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In this lesson the attempt is made to give an insight into the rise of the Reformed Church in Europe (excluding Germany). Unlike in other European countries, the Reformed Church in Germany developed in very different forms, as a result of the non-uniform and politically divided (patchwork-like) situation in Germany - this was presented in overview in lesson 4.

1. Switzerland

As was presented in detail in lessons 2 and 3, the beginning of the Reformed Reformation took place on the soil of today’s Switzerland, first of all in Zurich (in connection with which Ulrich Zwingli is to be mentioned) and then, at its culmination, in Geneva (in connection with which John Calvin is to be mentioned), although Geneva did not belong to the Swiss Confederation in Calvin’s time. The Swiss Confederation is characterised to this day by the independence of the individual towns and countries (cantons). Zurich introduced the Reformation in the year 1523. Other towns followed, e.g. Bern in 1528 and Basel in 1529. In other cantons the individual communities could decide for themselves whether they wanted to introduce the Reformation or not (e.g. in Appenzell, Graubünden and Glarus). Other towns in the Swiss Confederation remained Roman-Catholic. Armed conflicts arose between the Protestant and Catholic parties, culminating in the infamous defeat of the Protestants at Kappel (near Zurich) in 1531. The reformer Ulrich Zwingli also died in this battle. Of the total 13 political territories in the Swiss Confederation, seven were Roman-Catholic, four were Reformed and in two of them both confessions existed. Heinrich Bullinger, the successor of Zwingli, and John Calvin succeeded in preventing the different orientations of the Reformed Reformation in Switzerland from drifting apart, and thus a Zwinglian and Calvinist Reformation never developed alongside one another. The most important document of this agreement in respect of the Lord’s Supper is the “Consensus Tigurinus” of 1549 (Zurich Consensus) - one can in fact only from this point on speak of the existence of a Reformed Church.

In 1566 Heinrich Bullinger drew up a confession which was accepted by almost all churches of German-speaking Switzerland - the Confessio Helvetica posterior (the Second Helvetian Confession), dealt with in detail in lesson 6. Besides the
Confession, catechistic work was also intensified. In Zurich the reformer Leo Jud drew up a catechism which was in use for several centuries in Zurich. In other towns the Heidelberg Catechism was introduced. In 1531 a complete Bible translation was also published in Zurich, the so-called “Zurich Bible,” which is available today in new translation.

For several hundred years there were hardly any structural changes in the Swiss Church. The earlier functions of the bishops were to a large extent performed by the state authorities. The Reformed churches remained independently coexistent churches, only uniting to form a church federation (the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches) in 1920, and even then without losing their independence. In the 19th Century there were admittedly divisions within individual cantonal churches. The churches were to a large extent characterised by liberal theological movements, which for their part were closely associated with the Enlightenment. This liberalism in the churches had the result, among other things, that commitment to the confessions (e.g. the Apostles’ Creed and the Second Helvetian Confession) was renounced in the Reformed churches of Switzerland. In the train of this development, church divisions very nearly resulted in some churches, and actually did so in others, partly in connection with revival movements, as for example in the cantons Waadt and Neuenburg (where reunions occurred again in 1966 and 1943 respectively) and also in the canton Geneva, where there is still today a small Reformed free church besides the land church.

In the 1970s there began a gradual dissolution of what was up to then a very close relation between state and church. This tendency can be perceived earlier on and more clearly in the French-speaking Switzerland.

2. The Development of the Reformed Church in France after 1598

In the year 1598 (for the time before 1598 see lesson 3) the French King Heinrich IV published the Edict of Nantes. This decree resulted in a period of relative peace amongst the French Reformed Protestants. Heinrich IV, who was only able to become king on the condition that he gave up his own Reformed confession, can in certain respects be seen as the patron of the Reformed Protestants. For with the Edict of Nantes, the principle “cuius regio eius religio” (he to whom the land belongs
also determines the religion of his subjects) was broken for the first in a European country, and a confession other than the Roman-Catholic obtained the right to exist. France had become a multi-confessional state.

From the “Edict of Nantes” of 1598

18. We also forbid all our subjects…to kidnap by force or through encouragement against the will of the parents children of the said religion, in order to baptise or confirm them into the Catholic, apostolic and Roman Church…

19. Those of the named R.P.R. should not be forced into anything, nor bound on account of previous renunciations, promises and oaths …They should therefore not be bothered or pestered in any conceivable way.

21. Books concerning the said R.P.R. must only be published and sold publically in towns and places where the public practice of the said religion is permitted.

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Questions for further work

1. What does the Edict of Nantes require of the members of the Roman-Catholic Church?

2. What does the Edict of Nantes say to those who have revoked their Protestant confession in the course of the Counter-Reformation?

3. Is it possible to speak of an equality of status between the Reformed and Catholic churches?
Admittedly the two confessions did not have equal status, but the Reformed Protestants were granted certain things: they were allowed to hold church services in a large number of places; they were allowed to build churches and schools and even academies (for instance in Montauban, Sedan and Saumur). They did not simply have to hand over their former garrisons, but were allowed to keep them for several years. In the first half of the 17th Century there were roughly 850000 Reformed Protestants, which corresponds to ca. 4 percent of the whole population. The Reformed communities arose above all in Normandy, in the area of La Rochelle on the Atlantic, in Languedoc and in the Cevenol in the South of France. The nobility was strongly represented – a fact which should not be underestimated as a reason for the tolerance of the state.

Over against these concessions of the state there was a distrust of the new religion on the part of many of the French people, which continually came to expression in assaults and persecutions. There were also substantial groups in the political leadership of France that considered Heinrich IV to be wrong. After the murder of Heinrich IV in the year 1610, the climate changed increasingly to the disadvantage of the Reformed Protestants. Heinrich’s successor, Ludwig XIII, who for reasons of his age effectively came into power only in 1617, worked with the aim of a provisional political stabilisation in France, but never left it in doubt that he was ultimately interested in the elimination of the Reformed Confession. His minister, Richelieu, thus saw to it that in 1629 the religious freedom of the Edict of Nantes was once again endorsed. This happened, however, against the background of the increasing number of individual persecutions. After the death of Ludwig XIII, Ludwig XIV, known as the Sun King, came to the French throne. For reasons of his age he reigned only from 1661. And from 1659 the policy regarding the Reformed Protestants markedly changed. In the first place, the general synods were forbidden. Oppressive measures followed: church services were monitored; parents were still only given a limited power of decision in the matter of the religion of their children; those who converted to Catholicism were granted privileges; Reformed Protestants could no longer take up all professions. More and more often there were violent malpractices against Reformed families, which the state authority either tolerated or overlooked.

Finally in the year 1685 the Edict of Fontainebleau was published – the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Thereby the Reformed Protestants in France were deprived of all their hitherto existing concessions. From then on all children had to participate in
Roman-Catholic catechism. The Reformed churches were destroyed and the pastors exiled. Everyone else, however, was forbidden from leaving the land. This also had economical reasons on the part of the state. Failure to comply was threatened with the galley.

*From the “Edict of Fontainebleau” of 1685*

2. We forbid our subjects of the R.P.R. to meet any more for the exercise of the said religion in any place or private house, under any pretext whatever,…

3. We enjoin all ministers of the said R.P.R., who do not choose to become converts and to embrace the Catholic, apostolic, Roman religion, to leave our kingdom and the territories subject to us within a fortnight of the publication of our present edict…on pain of being sent to the galleys.

9. We repeat our most express prohibition to all our subjects of the said R.P.R., together with their wives and children, against leaving our kingdom, lands, and territories subject to us, or transporting their goods and effects therefrom under penalty, as respects the men, of being sent to the galleys, and as respects the women, of imprisonment and confiscation.

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*Questions for further work*

1. *Does the Reformed Church have the possibility of survival in France?*

2. *Preachers must leave the country whilst others are not permitted to emigrate. Why is this distinction made?*

This arrangement of Ludwig XIV had catastrophic consequences for the whole of the Reformed Church in France. There were numerous conversions, even among the
pastors. Many of these, however, were sham conversions. Others resisted, some even by force of arms. More than 1500 Reformed Protestants were sentences to the galley. Above all, however, there began after 1685 a massive flight of many of the Reformed Huguenots. Ca. 200000 people secretly fled abroad, above all to Switzerland, the Netherlands, England and various German countries (above all Brandenburg – see lesson 4).

The Reformed Church in France was therefore weakened, but not, however, destroyed. It lived on underground in the years following 1685, and formed the “Church in the desert.” Above all, the Huguenots in Cevenol met secretly for church services. Hopes for the retraction of the Edict of Fontainebleau were shattered, and there subsequently arose between 1702 and 1704 a large revolt in the South of France, which also became known as the Camisards War or Cevenol War. At any rate, it became clear in the course of this that the aim of the French state to root out the Protestants had failed. In the first half of the 18th Century the persecution of the Reformed Protestants was no longer carried out so systematically or to such a great extent. Phases of relative quiet alternated with persecution and oppression. There were scarcely any Reformed Protestants in the towns, but the communities continued to exist in the country, often holding church services in the castles of Reformed nobility. From 1750 a reorganisation of the Reformed Church began and synods were held. Finally in 1787, a good hundred years after the abolition of the Edict of Nantes, the Reformed Protestants were awarded full citizenship.

By the time of French Revolution in 1798, the Reformed Church in France had grown to almost a million members. Although the French Revolution had first of all granted religious freedom in its constitution, the radicalisation of the French Revolution in 1793 led to the oppression of the Reformed Church. This brief episode caused a considerable weakening of the Reformed Church. From the 205 pastors of the time before 1789, there were only 120 left in 1794 when the reconstruction of the Reformed Church was undertaken. At the beginning of the reign of Napoleon I in 1799, the situation changed. Although Napoleon granted the Protestants the right of existence, he simultaneously opposed the independence of the Church. No national synods were planned. The Church was divided up by the French State into districts – 80 consistorial churches, each with about 6000 members. This had the consequence that many formerly independent parishes were integrated into larger units, for local parishes were not recognised legally. The pastors were paid by the state and
conversions were not allowed. The state regulated the church life. As a counter-
movement to the strong influence of the state, there arose from 1817 the revivalist
movement (Reveil), which led to the establishment of new communities. After 1848
this revivalist and evangelistic movement was fostered above all by societies
independent of the church and in part also free churches. An integration of these new
communities into the French Reformed Church succeeded only in a few cases. The
lack of a national synod also led to a situation in which various currents within the
Protestant Church were able to break free. A union was called for and in 1872 the
first French national synod since 1559 was convened. However, instead of achieving
unification, this led to an official separation. The former Orthodox Reformed
Protestant Church (Église réformée évangélique) and the Liberal Reformed Church
(Église réformée) existed alongside one another and each held their own
independent synods.

In 1905 the Federation of Protestant Churches in France (Fédération Protestante de
France), to which all Protestant churches in France belonged, was founded. The
rapprochement of the various Reformed churches led in 1938 to the formation of an
alliance and thus to a reestablishment of the Reformed Church in France.

Today this Reformed Church has roughly 180000 members in 350 parishes. Besides
this there is also the Reformed Church of Elsass and Lothringen, which has roughly
33000 members in 52 parishes. Since Elsass and Lothringen only later became parts
of France, the Reformed Church developed rather differently in these places. Here
there is also a strong Protestant-Lutheran Church, with which the Reformed Church
of Elsass-Lothringen is in close cooperation.

3. The Netherlands

The territory of today’s Netherlands is not identical with the Netherlands of the time of
the Reformation. This included today’s Belgium and Luxemburg. The first Protestant
martyrs were burnt at the stake in Brussels in 1523. Until about 1560 one must
assume the coexistence of various groups and movements of reformational
persuasion. These were heavily persecuted, most of all in the South of the
Netherlands. There was a whole series of pastors and intellectuals influenced by
followers of Erasmus and by Luther. Besides this there existed from about 1530
various groups of so-called Anabaptists, which were to a large extent the reason for the rise of the Anabaptist Rule in Munster in 1534/1535. After the breaking up of the Anabaptist rule in Munster, the Anabaptists were persecuted. Only from around 1550 did a second generation of new Anabaptist movements emerge, initiated by Menno Simons, after whom the Mennonites are named. These movements also founded churches.

From about 1550 the members of the Reformed Church, above all in the South of the Netherlands, founded their own underground church. They named themselves “Churches under the cross,” on the model of the Huguenots. The church in Emden played an important role for the rootless pastors of this underground church. It was thus called “moederkerk” (mother church). In 1561 Guido de Brés drew up the Confessio Belgica (the Dutch Confession), which partly goes back to the Confessio Gallicana. The Heidelberg Catechism was also translated into Dutch in the year of its emergence in 1563. Both documents formed the basis of Dutch Reformed doctrine.

The splitting up of the Netherlands started in 1566. The Spanish Duke of Alba invaded the Netherlands by order of its sovereign, the Spanish king Philipp II, for the purpose of subjugating the members of the Reformed Church. However, powerful resistance arose under the leadership of William of Orange (1533-1584) with the consequence of the 80 Years War (1568-1648). By 1648 the South (today’s Belgium and Luxembourg) still remained Spanish and thus Roman-Catholic. The North (today’s Netherlands), on the other hand, was confessionally pluralistic, with leanings towards the Reformed Confession.

The Reformed churches met for the first time in 1568 for the so-called Wesel Convention (thus abroad in the Lower Rhine). The first synod took place in Emden in 1571. From then on one can speak of a Dutch Reformed Church. At this synod a model church constitution for the later Reformed churches in the Netherlands was agreed upon.

From the “Emden Church Constitution of 1571”

1. No community should claim precedence over other communities, no pastor over other pastors, and no deacon over other deacons. Rather, they should avoid even the slightest suspicion of this and every opportunity for it.
6. In the individual communities there should take place sessions or consistories of pastors, elders and deacons at least once a week at a time and place which seem most convenient for the individual communities.
7. Besides these sessions there should take place every three or six months assemblies of several neighbouring communities, whenever it seems purposeful or necessary to them.
8. Besides this, a special assembly of all the communities scattered throughout Germany and East Friesland should take place, and in the same way an assembly of all the communities in England as well an assembly of the communities which are under the cross.
9. Lastly an assembly of all the Dutch communities should be held every two years.

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Questions for further work

1. What model of community and communities can be seen here?

2. Does the Emden Church Constitution of 1571 advocate a more presbyterial church model, which reinforces the individual church communities, or rather a synodal church model, which reinforces their working together?

Soon after 1571, the organisation of the various different churches took place. Provincial synods were formed and in 1578 the first Dutch general synod took place. It was already clear early on that the members of the Reformed Church in the Netherlands could not look back to a uniform origin. Rather, there were various people by whom one oriented oneself. There was above all Calvin, but besides him also Zwingli and Erasmus. These various orientations led to a severe conflict. The Leuven Professor Jacobus Arminius took the view that the predestination (election) of human beings occurs because God has foreseen their faith. His opponent, Franciscus Gomarus, who also taught in Leuven, took the opposite view that faith is only given to those who are chosen by God. The theological background was the
question of the relation between divine action (election) and human action (faith), which were thought to compete with one another. Both theologians gained many followers. Both the remonstrants (followers of Arminius) and contra-remonstrants (followers of Gomarus) filed their petitions with the Dutch state. In 1618/19 the general synod took place in Dordrecht, which decided in favour of the contra-remonstrants. Subsequently there arose beside the Reformed Church a small remonstrants’ church, which still exists today (Remonstrantsche Broederschap).

In the 17th Century, which is also called the “Golden Age” of the Netherlands, the Reformed Church developed more and more into a state church. There appeared the “Statenvertaling,” the Dutch translation of the Bible, whose influence on culture and language is comparable with that of the Luther translation in Germany. In theology, through the assimilation of Aristotelian philosophy, there emerged an orthodox orientation which was concerned with the preservation of true doctrine. However, there soon arose two counter-movements to this orthodoxy. First, that of the so-called “Nadere reformatie,” which had in view the praxis pietatis, the renewal of life. The founder of this movement was Gisbert Voetius, who was also the founder of Utrecht University. Second, the federal theology of Johannes Coccejus from Bremen, which had the idea of the covenant at its centre and taught a historically progressive revelation of the covenants between God and the human being. In the course of the 18th Century the Enlightenment also became influential in theology. In Groningen there arose after 1830 an orientation which focused on the presence of the love of God in Jesus, Jesus in this way being the example for all humanity.

Partly as a protest against this influential Groningen orientation, there took place from 1843 on the so-called “Afscheiding” (segregation) under the leadership of the pastor Hendrik de Cock. From this “Afscheiding” a small church soon developed with several thousand members who also formed their own synod. This was persecuted until 1840. Then in 1870 Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920) entered the scene, causing a stir. He established his own newspaper, his own university (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam) and his own party. Kuyper, who had had the purpose of waking the Reformed Church out of its sleep and of overcoming liberalism, met resistance in the Hervormden Kerk. When agreement was no longer possible, he broke with the Hervormden Kerk and founded his own church communities (in a movement called “Doleantie” [from dolere = to mourn]). Over 200000 people followed Kuyper. In 1892 the Afscheiding and Doleantie merged to form the “Gereformeerde Kerken in
Nederland” (Reformed Church in the Netherlands). Around 1900 this new church encompassed roughly 8% of the Dutch population. Further church divisions in the 20th Century have led to the existence of 17 Reformed churches in the Netherlands today, of which the majority are admittedly very small. Nevertheless, since the 1960s a counter-movement has existed: the Hervormde Kerk and the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland together with the very small Protestant-Lutheran Church have taken steps towards one another on a not yet completed path. This process is called “Samen op weg” (together on the way).

The Protestant churches together make up roughly 20% of the population in the Netherlands today. There are somewhat more Roman-Catholics and over 40% do not belong to any church at all. The Netherlands are thus the most thoroughly secularised country in West Europe. Many church buildings are no longer used for church business.

4. Scotland

The Reformation reached Scotland in the first place only very slowly. Individual works of Luther were smuggled into the country. Patrick Hamilton was burnt as a Martyr in 1528 in St. Andrews, because he had preached the Reformation. In general, however, the Reformation did not gain acceptance. One reason for this was that some of those inclined towards the Reformation hoped to come together with the English Church, which had broken away from Rome under Henry the 8th. However, Scottish politics were at this time anti-English and thus pro Roman-Catholicism. After the death of the Scottish king Jacob V in 1542, his daughter Mary Stuart, although only an infant, became the new Scottish queen. Her mother Mary of Guise reigned in her place.

John Knox (roughly 1514-1572) began as a priest and after converting to Protestantism became a notary and tutor. In 1547 he was sentenced to the galley, spent one and a half years there and then became a pastor in England in Berwick and Newcastle-upon-Tyne. When Mary Tudor ascended to the throne in 1554, Knox became a coworker of Calvin in Geneva. He finally returned to Scotland in 1559 in order to win acceptance for the Reformation. In Scotland there was a conflict between the ruler Mary of Guise and the Protestant nobility. As a result of appeals to
the English queen Elizabeth I (who reigned from 1558), England intercepted the shipping traffic between Scotland and France, since the latter wanted to hinder the Reformation in Scotland. The Reformation achieved victory, which was confirmed by the Scottish Parliament in 1560 in the treaty of Edinburgh. In the same year the Confessio Scotica, the Scottish Confession (drawn up among others by John Knox), was passed by the General Assembly of the Scottish Church. The “First Book of Discipline,” which had the goal of a thorough reformation also of everyday life, however, was never ratified by Parliament and thus could not come into force. In 1561 Mary Stuart became regent in Scotland and made a futile attempt to abolish the Reformation. She fled to England in 1568.

After the death of John Knox in 1572 Andrew Melville became influential in the Scottish Church. He composed the “Second Book of Discipline” (1578), which had as its goal a Church independent from the state. In this book a problem which had characterised the Scottish Church for roughly 100 years came to expression: in what relation to the state should the Church live? Independently, in the view of e.g. Melville. Or under the control of the state, and thus of the bishops who were installed by the state.

From the “Second Book of Discipline” of 1578, Chapter 1

1. The kirk of God is sometimes largely taken for all them that profess the gospel of Jesus Christ, and so it is a company and fellowship, not only of the godly, but also of hypocrites professing always outwardly a true religion. Other times it is taken for the godly and elect only; and sometimes for them that exercise spiritual function among the congregation of them that profess the truth.

2. The kirk in this last sense has a certain power granted by God, according to the which it uses a proper jurisdiction and government, exercised to the comfort of the whole kirk. This power ecclesiastical is an authority granted by God the Father, through the Mediator Jesus Christ, unto his kirk gathered, and having the ground in the word of God; to be put in execution by them unto whom the spiritual government of the kirk by lawful calling is committed.
3. The policy of the kirk flowing from this power is an order or form of spiritual government which is exercised by the members appointed thereto by the word of God; and therefore is given immediately to the office-bearers, by whom it is exercised to the weal of the whole body. This power is diversely used: for sometimes it is severally exercised, chiefly by the teachers, sometimes conjunctly by mutual consent of them that bear the office and charge, after the form of judgment. The former is commonly called potestas ordinis, and the other potestas jurisdictionis. These two kinds of power have both one authority, one ground, one final cause, but are different in the manner and form of execution, as is evident by the speaking of our Master in Matt. 16 and 18.

4. This power and policy ecclesiastical is different and distinct in its own nature from that power and policy which is called the civil power and appertains to the civil government of the commonwealth; albeit they are both of God, and tend to one end, if they are rightly used: to wit, to advance the glory of God, and to have godly and good subjects.

5. For this ecclesiastical power flows immediately from God, and the Mediator Jesus Christ, and is spiritual, not having a temporal head on earth, but only Christ, the only spiritual King and Governor of his kirk.

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Questions for further work

1. In the “Second Book of Discipline” the distinction between Church and State and therefore the independence of the Church from the State is particularly emphasised. Where is this expressed in the selected passage?

2. What does it mean if authority and power are conferred on the Church?

3. In what do the Church and the State agree?

4. In what does the “Second Book of Discipline” base its position?
In 1592 a victory was reached on the part of the groups pro the independence of the Church, but only at the price of the following concession: that the General Assembly could only meet if the king or a state official was invited. In 1638 a General Assembly of the Scottish Church took place at which the bishops were deposed. This Synod, which was convened in the first place by King Karl I, but then continued to convene despite the king’s command that it be dissolved, was generally named the “Second Scottish Reformation” in Scotland. In the following years the English government became weaker and the Scottish army invaded England in 1644. The English parliament had resolved upon the Reformation of the Church of England, and in 1644 the “Westminster Confession” was passed in Westminster (with the influence of Scottish Reformers). This has become the most important confession of Anglo-Saxon Calvinism, having superseded the Confessio Scotica in Scotland.

In the year 1662 the system of bishops was reintroduced under the pressure of the English king Karl II, with him as their head. Thus the Anglican church system was prescribed in Scotland without change in the Scottish confession and liturgy. The resistance in Scotland was great. More than 300 pastors refused to acknowledge this system and were deposed. People consequently assembled in the open air or in barns. This strange situation came to an end only six years later when William of Orange invaded England and the successor of Karl II, James II, fled.

However, there was a theological division in the Scottish Church which ultimately led to a structural division as well. The Moderates adopted a partly rationalistic thinking under the influence of the Enlightenment, Deism and also to some extent Unitarianism. They equated Christian identity to a large extent with ethical behaviour, and as a result opposed the hitherto orthodox Calvinist doctrine. On the other side there were the Evangelicals who can be regarded as the heirs of Reformed Orthodoxy, although they sometimes equated “culture” with worldliness. At the beginning of the 18th Century after severe conflicts divisions arose, all of which had the relation of the Church to the state at their root. In the first place, the “Secession Church” and the “Relief Church” were formed, which united to form the “United Presbyterian Church” in 1847. The great split occurred only in 1843, however. The Evangelicals left the General Assembly and roughly a third of the Church up to this
point established itself as the “Free Church.” In the first two years roughly 500 churches and several colleges were set up.

In the course of the second half of the 19th Century the significance of the Westminster Confession for the churches considered orthodox declined. In 1879 the “United Presbyterian Church” resolved upon a qualification of the Westminster Confession according to which freedom of opinion was to exist in cases which did not concern the substance of the confession of faith. Following this in 1892, the Free Church made a corresponding declaration. In 1900 these two churches united and there followed in 1929 a great unification of the new united Church with what was up to this point the state Church to form the “Church of Scotland.” At the same time there were still several free Presbyterian churches in Scotland which split off and protested against the unification, some in the 19th Century and others only in the 20th. Today most of these form the “United Free Church of Scotland,” which has roughly 20000 members in 115 parishes. The Church of Scotland exists today in roughly 1555 parishes and 630000 members.

5. Italy (Waldenses)

The Waldensian movement, which had already arisen before the Reformation, joined the Reformation after much consideration in 1532 (see lesson 1). It thus changed from being a not particularly organised society into an established church with a clear structure. The Waldenses had charisma and grew. In the year 1555 the first of their own church buildings were erected – a sign of their adjustment to the public and also an expression of their self-confidence. However, the phase of their expansion did not last long. In the train of the Counter-Reformation, all the communities were wiped out apart from a small few in the Valleys of Piemont. The Waldenses were once again restricted to their old territories in the area of their religious centre, Torre Pelice. The Waldensian communities spent about 150 years in this Alpine ghetto, where they were constantly oppressed, if not always persecuted. The inaccessible region and the intervention of several Swiss cantons and of England prevented anything worse. At the beginning of the 18th Century a thorough re-Catholicisation began, and subsequently some of the Waldenses left Piemont and moved to Württemberg, where they founded new communities. Henri Arnaud (1641-1721) is to be mentioned
in this context. He first of all fled in 1685 from Piemont to Geneva, then returned from there and after having been driven out again, became a pastor in the Waldensian colony of Dürrenmenz-Schönenberg (Württemberg) in 1699. After 1848 the Waldenses gained full rights of citizenship in Italy. In connection with a revivalist piety and missionary activities growing out of this, small Waldensian communities arose in many places in Italy (e.g. Turin, Florence, Rome and Sicily). In addition to this there were emigrations, above all to the area of the Rio de la Plata in South America. In 1905 the old and new communities united to form the “Chiesa Evangelica Valdese” (Protestant Waldensian Church). Today the Waldensian Church has roughly 135 parishes in Italy and about 28000 members, of which roughly 11000 live in the Valleys of Piemont. There work has an emphasis on social matters. The Waldensian Church also has its own faculty in Rome.

6. The Protestant Church of the Bohemian Brothers

In Bohemia and Moravia there existed at the time of the Reformation the “Bohemian-Moravian Unity of the Brethren” of above all Hussitic origin, which had also integrated Waldensian and other traditions. There were contacts between Brother Luke, who had influenced the Unity of the Brethren at the beginning of the 16th Century, and Martin Luther. However, in the context of the confessional conflicts the Unity of the Brethren developed more in the direction of the Reformed Church. From 1618 on Bohemia and Moravia were forcibly re-Catholicised, after the imperial Habsburg troops had beaten the Bohemian army. 27 spiritual leaders were executed and mutilated. Over 1200 pastors had to leave the country. More than 360000 families left with them and the population was reduced to a third. The hitherto heyday and the affluence of the country were thus brought to an end. Besides Saxony, Silesia and Poland were also destinations of emigration. Another proportion went into the underground. In Poland Jan Amos comenius was the most important theologian and senior in the 17th Century. The “Patent of Toleration” of 1781 of the Habsburg emperor Joseph II once again permitted the Protestant Confession. And subsequently roughly 66000 Czechs joined the Reformed Church. By 1789 73 parishes had been founded.
From the “Patent of Toleration” of Emperor Joseph II (1781)

Convinced on the one hand by the harmfulness of all coercion of conscience and on the other hand of the great benefit for religion and the state of a true Christian toleration, we have found ourselves persuaded to allow adherers to the Augsburg and Helvetian confessions to perform a religious practice appropriate to their religion….The Roman-Catholic religion alone should continue to have precedence in regard to public religious practices.

1. … Concerning the churches, we expressly enjoin, where it is not already so, that there should be no bell ringing, no bells, no towers and no public entrance from the street…

7. Non-Catholics are permitted real estate and property, rights of citizenship and craftsmanship, academic titles and civil employment…and they are to be urged to no other oath than to that which is appropriate to their religious principles, nor to the attendance of the processions or functions of the dominant religion…

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Questions for further work

1. What understanding of toleration can be seen in this Patent of Toleration? Is it identical with today’s understanding of toleration or can it be distinguished from this?

2. Why are the Protestant churches (Augsburgian = Lutheran, according to the Augsburg Confession of 1530; Helvetian = Reformed, according to the Second Helvetian Confession of 1566) entitled both existence and church services, but nevertheless only a limited public space?
3. Are there distinctions between the Catholics and Protestants in respect to their rights of citizenship?

However, the confessions never gained equal status. The Protestants, for example, also had to pay the Roman-Catholic priests. Protestants were allowed to exist but were not liked by the state. Up to 1861 the Reformed Church grew more slowly than the population – only five parishes were added. In this year the emperor Franz Joseph I passed the so-called “Protestant Patent.” The Protestants now obtained equal rights and the Lutheran as well as the Reformed Church grew extensively. In the year 1919 the Reformed and Lutheran churches united to form the “Protestant Church of the Bohemian Brothers” – the name expressing a continuity of the Bohemian history. In the following years many former Catholics joined this Church. After 1945, however, the Church became considerably smaller. 13000 members among 264 parishes belong to the “Church of the Bohemian Brothers” today. Important for the Church is the Comenius Faculty in Prague.

7. Hungary

The Reformation was brought to Hungary probably around 1520, above all by students who had studied at Western universities. From 1526 on Hungary was under Turkish rule. Subsequently the country was divided into three parts. The West became part of the Habsburg dominion; the middle part became Turkish, and Transylvania remained at first independent and then became a Turkish protectorate. This foreign rule, which was incomprehensible to the greater part of the Hungarian population, was taken up as an argument by the Reformers in Hungary insofar as they saw it as a consequence of the perverted state of the Church. They thus called for conversion. Their sermons were successful. After Lutheran beginnings, the Reformed orientation gained great influence from the 1640s on. Mihály Sztárai (+ 1578) and István Szegedi Kis (1506-1572), who were influential preachers, are to be mentioned in this connection. In 1567 the first synod assembled in Debrecen and adopted the “Second Helvetian Confession” (Confessio Helvetica Posterior, see lesson 6). However, a uniform church was not established because it existed in
various different territories. In the 17\textsuperscript{th} Century as a reaction against the stale orthodoxy in Hungary, there arose a puritan pietistic movement, which is still important today. This emphasised above all else the “praxis pietatis” of everyday life. In the Habsburg territories the Counter-Reformation raged from 1671 on. More than 40 pastors and teachers who were not willing to convert were sentenced to the galley. At the end of the 17\textsuperscript{th} Century Habsburg conquered the Turkish middle part of Hungary and exerted Counter-Reformational pressure on the Protestants. From 1711 to 1718 the situation improved insofar as the Counter-Reformation ceased from being bloody. Up to the end of the 18\textsuperscript{th} Century, however, the Counter-Reformation caused severe decimation in the Reformed Church of Hungary, to which the majority of the population belonged. As a result of the “Patent of Toleration” of 1781 of the Habsburg emperor Josef II, the Reformed Church gained outward freedom. First, organisational superstructures for the whole of Hungary were planned and many new churches were built. In 1881 at the General Assembly of Debrecen the Reformed Church was officially established. However, this outward strengthening and independence went together with an inner emptying which took place in connection with liberalism. Only after the First World War did a phase of new orientation begin. The church leadership itself tried to strengthen its influence on the state by approximating to nationalistic positions. Thus it was scarcely able to criticise the pro-fascist policy of the Hungarian government during the Second World War. In the time after 1945 there were also occasional problematic relations to what was by this time the socialist state. Roughly 2 million members of the Reformed Church live today according to a synodal-presbyterial principle in four church districts in Hungary. The Reformed Church has two faculties in Budapest and Debrecen.

8. Romania (Transylvania)

Up to 1541 Transylvania (or Siebenbürgen) was a part of the Hungarian Kingdom, before it became an autonomous Turkish protectorate up to the end of the 17\textsuperscript{th} Century. The most renowned reformer of Transylvania was Johannes Honterus who introduced the (Lutheran) Reformation in Kronstadt in 1542. By about 1550 the whole Church had become Protestant under the leadership of the clergy, a moderate form of Lutheranism in the tradition of Philipp Melanchthon initially being adopted. From
1550 on, however, the majority of the Transylvanian Church turned to the Reformed Reformation. The pastors Gregor Szegedi and Peter Méliusz Juhasz were important in this respect in the following way. In the argument over the manner of Christ’s presence in the Lord’s Supper they represented an opinion based on the Christ event as a whole: there is no communion with the body of Christ without faith in him. The “body lives from the Spirit.” This position corresponding to the Calvinist doctrine convinced the Transylvanian Church more and more. 1564 is regarded as the first year of the Reformed Church in Transylvania, and by 1567 most pastors had decided for the Reformed Reformation. In 1565 the Heidelberg Catechism was introduced in Klausenburg (today’s Cluj Napoca / Kolosvar). To be sure, the state supported Unitarianism (Anti-Trinitarianism) from 1566 to 1571. Even now there are Unitarian churches in Transylvania. And in 1571 the Catholic Stephan Báthori became prince of Transylvania. He supported the Roman-Catholic Church but also helped the Lutherans. Nevertheless, the principle that each town could choose its own confession continued to be valid. The Transylvanian princes worked together with Habsburg and there was threat of a re-Catholisation. However, the Reformed nobility succeeded to gain the rule in Transylvania in the so-called Long War of 1593-1606. The Turkish supremacy favoured the Reformed Church because they together formed an anti-Habsburg front. This positive situation for the Reformed Church changed in 1692 when it was again suppressed as a result of the Habsburg occupation of Transylvania. Church buildings were confiscated and the use of the Heidelberg Catechism was forbidden. A full re-Catholicisation was prevented by the uprising against Habsburg between 1705-1711. And only the Patent of Toleration of 1781 eventually brought relief. As in other places there occurred a simultaneous emptying of church life. Only in the second half of the 19th Century were there revivals on various different levels. For example, new schools, churches and parsonages were built and the theological faculty in Klausenburg was reorganised. After the First World War Transylvania became a part of Romania. After the Second World War the Reformed Church was founded in the People’s Republic of Romania, which extends beyond Transylvania. Today, living in two districts, there are over 725000 members of the Reformed Church in almost 800 parishes.