

Reformation in the Low Countries, 1500–1620

This accessible general history of the Reformation in the Netherlands traces the key developments in the process of reformation – both Protestant and Catholic – across the whole of the Low Countries during the sixteenth century. Synthesizing fifty years' worth of scholarly literature, Christine Kooi focuses particularly on the political context of the era: how religious change took place against the integration and disintegration of the Habsburg composite state in the Netherlands. Special attention is given to the Reformation's role in both fomenting and fuelling the Revolt against the Habsburg regime in the later sixteenth century, as well as how it contributed to the formation of the region's two successor states, the Dutch Republic and the Southern Netherlands. *Reformation in the Low Countries, 1500–1620* is essential reading for scholars and students of early modern European history, bringing together specialized, contemporary research on the Low Countries in one volume.

Christine Kooi is the Lewis, Katheryn and Benjamin Price Professor of History at Louisiana State University. She writes on the religious history of the early modern Low Countries and is the author of *Liberty and Religion: Church and State in Leiden's Reformation* (2000) and *Calvinists and Catholics during Holland's Golden Age: Heretics and Idolaters* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), as well as numerous essays and articles.

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*In fond memory of my grandparents,
Reformed Netherlands all*

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Acknowledgments

I think that I have always wanted to write this book. I have wanted to write it at least since the days I roamed the stacks of Sterling Memorial Library at Yale University as a graduate student, fingering dusty volumes on the history of the Reformation in the Low Countries. A work of synthesis, however, is best done later in one's career, and so after thirty or so years of seasoning I offer this volume as an attempt to fill a lacuna in the historiography. It has been a labor of love in all the senses of those words.

First I would like to offer some institutional thanks: I am grateful to the College of Humanities and Social Sciences of Louisiana State University (LSU) for providing me with both grants and leave time to research and write this book. My particular thanks go to the Inter-library Loan Office of LSU Library for its heroic work in securing for me books on obscure topics from faraway libraries, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. On the other side of the Atlantic I spent many happy hours working on this project in the Royal Library in The Hague, a congenial venue for scholarship of all varieties. Since 2013 I have presented portions of this work at an array of conferences and meetings in such far-flung places as San Juan, Leuven, Wittenberg, Bologna, Ghent, Dordrecht, Kampen and Grand Rapids. I warmly thank my hosts at each of these occasions for their invitations to talk about this project.

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Over the course of thirty years working in the field of Netherlandish history, I have had many colleagues in early modern European history ask me to recommend a good overview on the Reformation in the Low Countries. It took some time, but I hope this work will provide them with at least some of the insight they sought.

A Note on Nomenclature

This book is about a place that has historically been difficult to name. It uses the terms “Low Countries,” “Netherlands” and “Netherlandish” interchangeably to describe the collection of territories that in sixteenth-century Europe was tucked in between the western border of the Holy Roman Empire and the northern border of the kingdom of France. This region corresponds roughly to the present-day Netherlands, Belgium and Luxemburg, as well as to northern parts of the French Republic. Today these are of course all sovereign states, but back then they were mostly gathered under the composite monarchy of the Habsburg dynasty and so here they are referred to as the “Habsburg Netherlands.” The adjective “Dutch” is limited to those parts and peoples of the region that were either Dutch-speaking or that came under the control of insurgents starting in the 1570s, provinces that formed the nucleus of the eventual Dutch Republic. Those parts of the region that remained under or were restored to Habsburg control in the later 1500s are referred to as the “Southern” or “archducal” Netherlands. “Reformation” is used as a shorthand, nonsectarian term for the many momentous and enduring religious changes that took place during this period: the rebellion against the established church and the concomitant emergence of new types of Christianity, as well as the reinvigoration of Catholicism.

Abbreviations

<i>AGKKN</i>	<i>Archief voor de Geschiedenis van de Katholieke Kerk in Nederland</i>
<i>AGN</i>	<i>Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden</i>
<i>AHN</i>	<i>Acta Historiae Neerlandica</i>
<i>ARG</i>	<i>Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte</i>
<i>BMGN</i>	<i>Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden</i>
<i>BRN</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Reformatoria Neerlandica</i>
<i>NAGN</i>	<i>Nieuwe Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden</i>
<i>NAKG</i>	<i>Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis</i>
<i>SCJ</i>	<i>Sixteenth Century Journal</i>
<i>TvG</i>	<i>Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis</i>

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