



A Short History of Renaissance and Reformation Europe: Dances over Fire and Water (3rd Edition)

By Jonathan W. Zophy

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For courses in Renaissance, Reformation Europe, Early Modern Europe, and first year surveys of Western Civilization. This text's conversational tone and concise presentation are examples of an approach that is more representative than comprehensive--introducing historical figures and concepts as they flow through the narrative, without frequent interruption to include and define technical and foreign terms. Rather than a compendium or grand summa, the text serves as a brief introduction to some of the major personalities, issues, events, and ideas of the Renaissance and Reformation age.

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

This concise survey is designed to make the exciting history of Europe in the age of the Renaissance and Reformation come alive to readers. It is the first textbook on Europe between 1300 and 1700 to focus on gender as a significant issue for historical analysis. Author **Jonathan W. Zophy** introduces major events and personalities of the period as well as its cultural, economic, religious, political, and social developments. Taking a biographical approach, the book discusses ideas and artistic creations in their human and societal contexts.

- Reflects the latest in cross-disciplinary scholarship
- Written in a lively, student-friendly style
- Handsomely illustrated with masterpieces of art and useful maps
- Each chapter concludes with a chronology and up-to-date reading lists
- **NEW**—Revised bibliographies
- **NEW**—Additional material on Savonarola and Philip Melanchthon

About the Author

Jonathan W. Zophy is a professor of history at the University of Houston-Clear Lake, where he teaches courses in Renaissance and Reformation history. A winner of several teaching awards, his previous books are: *Patriarchal Politics and Christoph Kress (1484-1535) of Nuremberg*, *The Social History of the Reformation* (edited with Lawrence P. Buck), *The Holy Roman Empire: A Dictionary Handbook*, and *An Annotated Bibliography of the Holy Roman Empire*.

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This book originated from the concerns of my students that my course in Renaissance and Reformation Europe needed a different textbook. They argued that the various texts I have been using over the past three decades are too detailed, too boring, and do not pay sufficient attention to the roles of women. Although I do not agree with them about some texts being either too lengthy or insufficiently stimulating, student suggestions did remind me how much of a gap there is between those of us who have studied a period intensely for a number of years and those who are learning about it in some cases almost for the first time. This text is an effort to provide a bridge between the often different worlds of the professor and the student.

I seek to make the Renaissance and Reformation more accessible to students, many of whom have not had much prior exposure to the subject. Deliberately adopting a conversational tone in my prose, I have attempted to write what might be called a student-friendly text by, for example, avoiding technical and foreign language terms as much as possible and attempting to introduce historical figures and concepts as they appear in the narrative. Because this is a "short" history, it is more representative than comprehensive. This means, for example, that some important Renaissance painters are not discussed in great detail. This is somewhat compensated for by the greater coverage given to significant women artists and thinkers, who are not always found in traditional Renaissance and Reformation textbooks.

This book is organized around general topics such as Italian Renaissance art (Chapters 6 and 7) or religious warfare (Chapter 11). However, topics are presented roughly in a chronological order throughout the book. Hence, the Black Death of 1347 to 1350 appears in Chapter 3 of the book and the seventeenth-century constitutional crisis in England is discussed in the last chapter. Subtopics are presented in chronological order in each chapter.

All but the second chapter on "The Peoples of Europe" feature a chronology of important persons and events. My students have found these chronologies to be a helpful review aid in preparing for examinations. Even though I do not test them on their recall of specific dates, I want them to attain a relative sense of sequence: to know, for example, that Giotto lived before Artemisia Gentileschi or that Jan Hus preceded Martin Luther. It seems to me that to tell a good story it is usually a sensible notion to begin at the beginning and proceed to the end even if life itself is a seamless web.

Each chapter also ends with a list of suggestions for further reading. These are meant to recommend some of the best and most recent English-language scholarship on various topics covered in each chapter and in some cases throughout the book. Usually, I have selected books and collections of translated sources that I think serious students will enjoy reading, although I do not include novels or nonfiction works written by nonprofessional historians. In the interest of brevity, the lists have been kept relatively short with only limited annotation. They are not at all comprehensive bibliographies. I do refer readers to some of the bibliographical literature such as John O'Malley's, *Catholicism in Early Modern Europe: A Guide to Research* or my own, *Annotated Bibliography of the Holy Roman Empire*. Obviously, the scholarly monographs included have a wealth of citations in their notes and bibliographies.

Although I try to give some attention to the intellectual developments of the era, my emphasis for the most part has been on people of all ages and both genders. My experience is that the ideas of the period can best be learned by small group discussions of documents and texts. This brief text is meant to be used in conjunction with collections of documents such as Kenneth Atchity's *MThe Renaissance Reader*, David Englander's *Culture and Belief in Europe*, or Peter Elmer et al's *The Renaissance in Europe: An Anthology* and supplemented by more specialized monographs. It is meant solely as a brief introduction to some of the major personalities, issues, events, and ideas of the age of Renaissance and Reformation. It is not a compendium or a grand summa. My hope is to capture your attention and interest and stimulate you to make additional explorations of this rich and complex period in human history.

Users Review

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