

TWENTY CENTURIES

A Survey of Church History



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THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

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- The Conciliar Movement
- The Reformation Anticipated
- The Renaissance

The Conciliar Movement



- **The Conciliar Movement**

- Brought about to solve the problem of the Great Schism (1378-1417), with its competing popes.
- The Council of Pisa (1409) declared against both popes (Rome & Avignon) and appointed Alexander V. The prior popes refused to resign, leaving 3 popes.
- The Council of Constance (1414-18) removed all three popes, and elected Martin V as pope.
- Declared that a council of bishops holds higher authority than even the pope.

The Conciliar Movement



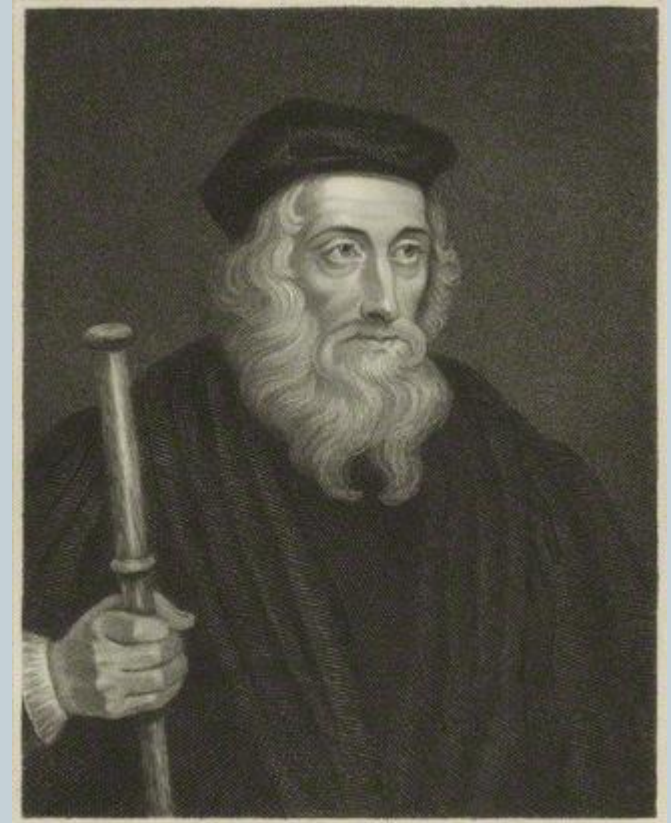
- **Peter d'Ailly, Jean Gerson, and Nicholas of Cusa**
 - Taught that the Church is greater than papacy, and that infallibility belonged only to the church as a whole.
 - Asserted councils as expressions of the Church's witness.
 - Gave the pope his authority and could depose him.
- **The Council of Pisa (1409)**
 - Deposed both rival popes (Avignon and Rome) and appointed a third pope, Alexander V
- **The Council of Constance (1414-18)**
 - A major ecumenical council, summoned by the Holy Roman Emperor Sigismund, called to restore order to the church and to solidify its doctrine and practice.
 - Attended by 29 cardinals, 100 doctors, 134 abbots, and 183 bishops. They voted in a national bloc
 - “It has power immediately from Christ; and that everyone of whatever state or dignity, even papal, is bound to obey it in those matters which pertain to the faith, the eradication of the said schism and the general reform of the said church of God in head and members.”
 - Forbad the cup from the laity in the Eucharist.
 - Deposed Pope John XXIII and persuaded Gregory XII to step down. Appointed Martin V as sole pope. Pope Martin then denounced the authority of the council over the pope.
- **The Council of Florence (1438-41)**
 - The on-going councils overplayed their hand by seeking to depose popes whenever they disagreed. National interests began threatening the unity of the church. As a result, papal supremacy was reaffirmed.
 - Approved the doctrine of purgatory
 - Sought reconciliation with Eastern churches, in light of Byzantium's imminent fall (1453).

The Reformation Anticipated



- **The Lollards (England)**

- Followers of John Wyclif. Key doctrines: authority of Scripture; salvation by grace; invisible church of the elect; spirituality of the Church; priesthood of all believers;
- Rejected: icons & images, secularized church, transubstantiation, capital punishment, priestly celibacy, oaths.
- Lay preachers spread these views throughout the country, gaining strong popular support.
- *Twelve Conclusions* posted on door of Westminster Abbey by Lollard MP's, denouncing England's bondage to the papacy, celibacy of clergy, transubstantiation, and more.
- In 1399, Henry IV, seeking Church support for his usurpation, passed a law for the burning of heretics.
- By 1410, outlawed and persecuted, but continued to spread, even to the aristocracy and court.
- Became an underground movement and survived to the Reformation, which it aided through pamphlets and English Bible translations.

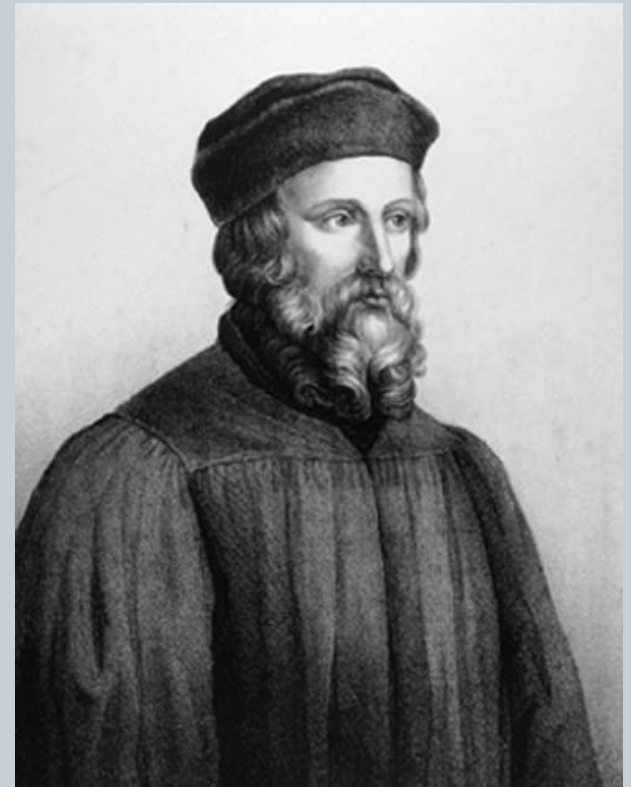


The Reformation Anticipated, cont.



- **Jan Huss (Bohemia)**

- England's Richard II married Princess Anne of Bohemia, prompting close ties between the two nations. Bohemian students at Oxford; took Wyclif's ideas back home. The Lollard teaching spread rapidly in Prague.
- John Huss (1372-1415) was a preacher in Prague, who promoted Wyclif's teaching.
- More moderate than Wyclif, but launched an attack on indulgences in 1411. Pope John XXIII, a major seller of indulgences, excommunicated Huss and threatened an interdict against Prague. Huss left Prague for the countryside.
- Two parties developed in Bohemia: Traditionalists and Hussites (or Wycliffites). The major issue was the authority of the Bible vs. the authority of the church. Huss taught an elect church and denied infallibility of the pope. Advocated preaching over sacraments



The Reformation Anticipated, cont.



- Jan Huss (Bohemia), cont.
 - Summoned to Council of Constance in 1414. Appeared under safe conduct.
 - ✦ Immediately arrested and imprisoned for six months in horrible conditions.
 - ✦ Brought to trial with no chance to speak for his views.
 - ✦ Deposed by having his vestments stripped, with a cap put on his head decorated with red devils. They committed his soul to the Devil, to which Huss answered: “And I commit myself to my most gracious Lord Jesus.”
 - ✦ Burned at the stake, June 6, 1415: “I shall die with joy today in the faith of the Gospel which I have preached.”
 - Huss’ death led to civil war in Bohemia. The pope declared a crusade. Hussites won victory after victory, remaining unvanquished until 1433. The pope responded by negotiating with one faction, so as to turn against the other. Produced the Moravian church.
 - Huss predicted Luther and the Reformation: “You are now going to burn a goose, but in a century you will have a swan which you can neither roast nor boil.” His writings were an inspiration to Martin Luther, who was converted 100 years later.

The Renaissance



- **The Renaissance**

- Increased availability of paper and invention of moveable type allowed ideas to spread.
- Rediscovery of classical languages (esp. Greek and Hebrew) and the reading of ancient sources. Aided by fall of Constantinople and flight of Greek scholars. Led to explosion of thought from great Universities.
- Opened the original text of the Bible to scholars. Opened up other literature without control of the Church. *Ad fontes!*



THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

The Renaissance



- **The Renaissance Papacy**
 - After overcoming the councils, the popes restored their former power over the church and reestablished their funding in Italy.
 - Late 15th c. popes known for lavish and decadent lifestyles.
 - ✦ Paul II (1464-71). Known for love of jewels: slept during day played with jewels at night.
 - ✦ Sixtus IV (1471-84 – Sistene Chapel). Decreed that indulgences could atone for eternal penalty of sin; began masses for the dead. Involved in political assassinations.
 - ✦ Innocent VIII (1484-92). Compromise candidate between the Borgias and Roveres. Decreed against teenage cardinals and only one cardinal per family.
 - ✦ Alexander VI (1492-1503). Rodrigo Borgia – elected through bribery. Had nine or ten illegitimate children, by four women. Held orgies at the Vatican. Open debauchery in Rome.
 - ✦ Julius II (1503-1513). The warrior pope. A military prince. Made war against the Borgias, France and Spain.
 - ✦ Leo X (1513-21). Giovanni di Medici. Spent much of the church's wealth in pursuit of art treasures. "Let us enjoy the papacy, for God has given it to us."



The Renaissance



- Attempted Church Reforms
 - Savonarola (1452-98), preached moral reforms in Italy. Claimed prophetic visions.
 - ✦ Famed for “burning of the vanities” – books, make-up, mirrors, etc.
 - ✦ When he attacked the papacy, he was hanged and his body burned.
 - ✦ Pre-Reformer, except that he attacked only morals and not doctrine.