

The circulation and impact of reformist ideas in Germany before the Reformation

Article

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Except in the ecclesiastical organisation of a number of towns and territories, the Protestant Reformation in Germany did not turn into a revolution which transformed social and political institutions.¹ In spite of much Protestant teaching and debate about social and political reform, the structure of society in the territorial principalities and the relationships between German classes or orders were not much shaken by the Reformation. At first, the knights of the Rhineland, Swabia and Franconia and the peasants of many regions from the Alps to the Baltic had hoped that Lutheran teachings would confirm their own social protest.² Anabaptists went further in that they saw little distinction between religious reform and social revolution.³ Their movements did not, however, cause lasting changes of direction within German society. The theologians of Wittenberg and the reformers in the south German cities were committed to social reform only in an ecclesiastical sense, though Luther's unguarded words were frequently open to misinterpretation. In his early years of mass popularity he must often have been mistaken for a revolutionary.⁴ Nevertheless, the Reformation did not fulfil those fifteenth-century popular expectations of reform which were essentially prerequisite to Luther's successes. In the 1520s the Reformation inevitably developed into a compromise between mass support and the cautious surveillance of city councils, princes of the empire, and university professors. The translation of old hopes into new realities was achieved only to a limited degree. How had these hopes been expressed in Germany before Luther's time?

When Martin Luther declared in 1518 that 'the Church needs a reformation',⁵ he was using a 'loaded' expression. For at least a century reform had been a slogan with the widest currency in the Holy Roman Empire.⁶ At times it had been crystallised into programmes sponsored by specific political interests or social groups. Luther's was a religious reformation, but reformations of diverse complexions and definitions had been expected, planned and debated by generations of Germans before 1518. What kind of reforms did they want?

Fifteenth-century Germans were conscious that they belonged to a ramshackle empire divided by political violence. Principally it was the rise of territorial lordship since the twelfth century which had ensured within one empire a multiplicity of regions and social structures, states and economies. Only a few contemporary commentators, for example, the reformer Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464), quite saw the force of this.⁷ Exacerbated by the economic crises of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries,⁸ the social conflicts of the sixteenth indicate how deep these divisions went. The mighty feuds and disturbances of the fifteenth century highlight the antagonisms of well-defined classes, orders or interests: churchmen and *Ritterschaft*, that is, the numerous lesser nobility of knights, and townsmen and peasants. A

whole literature was devoted to showing how the knights hated the peasants,⁹ how both distrusted townsmen,¹⁰ how all three feared the princes, and how all Germans loathed the church. No doubt these animosities were frequently exaggerated for polemical purposes. To take the clergy as an illustration of this, the Alsatian humanist Jacob Wimpfeling observed in one vein that 'scandalous living in the ranks of the clergy allows the people's hatred to grow against them', but in another, 'In the six Rhineland dioceses I know many, indeed countless virtuous and learned prelates and priests, of unquestionable reputation, full of piety, generosity and care for the poor'.¹¹

In spite of exaggerations and inconsistencies, all classes or orders were dissatisfied with the society they saw around them. All had some ideas of reform, whether practical, inconsistent or visionary in expression. Even the peasants began to present a coherent picture of what reform could mean to them,¹² especially with Hans Böhm of Niklashausen's revolt in 1476, and the subsequent *Bundschuh* and Arme Konrad risings. If their society was divided by hostilities, Germans still thought of themselves as a national community, although with less justification than other west European peoples at the end of the middle ages. There was a sense of unity and confidence, sedulously cultivated by the German humanists, who elaborated their theory of nationhood together with their revival of letters and their schemes for reform in the church.¹³ Well-informed foreigners like Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, later Pius II, thought that the Germans showed promise,¹⁴ and Ficino praised them for contributing the printing-press to the progress of civilisation.¹⁵ Native humanists were encouraged by the implications of texts like Tacitus' *Germania*, now virtually rediscovered.¹⁶ The indigenous virtue of the Germans was felt to herald a fine national future. This can be seen most plainly in the writings of Ulrich of Hutten (1488-1523), who thought that resurgent Christian truth had been vouchsafed to Luther, and ought to be defended by the German people.¹⁷ His confederate Hartmuth of Kronberg claimed that with the Lutheran message 'God has revealed to us Germans before all other nations his Word and his irrefutable truth'.¹⁸

In the fifteenth century the clamour for reform was a positive element in German political and religious life. Inspired in part by conciliarism in the Church,¹⁹ it was an important precondition of the Reformation. But the intentions of the various German authors about reform are not easy to make explicit. In their writing, we can identify a specifically religious call to reform the Church. A propelling force behind the conciliar, humanist and Protestant movements in turn, it was not, of course, confined to Germany. But some German bishops took it seriously enough to attempt to enforce conciliar decrees in their dioceses.²⁰ We can also isolate a specifically political call to reform the structure and functions of government in the Holy Roman Empire. This debate stretched out across the fifteenth century,

culminating after 1485 in the imperial reform programme sponsored by Berthold of Henneberg, archbishop of Mainz (1484-1504),²¹ who was Germany's senior cleric. We can further identify a specifically social call to reform the relationships between the classes or orders in German society. An early and articulate example is the *Reformatio Sigismundi*, a long anonymous tract which appeared in the late 1430s and was ascribed to the Emperor Sigismund's (1410-1437) personal inspiration.²² For us the difficulty is that fifteenth-century Germans made no such clear distinctions of category. To Nicholas of Cusa, reform in the Church and reform of the empire were different aspects of one universal question, which could only be solved by returning to unity and right order throughout the Christian community.²³ This cosmic attitude was not confined to the intellectuals, but was commonplace in German debates about reform in late medieval times.²⁴ The *Reformatio Sigismundi* also treats political reform of the empire and the reform of German social and economic relationships as one interrelated problem. From the Joachimites to the Lutherans, so much reformist writing appears confused because it makes no very clear distinction between individual reform, the regeneration of hearts, minds and souls,²⁵ the reform of organised religion, and what we would call the reform of social, political and economic structure. They were treated as different facets of one striving after renewal, which would restore the tradition of Christian unity defended by Nicholas of Cusa. But this makes his programme oblique and indefinite.²⁶

Some Germans, however, had more limited aims, and were able to distinguish between total reformation and a handful of practical innovations. The imperial *Landfrieden* or peace-associations fall into the latter category,²⁷ and so do many of Emperor Sigismund's proposals to his *Reichstage* or parliaments.²⁸ The needs of war with Hussite Bohemia in the 1420s saw new plans for raising taxes and armies at the national level.²⁹ A writer of the 1440s is interesting as one of the few to point to foreign examples, to the centralised law-courts of France, England and Savoy, as a lesson of value to Germany.³⁰ In the 1450s, Jacob of Sierck, archbishop of Trier (1439-1456) and his circle were proposing an imperial governing council for the whole empire,³¹ an idea rehearsed long before, in Emperor Charles IV's (1346-1378) 'Golden Bull' on imperial elections issued in 1356.³² These projects were given new force at the end of the century by Berthold of Henneberg's genius. However tough and coherent and circumscribed by good sense they seemed in the *Reichstag* debates and on paper, they were in fact out of touch with the realities of a Germany irrevocably divided along territorial lines. Emperor Frederick III (1440-1493) appears to have realised this. Yet he did label the old-fashioned *Landfriede* which he issued in 1442 as his *Reformatio Friderici*.³³ It was a dead letter, yet he reissued it several times towards the end of his reign while opposing Archbishop Berthold's more substantial schemes of reform. Without being too sure of his motives, the 1442 *Reformatio* did trim to the current

interest in conciliar and political reform. It aimed at the popular visionary notion derived from Joachimite speculation that reform would be inaugurated by a third emperor called Frederick.³⁴ More important, it revived the concept stretching back to the Hohenstaufen era that the political reformation of the empire would be achieved by Landfrieden.

Originating in theological speculation about renewal as a spiritual force in the early Church,³⁵ the words reformare and reformatio had since been applied to political or ecclesiastical changes in the German empire imposed by emperors, churchmen or princes,³⁶ including Landfrieden in the thirteenth century.³⁷ Reformatio was regularly used in Rudolf I of Habsburg's (1273-1291) chancery to indicate the king's policies for restoring the declining fortunes of the empire.³⁸ Other examples indicate the growing political flavour of reformatio in later medieval Germany. In 1298, Adolf of Nassau's deposition was justified, in part, 'pro sancte pacis reformatione', while Charles IV's somewhat irregular election in 1346 had been publicised 'pro reformatione sacri imperii'.³⁹ Fifteenth-century Germans were accustomed to using reformatio in either sense. Ulrich of Richental's German-language account of the Council of Constance (1414-1418) refers to ecclesiastical reform as reformation,⁴⁰ while an early printed edition of Charles IV's 'Golden Bull' of 1356 calls it 'Die güldin bulle und küniglich reformation'.⁴¹ It was not called a reformatio in 1356, although the word occurs once in the originals, for political reforms to be initiated by the emperor on the advice of the electors.⁴² The Reformatio Sigismundi also illustrates the double meaning of the word. For this reason Luther was suspicious of it, though he did try to exploit its effectiveness in a popular tract like his address 'To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation' in 1520, and later remarked that he had 'made a reformation'.⁴³

Schemes for the total reformation of the Christian order still had an overriding appeal before Luther's Reformation. Joachimite thought had encouraged the idea of future emperors as reformers, and though this tended to be couched in visionary vocabulary,⁴⁴ it was perhaps not unnatural for Germans to look to their monarchs to implement their hopes. Cola di Rienzo (1313-1354) had already reminded Charles IV that 'God is urging towards universal reformation now predicted by many spiritual men'.⁴⁵ Charles' son Sigismund opposed the advance of Islam, gave substance to conciliarism, planned crusades, and advocated political reforms at Reichstag meetings, bringing new hope to the possibility of the emperor himself as the reformer. It was this hope which inspired the author of the Reformatio Sigismundi to claim his programme as the emperor's own intentions. In 1516 Ulrich of Hutten encouraged Emperor Maximilian I (1493-1519) to undertake reform of the Roman curia by force of arms.⁴⁶ The Reformatio Sigismundi already advocated reformation by force, since the councils had failed in their task.⁴⁷ To Catholic Germans and even to Protestants Emperor Charles V (1519-1556) appeared as a new Sigismund,

with his crusades against Ottoman Turkey, his demand for an ecumenical council,⁴⁸ and his measures to reform the German polity, notably in issuing his new law-code in 1532, the *Constitutio Criminalis Carolina*.⁴⁹ Many Germans thus had serious reforming expectations of their emperors. Shifting their ground a little, Luther and others thought that the well-known prophecies about the imperial reformer to be called Frederick were actually fulfilled in his own patron, Frederick the Wise, elector of Saxony (1486-1525),⁵⁰ who was himself temporarily considered as a candidate for the imperial throne in 1519.

More secular in approach was the programme promoted by Berthold of Henneberg, building upon the experience of *Reichstage* and *Kurvereine* or meetings of electoral princes stretching back to Sigismund's reign. The *Reichstag* continually expressed its concern for reform, without confessing to the disparate nature of an empire torn asunder amongst competing territorial authorities, whether dynastic, ecclesiastical or urban. New national institutions were introduced without reversing the trend towards territorial autonomy, a contradiction which condemned imperial reform to failure. Fifteenth-century Germany already had national institutions which functioned feebly: the monarchy with its useless plenitude of imperial power,⁵¹ the college of electors, the *Reichstage* and the *Landfrieden*. After 1495 the reformers introduced others which also proved ineffective: the perpetual *Landfriede*, the *Reichskammergericht* or imperial chamber court, and the startling *Reichsregiment* or imperial governing council, which was established at Nuremberg in 1500 and again in 1521. As for standing armies or regular taxes, these were beyond the bounds of political possibility. Perhaps the hopeless divisiveness of German politics has been exaggerated. It did, after all, prove possible to raise men, arms and cash across territorial boundaries, to meet external foes like John Žižka and Matthias Corvinus, Charles the Rash and Suleiman the Magnificent. And the idea of a perpetual *Landfriede*, developed in *Reichstage* between 1431 and 1495, did contribute to rendering aristocratic civil war no longer respectable as a political method,⁵² as Franz of Sickingen, Michael Gaismair, Florian Geyer, Götze of Berlichingen, knightly leaders of rebellious noblemen and peasants in the 1520s, found to their cost.

Significantly, important Germans were devoting energy to a kind of secular reformation which ran from the Frankfurt *Reichstag* of 1485 to the early 1530s, to the last sessions of the Nuremberg governing council and to the promulgation of the *Carolina*. On a national level it was far too late. The contemporary Swabian League (1488-1534) was a more potent force in south German politics than the imperial chamber court,⁵³ while the everyday lives of Germans were being affected more deeply by administrative and juridical reforms in the principalities than by the imperial governing council.⁵⁴

The concept of secular reformation to be found in the Landfrieden and other political acts also adhered to local reform in the legal sphere. At Nuremberg in 1479, in Westphalia in 1495, at Bamberg in 1503, at Frankfurt in 1509 and in Bavaria in 1518, legal reform was advertised as a reformatio.⁵⁵ Fifteenth-century Germans understood this conservative, legalistic meaning of reformatio, and in this more restricted administrative sense the post-1517 religious reformers were also using reformatio for the introduction of new ecclesiastical forms into the principalities.⁵⁶ In both spheres, secular law and ecclesiastical organisation, the same word described the reform of the rules which would govern the Christian social order. Modern historians have compared Germany's return to Justinian's texts with the Protestants' direct appeal to scripture.⁵⁷ On the national level, however, the secular reform movement inspired by Berthold of Henneberg was a failure. Germans had not yet realised that their developing sense of impetuous nationality could not prevail over the realities of territorial division. Reform in the secular sphere after 1485 and in the religious sphere after 1517 appealed confidently to national sentiment and derived strength from it. But the truly decisive power of territorial government ensured that nationalism remained essentially a cultural phenomenon, which could not become a reliable vehicle for reform, as the German humanists had hoped.

Emperors inspired hopes of reform, new governing institutions were set up, and Roman law was introduced. With their protean and vocal talents the German humanists were advocating reform in a less piecemeal sense. Their programme included personal regeneration, the renewal of learning and reform of the Church.⁵⁸ They conceived of Germany evolving towards a new national and reformist enlightenment, the Erasmus concept 'rebirth of letters' or 'renascentes litterae' being held a necessary concomitant of the expected 'Christian restoration' or 'restitutio Christianismi'. In a literal sense, reformation implied a return to pristine texts, whether to edit them like Erasmus or to expound them like Luther. How deeply the Reformation was affected by this strand of humanism is revealed in such writings as Luther's appeal in 1524 to the German towns to invest in the expansion of children's education.⁵⁹ In social matters all schemes of reform were grounded in biblical authority. At Worms in 1521 Luther refused to retract his recent writings except by scriptural authority, and in the Peasants' War (1524-1526) the peasants justified their list of grievances by exactly the same argument.⁶⁰ Reformers appealed to the same sources, but understood them very differently. The peasant Bundschuh risings had already used the expression 'Nothing but God's Righteousness' as their slogan, ⁶¹ the very concept which Luther claimed in his Autobiographical Fragment to have brought about his personal regeneration by 1519.⁶² Yet to Luther the peasants were to prove themselves mad dogs, while the older generation of humanists considered Luther a harmful revolutionary. On the prophetic or visionary level, too, the German situation appeared to have fulfilled the typical Joachimite prognosis derived from scripture. The fifteenth

century was the prophesied time of tribulation, an interpretation popularised once more in Johann Lichtenberger's *Prognosticatio* of 1488,⁶³ and it was indeed followed by the forecast spiritual reformation.

The Bible provided a variety of inspiration for its avid interpreters. Franz of Sickingen's (1481-1523) more literate supporters found in the 'Word of God' as revealed by Luther a fairly coherent justification for his military operations against the old Church. In the Knights' War, his army encamped before Trier was offered 'a blessed death for the Word or a splendid victory'.⁶⁴ Though the older humanists had used scripture to excoriate the Roman Church, they stuck to it in the end - witness Willibald Pirckheimer (1470-1530) at Nuremberg, who found the new Lutheran schism frivolous.⁶⁵ In Philip Melancthon, a generation younger than Pirckheimer, scriptural devotion produced the opposite effect. In 1530 at the Augsburg *Reichstag* he claimed that the whole justification for Lutheran reform was its essentially scriptural and conservative nature.⁶⁶ The older humanists were responsible for introducing this exacting scriptural attitude in Germany, and it instilled a profound reforming ambition in all religious matters. In spite of the adherence of the older humanists to Rome, curialists like Cardinal Aleander were quite alive to the dangerous consequences of their work. From the Worms *Reichstag* in 1521 he wrote a sharp warning to Rome blaming Erasmus as well as Luther for inspiring religious revolt in Germany.⁶⁷

Enlightened Catholics were aware that the shortcomings of the established Church provided grounds for Luther's Reformation. In 1523 John Eck wrote that 'The Lutheran heresy arose because of the malpractices of the Roman curia, and progressed because of the depraved life of the clergy'.⁶⁸ This opinion could well apply to all of Christendom, but for good reasons the Reformation was in origin a German product. Historians have first emphasised the genius of Luther, his friends and his rivals. Secondly, they have shown that Germany's ecclesiastical organisation was in principle at the mercy of territorial authorities powerful enough to choose new brands of the Faith.⁶⁹ Thirdly, they have investigated (with some disagreement) the vigorous nature of German popular piety, which worked at first in Protestant favour, although it eventually tore to shreds the religious loyalties of the country.⁷⁰ Such piety had been stimulated in part by preachers such as John Geiler of Kaisersberg (1445-1510),⁷¹ in part by prophetic propaganda which tended to encourage popular dissatisfaction with the traditional order of the Church.⁷² Fourthly, humanist literature and *Reichstag* debate had tended to direct the nascent nationalism of the time against the Roman curia as the chief foreign enemy of Germany,⁷³ a point driven home once more by the successes of German arms against the papacy in Italy in the 1520s. Fifthly, the condition of the German cities at the beginning of the sixteenth century made them peculiarly receptive to religious innovations, and in a sense townsmen were

pioneers of the Reformation as a popular religious movement. This aspect has been the subject of much recent research.⁷⁴ The eager circulation of reform programmes in late medieval times was a sixth factor, creating an atmosphere favourable to new religious experiments in Germany.

Since the cities were the first to embrace reformed practices systematically,⁷⁵ it would be possible to claim that reformist expectation was stronger amongst townsmen than other groups in German society. On the other hand, the social reactions which accompanied the Reformation in the 1520s were less marked amongst townsmen than amongst the depressed rural classes of knight-hood and peasantry. Arguably, the lesser nobility and the peasants were more impressed by reform programmes than townsmen, broadly because the fifteenth century had turned out to be an era of success and stability, socially, economically and politically, for the existing urban structure, including its religious institutions. This was certainly not the case for knights and peasants. Nevertheless, the religious Reformation as well as the varied reform programmes of the fifteenth century were likely to be better understood in the cities, if only because they had been advertised in the urban setting: through university lectures and debates, in the humanist sodalities, from the pulpits of preachers, through the printing shops and their products,⁷⁶ and in the meetings of *Reichstage* and *Landtage*, or provincial parliaments. There were important connexions and sympathies between townsmen and peasants in the 1520s,⁷⁷ but the cities were interested in religious reform principally because it made sense within the existing communal context. Knights and peasants hoped for other things - for example, that the Reformation would improve their worldly lot.⁷⁸ The Reformation made its impact very much according to the social diversities of Renaissance Germany, and so did the reformist expectation which preceded it.

Germans were quite used to the label 'reformation' when it was used in Luther's time. They understood its religious content, its basis in scripture, its distinct legal, even administrative, meaning, its assumptions about social and personal regeneration,⁷⁹ and its historical, prophetic connexion with the needs and hopes of the German empire and people. But all pre-Lutheran proposals had had the fatal disadvantage of emanating from one class or order or interest, and could not therefore have overwhelming popular appeal throughout the amorphous German nation. Nor could Luther sustain his advantage in this respect much later than 1521. In the end, all manifestations of the German reforming consciousness broke upon the conditions which Germany had inherited from the medieval past: that there was no national community capable of concerted movement in a desired direction, but a jumble of antagonistic territories and authorities, jurisdictions and boundaries, orders and classes. For all its early assumptions about total religious Reformation throughout Germany, the Lutheran movement had to be tailored to these bitter

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realities, in the social conflicts of the 1520s and 1530s, in the disagreements and rivalries of the reformist teachers and their followings,⁸⁰ in the official debates sponsored by Charles V and his viceroy Ferdinand,⁸¹ in the individual decisions of city councils and territorial princes,⁸² and through the War of Schmalkalden to the unsatisfactory compromises worked out in the Augsburg Reichstag of 1555.⁸³

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NOTES

1. W. von Loewenich, 'Reformation oder Revolution?' in Festgabe Joseph Lortz i, ed. E. Iserloh & P. Manns, Baden-Baden, 1958, pp.5-13.
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3. E. Iserloh, 'Revolution bei Thomas Müntzer. Durchsetzung des Reiches Gottes oder soziale Aktion?', Historisches Jahrbuch xcii, 1972, 282-99.
4. J. Lortz, Die Reformation in Deutschland i, 3rd edn. Freiburg, 1949, p.286.
5. D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe i, Weimar, 1883, p.627.
6. A.G. Dickens, The German Nation and Martin Luther, London, 1974, pp.1-20.
7. De Concordantia Catholica iii, Nicolai de Cusa Opera Omnia xiv/3, ed. G. Kallen, Hamburg, 1959, p.435f. But this understanding was not consolidated until the publications of Samuel Pufendorf in the seventeenth century.
8. W. Abel, Geschichte der deutschen Landwirtschaft, Deutsche Agrargeschichte ii, Stuttgart, 1962, pp.103-37 and F. Lütge, 'The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries in Social and Economic History' in Pre-Reformation Germany, ed. G. Strauss, London, 1972, pp.316-79.
9. An example from 'Lucifer's Sermon' in G. Franz, Quellen zur Geschichte des Deutschen Bauernstandes im Mittelalter, Freiherr vom Stein Gedächtnisausgabe xxxi, Berlin, 1967, p.525ff:
 'Aber von disen Tagen
 Sol auf diser Erden
 Nimmer kain rechter Frid werden
 Zwischen den Pauren und Ritterschaft.'
10. An example from Reformation Kaiser Siegmunds, ed. H. Koller, Monumenta Germaniae historica, Staatsschriften des späteren Mittelalters vi, Stuttgart, 1964, p.269:

'Es ist alles in der stat übersetzt und sein hern und lantleüt darumb den steten gram.'

For a selection from this kind of literature, translated into English, see G. Strauss, Manifestations of Discontent in Germany on the Eve of the Reformation, Bloomington & London, 1972.

11. Quoted by Lortz, op.cit., pp.90, 95.
12. G. Franz, Der Deutsche Bauernkrieg, Berlin, 1926, pp.13-27.
13. Dickens, op.cit., pp.21-48.
14. See the passage in his Germania in Enea Silvio Piccolomini Papst Pius II, ed. B. Widmer, Basel & Stuttgart, 1960, pp.370-4. If Aeneas Sylvius' motives for composing the Germania are questionable, it does at least contain accurate descriptions of Germany's urban and social progress. He also shared Nicholas of Cusa's exalted view of the empire's political potential. See J. Toews, 'The View of Empire in Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini', Traditio xxiv, 1968, 471-87.
15. In a letter in 1492. M. Reeves, The Influence of Prophecy in the Later Middle Ages, Oxford, 1969, p.429.
16. P. Joachimsen, 'Tacitus im deutschen Humanismus', Neue Jahrbücher für das klassische Altertum xxvii, 1911, 697-717.
17. In his introduction to his edition of Pope Leo X's bull 'Exsurge Domine' in Ulrichs von Hutten Schriften v, ed. E. Bßcking, Leipzig, 1861, 302. For Hutten's place in the early Reformation, see P. Kalkoff, Ulrich von Hutten und die Reformation, Quellen und Forschungen zur Reformationgeschichte iv, Leipzig, 1920 and H. Holborn, Ulrich von Hutten and the German Reformation, Yale Historical Publications xxi, New Haven & London, 1937.
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22. As note 10 supra and L. Graf zu Dohna, Reformatio Sigismundi. Beiträge zum Verständnis einer Reformschrift des fünfzehnten Jahrhunderts, Veröffentlichungen des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte iv, Göttingen, 1960.

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24. F. Heer, 'Zur Kontinuität des Reichsgedankens im Spätmittelalter', Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung, lviii, 1950, 336-50.

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25. See Dohna, op.cit., pp.65-8.
26. His universal approach and his corporate metaphors are already to be found in his preface to De Concordantia Catholica, Opera Omnia xiv, ed. Kallen, Leipzig, 1939, 3:

'De catholica concordantia tractaturus investigare necesse habeo ipsam unionem fidelis populi, quae ecclesia catholica dicitur, et illius ecclesiae partes unitas, scilicet animam et corpus. Unde erit prima consideratio de toto composito, scilicet ipsa ecclesia. Secunda de anima ipsius, scilicet sacratissimo sacerdotio. Tertia de corpore, scilicet sacro imperio.'
27. H. Angermeier, Königtum und Landfriede im deutschen Spätmittelalter, Munich, 1966.
28. See the meetings at Constance during the Council, Deutsche Reichstagsakten vii, 255-324.
29. Ibid., viii, 154-84, 1422; ix, 81-112, 1427 and 513-61, 1431.
30. R. Smend, 'Ein Reichsreformprojekt aus dem Schriftenkreis des Basler Konzils', Neues Archiv xxxii, 1906, 746-9. The 'Der weg, wie man das rych uffbringen muge' issued by the spiritual electors in 1456 also cites Paris and Rome as models: K. Zeumer, Quellensammlung zur Geschichte der deutschen Reichsverfassung im Mittelalter und Neuzeit, Tübingen, 1913, no.169, p.269.
31. Deutsche Reichstagsakten xix/1, 239-47.
32. A. Erler & K. Zeumer, Die Goldene Bulle Kaiser Karls IV von 1356, Studentexte der Johannes Gutenberg Universität in Mainz ii, Mainz, 1948, ch. xii, 'De congregacione principum', p.26f.
33. Deutsche Reichstagsakten xvi, 396-407 and Angermeier, Königtum und Landfriede, p.495.
34. Reeves, op.cit., pp.332-46.
35. G. Ladner, The Idea of Reform. Its Impact on Christian Thought and Action in the Age of the Fathers, Cambridge, Mass., 1959.
36. Examples include the Synod of Pavia in 1022, Mon. Germ. hist., Constitutiones et Acta publica i, 34, p.76 (in the Responsio augusti)

- and Sigebert of Gembloux on Otto I's time, 'res publica sit reformata', in his Vita Deoderici Episcopi Mettensis, M.G.H. Scriptores iv, 467.
37. See the 1235 Reichslandfriede in M.G.H. Constitutiones ii, 196, p.241 and the Annales S. Rudberti Salisburgenses, M.G.H. Scriptores ix, 788, where the Bavarian princes met at Regensburg in 1244 'pro reformatione status terre' and issued the Landfriede in Constitutiones ii, 427, pp.570-9.
 38. Ibid., 20, p.22, 1273, 26, p.28 and 56, p.50, 1274, 80, p.69, 1275, 118, p.111, 1276, 387, p.367, 1286 and 399, p.383, 1287.
 39. Ibid., iii, 588, p.549, 1298; and viii/1, 63, p.94, 1346.
 40. Chronik des Constanzer Concils, ed. M. Buck, Hildesheim, 1962, pp. 111, 113, 136, 208.
 41. Die güldin bulle und küniglich reformation Strassburg 1485, ed. A. Wolf, Mittelalterliche Gesetzbücher Europäischer Länder in Faksimiledruck i, Frankfurt, 1968.
 42. As note 32 supra.
 43. Luthers Werke vi, 438 and xxvi, 530.
 44. For apocalyptic literature, see N. Cohn, The Pursuit of the Millenium, London, 1962, pp.113-23.
 45. K. Burdach, Reformation Renaissance Humanismus, Berlin and Leipzig, 1926, p.22.
 46. Ulrichs von Hutten Schriften i, ed. Böcking, 'Epistola ad Maximilianum Caesarem' 1516, pp.106-13; lls. 145-8.
'Causa gravis belli, victori maxima laus est
Praedones Latio pellere ab imperio,
Romanum formare statum vicisse superbos,
Et tandem Romam restituisse sibi.'
 47. Reformation Kaiser Siegmunds, ed. Koller, p.56: 'man kan dye reformatz nit aussgeben dann mit gewalt und pene zu verorden, daz sye bestee'.

48. H. Jedin, 'Die Päpste und das Konzil in der Politik Karls V' in Karl V: Der Kaiser und seiner Zeit, ed. P. Rassow and F. Schalk, Cologne and Graz, 1960, pp.104-17.
49. H. von Weber, 'Die peinliche Halsgerichtsordnung Kaiser Karls V', Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte. Germanistische Abteilung lxxvii, 1960, 288-310.
50. Reeves, op.cit., pp.369-74.
51. H. Wiesflecker, 'Der Traum des Hans von Hermansgrün', in Festschrift Karl Eder, Innsbruck, 1959, pp.13-32.
52. Offler, art. cit., p.238f.
53. E. Bock, Der Schwäbische Bund und seine Verfassung, Untersuchungen zur deutschen Staats- und Rechtsgeschichte cxxxvii, Aalen, 1968.
54. T. Mayer, Die Verwaltungsorganisationen Maximilians I, Forschungen zur inneren Geschichte Oesterreichs xiv, Innsbruck, 1920; G. Richter, Die Ernestinischen Landesordnungen und ihre Vorläufer von 1445 und 1482, Mitteldeutsche Forschungen xxxiv, Cologne and Graz, 1964; H. Cohn, The Government of the Rhine Palatinate in the Fifteenth Century, Oxford, 1965; H-S. Brather, 'Administrative Reforms in Electoral Saxony at the End of the Fifteenth Century' in Strauss, Pre-Reformation Germany, pp.225-62. For a more favourable view of the Reichskammergericht, at least later in the sixteenth century, see G. Benecke, Society and Politics in Germany 1500-1750, London and Toronto, 1974, pp.263-87.
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56. In Hesse, Landgrave Philip's Reformatio Ecclesiarum Hassiae of 1526, B. Kidd, Documents Illustrative of the Continental Reformation, Oxford, 1911, 98, p.222 and see Luther's letter to Elector Joachim II of Brandenburg, Luthers Werke. Briefwechsel viii, Weimar, 1938, 3420, p.623, 1539.

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58. L. Spitz, The Religious Renaissance of the German Humanists, Cambridge, Mass., 1963; P. Joachimsen, 'Humanism and the Development of the German Mind' in Strauss, Pre-Reformation Germany, pp.162-224; P. Kalkoff, 'Die Stellung der deutschen Humanisten zur Reformation', Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte xlv, 1927, 161-231; B. Moeller, 'Die deutschen Humanisten und die Anfänge der Reformation', ibid., lxx, 1959, 46-61.
59. Discussed in Spitz, op.cit., pp.242-54.
60. Compare Luthers Werke vii, Weimar, 1897, 838 with the Memmingen Articles in G. Franz, Quellen zur Geschichte des Bauernkrieges, Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte der Neuzeit, Freiherr vom Stein Gedächtnisausgabe ii, Darmstadt, 1963, 43, p.178f.
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75. See the results of the Bishop of Bamberg's investigations at Nuremberg in 1524; Kidd, op.cit., pp.79, 167ff.
 76. On the importance of pulpits and printing-presses to the successes of the Reformation, see M. Hannemann, The Diffusion of the Reformation in South-West Germany 1518-1534, University of Chicago Department of Geography Research Papers clxvii, Chicago, 1975; R. Cole, 'The Reformation in Print: German Pamphlets and Propaganda', Archive for Reformation History lxvi, 1975, 93-102.
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 78. Sickingen and Hutten planned this in 1522, and so did the pamphleteer quoted in Hitchcock, op.cit., p.28: 'And I beg all of you who are of noble birth that you be good Lutherans and follow the truth of Christ; so shall we make our fortune'. In the Memmingen Articles, numbers 2-11 are about the peasants' economic, social and legal conditions and their improvement: note 60 supra.
 79. That this feature of the Reformation was a failure is made clear by G. Strauss in 'Success and Failure in the German Reformation', Past and Present lxvii, 1975, 30-63.
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