



All parties involved in the disintegration had the same slogan: "back to roots". They each wanted to break with this sick, wrong, erroneous medieval mix, and both wings proposed a radical alternative.

### **Reformation:**

In 1517 Luther posted up his 95 theses for debate on the castle church door at Wittenberg. In that church were 7,000 relics which were said to be able to release a person from 2 million years in purgatory, if you could pay. This practice came from the idea that a great reservoir of merit had been accumulated by past saints, and that this surplus merit could be tapped into via the offices of the church. The Pope decided to build St Peter's in Rome, for which finance was raised by the selling of indulgences, documents which awarded the buyer so many years off purgatory. The 95 theses were propositions intended by Luther to open up debate about indulgences and the doctrine of purgatory, whereby everyone, including believers, would have to spend ages after death in agony in order to atone for their sins and be purified. The methods of some modern day American TV evangelists seem tame compared to the way in which the Roman Catholic church milked Europe for the building of huge edifices and the maintaining of a sumptuous lifestyle for the clergy in Rome, who lived like medieval princes.

Luther's idea of getting back to the roots was primarily to return to the texts of the Old and New Testaments, but also in a very large measure to the Church Fathers, who were seen as important by all the reformers. He wanted to offload the GraecoRoman heritage of classical antiquity and return to an authentic Christianity - his comments on Aristotle are unprintable!

### **Renaissance:**

Renaissance scholars, on the other hand, saw the problem as the corruption of the classical inheritance by medieval Christianity; they wanted to return to the life of Greece and Rome where men were really men. They wanted to be Christians too, but Christian Humanists, Christians on different terms. Both the men of the renaissance and the reformers wanted to unravel the synthesis.

### **Counter-Reformation**

There were also many in the Roman Catholic church appalled by the sell-out of their leaders to the values of the Renaissance, and who wanted to see the RC church purged of moral corruption. Indeed, Luther also saw himself as reforming the RC church, the only church that existed at the time (catholic = universal).

This led to the Council of Trent in the 1530's and 1540's, which proposed a serious moral, theological and financial and administrative overhaul of the church. There were at the time priests who never visited their parishes, and even bishops who held three or four bishoprics they never visited. Disgusted by the state of the church, many Catholics were worried that they would lose people to the emerging Protestantism, and realised the need to live up to the same standards of integrity.

In the 16th century many of these movements were muddling their way forward, constrained by circumstances, not yet having crystallised into their final forms.

### **Education during the period (cf. Diagram)**

Medieval education had been for the clergy plus a few lawyers and doctors; that is what the resources and the universities were for. The clergy, of course, provided not just the manpower for the church, but also for the governments of Europe (think of Cardinal Wolsey, Chancellor of the Exchequer for Henry VIII). The rule of compulsory celibacy for the clergy was passed in the 12th century against much opposition.

### **Renaissance Humanism:**

Compare with this the Renaissance humanists who did not advocate the setting up of institutions, but rather the employment of private tutors, as the numbers they wanted to educate were very small. Royal and aristocratic

families took on tutors to train their sons for future rulership and responsibility: they wanted control of education to leave the church and go to the princely families. There also emerged a rising current of nationalism as nations began to take responsibility for themselves as nations in the face of worldwide exploration and travel, the opening up of trade and the increasing complexity which these things brought to the world situation. Whereas previously kings and princes had been able to feast and hunt while the church ran their governments, now they needed more training to actually rule.

The aim of renaissance education was thus to prepare sons of the nobility for the practicalities of power: how to get it and keep it (cf. Machiavelli's "The Prince", in which he advocates as a means to power the eradication of the whole ruling family at once) \* The medieval world of God, judgement and humility is swept away in favour of modern realism: there is only nature, man and power, and what matters is who gets it. In addition, a prince's public image was of great importance - he must appear worthy of holding power, and have bearing, dignity and style.

Other important works on the theme were Thomas Elyot's *The Governor* and, Castiglione's *The Courtier*. The ideal of Renaissance education was the *homo universale*, the all-round man, competent in every situation, and very strong elements of this ideal persist in the English public school system. There were three elements to this education: the first was that of knightly exercises of a quasi-military nature such as jousting, fencing and hunting, needed to develop skills for war. Literary studies were also pursued, as a ruler had to be a man of culture, always ready with words and capable of writing elegant prose, who would need to make speeches and noble proclamations with style, dignity, and above all, elegance. Knowledge of the classics was indispensable, and these were quoted to demonstrate one's superior learning. The third element of Renaissance education was that of courtly manners: knowing the ways of relating to and addressing people at court.

**Roman Catholicism:**

One of John Calvin's fellow students at Paris was Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Jesuits. This was a quasi-military order of highly trained, disciplined, committed and educated men which was intended to form a cultural, intellectual and theological vanguard against the spread of Protestantism, to regain Europe for Rome. They aimed:

(i) to come alongside existing RC rulers to be their priests, consciences and advisors - targeting the most influential rulers in order to keep them or get them back on the 'right' path of orthodox Catholic doctrine. In order to achieve this aim they obviously had to be trained to the highest levels. In contrast, one of the scandals of medieval Christianity had been that many priests could not read Latin, or if they could read the services, they did not understand them.

(ii) They wanted to renovate the RC education system and set up new institutions to train the clergy and the sons of the aristocracy - a training that would be recognised as good enough for the latter not to be given private tutors. They offered training for the aristocratic role in society, but kept within the Catholic tradition, and to this end they set up secondary schools, reformed the existing universities and founded new ones. (In Britain the Jesuits were banned, deported and put under the death penalty during the reigns of Henry VIII and Elizabeth 1, as they were recognised as a threat to the government).

**Reformation:**

The movement was highly diverse, but the crucial need for education for all was a prominent feature. The prime reasons for this were the need for all the people to have access to the Scriptures, and hence to read, and also the newly discovered concept of the priesthood of all believers.

Thus the idea of universal education was introduced: and education not tied to wealth or career, and not conceived in terms of human rights, as it has been seen in modern times, but as a requirement for people to be able to serve God as they should.

### **1. The Anglican Church:**

In England Henry VIII declared himself supreme governor of the Church of England, replacing the Pope and taking on his role over the English church (NB. the doctrine of the divine right of kings stems from the notion of papal infallibility). All education was finally controlled by the monarch, as head of church and state, although in practice the church still ran education, and those with the task of educating had to subscribe to the articles of the Anglican church. There was an explosion of education, financed by money gained from the dissolution of the monasteries, plus hand-outs made by Henry VIII to his friends to pay them off and encourage them not to try to reverse the process of the Reformation. Merchants also paid for schools to be established, as a bulwark against Catholicism and a national bulwark against threats from continental Europe. Also with the rise of the mercantile class there was a growing demand for competent, trustworthy people.

### **2. The Lutheran Church:**

Germany at the time of the Reformation was a collection of feudal states each run by its own prince. Luther aimed at reforming the RC church, but as the church itself did not appreciate this concern, he had no option but to turn to the local autocratic princes, under whose auspices to carry out reform. Luther believed that the religion of the people should be that of the prince, thus a territorial church developed, with churches and schools (which were run by the churches) governed by the princes, from the top down.

### **3. The Calvinists:**

Geneva was at this time a sort of republic, not an aristocracy with princes or kings. Calvin himself was very keen on separation of church and state, being opposed both to a state church and a church state, and in Geneva there was a very clear distinction between the church authorities (the company of pastors - clergy and leading laity) and the state authorities (a separate governing council), with the latter not permitted to bring their staff of office into church. The system, however, was not fully worked out and many

overlaps of function occurred. Education was seen as a joint responsibility, but again the distinctions were not clear. Calvin started an academy which became the training ground for leaders of the Reformation from all over Europe (eg. John Knox studied there), and educational institutions played a crucial role in the city.

The reformers were preoccupied with replacing or retraining the corrupt papist' clergy with people who knew their Bibles (and therefore their Greek, Hebrew and Latin), but they were also concerned to prepare the officers of the state for their increasingly complex duties, as well as to educate the general population in basic literacy and numeracy. A kind of pyramid structure was envisaged: the basics for everyone (and the training of Christian youth, not to be merely head-knowledge), while some would need higher forms of education.

Although Luther and Calvin had great hopes of a new Christian order where the Gospel would bring blessing on all areas of life, tragically the means of achieving this goal was beyond their grasp. This, together with the dissipation of their energies by the wars of the period meant that the curriculum ended up almost the same as that of the RC institutions. Melancthon, for example, is called "the educator of Germany", but his program consisted in lots of Bible and lots of Aristotle, and throughout Europe the pagan classical heritage remained. This heritage was carried along as empty baggage, and has led to Christians in the modern world being left on the conservative sidelines of debate and action. For the reformers had a big vision for education, but only changed some cosmetic details instead of changing the nature of the beast.

**Reformation:**

Luther	1483 - 1546	Tyndale	1494 - 1536
Calvin	1509 - 1564	Beza	1519 - 1605
Zwingli	1484 - 1531	Bucer	1491 - 1551
Knox	1514 - 1572	Hooker	1554 - 1600

Melancthon 1497 - 1560

**Roman Catholicism:**

Leo X 1475 - 1521 (Pope 1513 onwards)

Sixtus V 1521 - 1590 (Pope 1585 onwards)

Ignatius Loyola 1491 - 1556

**Renaissance Humanism:**

Machiavelli 1469 - 1527

Pico della Mirandola 1463 - 1494

Erasmus 1466 - 1536

Socinius 1539 - 1604

Pomponazzi 1464 - 1525

Castiglione *The Courtier* 1528

Elyot *The Governor* 1531