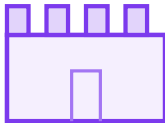


Age of Reformation

AP European History ■ Unit 2

AP European History



What we will cover

- 1 Contextualizing 16th- and 17th-Century Challenges
- 2 Luther and the Protestant Reformation
- 3 Protestant Reform Continues
- 4 Wars of Religion
- 5 The Catholic Reformation
- 6 16th-Century Society and Politics

Contextualizing 16th- and 17th-Century Challenges

Unit 2 covers the [Reformation and the wars of religion](#), and the CED frames the whole period around one claim: **religious pluralism challenged the concept of a unified Europe** 宗教多元.

The unit's characteristic question asks how religious change and political change acted on each other, so keeping them in separate mental boxes is the main way students lose marks here.

Luther and the Protestant Reformation

Reformers **Martin Luther** 马丁·路德 and **John Calvin** 加尔文 criticised Catholic abuses and established **new interpretations of Christian doctrine** 教义 and practice. The CED's emphasis is on *interpretation*: what changed was not only conduct but the account of how salvation works and where religious authority lies.

That is the link between the Reformation and the commercial developments of Unit 1, and it is worth having ready for economic questions.

Protestant Reform Continues

Three developments carry the Reformation past its first generation:

- Protestant reformers **used the printing press** 印刷机 to disseminate their ideas, which spurred reform and helped it become permanent. Printing again functions as the amplifier – it is why this movement did not end as earlier ones had.
- Some Protestants, including **Calvin and the Anabaptists** 再洗礼派, **refused to recognise the subordination of the church to the secular state** 教会从属于世俗国家.
- Religious conflicts **became a basis for challenging monarchs' control** of religious institutions.

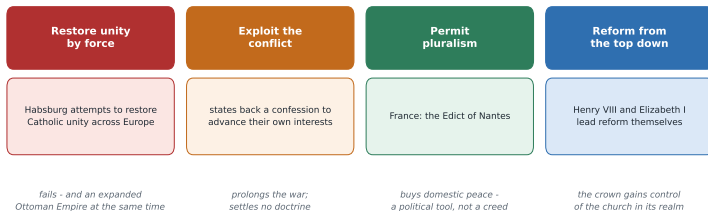
Protestant Reform Continues, continued

The last two are political claims dressed in religious language, and the CED treats them that way.

Once religious authority is contestable, so is the authority of whoever claims to control it.

Wars of Religion

One problem - religious division - and the four answers the CED names



Westphalia (1648) ends the attempt to restore a single Christendom, and the sovereign state system takes its place.

the distinction this unit turns on

Wars of Religion

The CED gives four state responses to religious division, and a strong answer treats them as a set:

- **Restore unity by force** – Habsburg rulers attempted to restore **Catholic unity** across Europe and failed, while simultaneously confronting an **expanded Ottoman Empire** 奥斯曼帝国.
- **Exploit the conflict** – states used religious disputes to **promote political and economic interests** 政治与经济利益 rather than to settle doctrine.
- **Permit pluralism** – a few states, such as France with the **Edict of Nantes** 南特敕令, allowed religious pluralism **in order to maintain domestic peace** 国内和平.
- **Reform from the top down** – monarchs, including **Henry VIII** and **Elizabeth I**, initiated religious reform themselves to strengthen control over the church within their realm.

Wars of Religion, continued

Religious reform also **exacerbated conflicts between monarchy and nobility**, as in the French wars of religion – religion supplied the language, and existing political rivalry supplied the force.

The settlement matters as much as the wars: the **Peace of Westphalia (1648)** 威斯特伐利亚和约 marked the effective end of the medieval ideal of **universal Christendom** 普世基督教世界 and accelerated the decline of the Holy Roman Empire.

The Catholic Reformation

The **Catholic Reformation** 天主教改革, exemplified by the **Jesuit Order** 耶稣会 and the **Council of Trent** 特伦特会议, **revived the church but cemented the division** within Christianity.

Revival and permanent division were the same act.

16th-Century Society and Politics

This is the unit's social-history topic, and it is dense with examinable content that essays rarely use:

- **Established hierarchies of class, religion, and gender** 阶级、宗教与性别等级 continued to define social status in both rural and urban settings.
- Rural and urban **households worked as units**, with men and women engaged in **separate but complementary tasks** 分工互补.
- The Renaissance and Reformation **raised debates about female education** 女性教育 and women's roles in family, church, and society.
- **Social dislocation** 社会失序, together with the shifting authority of religious institutions, left **city governments** to address the problems it created.
- **Leisure** remained organised by the religious calendar and the agricultural cycle, and remained communal.

16th-Century Society and Politics, continued

The witchcraft peak is worth holding precisely because of its dates: it coincides with the period of maximum religious conflict and economic strain, which is what makes it usable as evidence rather than as an anecdote.

Art of the 16th Century: Mannerism and Baroque

The examinable point is the same as in Unit 1, one step further: art was **commissioned to persuade**.

Baroque drama in a Catholic church and Baroque grandeur at a royal court are doing the same work in different directions – asserting the authority of the patron in an age when authority was contested.

Causation in the Age of Reformation

The unit's reasoning skill is **causation**.

Exam tips

- Never separate **religion and politics** in this unit. Nearly every question tests the interaction.
- The four state responses – **force, exploitation, toleration, top-down reform** – make an excellent answer skeleton for any wars-of-religion question.
- **Westphalia** is the hinge: the end of universal Christendom, the start of the sovereign state system.
- The Catholic Reformation **revived and divided** at the same time. Both halves earn the mark.
- **Toleration was a political tool**, not a moral position. The Edict of Nantes bought domestic peace.
- Use the **witchcraft peak (1580-1650)** as dated evidence of social and religious strain, not as colour.