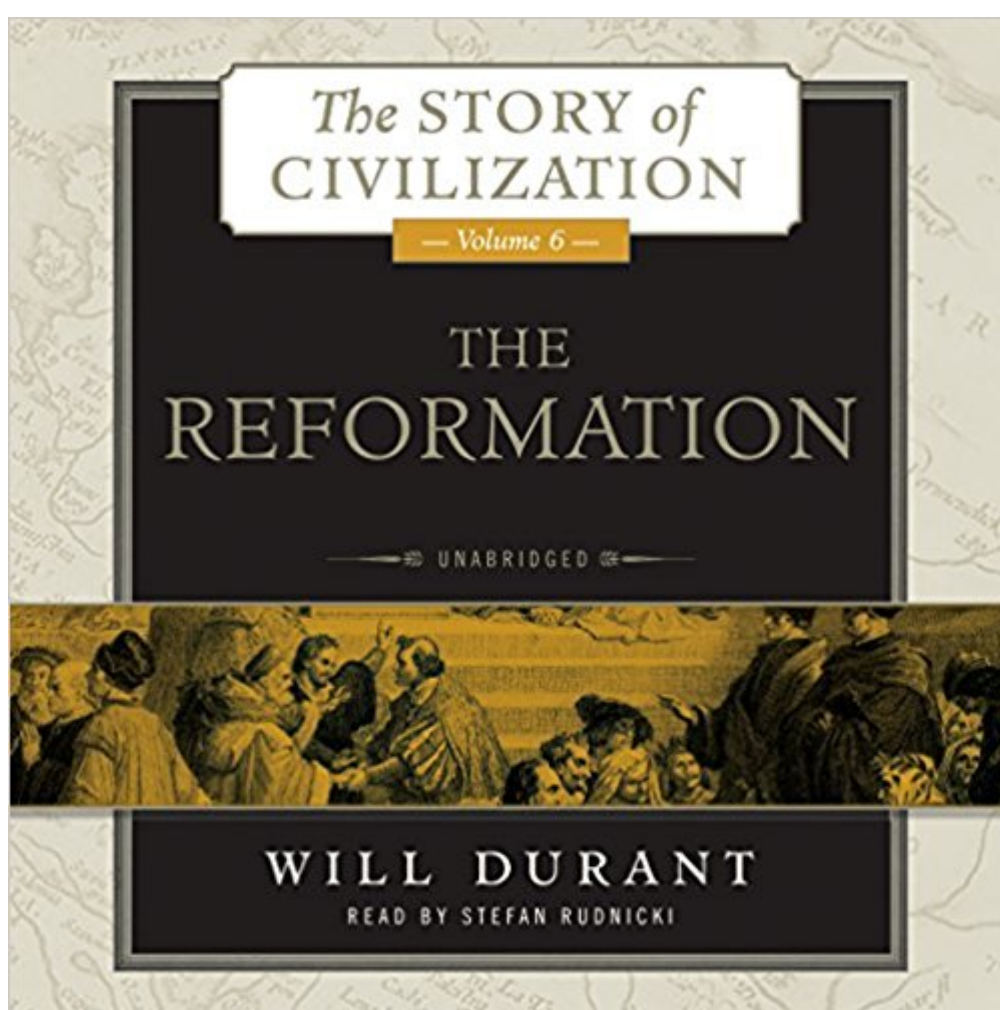


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The Reformation: A History Of European Civilization From Wycliffe To Calvin, 1300 - 1564 (Story Of Civilization Series, Volume 6) (Story Of Civilization (Audio))



Synopsis

[Read by Stefan Rudnicki] An engrossing volume on the European Reformation by Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Will Durant The sixth volume of Durant's acclaimed Story of Civilization, "The Reformation" chronicles the history of European civilization from 1300 to 1564. In this masterful work, listeners will encounter: -the schism within the Roman Catholic Church and the formation of early Protestantism; -the theology of Martin Luther and his societal impact; -the rise of Humanism and the life of Desiderius Erasmus; -the royal monarchies of England, France, Spain, and Italy; -the imperial conquests of Christopher Columbus and the discovery of the Americas; -the Bohemian revolution of Eastern Europe, the unification of Russia, and the rise of the Ottoman Empire; -the teachings of John Calvin; and -the Counter-Reformation of the sixteenth century.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Reading Will Durant's History of European Civilization from Wycliff to Calvin 1300-1564 will be an illuminating experience for readers unacquainted with factual descriptions of life during those years. For having views on religion or government contrary to time or country thousands died slow deaths tied to a stake surrounded by a pile of burning wood. Those who committed less serious crimes against the church or state received the kinder, quicker death of one strong blow of a sword removing their head. Even belonging to royalty was no insurance for living to an old age. With the death of a ruling king or queen, only one member of the family could inherit the throne. Therefore it was not unusual for the quick murder of potential heirs who commonly were family members. The

discovery of America by Christopher Columbus is commonly taught as a wonderful event in world history. How many know that of the three ships, the Nina, Pinta, and Santa Maria, only two returned, the largest, the Santa Maria having been destroyed in a storm. The harrowing return trip in two tiny, badly over-crowded open ships, stands as one of the miracles of ocean travel. In our observation of Columbus Day do we know the initial good will of the natives was quickly lost. On a later trip Columbus observed "The Europeans had roamed the island robbing the natives of gold and women; they had established a tropical paradise with five women to each man; they had quarreled and murdered one another, and nearly all the rest had been killed by the outraged Indians. Later on in the Spanish conquest of Yucatan, the Aztec Empire and the socialistic civilization of the Incas Durant observes the conquered people were more civilized but not equal to the guns of the conquerors.

If we ask a question "What put an end to the Middle Ages (as the majority visualizes them - barbarous, violent, uneducated, unsanitary... even if it is not really so)? To answer with author's words "Many causes through 3 centuries: the failure of the Crusades,...the resurrection of classic pagan culture, the expansion of commerce through great navigators, the rise of business class, the development of national states and Luther challenging the supernational authority of the Popes, printing". These 5 lines in short summarize the book. And although "we do nations injustice when we judge them from their kings, for morals are not made for sovereigns", you'll find accounts for all prominent monarchs of that period (to some, e.g. Yorks & Lancasters, Richard III, insane King Charles VI of France, only a dozen of lines is dedicated, analysis of lives and deeds of others - Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, Mary Tudor and Henry VIII, Ivan the Terrible, the Burgundian kings, Francis I occupy chapters). Approximately 1/4 of the book is dedicated to the conflict that actually brought the Reformation (church vs. state and individual) and afterwards, Contr-Reformation. As I'm not the specialist in this area, I've skipped some pages, but I'll definitely put myself together and read them later. As usual, Mr Durant guides us through all bloody and terrible wars and strifes of that age, reminding us that "from barbarism to civilization requires a century, from civilization to barbarism needs but a day". No distinguished artist, philosopher, writer escapes his scrutiny (Hans Holbein, Rabelais, Durer, F. Villon - to name just a few). I was particularly hooked by chapters on development of science and medicine (A.

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