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Before the Reformation

Asleep at the Wheel



How a succession of Popes,
“asleep at the wheel”
helped the world to hear the
challenges of Martin Luther



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Precursors to Reformation

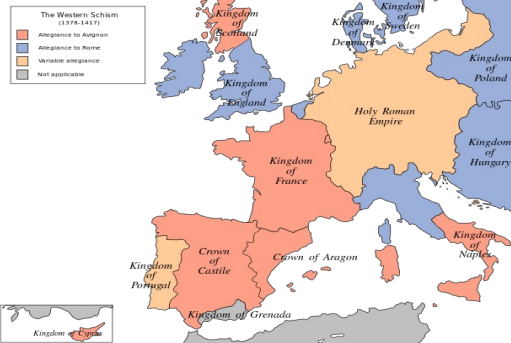
- The **seduction** of the Western Christian Church
 - Fall of the Roman Empire in West → Holy Roman Empire
 - Papal States in the wake
 - “Three Rules of the King”
 - **Investiture Controversy**
 - Who appoints bishops?
 - Who controls power, politics, and money
 - Henry IV (late 11th c.)
 - Concordat of London



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The Western Schism

- **Avignon** start of 14th century
 - **Unam Sanctum** – all kings subject to the Pope
 - Pope chased out of town
 - Avignon, France – and a succession of French popes
- **The anti-Popes**
 - Not theological; pure political
 - Investiture controversy played out on a larger stage
- What happens to the Church in the meantime?



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Embers in England

- John Wycliffe (1320-1384)
 - Translated Vulgate to old English
 - Oxford disappointment
- Oxford tracts
 - simony, indulgence, *annates*
 - primacy of the King
 - Franciscan poverty
 - double pre-destination
 - contra-Transubstantiation
 - hero of the Lollards – advocates of lay priesthood



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Fire in Bohemia/Czech

- Jan Hus (1369-1415)
 - Priest, scholars, master
 - Translated Wycliffe
 - Delineated moral failings
- The Exodus of Charles University
 - 10,000 foreign doctors, scholars and students sent home
 - Wycliffe and Hus' work spread
- anti-Pope John XXIII
 - Sold indulgences in Bohemia -1411
 - Hus lead protests
 - Hus burned at stake 1415



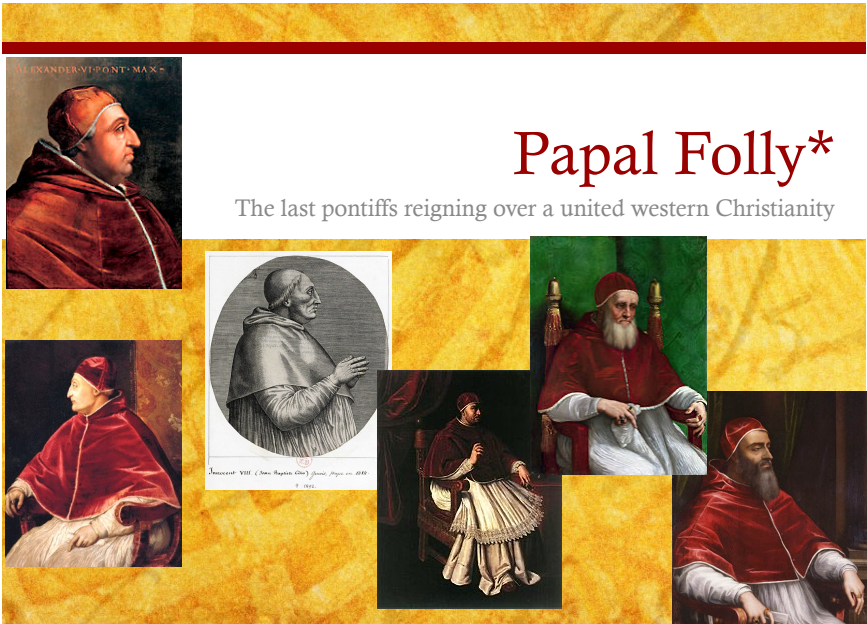
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Just a snapshot

- There is still more than 100 years to the Reformation
- The embers are widespread
- All the hallmarks of the German Reformation are already on the table
- The Renaissance's impact can not be overstated
 - *Unam Sanctum* is questioned
 - Rise of a new class of educated
 - ...plus a good crop



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Papal Folly*

The last pontiffs reigning over a united western Christianity

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Murder in the Cathedral

- Early Years
 - Born into modest family
 - Franciscan Minister General
 - Cardinal of Reform; pope with backing of the **Borgia** family
- Nepotism – the new art form
 - Archbishop of Milan – 11 year old
- New level of extravagance & licentiousness in papal and curia court
 - At least restored Vatican Library
- **Pazzi Controversy**
 - Enter the **Medici** family of Florence
- Pleading of all royal courts for reform



Pope Sixtus IV (1471-84)

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The Malleable Pope

- Poster boy for a misspent youth
 - Fathered two children
 - Family directed him to the priesthood
 - Family connections => Cardinal
- Pope Innocents (...hardly)
 - his son Franceschetto wed to Medici; mortgaged papal tiara to pay for it
 - Bureau of favors and pardons; epic corruption in Curia
 - Appointed Giovanni d' Medici (age 16) as Cardinal (later Pope Leo X)
- Papal States/Florence –v– every other state
 - For this you need money
 - Three rules of the King

Under the Medici thumb



Innocent III (1198-1216)

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A Depraved Papacy

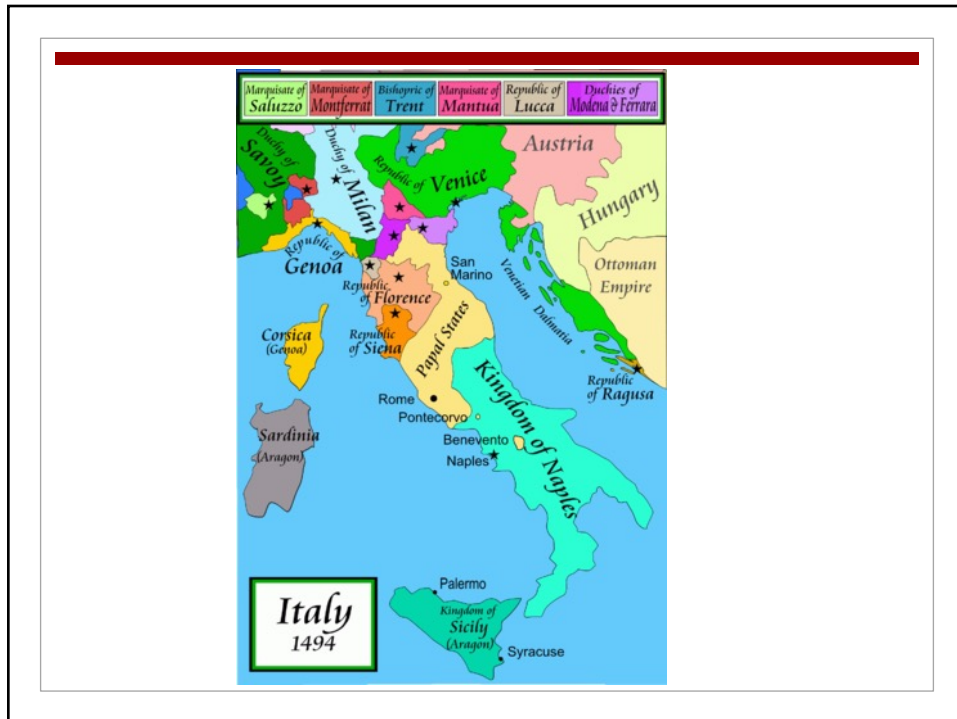
- 35 years in the Curia before election – the old fashioned way – he bought it
 - “Flee, we are in the clutches of the wolf”
 - Burchard/MC – toneless tale of violence, murder, torture, executions, scandal, sexual excess, money and more money
- Father of seven children – nepotism as art
 - Attended to the political alliances of his children; not religious reform
 - Secured alliances with France, England, Spain, Hungary, Venice, Milan and Rome
 - Depleted the papal bank
- The Dominican Savonarola / Florence

The Borgia Pope



Pope Alexander VI (1492-1503)

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The Warrior Pope

- Nephew of Sixtus IV and hated the Borgias
 - Sealed Pope Alexander's papal apartment – would not live where a Borgia had lived
 - Yet his pontificate was but a version of Alexander VI save the nepotism
- Patron to the arts – Sistine Chapel commission; started the Swiss Guard
- 10 years of political intrigue and war
 - Targets: France in general; Italian city-states
 - Alexander broke the bank – more sales
 - Henry VIII-England: allowed him to marry Catherine of Aragon
- Forced to call 5th Lateran Council for reform

The selling of indulgences



Pope Julius II (1503-1513)

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5th Lateran – *the last chance*

- Egidio of Viterbo, General of the Augustinians – opening homily
 - saw Divine Providence in the very recent defeat of papal forces at Ravenna on Easter Sunday morning.
 - Challenged Pope, cardinals and bishops
 - on the vanity of relying on worldly weapons
 - summoned the Church to resume her true weapons, “piety, religion, probity and prayer,” the armor of faith and the sword of light.
- Condition of the Church
 - lying on the ground “like the dead leaves of a tree in winter. When has there been among the people a greater neglect and greater contempt for the sacred, for the sacraments and for the holy commandments?
 - When has our religion and faith been more open to the derision even of the lowest classes? When, O Sorrow, has there been a more disastrous split in the Church? When has war been more dangerous, the enemy more powerful, armies more cruel?
 - . . . Do you see the slaughter? Do you see the destruction, and the battlefield buried under piles of the slain? Do you see that in this year the earth has drunk more blood than water, more gore than rain? Do you see that as much Christian strength lies in the grave as would be enough to wage war against the enemies of the faith?”

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The Protestant Break

- Medici on the Chair of Peter
 - Last lay person elected pope
 - Ignored 5th Lateran reforms
 - “God has given us the Papacy, let us enjoy it”
 - The Renaissance Pope – patron of the arts
- Finances – broke the bank again, sold cardinal positions,, borrowed, pawned, invented new fees
- The fires of the Reformation were obscured by the smoke of papal libertine living, excess and debt.
- Never saw beyond the walls of Rome

The Church burned and he fiddled



Leo X (1513-1521)

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The Sack of Rome

- Another Medici – Pazzi Conspiracy
- Politically between the rock and the hard place
 - Clement seeks support of French Francis I
 - Curial uprising – revolt in Rome
 - Colonna, Orsini families; Every enemy of Medici comes to the fore
 - 1527 sack of Rome; ransom of Clement
 - At mercy of HRE Charles V
- Henry VIII in England
 - wants annulment to marry Ann Boleyn
 - Catherine of Aragon, aunt of HRE Charles V
 - England is lost – investiture not longer a controversy. The King rules

Last papal king in the march of folly

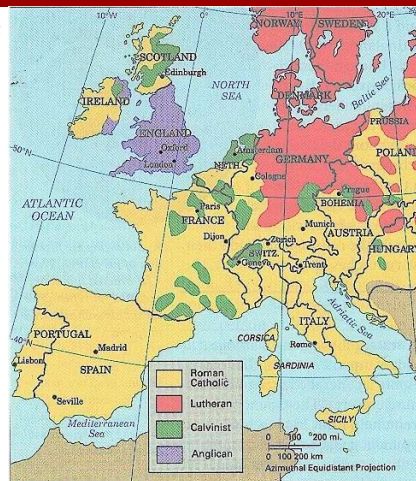


Clement VII (1523-1534)

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After 1500 years....this

- Between the start of the pontificate of Leo X and the end of Clement VII's
 - unity in the western Christian Church is a memory
 - Yet the cries for reform were more than 200 years old
- Did you notice any significant discussion of papal-led or inspired spiritual movements?
- Absolute power corrupts....
- A new map is drawn



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What just happened?

- Investiture Controversy
- Years of Avignon
- Papal States
- Separation of the Pope, the Cardinals and the Roman Curia from any spiritual roots
- Entanglement in Italian city-state politics
- The 3 rules of kingship
- Scholasticism gives way to Nominalism
 - Aquinas, Bonaventure, Scotus, Albert the Great
 - Ockham, Erasmus
- Rise of Humanism and advent of the Renaissance
- New lenses to see Scripture
- “Tradition” now associated with religious imperialism

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At the doorstep of the Reformation



How a succession of Popes, “asleep at the wheel” helped the world to hear the challenges of Martin Luther



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