred art in churches, the images and statues of saints, and other icons as promoting idolatry. With varying degrees of emphasis, the followers resorted to periodic iconoclasm, destroying the sacred images in the churches.



# Reformation, the Geopolitics.

- Luther had nailed his 95 Theses, about the church practice of offering indulgences to their flock, to the door of the church of Wittenberg Castle in 1517. In response, Pope Leo X issued a papal bull on June 15, 1520. The bull threatened Luther with excommunication unless he recanted his teachings. He refused, and the Pope excommunicated him and one of his colleagues in January 1521.
- The same year, the Diet of the Holy Roman Empire met in the imperial free city of Worms from January to May. Emperor Charles V summoned Luther for a trial. Luther stood by his ideas again. The Emperor issued the Edict of Worms, declaring Luther a heretic and forbidding his subjects from propagating his ideas.
- The Holy Roman Empire was an offshoot of the Carolingian Empire, taking this name around 962. It was a loose confederation of princely states spread over a vast area, including today's Germany, Austria, the Czech Republic, and parts of France and the Netherlands.

Holy  
Roman  
Empire  
1648



# Reformation, the Geopolitics.

- It was not a hereditary kingdom. Since 1356, it had adopted a legal framework to elect an emperor out of the princes of constituent territories of various sizes. In the sixteenth century, seven prince-electors chose the emperor.
- The Catholic Church had an extensive religious and political relationship with the Empire. Three of the prince-electors were Archbishops..
- Besides a role in the electoral college for the emperor, the church exercised enormous influence on the princes who clustered into various caucuses within the Parliament, the Diet, to pursue and protect their interests. They enjoyed a fair degree of autonomy within their jurisdictions.





# THE SEVEN ELECTORS OF THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE

## according to the Golden Bull of 1356



THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE c. 1356



In 1356, the Golden Bull issued by Emperor Charles IV formalized the election system of the Holy Roman Empire. It established a college of seven prince-electors, who held exclusive authority to elect the King of the Romans.

Elections were to take place in Frankfurt, with a majority vote deciding the outcome.

This system remained the constitutional foundation of imperial succession until the empire's end in 1806.



**1**  
**ARCHBISHOP OF TRIER**  
HOUSE OF SAARBRÜCKEN

Hereditary Imperial Office:  
**ARCH-CHANCELLOR OF BURGUNDY**

Core Lands (c. 1356)  
Moselle valley

controls the Moselle trade route,  
linking France and Germany,  
lucrative wine & silver revenues.



**2**  
**ARCHBISHOP OF COLOGNE**  
HOUSE OF GENNEP

Hereditary Imperial Office:  
**ARCH-CHANCELLOR OF ITALY**

Core Lands (c. 1356)  
Lower Rhine

rules the empire's largest city -  
pilgrim traffic to the  
Shrine of the Three Kings.



**3**  
**KING OF BOHEMIA**  
HOUSE OF LUXEMBOURG

Hereditary Imperial Office:  
**ARCH-CUP-BEARER**

Core Lands (c. 1356)  
Kingdom of Bohemia

silver output finances imperial policy,  
Bohemia has the right to mint  
the renowned Prague groschen.



**4**  
**COUNT PALATINE OF THE RHINE**  
HOUSE OF WITTELSBACH

Hereditary Imperial Office:  
**ARCH-STEWARD (SENESCHAL)**

Core Lands (c. 1356)  
Middle Rhine & Neckar

holds one of Germany's most  
fertile wine regions & key Rhine tolls,  
later pivotal in the Thirty Years' War.



**5**  
**DUKE OF SAXONY-WITTENBERG**  
HOUSE OF ASCANIA

Hereditary Imperial Office:  
**ARCH-MARSHAL**

Core Lands (c. 1356)  
Elbe valley

carries imperial sword at coronations;  
leverage in Baltic trade,  
and later in Reformation politics.



**6**  
**MARGRAVE OF BRANDENBURG**  
HOUSE OF WITTELSBACH

Hereditary Imperial Office:  
**ARCH-CHAMBERLAIN**

Core Lands (c. 1356)  
Mark Brandenburg (Havel valley)

controls the northeast marches  
guarding routes to Poland,  
and later the nucleus of Prussia.



**7**  
**ARCHBISHOP OF MAINZ**  
HOUSE OF NASSAU

Hereditary Imperial Office:  
**ARCH-CHANCELLOR OF GERMANY**

Core Lands (c. 1356)  
Rhine-Main heartland

convenes the election at Frankfurt  
controls profitable toll stations,  
mints its own coinage.



The Holy Roman Empire (962–1806) was a decentralized realm in Central Europe,  
uniting hundreds of semi-independent states under an emperor elected by leading princes.



# Reformation, the Geopolitics.

- The most significant aspect of geopolitics is that the Holy Roman Emperor spared the heretic Luther's life. The princes implemented the Edict of Worms as they wished. The Edict declared him a heretic, but the flexible governance structure of the empire allowed the prince of Luther's hometown, the Elector of Saxony, to grant him a safe return and departure to a safe haven. Luther thus escaped the persecution that took the lives of several of his followers.
- The wide range of shared sovereignties in the Empire also enabled Luther to continue to refine his ideas, print, and circulate them, including a German translation of the Bible in 1522.

# Reformation, the Geopolitics.

- The Reformation hugely benefited from the Diet of Speier 1526, which decided to convene a national council for the settlement of the church question. In the meantime, in matters concerning the Edict of Worms, “every State shall so live, rule, and believe as it may hope and trust to answer before God and his imperial Majesty.”
- Within three years, the Empire changed its mind at the Diet of Speier 1529, required the implementation of the Edict of Worms, and forbade any further reformation until the meeting of the council that must convene in 1530.

# Reformation, the Geopolitics.

- The Reformation faced a dire challenge at Speier in 1529 that took a decidedly rewarding turn as a minority of the Diet members, including six princes and fourteen imperial cities, lodged a legal appeal on April 25, 1529, against the reversal of 1526. The signatories to the appeal viewed the reversal of 1526 as against the Word of God and their conscience.
- Most significantly, the Lutheran leaders called their legal petition a presentation of *protestatio*. They had formally given Luther's reform movement a name, Protestantism.

# Reformation, the Geopolitics.

- Although a minority of Princes had opted for Lutheranism in 1529, gradually they grew into a League of Protestant Princes in 1531 and called it the Schmalkaldic League.
- The following of Luther remained on the rise. By the 1550s, say Sherman and Salisbury (*The West in the World* (2014) 85), Lutheranism had captured about half of the population of the Empire, an approximate total of 20 million.
- The Princes had an incentive in following Lutheranism. Moving away from the grip of Catholicism enhanced their power and wealth as they could stop the flow of funds outside their territories to Rome. They were also able to appropriate Catholic monasteries, bishoprics, and other ecclesiastical lands and assets within their territories.
- Luther emphasized obeying the secular ruler. The revolt of peasants in 1524, therefore, found no sympathy from him. The princes brutally suppressed it, taking some 100,000 lives, and appreciated his support.



# Reformation, the Geopolitics.

- The geopolitics had both internal and external dynamics.
- Internally, Charles V was able to defeat the leading Protestant Princes of the Schmalkaldic League at the Battle of Mühlberg in 1547.
- Externally, historian Paul Kennedy (*The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (New York: Random House, 1987), 37-40) tells us that his enhanced central power alarmed the neighboring French. France, a rival of the fellow Catholic Charles V, moved its forces into Germany by 1552. This intervention enabled the Protestant states to resist the emperor.
- By 1555, Emperor Ferdinand had succeeded Charles V.

# Reformation, the Geopolitics.

## The Peace of Augsburg, 1555

- Under Emperor Ferdinand, the two sides signed a peace treaty in 1555.
- The treaty gave each prince the right to define his territory as Protestant or Catholic. It allowed the dissenters to migrate to the territory of a prince who followed the religion of their choice.
- The treaty, however, made no accommodation to the followers of John Calvin, which we will discuss in our next lecture in detail.
- The treaty enabled states outside the Holy Roman Empire to make a religious choice. The Scandinavian states opted for Protestantism.

# Reformation, the Geopolitics. Thirty Years' War 1618-48

- In the seventeenth century, external dynamics dominated geopolitics. The conflict between the Catholic and Protestant princes evolved into the Thirty Years' War.
- Paul Kennedy traces the immediate spark to the war of 1618-48 in the 1618 revolt of the Protestant estates of Bohemia against their Catholic ruler. A Spanish Habsburg army came to rescue the Bohemian ruler. The Dutch moved 1621 into the Rhineland to counter their Spanish rivals. In 1626, a Danish force invaded from the north.

# Reformation, the Geopolitics.

- In 1630, Swedish King Gustavus Adolphus II (1611-1632) moved into northern Germany and pushed southward to the Rhineland and Bavaria. He lost his life at the Battle of Lützen in 1632, but the Swedish intervention continued.
- By 1634, the Spanish (also a part of Charles V's domain, outside the Holy Roman Empire) decided to support Austria, which provoked the French, Catholics, and yet rivals, to move troops across various frontiers in 1635.
- By 1640, the Spanish had to diminish their pressure on the north to overcome a revolt in Portugal, which finally separated from them in 1668. The French pressed against them by helping the Catalans, threatening their heartland.

# Reformation, the Geopolitics.

- Kennedy also denotes it as the first global war because the Dutch used their maritime advantage to attack Spanish-Portuguese outposts in Brazil, Angola, and Ceylon (Sri Lanka).
- Interlinkages and alliances made it hard for the war-weary participants to strike a peace deal. Finally, the Spanish initiated it by recognizing full Dutch independence in 1648.
- The parties negotiated the 1648 Peace of Westphalia, which restored religious and political balance within the Holy Roman Empire and confirmed the limitations on imperial authority.

# Reformation, the Geopolitics

## The Peace of Westphalia, 1648.

- The landmark Peace of Westphalia stipulated the principle, as already recognized in Augsburg 1555, that the Prince's faith determines his subjects' belief system: *cuius regio, eius religio*, whose realm, his religion.
- Unlike Augsburg, Calvinism figured in the treaty as a tolerated faith.
- A reform movement thus changed the religious map of Europe forever.
- The treaty also laid the foundations for the future emergence of the nation-state system and nationalism in Europe.
- Only France and Spain, two Catholic powers, remained engaged in hostilities for geostrategic reasons beyond religious differences until 1659.

# Reformation: The Print Revolution

- In addition to his ideas, Luther enormously benefited from a technological development of the era, the mechanized printing that Gutenberg began to advance around 1440. The availability of Bibles in printed versions beginning in 1457, a Latin edition of the book of Psalms, enhanced believers' access to God's word. Despite voices from within the church to ban Bible translations, the market sided with the printers. The demand for translations in local languages remained on the rise. Between 1466 and 1522, there were 22 editions of the Bible in high or low German. Translated versions of the Bible, partial or complete, in printed form reached Italy in 1471, the Netherlands in 1477, Spain and the Czechs in 1478, and Catalan in 1492. In 1473-74, French publishers opened a market in abridged Bibles, concentrating on the selections.

# Reformation: The Print Revolution

Here are some of the titles of Luther's publications, beginning in 1517

Ninety-five Theses (1517)

To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation (1520).

On the Freedom of a Christian (1520).

Large Catechism and Small Catechism (both 1529).

Commentary on Galatians (1535)

The Bondage of the Will (1525).

Smalcald Articles (1537)



# Reformation: The Print revolution

The printing press enabled Luther to translate the Bible into German, 1522 of the New Testament and the complete Bible by 1534, for a wider public understanding of the scripture. The Gutenberg Bible 1454 became part of a major boom in the print industry, Arthur Benedict in *Imagined Communities* says, "...by the close of the fifteenth century, more than 20,000,000 printed volumes were produced in Europe. Between 1500 and 1600, the number manufactured had reached between 150,000,000 and 200,000,000." (Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, Kindle edition, 2006), 34-38.)

Translations of the Bible were a major landmark in the history of Christendom. The prevailing belief, says Benedict Anderson, was that a language "offered privileged access to ontological truth, precisely because it was an inseparable part of that truth." Translations enhanced the possibilities of telling the truth in more than one language. "...print-capitalism, which made it possible for rapidly growing numbers of people to think about themselves, and to relate themselves to others, in profoundly new ways."

# Reformation: The Print Revolution

- Print revolution, says Andersen, brought a radical change in the Western European assumptions about knowledge and originality of thought. Before the invention of printing, a major part of a scholar's life was spent copying existing documents by hand, simply to have access to them. Right now, they could devote more time to thinking about what they read and for themselves.
- This focus on meditation and reflection had implications for scholarly respect for the articulated thinking of previous generations. They sought to carve their path to wisdom and redemption.

# Reformation: The Conclusion

- Luther's reformation movement, in conjunction with the print revolution and fallout of geopolitics, contributed to finding multiple ways of engaging with God. The Peace of Westphalia became a precursor to the rise of nationalism in Europe.
- Luther's movement also spread outside the Holy Roman Empire and gave religious leaders reasons to think, independent of him, about the human relationship with God and the church.
- In our next lecture, we will focus on how the movement spread to France, Switzerland, and the Netherlands, and a week later, we will cross the English Channel.