chants, and professional people. The patronesses of the literary world, however, generally remained Catholic, in name and association at least. This did not hold true, however, for many noblewomen and leaders, such as Jeanne d'Albret, Catherine de Bourbon, Eléonore de Roye, and Louise de Coligny, who were faithful, even zealous Protestants.

Another exception was the remarkable Marie Dentière, one-time abbess in Tournai, who was expelled from the convent because of heresy. She then found her way to Geneva, where she became an activist not only in the Reformed church but also in the cause of feminism. In 1538 she published a *Letter to the Queen of Navarre* (Marguerite d'Angoulême, sister of Francis I), containing a spirited "Defense of Women" against the defamations of ecclesiastical authorities, which caused a stir in Geneva because of its criticism of the pastors. Urging women to speak up about religious matters and to speak and write about the Scriptures, she wrote, "If God has done the grace to some poor women to reveal to them by His Holy Scriptures some good and holy thing, dare they not write about it, speak about it, and declare it, one to the other?"

The Spread of Calvinism

Calvinism was better equipped for international expansion than was Lutheranism. Thanks to Calvin's concise and adroit *Institutes*, and his systematic exposition of the gospel in other works, Calvinism was more intelligible and orderly than the evangelical movements of Germany. It had a particularly strong appeal to those who desired a complete theological and ecclesiastical system to take the place of the Roman Catholicism they had known. At the same time, Geneva provided active leadership for Calvinist expansion and served as a model for other Calvinist and semi-Calvinist cities like Amsterdam, Edinburgh, and Montauban. The founding of the Genevan Academy in 1559—patterned after Johann Sturm's school in Strasbourg—and its rapid growth likewise influenced the spread of Calvinism. Many of the leaders of the Reformed Protestant movement in Europe received their training at the Genevan Academy. The many book publishers in Geneva also provided a steady flow of Protestant propaganda into neighboring cities and towns even after Calvin's death in 1564.

With Calvin's own personal courage and total dedication as their lodestar, committed followers soon carried the message of Christ into the surrounding countries. From Geneva, Calvin's religious and social ideas quickly spread into the other cantons of western Switzerland, and then throughout Europe. Few countries were unaffected by Calvinism's growth, and in several it became the crucial factor in their religious and political development.

France

Calvin's most persistent proselytizing efforts were directed toward his native France. Conversions to his ideas began there shortly after the first edition of the *Institutes* was issued. When the French version was published in 1541, its effects were immediate. Francis I died in 1547 and responsibility for public order

Henri II. *This Louvre painting of the French king by François Clouet shows him in 1557 or 1558 after ten years of vigorously combating the growth of Calvinism in France.*

and defense of the faith rested with his twenty-eight-year-old son, Henri II. The new king was a less inspiring leader than his illustrious father had been, although, according to the Venetian ambassador, "He has great natural kindness, so much so that you cannot rank any prince, no matter how far back you go in the past, above him," and "He has a good mind . . . and is bold in all that he does." Henri II, however, was unfamiliar with affairs of state and leaned heavily on the constable, Anne de Montmorency (male despite his name). When he was fourteen, Henri had been married to Catherine de' Medici as a pawn in his father's Italian diplomacy, but his constant companion was the influential Diane de Poitiers, a well-read and capable woman who not only wrote poetry and poignant letters but had a pragmatic sense of politics and took an active part in public affairs. In religious matters, Henri II was more orthodox than his father, and less inclined to be lenient with dissenters, reformers, or heretics. Upon his ascension to the throne, he created the *Chambre Ardente* (the "Burning Chamber"), a special criminal committee of the Parlement de Paris to suppress heresy. Popular resentment forced its dissolution three years later, but in that time it tried over 500 separate cases.

In the meantime, beginning in 1555, or perhaps earlier, Calvin secretly dispatched highly trained pastors to France for the purpose of preaching the gospel of Christ and organizing the French sympathizers into cadres of devoted congregations prepared to serve the Lord. The leading voices of the ministry in France were Pierre Viret (1511–71) and Calvin's close friend, disciple, and

successor, Theodore Beza (1519–1605), the man who represented and spearheaded Calvinism in France for the next forty years. By 1559 the trickle of missionaries had become a torrent and, under Beza's vigorous leadership, France underwent a dramatic religious change, symbolized by the meeting of the first national synod of the French Reformed church in Paris. The promulgation of the French Confession of Faith, also in 1559, is a landmark in the rapid spread of Calvinist Reformed Protestantism. By this time, its organization was complete on all levels, from the local congregations in many of the cities of southern and southwestern France (with some scattered also in the northwest), through district colloquies representing numerous consistories, to the provincial synods, and finally to the national synod in Paris. This phenomenal growth of Calvinism in France was in part due to the natural affinity of the French for a Reformation leader who was genuinely their own. Luther would always remain a foreigner in France, and so would Zwingli and the Anabaptists.

Other conditions and events also contributed to the rapid expansion of Calvinist congregations in mid-sixteenth-century France. Stronger than the social and economic strains that influenced many to abandon their traditional views and vows was the deep longing for a more personal involvement in religion and a more meaningful and direct communication with God. In the early years of the Calvinist expansion, this religious attraction brought many people from all walks of life into the Protestant community. Immediately following the Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis in 1559, when Europewide peace seemed to be assured, thousands of nobles from almost every region of France swelled the Huguenot ranks until, according to fairly reliable estimates, nearly one-half of the French aristocracy could be counted on their side. The economic dislocation of the French nobles perhaps accounts for many of these conversions, but a great number of the highest rank, even princes of the blood who had no economic worries, also joined the spirited saints. Perhaps they saw the opportunities in Calvin's doctrine of church and state. Whatever their motives, this influx of nobles into Huguenot ranks supplied an already volatile mixture with an explosive fuse. By 1562 France was ripe for civil war.

The Netherlands

Calvinism was carried into the Netherlands by French refugees of the persecutions of Henri II and by ministers sent directly from Geneva. Progress was slow at first, because of the religious repressions of Charles V, but it quickened after 1555 when the emperor abdicated and his son, Philip II of Spain, became ruler of the Lowlands. This was not because Philip lifted the burden of religious oppression established by the emperor, but rather because his subjects were less inclined to obey the offensive rules of this foreign-born prince than they had been to abide by those of his Flemish father.

The logical dogmatism of Calvin's theology, with its biblical humanism and its ethical emphasis, appealed to many devotional Dutch who respected their Erasmus but also yearned for greater involvement than the illustrious Rotterdamer had provided. Above all, they respected and employed Calvinist

organizational structure, and soon flourishing congregations similar to those of Geneva and France were springing up from Arras to Groningen. With its greatest strength in the French-speaking provinces of Artois, Namur, Hainaut, and southern Flanders and Brabant, a Belgic Confession of Faith was drafted in 1561. This confession was of great importance in the religious history of the Netherlands, providing the basic catechism for the later Synod of Dort and the standard for the modern Dutch Reformed churches.

Germany

As might be expected, Calvinism moved northward and eastward through Germany almost as early as it did into France and the Netherlands, although without as much immediate success. Its growth in the Rhineland, however, was rapid after 1555, following the Peace of Augsburg (although no allowance was made for Calvinism in that agreement) and the accession of Frederick III as elector and Count Palatine of the Rhine. By 1560 Frederick was himself a convert to Calvinist doctrines, and from that time on, the spread of the Reformed church was encouraged throughout the Palatinate. In the Rhineland, however, Calvinism was of necessity broader and more eclectic than in either France or Scotland, and it was more subservient to the control of the prince. That is as it should be, maintained Thomas Erastus, the elector's physician and professor of medicine at the University of Heidelberg, whose view that the state should rule supreme over the church came to be known as "Erastianism."

In 1563, Calvinist pastors and professors, including Zacharias Ursinus (1534–83), who had been brought to Heidelberg by the elector to assist in formulating a statement of belief, drew up a remarkable and influential confession of faith. It was appropriately known as the Heidelberg Catechism. Less dogmatic than previous Calvinist statements of faith, thus accommodating most of the Sacramentarians and Melanchthonian Lutherans, the 129 questions and answers of the Heidelberg Catechism soon became the doctrinal guide of Reformed churches throughout the Empire, and with the second Helvetic Confession of 1556, written by Heinrich Bullinger at Zürich, formed the theological basis of most Calvinist congregations east of the Rhine.

Elsewhere in the Holy Roman Empire, Calvinism spread more slowly, but with increasing penetration, for the rest of the century. It was introduced into Nassau and neighboring Hesse, and later Anhalt, by missionaries from the Palatinate, and into Wesel and Cleves by Dutch refugees. Early in the next century, Calvinism was adopted by the Hohenzollern electors of Brandenburg. In the meantime, sons of Czech noble families returning from universities in the Rhineland, Switzerland, and Alsace brought Calvinism into Bohemia. In 1575 a Bohemian Confession was drafted at Prague, and thereafter a growing number of Czech nobles embraced the Reformed faith, adding spirit as well as strength to Czech opposition to the emperor. Nevertheless, Calvinist penetration into the Empire was sporadic and ineffectual compared to its success in the West. The heavy hand of the Habsburgs and the solid power of the Lutheran princes prevented the development of anything more than a few scattered congregations.

Eastern Europe

Further east, in Poland and Hungary, the story was different. Here the landed nobility, hostile both to German influences and Roman rituals (and to the Polish king), were strongly attracted by the orderly radicalism of Calvinist theology. They were similarly impressed with the presbyterian form of government, in which strong authority rested with the lesser magistrates, and which had a graded system of representative ecclesiastical bodies. Under noble and gentry patronage, Calvinism grew rapidly in Poland during the 1550s. Even on the national level, there was sympathy and sometimes enthusiasm for it. King Sigismund II (1548–72), last of the Jagiellonian dynasty, was initially sympathetic to the reform movement, and the Lithuanian chancellor-prince, Nicholas Radziwiłł, openly avowed Calvinism. In December 1556, the most zealous Polish reformer, John à Lasco (Jan Łaski), who had been in the West since 1523, returned to his homeland and began an enthusiastic effort to unite the Polish Protestants into a national church. His failure was due in part to the inability of the Polish nobles to rally around a single Protestant doctrine and to the lack of active support by the crown. After Łaski's death in 1560, both antitrinitarian and Anabaptist ideas (some introduced by exiles from Calvin's Geneva) won a considerable following among the Polish and Lithuanian nobility. The Catholic Counter-Reformation, though, was also picking up momentum, and Poland became one of the prime targets of its Jesuit shock troops.

In Hungary, and especially in Transylvania, where John Zapolya's rule (1526–40) was unchallenged except when he forgot that he reigned by the grace of the Turkish sultan, religious heterodoxy was already of long standing. Catholics, Moslems, Lutherans, Unitarians, and Greek Orthodox all lived in precarious harmony. Calvinism experienced a similar growth and vitality there as the Magyar nobles, like the Polish landlords, welcomed Calvinist doctrines and organization. So successful was the Calvinist expansion east of the Danube that the city of Debrecen proudly called itself the "Hungarian Geneva." Throughout the principality of Transylvania, a remarkable degree of religious toleration was allowed and radical doctrines gained a firm foothold. In 1557 its diet called for a national synod to settle religious differences peacefully, while the Unitarian court preacher Francis David (d. 1579) eloquently defended freedom of conscience for everyone. As a result, in 1568 the Diet of Torda proclaimed religious liberty throughout the jurisdictions of the Transylvanian prince. Such toleration did not last, however, and after Prince John Sigismund Zapolya died in 1571, the various faiths had to fight for survival.

Scotland and England

The Reformation in Scotland began in the early 1500s with humanist criticisms of church practices and clerical abuse, but the Catholic church retained its control until after mid-century. Lutheran ideas began penetrating the country in the 1520s, and in 1526 Tyndale's English New Testament was introduced there. Soon many voices were raising the cry for religious reforms, and the burning of Patrick Hamilton in 1528 only increased their number and volume. The martyrdom of another Protestant zealot,

George Wishart, in 1547 introduced a strong new voice when Wishart's friend and admirer, John Knox (ca. 1505–72), joined the chorus of protestors.

Son of peasant parents who schooled him in self-reliance and tenacity, Knox studied at Saint Andrew's University and subsequently became a papal notary and a tutor. He was also ordained to the priesthood some time before 1540. After Wishart's death, Knox renounced his clerical vows and joined the band of Scottish Protestants who boldly called themselves the Lords of the Congregation. Captured by the French in 1547, Knox was condemned to the galleys, where he toiled at the oar until his liberation by the English two years later. In the England of King Edward VI (1547–53), he became a popular preacher; but on the accession of Mary Tudor to the throne in 1553, this prophet of Protestantism fled to the continent, where he came under the pervasive influence of Calvin. In Geneva he was pastor of the English exiles and became completely imbued with Calvin's spirit and theology.

In 1559 Knox returned to Scotland to resume the battle in earnest against Catholicism and against the political rule of the French regent, Mary of Guise, widow of King James V. He had already launched the first salvo of the civil war three years earlier with the publication of his *First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*, which not only attacked Mary but reveals his attitude toward women rulers generally. From this point on, he never wavered in his determination to Protestantize the kingdom. Led by Knox's passionate preaching, nobles joined with commoners to oppose the established order and eject the queen-regent from power. The Scottish revolt was closely linked with both English and continental politics as French reinforcements arrived to support the regent, and English forces, reluctantly sent by Queen Elizabeth, were dispatched to intercept them. The death of the regent in 1560 resulted in the Treaty of Edinburgh, and left the field open to Knox and his followers. The government was reorganized, a parliament summoned, a Scottish Confession of Faith proclaimed, and a complete ecclesiastical overhaul accomplished. By the end of August 1560, the Mass had been abolished, papal supremacy overthrown, and the Roman church replaced by the Reformed Kirk of Scotland, with a directing board of presbyters and a national consistory.

With the return of Mary Stuart from France (where she had been left a widow by the death of her husband, King Francis II) in 1561, the Scottish Reformation seemed to be in jeopardy. Knox again mounted his pulpit at Saint Giles, drew his pen, and entered the battle. Boldly he proclaimed the right of rebellion against idolatrous (meaning Catholic) rulers. In his *Appellation*, employing Calvin's doctrine of resistance, but without Calvin's judiciousness, he had already appealed to the Scottish nobles to depose their Catholic regent. Now he enlarged his appeal to include not only the nobles and magistrates, "but also the whole bodie of that people, and to every membre of the same," calling upon them to kill the idolatrous queen as they would have killed any idolator in the days of Moses. In a face-to-face confrontation with the queen herself in August 1561, Knox reaffirmed that when princes exceed their bounds "they may be resisted, even by power."

Reformation monument in Geneva. *This modern landmark shows Calvin flanked by his colleagues and followers Guillaume Farel, Theodore Beza, and John Knox.*

Knox might not have needed such vehemence to conquer Scotland for the Reformed cause, since Mary was her own worst enemy. By 1568 her entangled private life so compromised her public rule that she was no longer able to maintain either her throne or her esteem. With the Queen of Scots removed, there were no further obstacles to the Reformation, although a determined minority of Catholic nobles continued to work for her rehabilitation, and innumerable highland parishes operated a hybrid form of Catholic-Protestantism for many decades. Nevertheless, it was John Knox, with his powerful preaching, who made the Scottish Reformation succeed. "He was the one person as 'God's trumpeter,'" notes his biographer, Stanford Reid,

> who seemed capable of maintaining and strengthening the morale of the forces which were seeking to make the Reformation successful. He was above all else the one who, when the clouds seemed darkest and the outlook most threatening, was able to keep his faith and stimulate those threatened with defeat to action and achievement.

The influence of Calvinism in England was slight until Edward VI's reign when Calvinist writings began to enter the country and increasing contacts were made between English Protestants and Calvinist-leaning continental reformers. During the restoration of Catholicism under Mary Tudor (1553–58), many English Protestant preachers and scholars, as well as Knox and the continental theologians who had settled in Edwardian England, fled to the continent to avoid persecution or death. The more direct impact of Calvinism came

only when Queen Mary died in 1558 and many of the Marian exiles returned to England. In the religious controversies of Queen Elizabeth I's (1558–1603) first years, some of the exiles joined with other dissenters to protest the overly ritualistic establishment of the Anglican church. Out of these protests came the beginnings of English Puritanism.

To understand the impact of Calvinism in England, as well as the development of the Anglican church and Puritanism, however, we must look more closely at the political and religious struggles that were taking place in that island kingdom from the beginning of Henry VIII's reign to the death of Queen Mary. Only then can we distinguish and appreciate the unique nature of the English Reformation.

Suggestions for Further Reading

THE EARLY REFORMATION IN FRANCE

For the general background of reform in France, R.J. Knecht, *Francis I* (New York, 1982) is very useful, and Mark Greengrass, *The French Reformation* (Oxford, 1987) provides a good brief introduction. More specific insights may be gained from Donald R. Kelley, *The Beginning of Ideology: Consciousness and Society in the French Reformation* (Cambridge, England, 1981), and James K. Farge, *Orthodoxy and Reform in Early Reformation France* (Leiden, 1985), a study of the faculty of theology of Paris, 1500–1543. On the most influential pre-reformer see Philip E. Hughes, *Lefèvre: Pioneer of Ecclesiastical Renewal in France* (Grand Rapids, 1984). Of related interest to the early Reformation are Francis M. Higman, *Censorship and the Sorbonne* (Geneva, Switzerland, 1979), a bibliographical study of books censured by the Faculty of Theology at Paris between 1520 and 1551; and Raymond A. Mentzer, Jr., *Heresy Proceedings in Languedoc, 1500–1560* (Philadelphia, 1984).

CALVIN: GENERAL

The most penetrating study of Calvin to date is William J. Bouwsma, *John Calvin: A Sixteenth Century Portrait* (New York, 1988), which sees Calvin as a person of his time, and analyzes his complex personality as a paradox between his humanism and dogmatism. Also significant and wider-ranging is Alister E. McGrath, *A Life of John Calvin: A Study in the Shaping of Western Culture* (Oxford, 1990). These works now supersede all previous biographies, although something can still be learned from François Wendel, *Calvin: The Origins and Development of His Religious Thought*, tr. by Philip Mairet (New York, 1963), and T.H.L. Parker, *John Calvin, a Biography* (London, 1975), a handy brief life. There is also much in Ronald S. Wallace, *Calvin, Geneva and the Reformation: A Study of Calvin as Social Reformer, Churchman, Pastor, and Theologian* (Edinburgh, 1988). Some useful articles are contained in B.A. Gerrish and Robert Benedetto, eds., *Reformatio Perennis: Essays on Calvin and the Reformation in Honor of Ford Lewis Battles* (Pittsburgh, 1981); E.J. Furcha, ed., *In Honour of John Calvin, 1509–1564* (Montreal, 1987); and Robert V. Schnucher, ed., *Calviniana: Ideas and Influence of Jean Calvin* (Kirksville, Missouri, 1988).