

TOLERATION?



**RELIGION,
POLITICS,
AND SOCIETY
IN THE
ENGLISH-
SPEAKING
WORLD (s)**

TOLERATION?

INTRODUCING / UNDERSTANDING
PERSECUTION AND TOLERATION ISSUES
IN THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORLD

RELIGION,
POLITICS,
AND SOCIETY

IN THE
ENGLISH-
SPEAKING
WORLD (s)

TOLERATION?

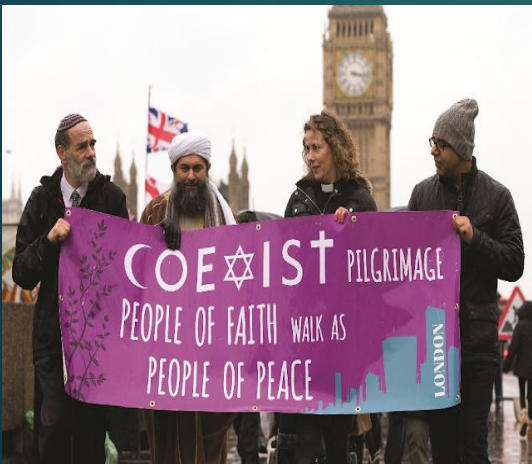
WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

- A Brief Introduction -

TOLERANCE = Attitude, disposition, mindset,
individual or collective virtue (moral level)

≠

TOLERATION = act, practice, deed, institution
(political level)



TOLERATION?

Is Tolerance and English/British/English-speaking virtue?

Tolerance and the Crisis of Britishness



“Our tolerance is part of what makes Britain Britain” (Tony Blair)



TOLERATION?



[Our] union flag is a 'British symbol of unity, tolerance and inclusion' [Gordon Brown]



Britishness, 'a common culture defined by pluralism and tolerance' [David Cameron]

TOLERATION?

We are a nation 'proudly built on
tolerance'
[Keir Starmer]



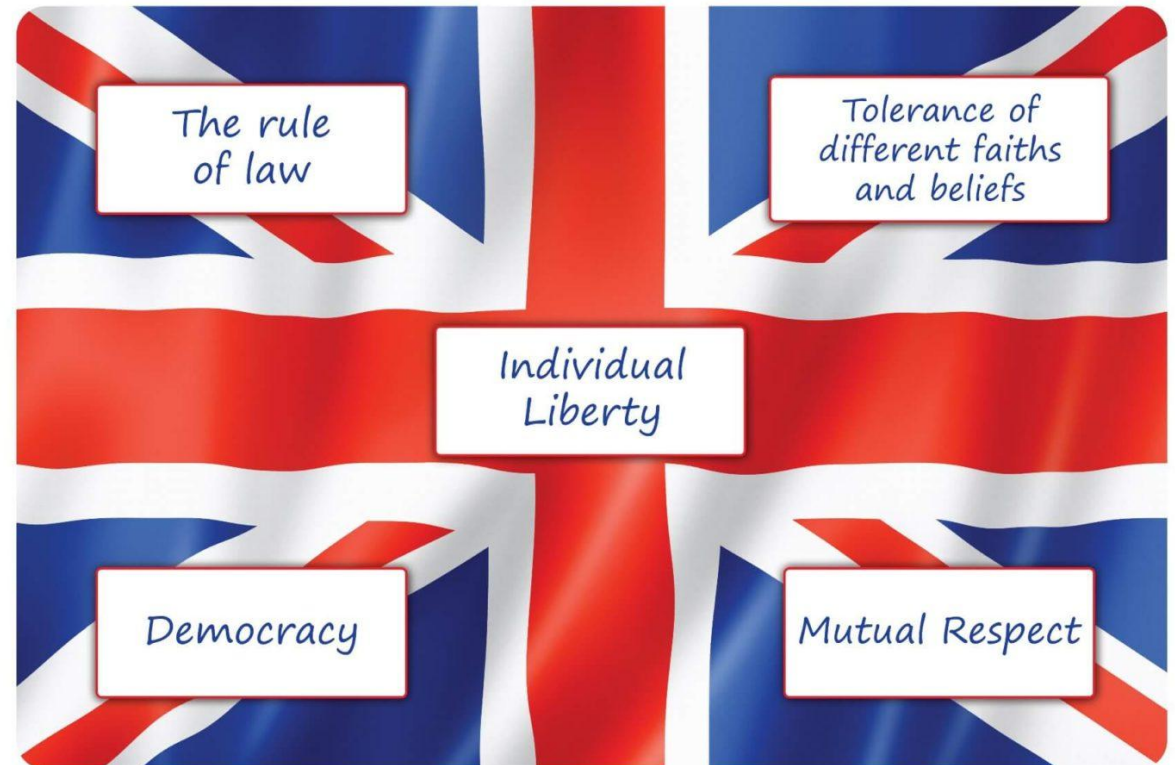
TOLERATION?



The “British Values” Campaign

(and the 2005 London terrorist attacks)

BRITISH VALUES

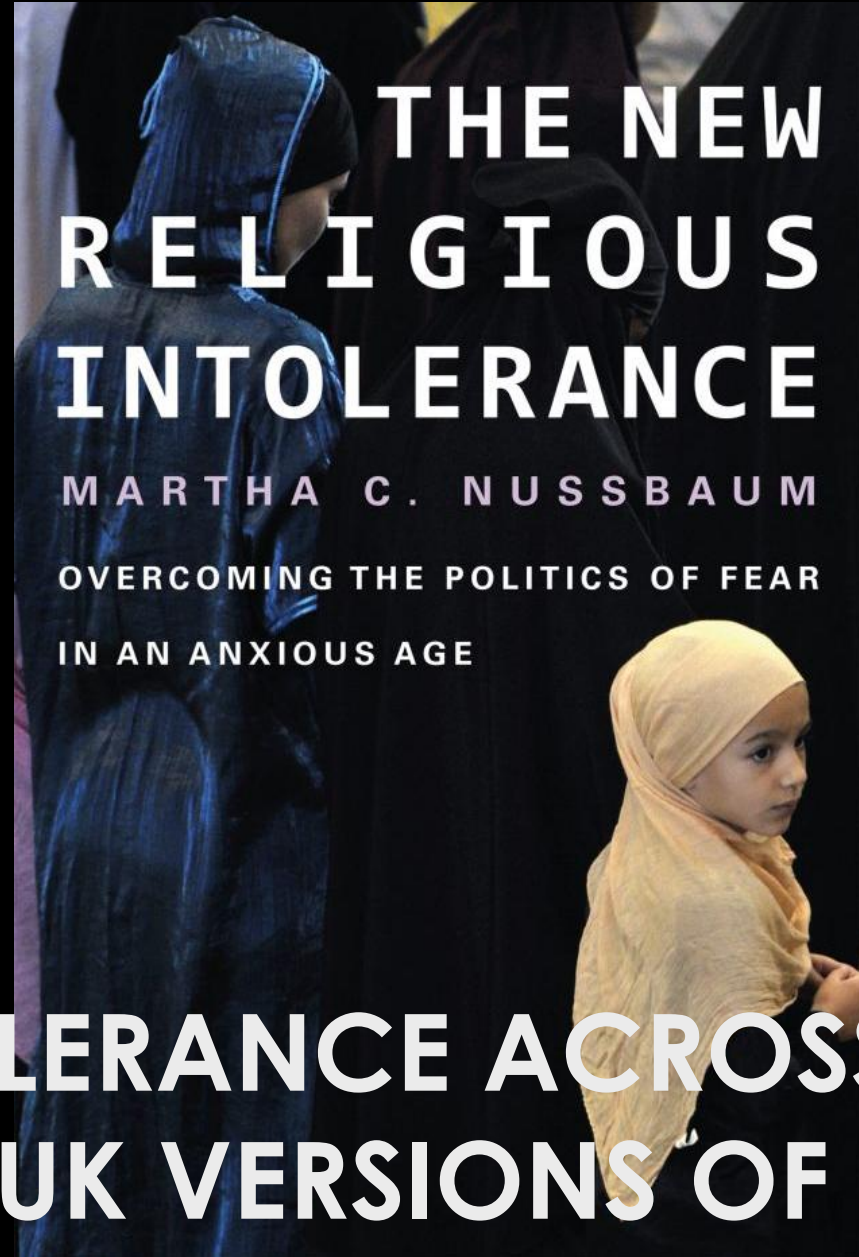
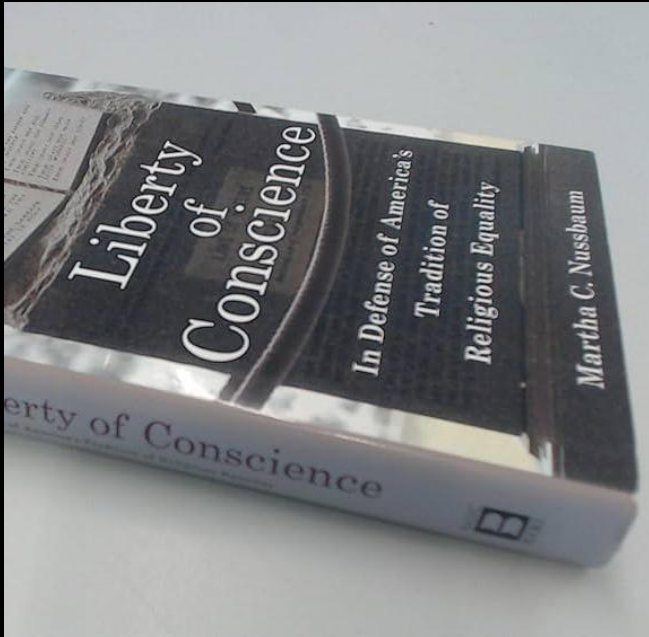


“The Department for Education has today (27 November 2014) published guidance on promoting British values in schools to ensure young people leave school prepared for life in modern Britain.

The guidance aims to help both independent and state-maintained schools understand their responsibilities in this area. All have a duty to ‘actively promote’ the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. These values were first set out by the government in the ‘Prevent’ strategy in 2011.

Until now schools have been required to ‘respect’ these values, but as a result of changes brought in earlier in the year all schools must now have a clear strategy for embedding these values and show how their work with pupils has been effective in doing so.”

[Source: www.gov.uk]



**TOLERANCE ACROSS THE POND: US
vs UK VERSIONS OF TOLERANCE?**

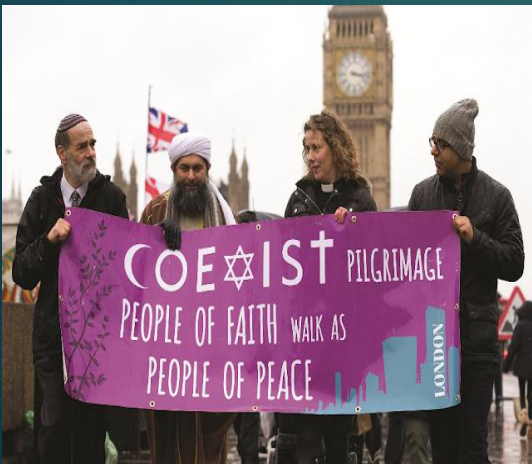
TOLERATION?

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

- A Brief Introduction -

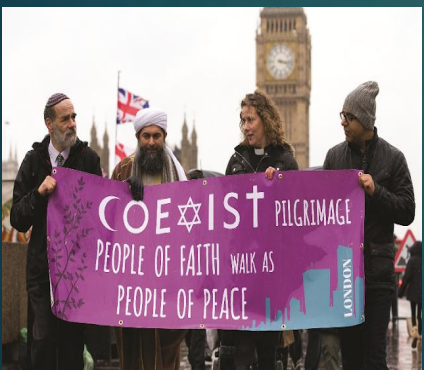
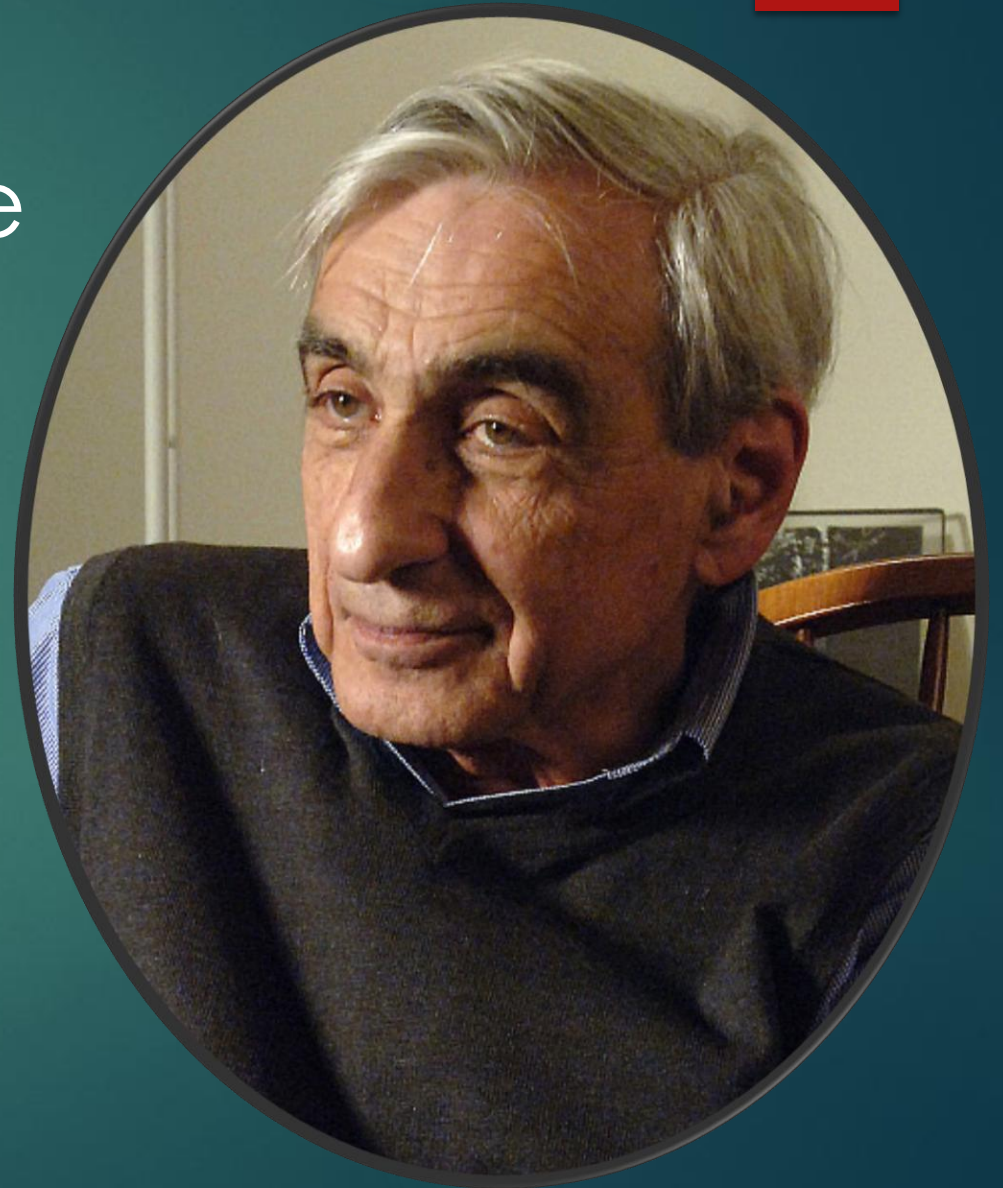
“Toleration makes difference possible; difference makes toleration necessary.”

[Michael Walzer, *On Toleration*]



TOLERATION?

“Toleration makes difference possible; difference makes toleration necessary.”
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FIVE REGIMES OF TOLERATION

Exploring past models of toleration in (very) different historical contexts

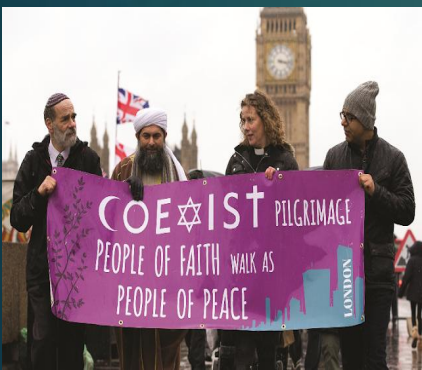
[See handout: excerpts from Walzer's *On toleration*]

TOLERATION?

Persecution = using force in religious matters

=> Toleration is nothing but the removal of that force.

[cf John Locke, *A Letter concerning Toleration* 1689]



A LETTER

CONCERNING

Toleration :

Humbly Submitted, &c.

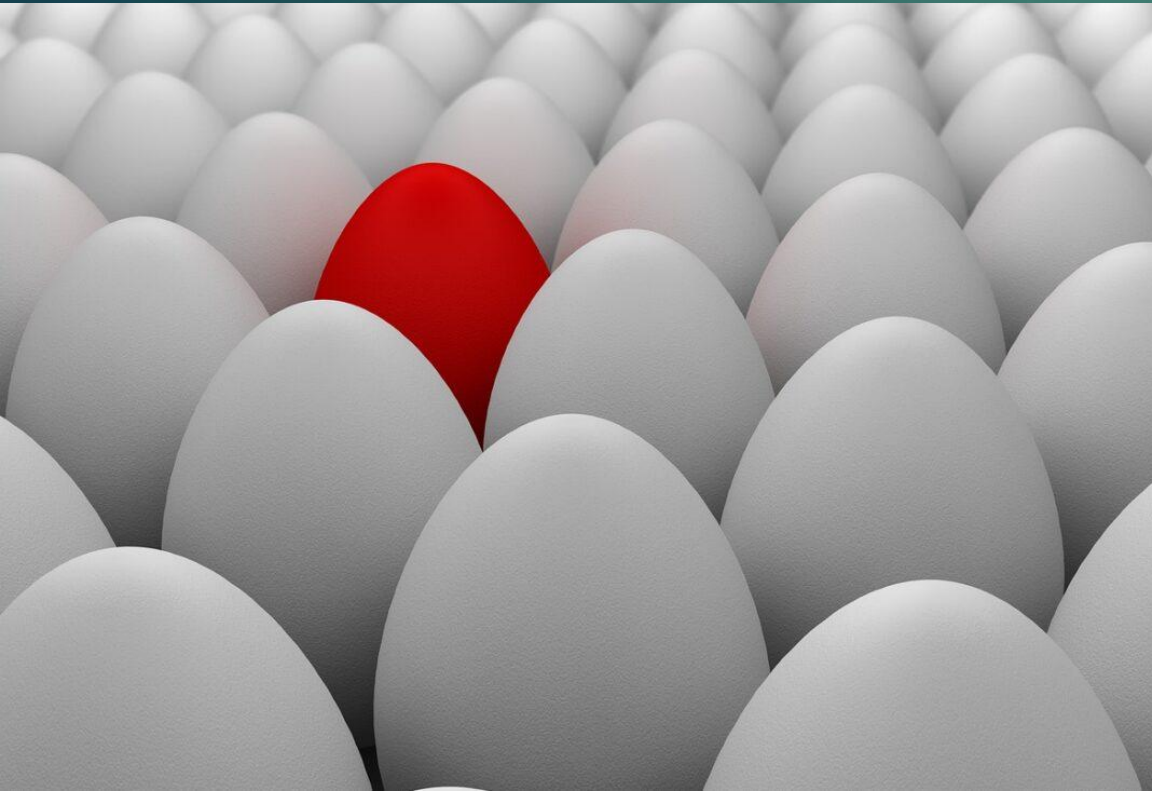
LICENSED, Octob. 3. 1689.

LONDON,

Printed for *Awnsham Churchill*, at the *Black Swan* at *Amen-Corner*. 1689.

TOLERATION?

“Difference”: What *kind(s)* of difference are we talking about? (=ones that **really** matter)

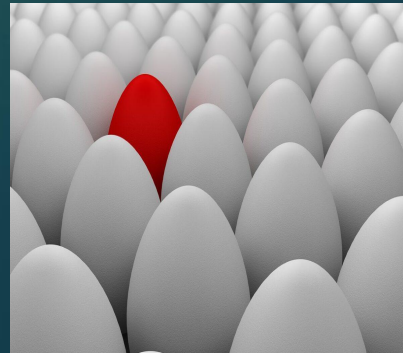


TOLERATION?

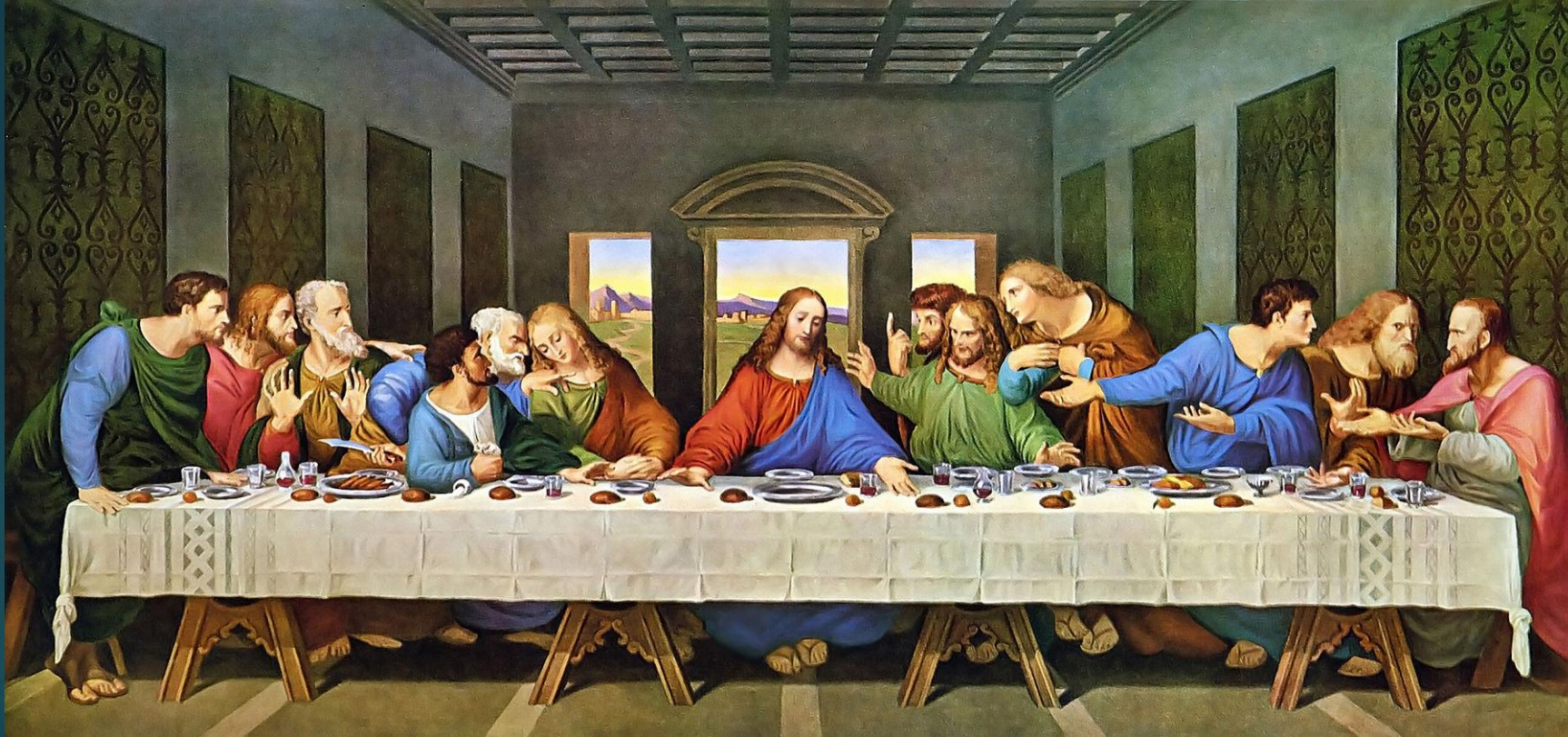


“The essence of Western civilization is the Magna Carta, not the Magna Mac [i.e. Macdonald’s Big Mac]. The fact that non-Westerners may bite into the latter has no implications for their accepting the former.”

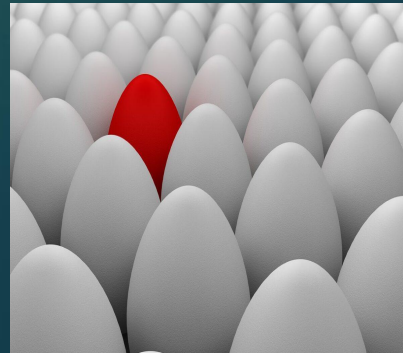
[Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations*, 1996]



TOLERATION?



CAVEAT: IS FOOD *THAT* 'INDIFFERENT'?
(notion of ADIAPHORIC/ADIAPHORA)



TOLERATION?

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?





DIFFERENCE => **VIOLENCE**?

[See later: Theories of persecution]

TOLERATION?

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

DIFFERENCES THAT

- ELICIT HARSH MORAL JUDGEMENT, HOSTILITY OR EVEN DISGUST FROM OTHERS
- AND AS A RESULT:
- SET/DRIVE PEOPLE APART AS GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS
- IMPAIR COMMUNAL LIFE TO A DEGREE
- CAN SOMETIMES RESULT IN OPEN STRIFE/AGGRESSION, SOCIAL UNREST, POLITICAL CONFLICT OR EVEN CIVIL WAR

TOLERATION?

Toleration is both the name of a problem and one possible solution to it: *how can we live together when we disagree on matters which at least some of us deem essential, pertaining to human life's ultimate ends and the very basis of community?*

=> *Historically in the West from the 16th century onwards: most 'solutions' entailed 'uncoupling' membership in the political/civic community from other 'identities'*

TOLERATION?

How much can
you tolerate/
accept / cope
with?

Evil family
next door=>



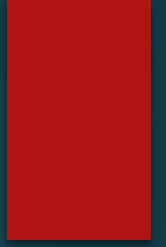
TOLERATION?

How far
does/should
toleration
extend?

=> Limits of
toleration?



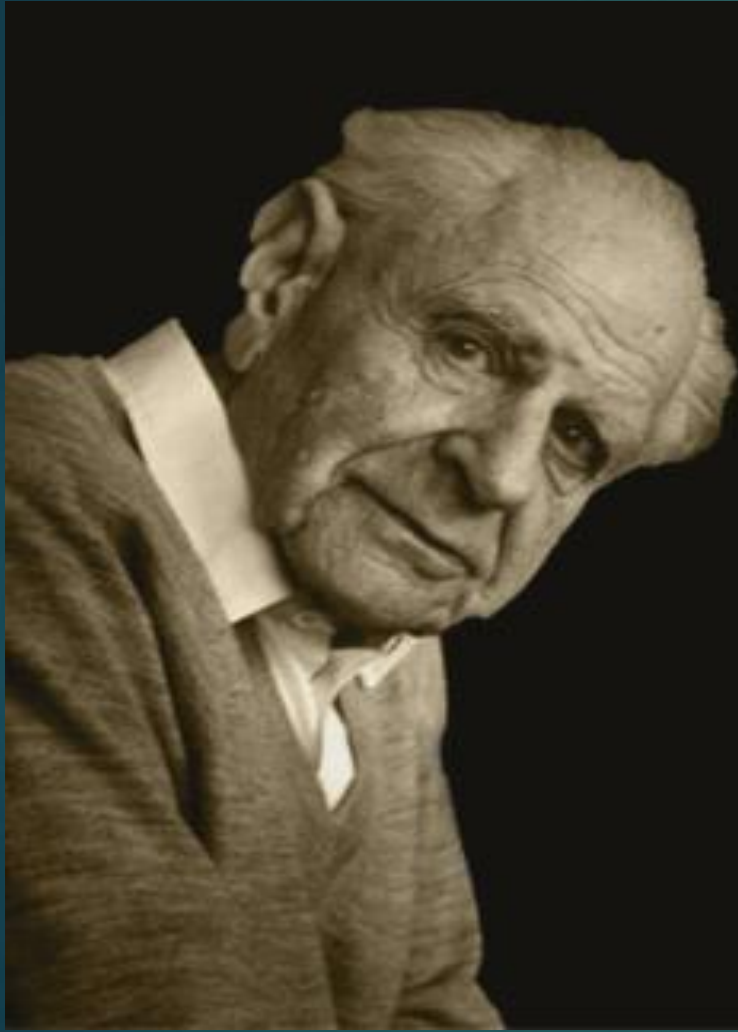
TOLERATION?



Paradox/Limits of toleration?

> “*Our tolerance is part of what makes Britain Britain. So conform to it, or don't come here.*”
[Tony Blair, to complete an earlier quote]

TOLERATION?



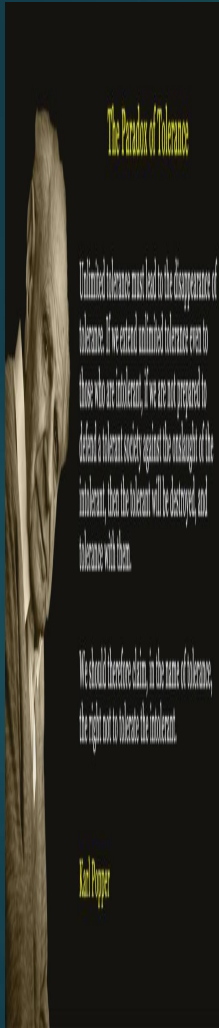
The Paradox of Tolerance

Unlimited tolerance must lead to the disappearance of tolerance. If we extend unlimited tolerance even to those who are intolerant, if we are not prepared to defend a tolerant society against the onslaught of the intolerant, then the tolerant will be destroyed, and tolerance with them.

We should therefore claim, in the name of tolerance, the right not to tolerate the intolerant.

Karl Popper

TOLERATION?



THE OPEN SOCIETY AND ITS ENEMIES

Vol. I
The Spell of Plato

K. R. POPPER

Reader in Logic and Scientific Method in the
University of London

THE OPEN SOCIETY AND ITS ENEMIES

Vol. II
The High Tide of Prophecy
Hegel and Marx

K. R. POPPER

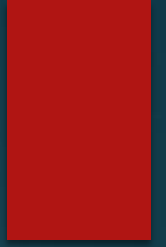
Reader in Logic and Scientific Method in the
University of London

Karl Popper

Pub.
in 1945

Karl
Popper
(1902-
1994)

TOLERATION?



The Paradox of Tolerance

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Karl Popper

PB = **SLIPPERY SLOPE** here – **WHO** DECIDES WHAT COUNTS AS TOLERABLE AND WHAT NOT ‘Because intolerant’? The moral majority? Tradition? Rulers (democratic, enlightened or otherwise)? A few wise guys//philosophers/founding fathers/constitutionalists?

=> ISSUES ABOUT TOLERATION ARE CLOSELY INTERTWINED WITH DEBATES ABOUT UNIVERSALISM, RELATIVISM, NEUTRALITY AND PLURALISM OF HUMAN VALUES.

And there’s no easy way out, as we will see...



One solution?: tolerating even horrific ideas and words, but not horrible deeds and action? Not so simple...

=> Toleration issues are also partly entangled with the (many) issues relating to **'freedom of speech'**...

TOLERATION?

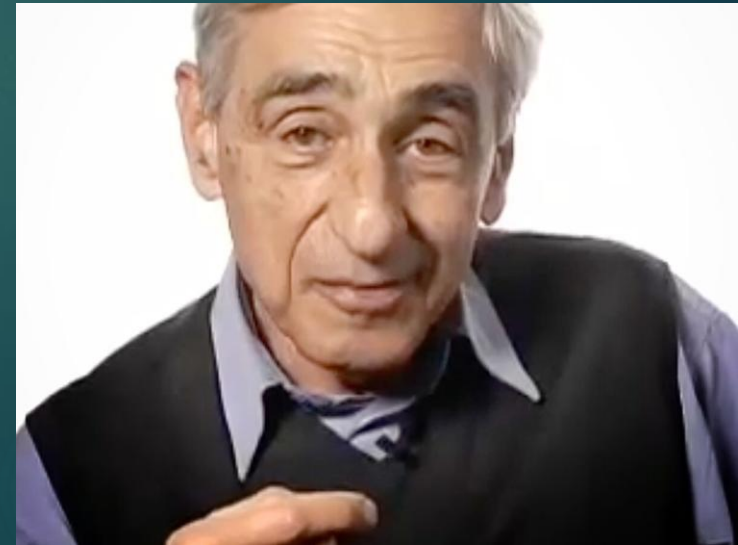
WHAT'S IN A NOUN...

A BRIEF (and mostly negative) HISTORY of
“TOLERATION”: Word and Concept



We need to acknowledge the following caveats:

- 1) Every word of family of words has a history and carries with it nuances and overtones which are a legacy of its past: this is particularly true with 'toleration'.
- 2) Even at one specific moment in time, a word can have multiple meanings or mean different things to different people.
- 3) This is emphatically the case regarding the SCOPE of toleration (how far and to whom does it extend?) as well as REASONS to adopt toleration (WHY should we tolerate?).



DIFFERENT WAYS TO UNDERSTAND 'TOLERATION':

'Toleration describes a number of possibilities. The first of these [is] simply **(1) a resigned acceptance of difference for the sake of peace**. People kill each other for years and years and then, mercifully, exhaustion sets in, and we call this toleration.

But we can trace a continuum of more substantive acceptances. A second possible attitude is **(2) passive, relaxed, benignly indifferent to difference**. 'I takes all kinds to make a world''.

[M. Walzer, *On Toleration*]

RANGE OF MEANING / 'TOLERATION':

A third follows from a kind of moral stoicism: **(3) a principled recognition that the "others" have rights even if they exercise those rights in unattractive ways.**

A fourth expresses **(4) openness to the others; curiosity**, perhaps even respect, a willingness to listen and learn.

And, furthest along the continuum, there is the **(5) enthusiastic endorsement of difference**: an aesthetic endorsement [...] or a functional endorsement, if difference is viewed, as in the liberal multiculturalist argument, as a necessary condition of human flourishing.' ' [M. Walzer, *On Toleration*]

TOLERATION?

‘A most negative word’: why were people not keen to be labelled ‘tolerant’ and embrace ‘toleration’ openly for most of its past?

=> For two opposite reasons (‘too much’/‘not enough’)



A deeply ambivalent word with bad reputation at both ends of the spectrum, and for most of its history:

1) “The Devil tolerates” [from a traditional, indeed medieval, point of view] = being seemingly indifferent to deeply held values and dogmas (*not caring*) is clear evidence of damnation



ACT of "TOLERATION" (1689) WHICH "DARES NOT SPEAK ITS NAME"?



Anno Primo

GULIELMI & MARIAE.

An ACT for Exempting Their
Majesties Protestant Subjects,
Dissenting from the Church of
England, from the Penalties of
certain Laws.



Inasmuch as some
Ease to Scrupulous
Consciences in the
Exercise of Religion
may be an effectual
means to Unite
Their Majesties Pro-
testant Subjects in
Interest and Affection,

Be it Enacted by the King and Queens
most Excellent Majesties by and With
the Advice and Consent of the Lords
Spiritual and Temporal and the Com-
mons in this present Parliament As-
sembled,

W b b b 2

sembled,



Charitable hatred

TOLERANCE AND INTOLERANCE IN ENGLAND,
1500–1700



ALEXANDRA WALSHAM

Another reason why toleration wasn't perceived as a principled, moral stance in the early modern period:

It was mostly, in the words of Alexandra Walsham, a 'Loser's creed': people pleaded for toleration *only* when they found themselves at the wrong end of the persecuting rod...

= pragmatic, not principled claim

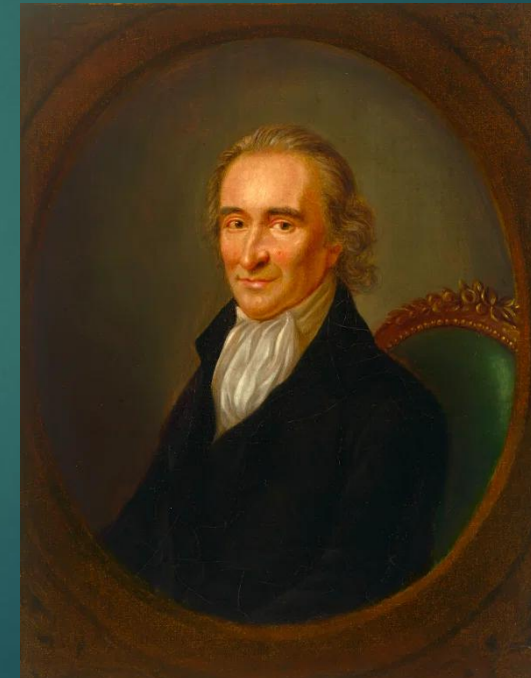
A deeply ambivalent word with bad reputation at both ends of the spectrum, and for most of its history:

2) Eighteenth century onwards: “To tolerate is to insult”



Thomas PAINE (1737-1809)

“ Toleration is not the opposite of **intoleration**, but is the **counterfeit** of it.”
[Rights of Man 1791]



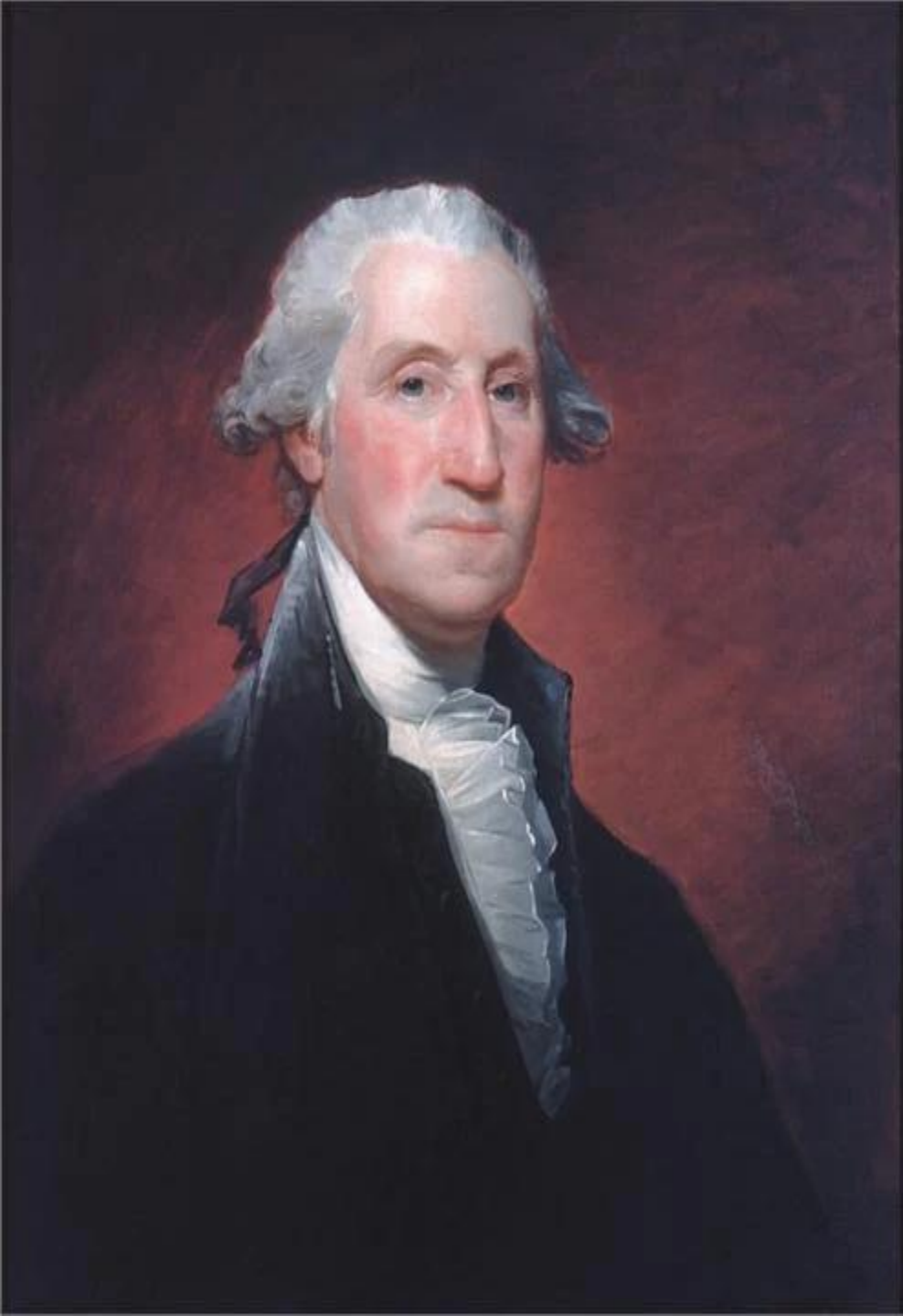
Thomas PAINE (1737-1809)

*“The French Constitution hath abolished or renounced toleration, and intolerance also, and hath established **UNIVERSAL RIGHT OF CONSCIENCE.***

Toleration is not the opposite of intolerance, but is the counterfeit of it. Both are despotisms. The one assumes to itself the right of withholding liberty of conscience, and the other of granting it. The one is the Pope, armed with fire and faggot, and the other is the Pope selling or granting indulgences.

[Rights of Man, full quote]

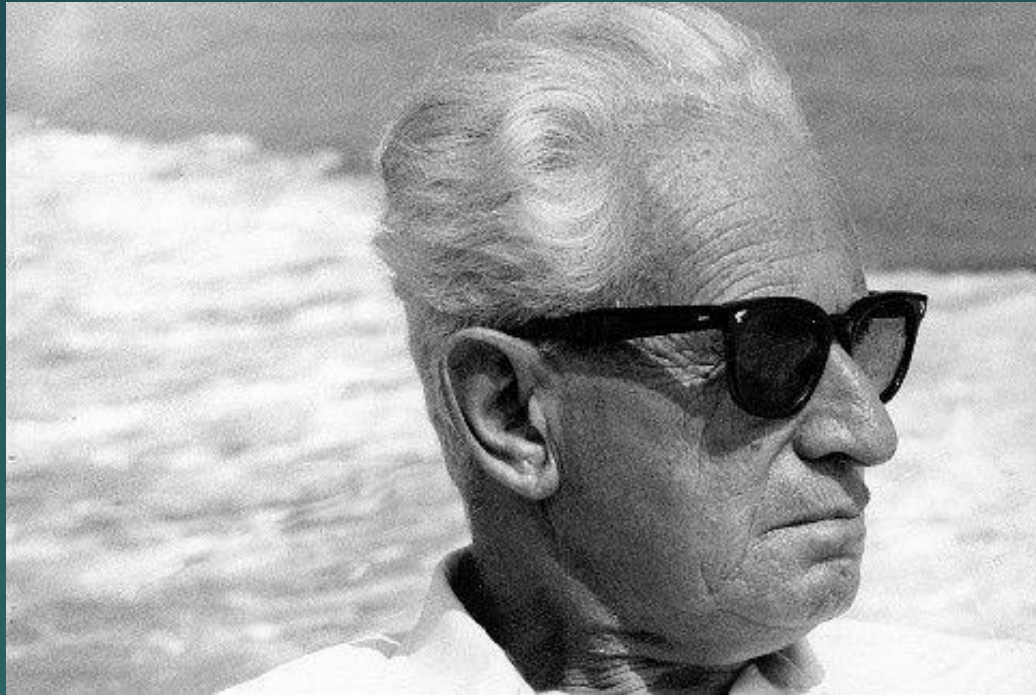
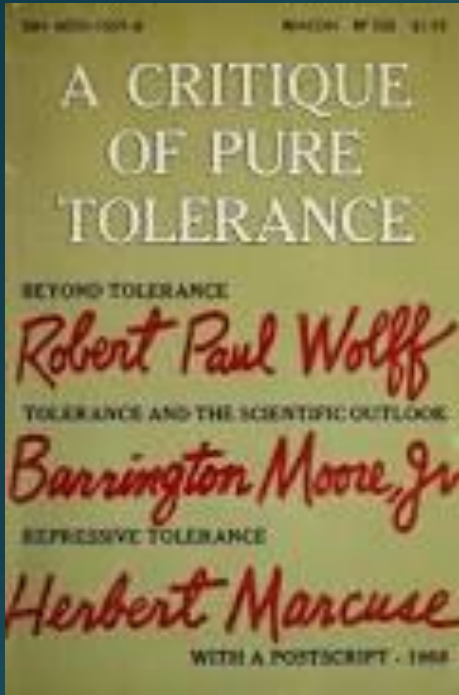




“It is now no more that toleration is spoken of, as if it was by the indulgence of one class of people, that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights.”

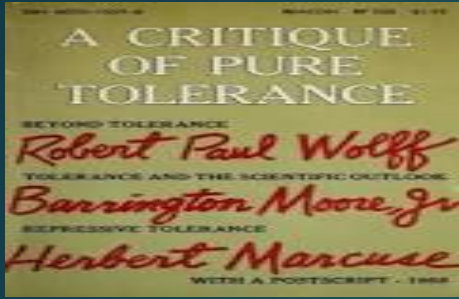
G. Washington, *Letter to the Hebrew Congregation at Newport*, 1790

=> Freedom of conscience/opinion



**Toleration's
bad name:
Legacy.**

Herbert Marcuse's concept of 'Repressive tolerance' (in 1965), i.e. the idea that existing liberal, pluralistic legal systems such as the US in the 1960s were actually 'formal' bourgeois ideological superstructures enforcing the status quo and stifling revolutionary movements and changes.

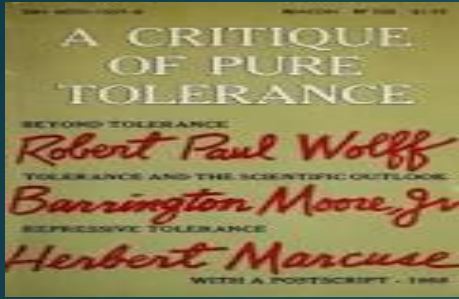


Tolerance's bad name: Legacy.

"The prevailing theory and practice of tolerance turned out on examination to be in vaying degrees hypocritical masks to cover appalling political realities" [cf. marxist analysis of 'real' vs. 'formal' liberty]

"Tolerance toward that which is radically evil now appears [falsely] as good because it serves the cohesion of the whole on the road to affluence and more affluence."

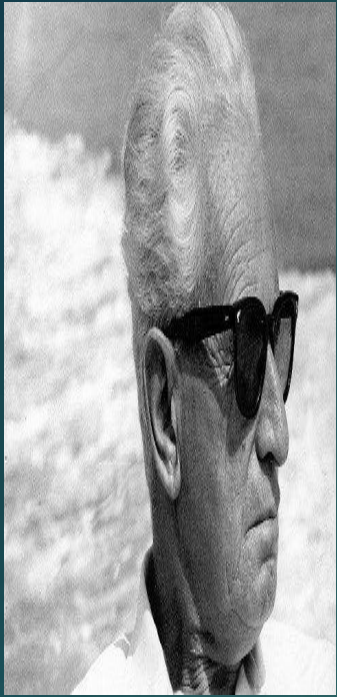
.'" => we need to abandon the "deceptive impartiality" 'The telos of tolerance is truth' of existing "pure" tolerance in favour of "discriminating tolerance".'



**Tolerance's bad
name: Legacy.**

⇒ advocacy of **active intolerance** and even violence against bourgeois order and far right activists, in order to achieve true freedom:

“Liberating [not repressive] tolerance, then, would mean intolerance against movements from the Right, and toleration of movements from the Left.”



General conclusion: Toleration was not usually a proud flag to sail under...

Maybe it was a thing only for a fleeting moment in the eighteenth c. around the publication of Voltaire's *Treatise on Tolerance* (1763) in the wake of 'l'Affaire Calas' + in the past few decades, actually

Interesting question: Why the recent revival especially in the English-speaking world?
=>(a few answers, hypotheses and hunches)

TOLERATION?

A FEW DISTINCTIONS WORTH KEEPING IN MIND:

- ▶ *TOLERANCE (moral) v. TOLERATION (political)*
- ▶ *VERTICAL v. HORIZONTAL TOLERATION*
- ▶ *CIVIL v. ECCLESIAL TOLERATION (LESSONS FROM HISTORY)*
[see example of humanist intolerance detailed in the next slides]

CIVIL v. ECCLESIAL TOLERATION

i.e. 'Comprehension' vs. 'Indulgence'



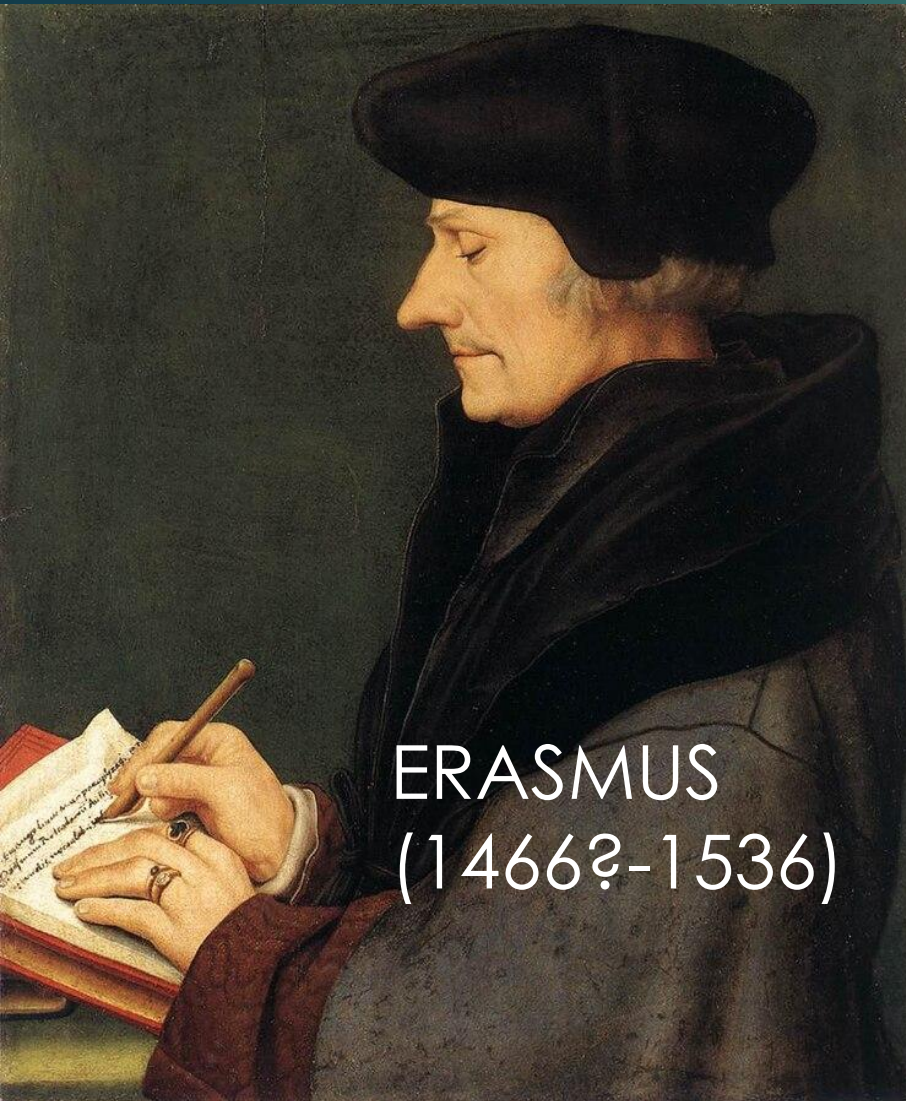
<= ERASMUS
(1466?-1536)

THOMAS MORE
(1478-1535) =>



CIVIL v. ECCLESIAL TOLERATION

i.e. 'Comprehension' vs. 'Indulgence'



ERASMUS
(1466?-1536)

On the Concord of the Church
(1533) => Choir of angels singing in
unison in Heaven as regulatory ideal

Letter (1529) ''against so called
Evangelicals'': Community
threatened => call to arms and
constraint

CIVIL v. ECCLESIAL TOLERATION

i.e. 'Comprehension' vs. 'Indulgence'

Epitaph written by himself stating (meant as a quality) that he was 'particularly grievous » to heretics...

Heresy is 'the worst crime that could be' (*Dialogue on Heresy* 1530)

Letter to Erasmus: 'I hate heretics with all my heart [...] I am terrified of what the world is going to suffer at their hands'.

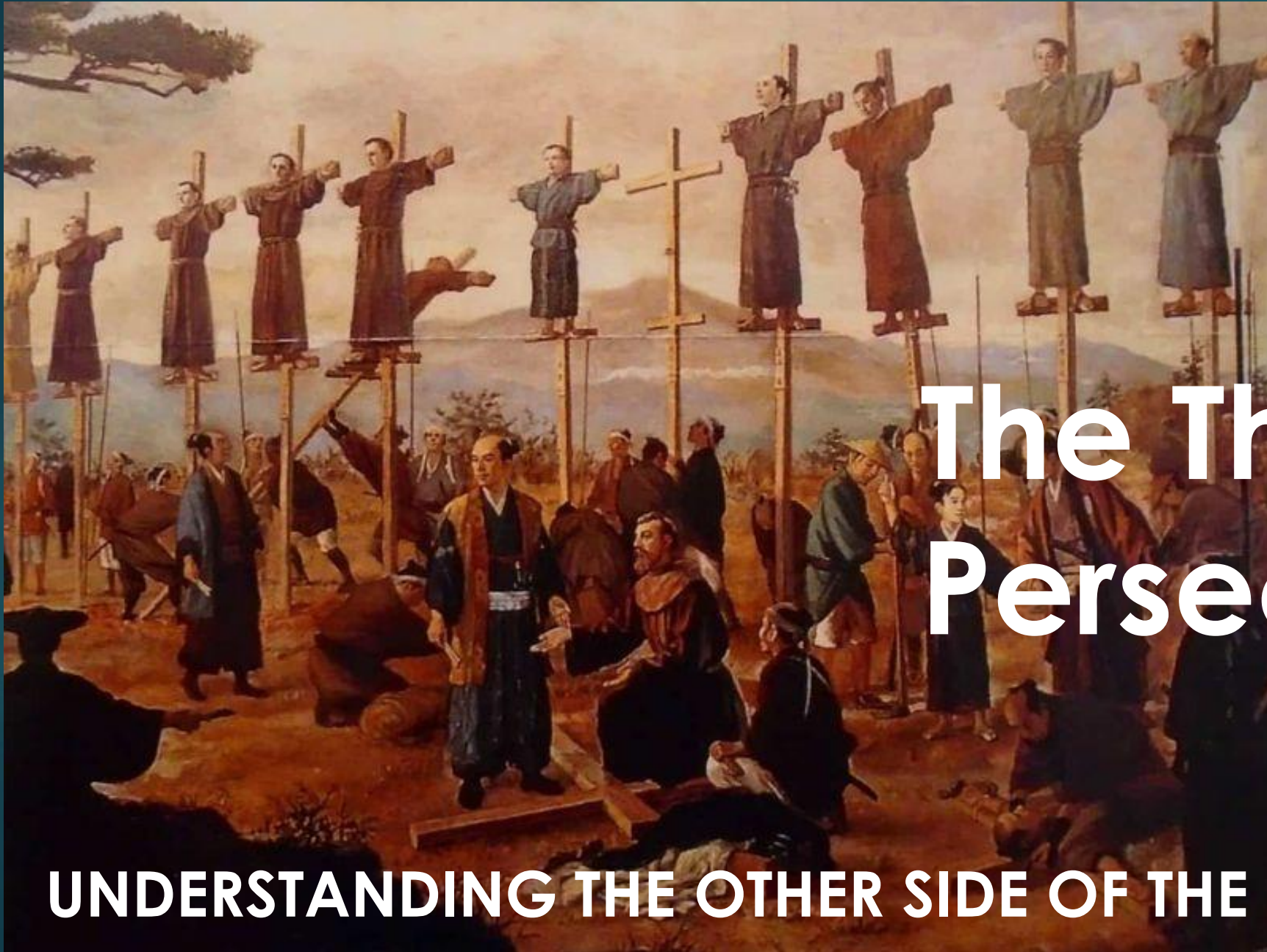
Utopia (1516) and the limits of toleration





Since toleration
always involves
some kind of trade-
off, what should we
let go of?

What are we willing
to sacrifice of our
sacred values and
ideals in order to
achieve toleration
and reap its
benefits?



The Theory of Persecution

UNDERSTANDING THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ARGUMENT

The Theory of Persecution

Religion is clearly defined for many of us by its absolute commands, stemming from more than human origins, commands which are usually not restricted to ourselves nor our inner selves => possibility of resorting to violence to enforce them?

YET it is not necessarily the case. Christian teachings, after all, can lead to extreme pacifism and promote non-violent resistance or passive obedience, and have done so repeatedly through the ages.

=> **How did the Christian world become a 'persecuting society'?**



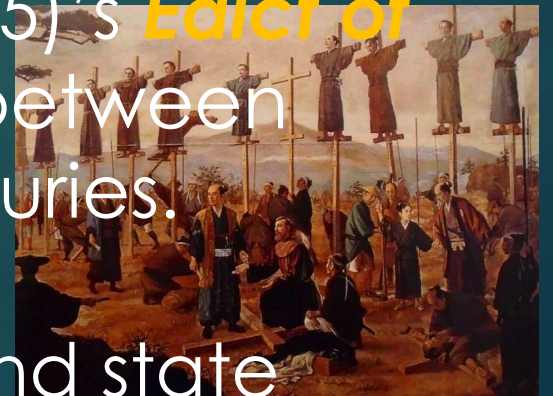
The Theory of Persecution

Potential for persecution in Christianity:

- Universalism (=scope is humankind)
- Salvation/Redemption (=notion of sin, afterlife, judgement of the dead, etc.)
- Deep relationship to 'Truth' (falsehood = damning; notion of orthodoxy, dogma and idea of propaganda)

Roman Empire becoming Christian: Constantine 'the Great' (272-337)'s **Edict of Milan** 313AD then Theodosius (347-395)'s **Edict of Thessalonica** 380AD. => ambiguity, conflict even, between Christian secular and spiritual 'arms' to last for centuries.

=> Eventually: 'heretic' meant rebellious / Prince and state



The Theory of Persecution

⇒ Augustine (354-430 CE) in the *City of God* mostly and a few letters about the Donatist schism in North Africa justifies persecution as a 'work of love':

1 - '*Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*' (Cyprian of Carthage): outside of the Church there is no salvation – '*Compelle intrare*' (parable of the feast, Luke 14:23) → Guiding the lost ones back on the right soteriological tracks

2 - **Schism** and **heresy** lead oneself and others to hell => need to save people from themselves through a kind of violent **therapy** and 'charitable hatred', esp. from a Christian prince...

3 – Heretics are stubborn, arrogant people infatuated with their own ideas (sin of pride: *hairesis*=choice) + they commit the worst possible crime: against God (blasphemy, schism)

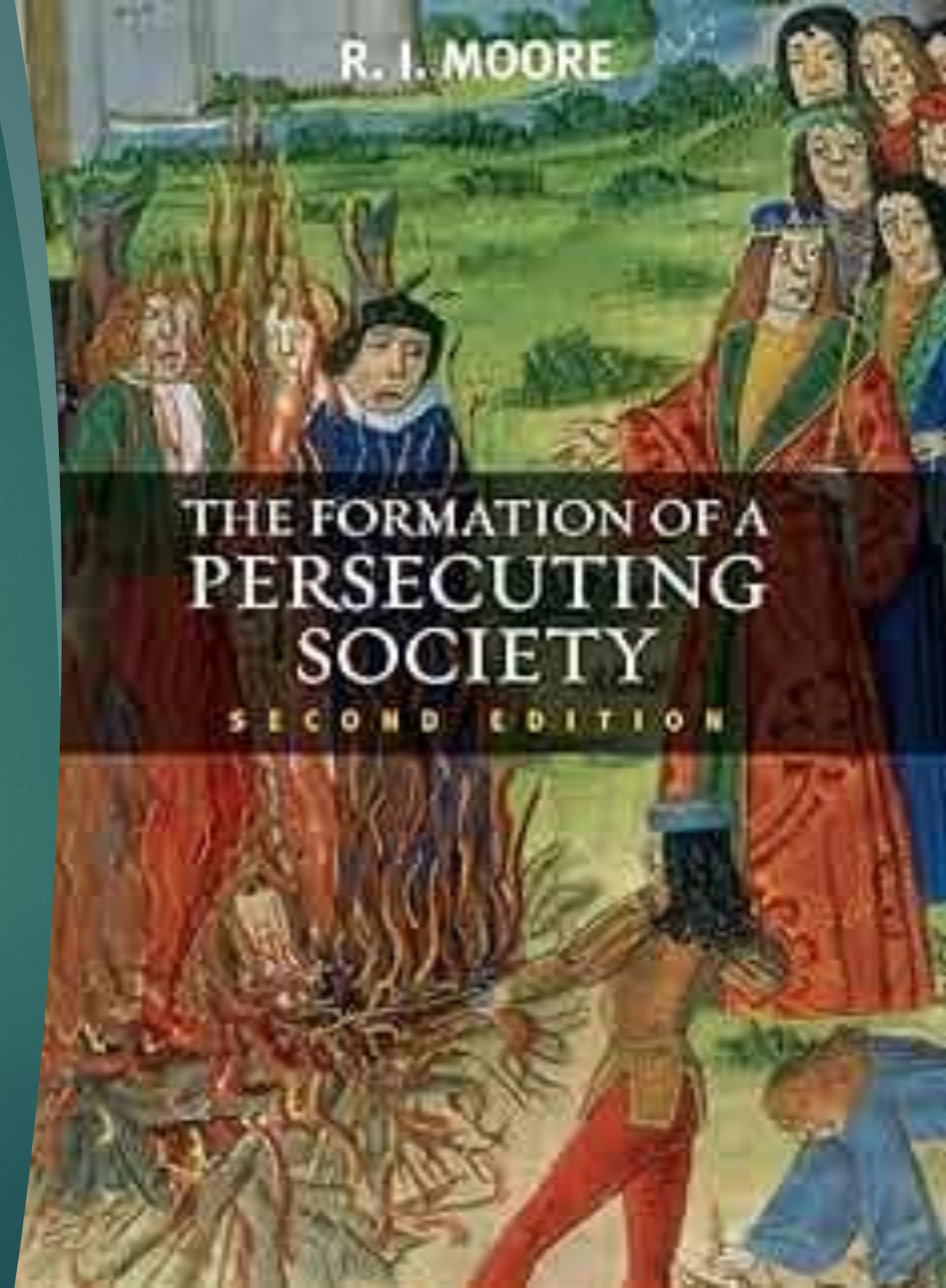
The Theory of Persecution

There were dissident voices in the early and medieval Church:

=> **Tertullian** (155-220 CE) had answered Augustine in advance in his *Apologetics* (197) and in *Ad Scapulam* (212) arguing that because true faith cannot be obtained by constraint, persecution only produces hypocrisy, which is unacceptable to God, who on top of that “doesn’t like violence” + What I believe cannot hurt my neighbours but only myself (cf. Thomas Jefferson: “*it neither picks my pockets...*”). Persecution is the true soul-killer.

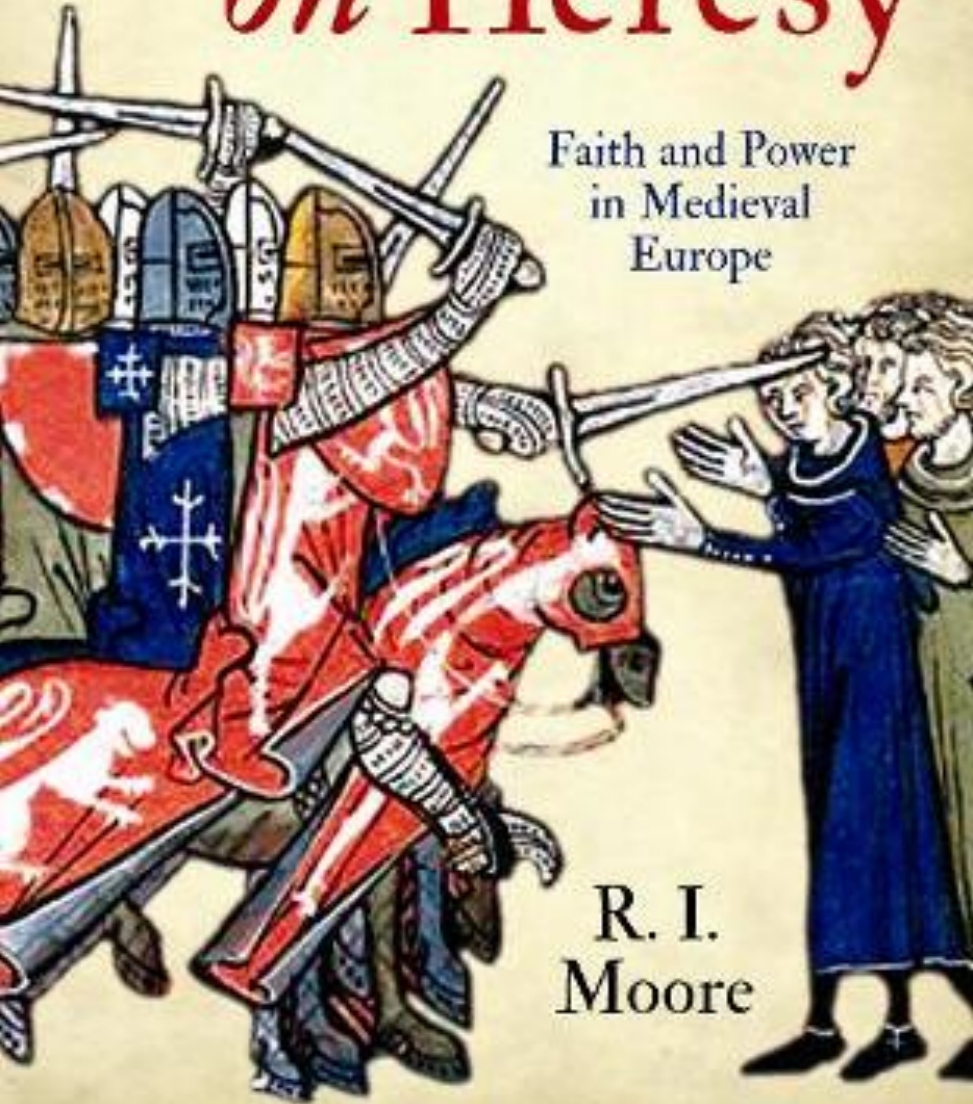
=> **Abelard** (1079-1142) had answered Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) also in advance in his *Ethica*, that we can’t be blamed, let alone condemned to everlasting fire, simply because of what we believe, even wrongly so.

- ▶ *The Formation of a Persecuting Society* (Robert I. Moore): starting in the thirteenth century, in the wake of the **Crusades**, and especially after Latran IV in 1215, the war on heresy became much more central for the Medieval Church.
- ▶ Heresy now deeply associated with **infectious, contagious disease** (leprosy, later plague, etc.)
- ▶ Renewed emphasis on doctrinal **purity**
- ▶ Hence the need to contain, cauterize, exclude, exterminate heresy and heretics (but also Jews) actively and physically



The War *on* Heresy

Faith and Power
in Medieval
Europe



R. I.
Moore

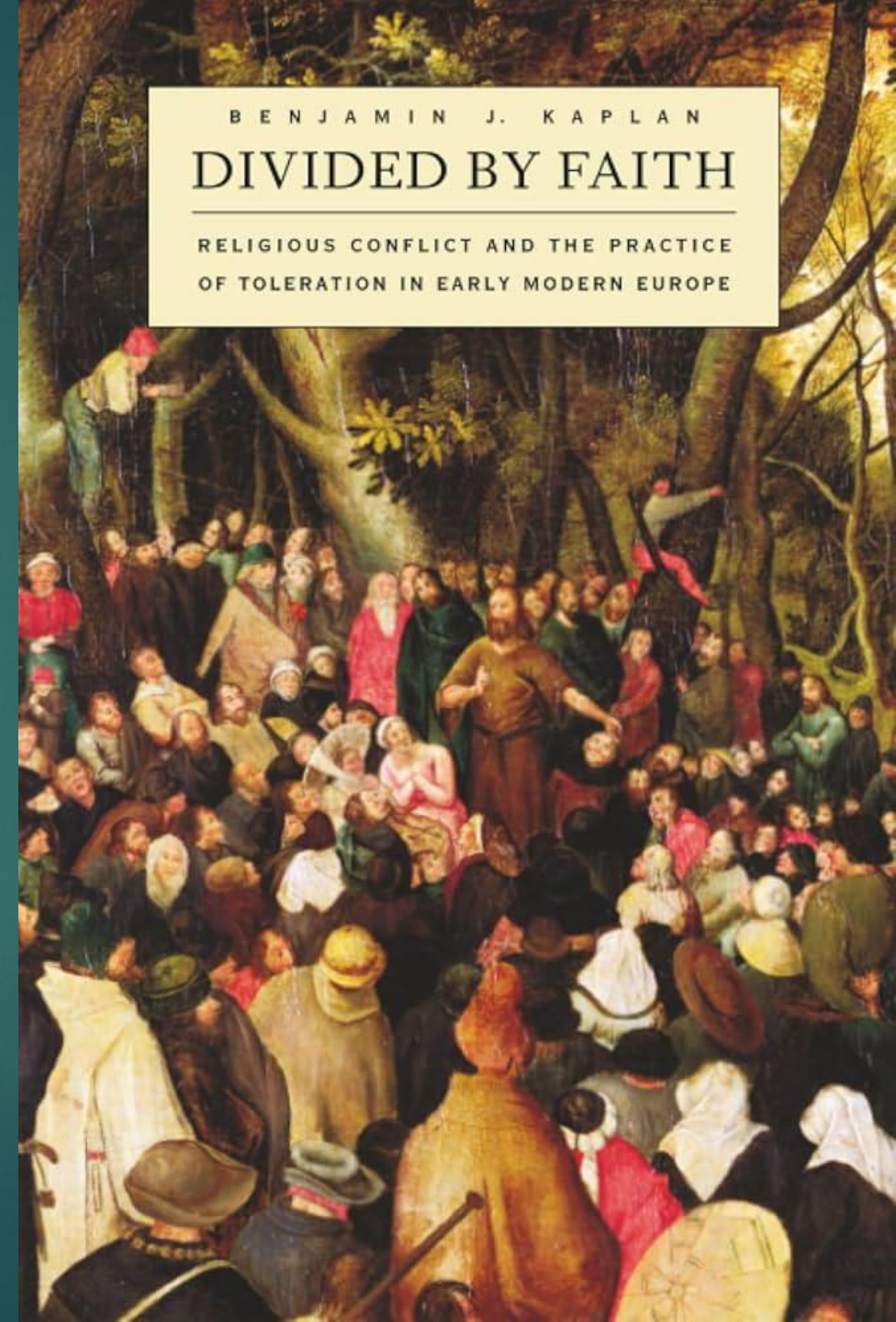
Impulse to control / monitor populations and territories more closely => **pastoral power** 'grid' through an increasingly dense network of parishes and bishoprics

=> Religion and enforced religious uniformity now more than ever seen as the **cement of society**, guarantee of community cohesion and viability

Violence, visibility and trespassing boundaries

Issues of tolerating (or not):
Violence triggered when
perceived intrusion of communal
space / public square.

Made even more pressing after
the Reformation became
entrenched (*cuius regio, eius
religio*)

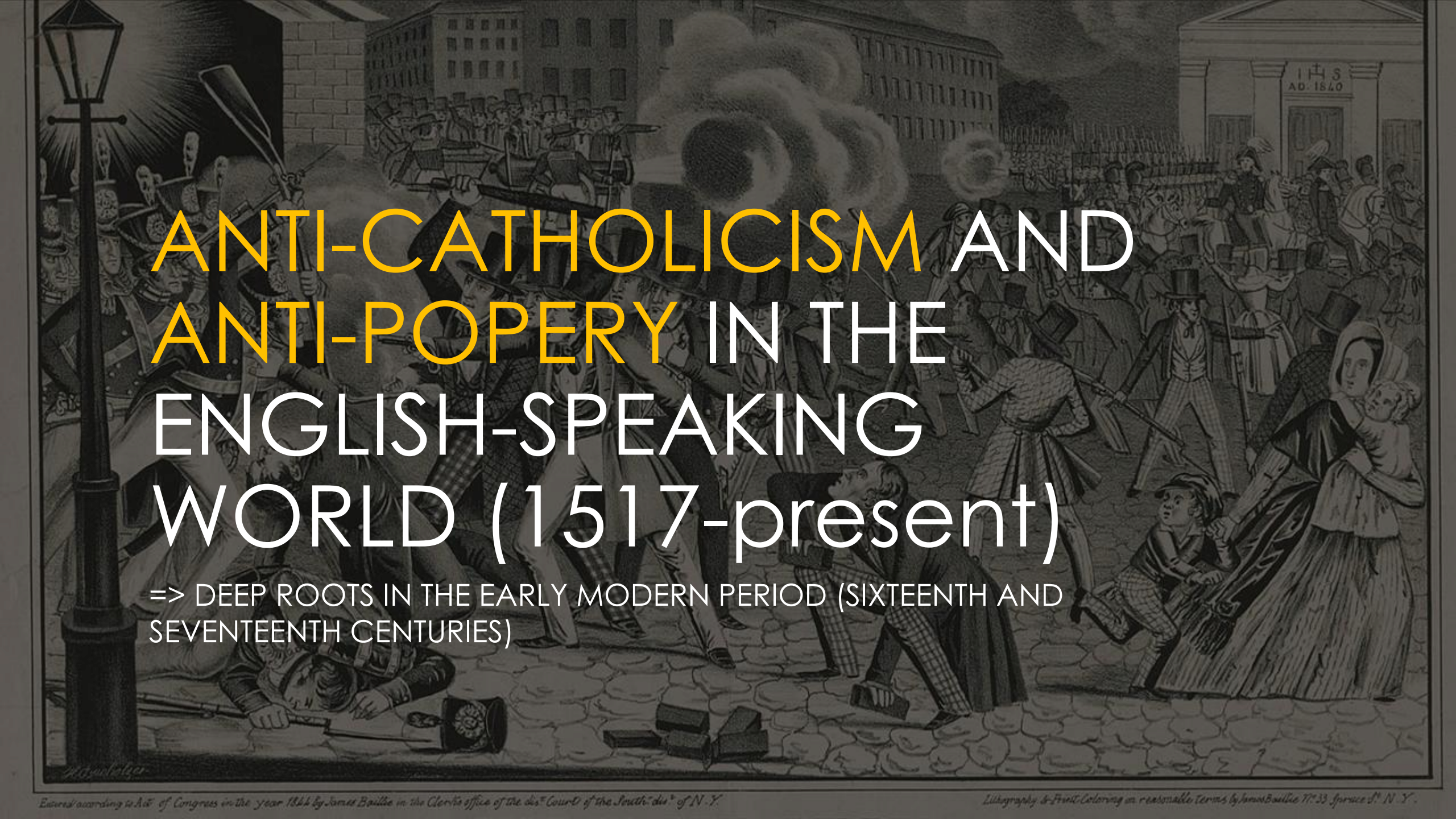


What could open space for toleration in such a context?
= Stop believing in the need for communal salvation and enforced religious uniformity:

- > Decreasing overall intensity, existential presence and relevance of religious belief
- Finding other, secular ways to hold society together (state power, the economy)

OR:

- Stop being concerned about whether other people are going to hell => fanatical plea for toleration
- Disconnecting **orthodoxy** and **orthopraxy**: less emphasis on Truth/dogma and more on deeds and morality (cf. *Latitudinarians* in the Church of England)

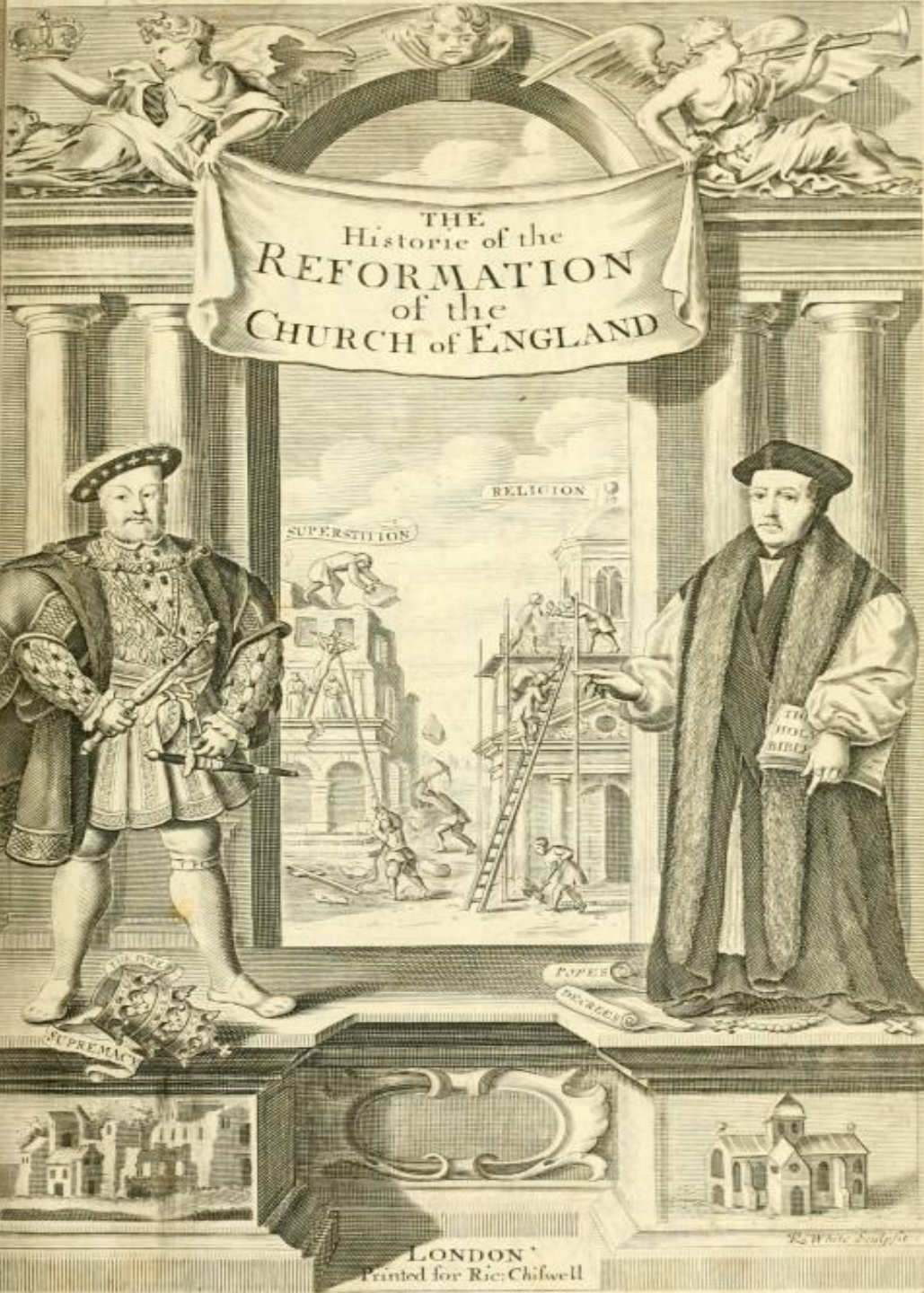


ANTI-CATHOLICISM AND ANTI-POPERY IN THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORLD (1517-present)

=> DEEP ROOTS IN THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD (SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES)

THE MAKING of the CATHOLIC 'OTHER' (16th-18thc):

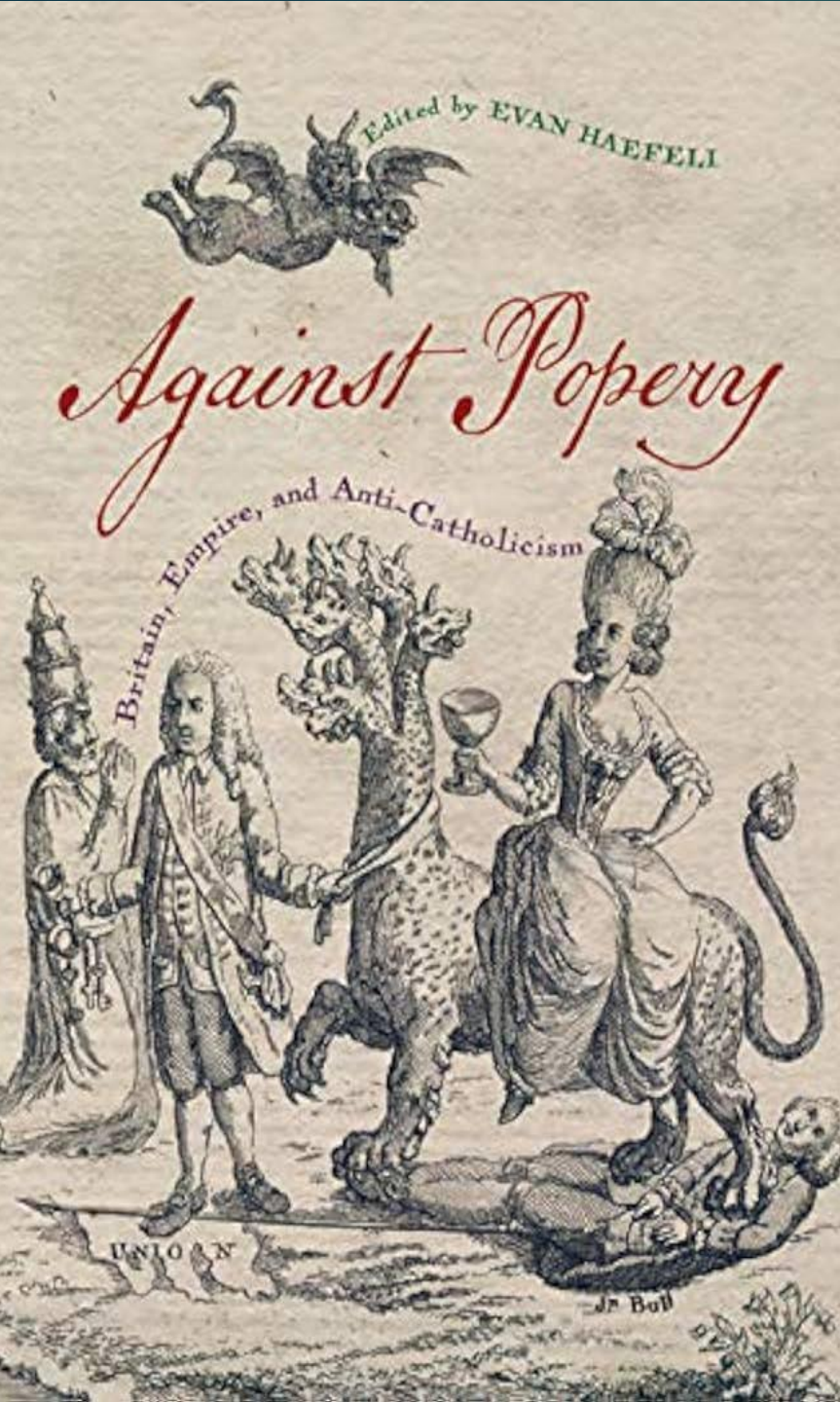
- Increasing identification with foreign powers, princes, cultures and ethnicities (fear+xenophobia)
- Equation of 'Popery' with tyranny and oppression (Pope trope as effeminate tyrant)
- **Popery** = **treason**, **hypocrisy**, deceit, **machiavellianism**
- Catholicism as soul-killing **antireligion** = **idolatry**, blasphemy, **superstition**, irrationality, schismatic, man-made (i.e. not GOD made) and satanical



How did England become
a 'Protestant nation'?

⇒ Long, protracted process
from 1534 (took at least
two centuries...)

⇒ Long shadow of the
English Reformation cast
on the English-speaking
world as a whole



Anticatholicism
is also a British,
Irish and
transatlantic
story



LINDA COLLEY **BRITONS**

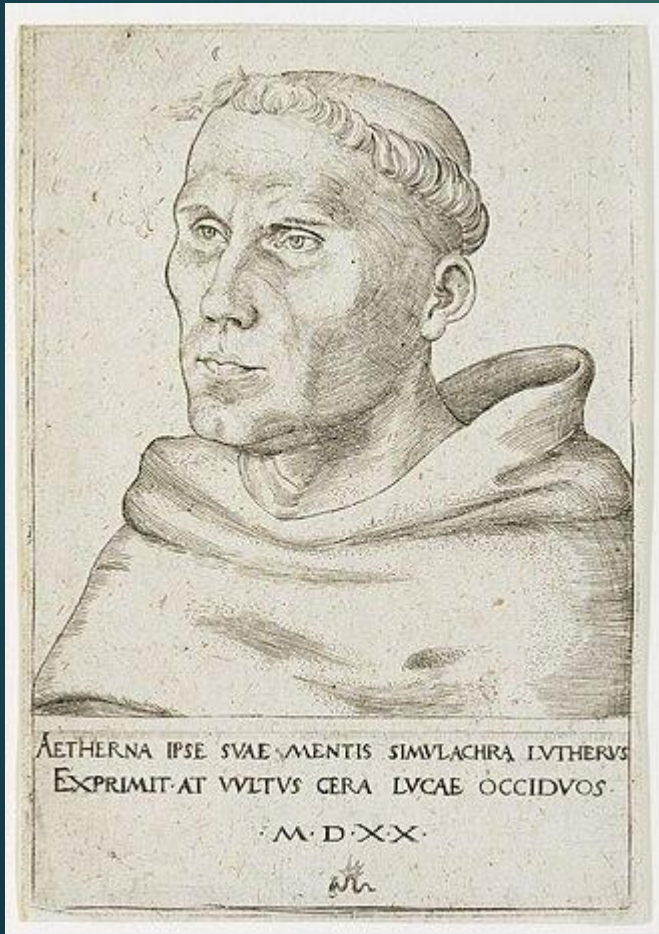
FORGING THE NATION 1707-1837

'A sweeping survey,... evocatively illustrated and engagingly written.' – Harriet Ritvo, *New York Times Book Review*

SECOND EDITION



Sola scriptura
Sola fide / sola
gratia
Solus Christus
Soli Deo gloria



Martin Luther (1483-1546)

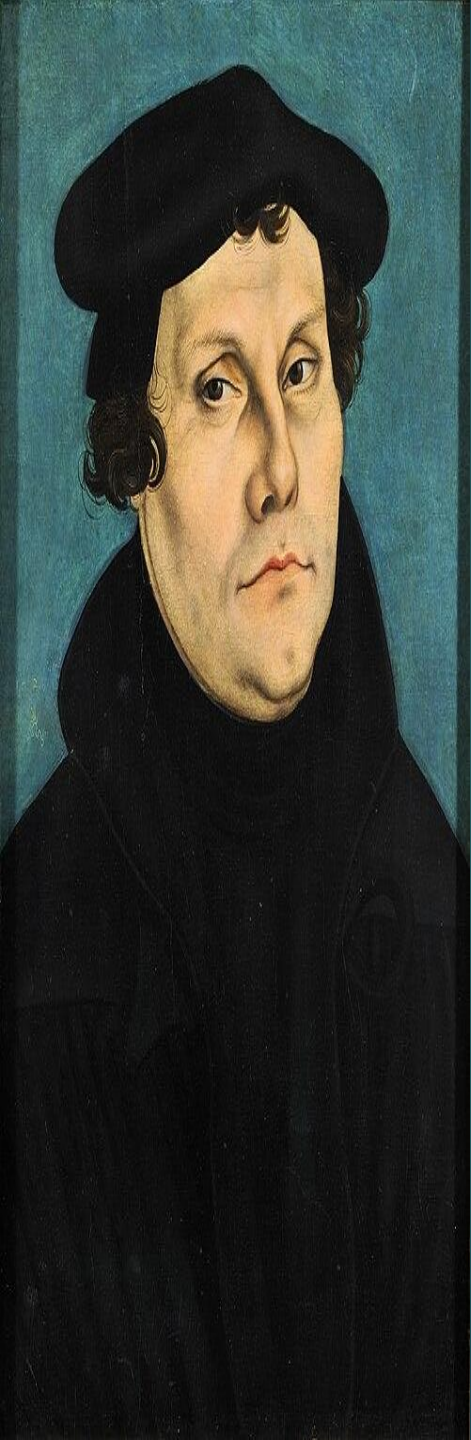
1517: Ninety-Five Theses

1520: *On the Freedom of a Christian / On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church*

1521: Diet of Worms

1525: *On the Bondage of the Will (contra Erasmus)*

1522-1534 Translation of the Bible

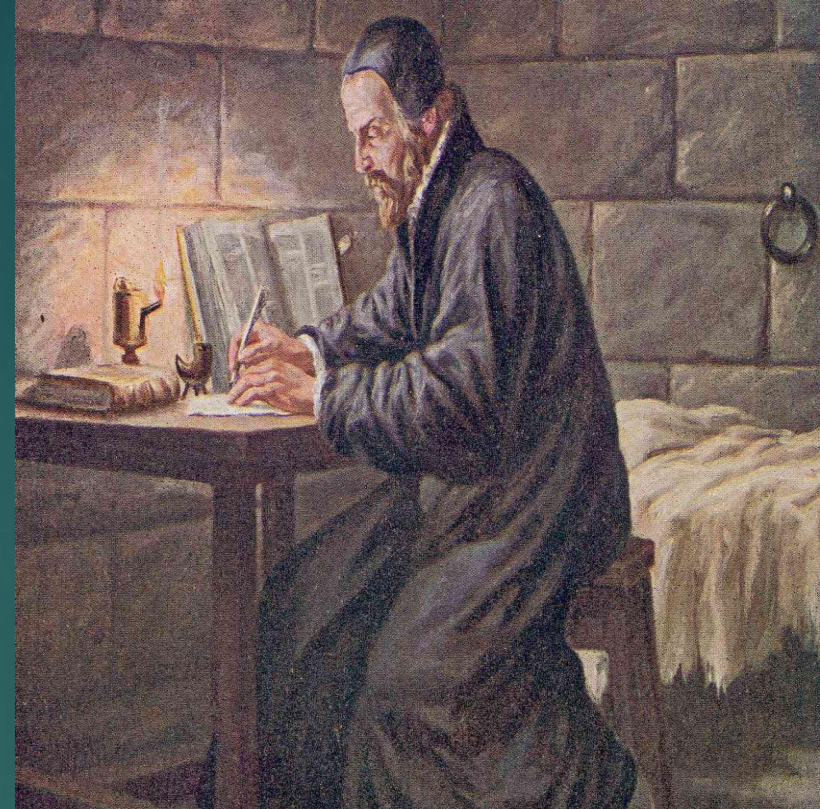


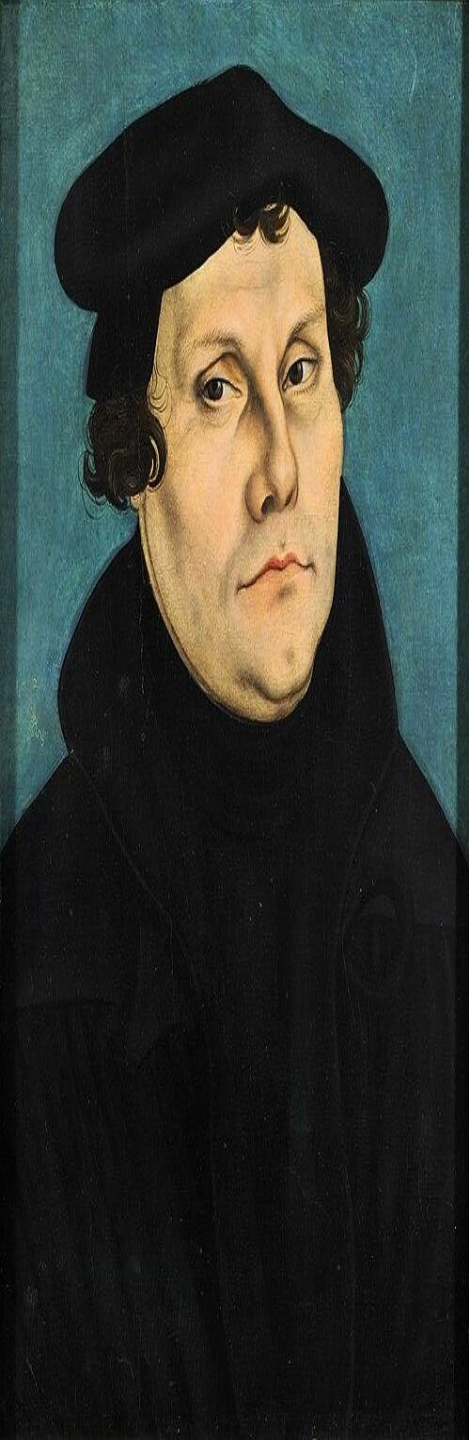
Early English 'Evangelicals':
a small but influential
group, and growing

William Tyndale (1484-
1536)

Translator of the Bible (NT)

Ancestors (in retrospect):
John Wycliff and the
Lollards (fourteenth
century)





Reformation from above (top-down) : Henry VIII

1509: becomes king, marries his brother Arthur's widow, Catherine of Aragon, no surviving male heir

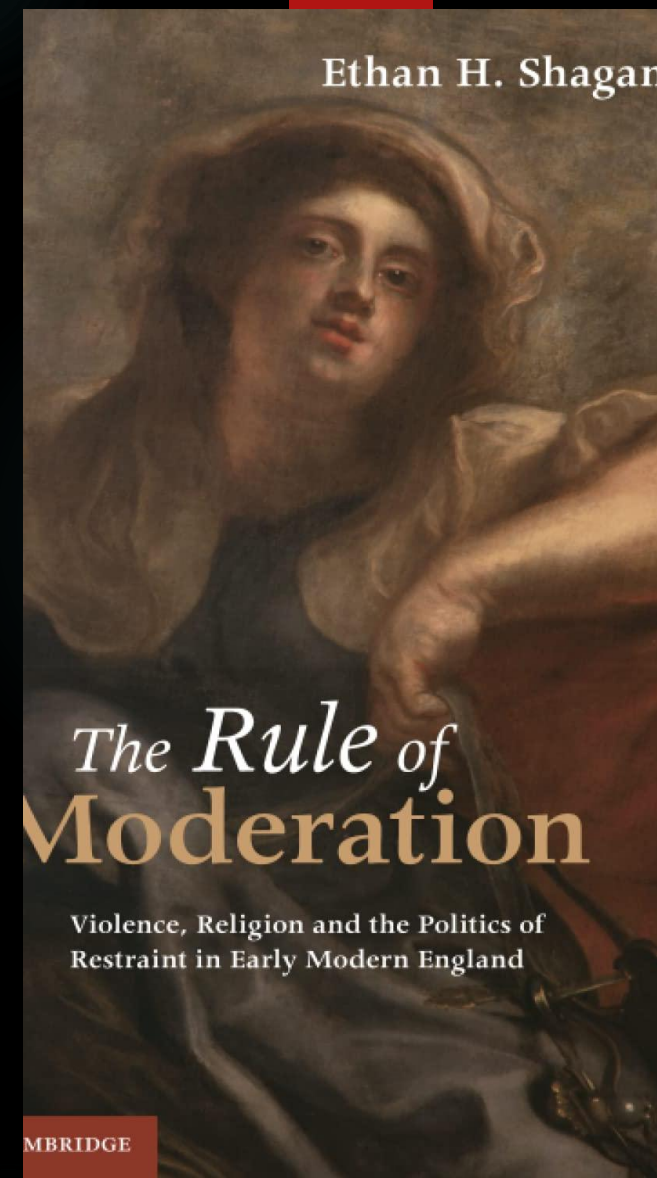
1521 'Defender of the faith' (Leo X)

1527 Clement VII refuses to grant divorce => downhill from there

1534 Act of Supremacy

1547 died, succeeded by his only son Edward VI







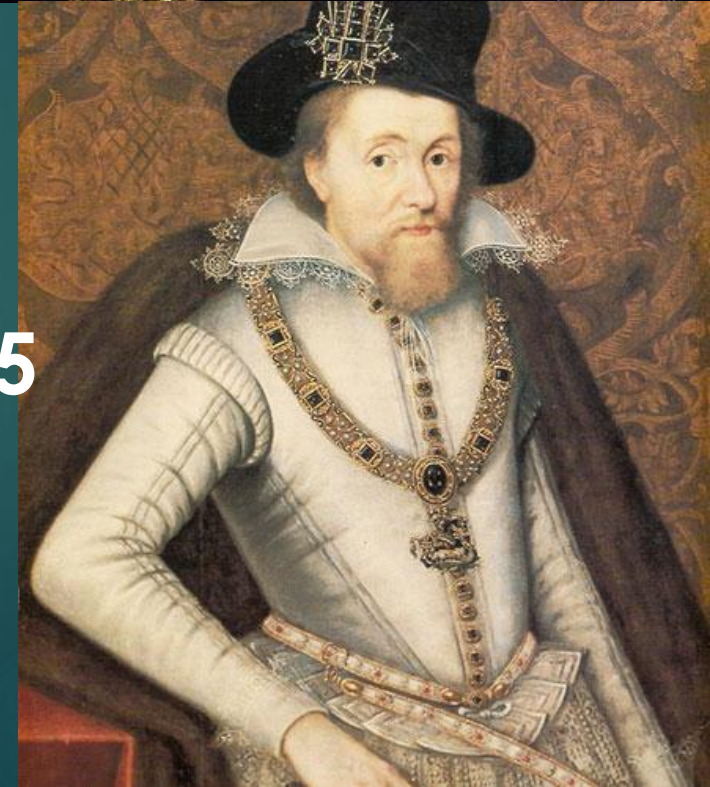
<= Edward VI 1547-1553

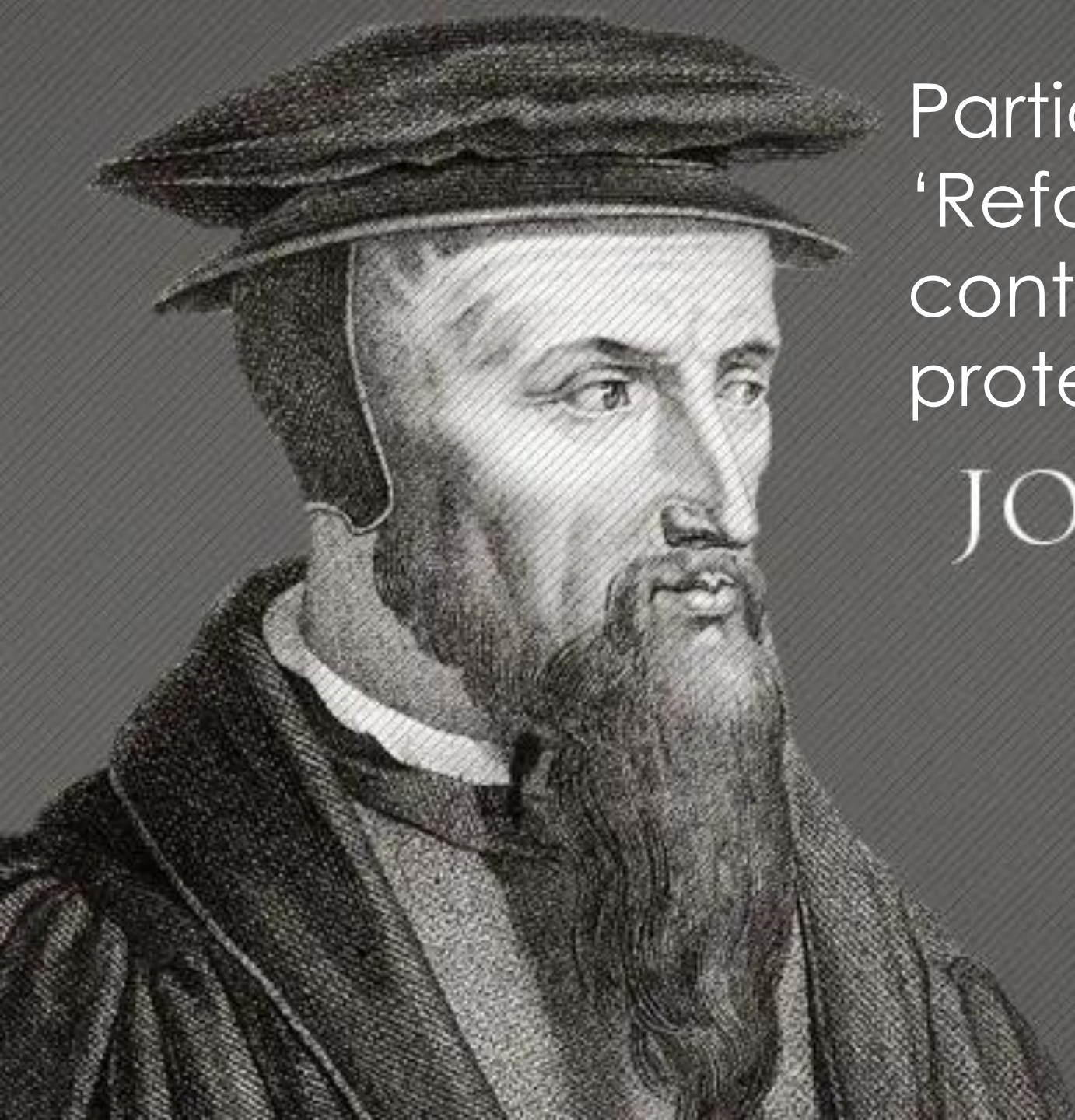
Mary I ('Bloody Mary')
1553-1558 =>



Elizabeth I
1559-1603
=>

James I
1603-1625
=>





Partial connection with the
'Reformed' brand of
continental 'magisterial'
protestantism:

JOHN CALVIN

1509–1564



Puritans, Presbyterians and Separatists: challenging the new Church of England from within and from without

JOHN CALVIN
1509-1564



'Becoming Protestant' Story of a Nation. **Milestones:**

- Coercion: the story of Catholic **Recusants**
- Propaganda : The **Spanish Black legend** and the **Eighty Years War** of independence in the Netherlands
- Bartholomew's Day Massacre (1572) ; The 1588 **Spanish Armada** ; **Gunpowder Plot** of 1605
- Spanish Match 1614-25;
- 1641 **Irish Massacre**; Civil War, '**Puritan Revolution**' and Cromwellian rule (1642-1660)
- **Exclusion Crisis** (1679-1681) ; **Glorious Revolution** (1688) and Jacobite uprisings

GUN-POWDER Plot:

O R,

A Brief Account of that bloody and subtle Design laid against the King, his Lords and Commons in Parliament, and of a Happy Deliverance by Divine Power.

To the Tune of Him not too high.

Licensed according to Order.



True Protestants I pray you do heare,
Unto this story lend attentive Ear;
The Lines are set although the Sultan's Old,
Likewise it is as true as e'er was told.
When James the First in England Rigned King,

At length, these wretched Romans all agreed
Which way to make the King and Nation bleed,
By Powder, all agreed with joint Consent,
To blow up both the King and Parliament.
For to keep secret this their Villany,

