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The Reformation as a Youth Movement

JOHN W. CONSTABLE

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In our day there has been a growing interest in the factors that bring about change in society. Theodore Roszak calls attention to the phenomenon of a growing new "counter culture":

How shall we characterize the counter culture they are in the way of haphazardly assembling? Clearly one cannot answer the question by producing a manifesto unanimously endorsed by the malcontented younger generation: the counter culture is scarcely so disciplined a movement. It is something in the nature of a medieval crusade: a variegated procession constantly in flux, acquiring and losing members all along the route of march. Often enough it finds its own identity in a nebulous symbol or song that seems to proclaim little more than "we are special . . . we are different . . . we are outward-bound from the old corruptions of the world." Some join the troop only for a brief while, long enough to enter an obvious and immediate struggle: a campus rebellion, an act of war-resistance, a demonstration against racial injustice. Some may do no more than flourish a tiny banner against the inhumanities of the technocracy; perhaps they pin on a button declaring "I am a human being: do not mutilate, spindle, or tear." Others, having cut themselves off hopelessly from social acceptance, have no option but to follow the road until they reach the Holy City. No piecemeal reforms or minor adjustments of what they leave behind would make turning back possible for them.¹

¹ Theodore Roszak, *The Making of a Coun-*

The parallels between then, the period of the Reformation, and now are striking: changing social patterns brought on by a growing money economy, a movement that grew out of the university experience of the reformers, a period of more time for thought, young people that were beginning to criticize the society in which they found themselves, and an establishment against which many were directing their darts of opposition.

The new century of the period of reform brought some very rapid changes into the late medieval world. The emergence of modern states with stronger rulers gave evidence that there were changes afoot. The rise of a newly organized and rapidly growing class of wealthy men with both time and money to spend on new ideas was symbolic of changes yet to be seen. The children of these men of growing means were to become some of the significant leaders of the new movement. Many of this newer generation found themselves in the expanding universities on the continent of Europe. The university movement was the source of many of the new ideas that permeated the changing society. The rise of criticism of both society and the church began to find expression in the works of those educated in the church schools. There was, above all, a monolithic societal

ter Culture (Garden City, N. Y.: Anchor, 1968), pp. 48—49.

structure, the church, against which the criticism could well direct itself in such formative days. Harold Grimm has directed attention to these significant changes in the early days of the 16th century in a very direct manner.²

Given the fact that many of the changes that were taking place in the beginning of the 16th century are analogous to those pressing us today, one is forced to examine them to see not only their roots but also the consequences for the history of the Western world.

The leadership in the movement of the 16th century which we have chosen to call the Reformation was in the hands of a change-minded group of rebellious youth, or "young Turks." Over the space of nearly four and a half centuries this fact has often eluded us. In the sense that this century could have maintained a revolt of any kind, it was a dramatic change brought about by both young theologians and youthful laymen. The history of the western world has often colored them older than they were, while their own contemporaries more often despised their youth.

The "Young Luther" school has for years stressed the importance of the formative years upon the reformer of Wittenberg. Much of Luther's significant work was produced in the years before 1521, when he was 38. Those who participated in the Reformation were often members of the "under thirty generation."

Luther's relative youth may in part account for his strong interest in the education of children. One of his most influential works was dedicated to youth—the

² Harold Grimm, *The Reformation Era* (New York: Macmillan, 1965), Chap. 1.

Small Catechism of 1529. He wrote to the city councilmen:

If children were instructed and trained in schools or elsewhere where there were learned and well-trained schoolmasters and schoolmistresses to teach the languages, the other arts, and history, they would hear the happenings and sayings of all the world and learn how it fared with various cities, estates, kingdoms, princes, men, and women; thus they could in a short time set before themselves, as in a mirror, the character, life, counsels and purposes, success and failure of the whole world from the beginning. As a result of this knowledge, they could form their own opinions and adapt themselves to the course of this outward life in the fear of God, draw from history the knowledge and understanding of what should be sought and what avoided in this outward life, and become able also by this standard to assist and direct others.³

Many of Luther's opponents in the ecclesiastical establishment were comfortably on the other side of 30. Leo X (1475 to 1521) was 46 when he announced the excommunication of the German priest. His successor, Clement VII, showed little inclination to do anything about the spread of the Lutheran ideas and his age at his death (56) put him in line with the older men of his day. Paul III (1468—1549) ascended to the papal throne in his 66th year. He did depend, however, on the efforts of the young Lainez and Salmeron at the Council of Trent after 1545. After

³ *To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany that They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools*, Martin Luther, *Works of Martin Luther*, Lenker Edition, IV (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publishing House, 1915 to 1932), 106—7. See *Luther's Works*, American Edition, 45 (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1962), 368—69.

several aged and interim popes, the scepter fell to Paul IV (1476—1559), who had some early reform experience while he was a member of the Oratory of Divine Love. The pope who closed the age of reform and also the Council of Trent, Pius IV (1499—1565), was in his 60s while engaged in reestablishing the Roman Church in Europe. There were exceptions in the leadership of the church. Albert of Mainz (1490—1545) was only 23 when he became archbishop in 1513.

On the Third Sunday After Easter, April 25, 1518, the 35-year-old Martin Luther appeared at the Heidelberg meeting of the Augustinian chapter to consider the 28 theological and 12 philosophical theses presented for dispute. Luther impressed a large number of the younger men. Martin Bucer, one of those present, wrote to Beatus Rhenanus at Basle:

I will oppose to you a certain theologian, not, indeed, one of our number, but one who has been heard by us in the last few days, one who has got so far away from the bonds of the sophists and the trifling of Aristotle, one who is so devoted to the Bible, and is so suspicious of antiquated theologians of our school . . . that he appears to be diametrically opposed to our teachers. . . . He is Martin Luther, that abuser of indulgences, on which we have relied too much.⁴

Others, too, among the young theologians, including John Brenz, Theobald Dillichanus, and Erhard Schnepf, must have sought Luther's company, for Bucer continues:

To return to Martin Luther: although our chief men refuted him with all their

⁴ Preserved Smith, *Luther's Correspondence*, I (Philadelphia: The Lutheran Publication Society, 1913), 57.

might, their wiles were not able to make him move an inch from his propositions. His sweetness in answering is remarkable, his patience in listening is incomparable, in his explanations you would recognize the acumen of Paul, not of Scotus, his answers, so brief, so wise, and drawn from the Holy Scriptures, easily made all his hearers his admirers.⁵

In 1519, Luther and the new university at Wittenberg became the center for the expanding Reformation. Both seemed to attract a growing number of the budding theologians from Germany and many other parts of Europe. The 22-year-old Melancthon had already arrived the year before. He had successfully completed the master of arts program at Tübingen after he had met the requirements for the bachelor of arts at Heidelberg at the age of 15. The M. A. had been "denied shortly thereafter (by Heidelberg) because of his youthful appearance."⁶ This youthful companion of Luther issued the first edition of his *Loci* in 1521 at the age of 25.

When it became evident that the elector of Saxony would protect Luther and when the pope felt that the elector should not be alienated in view of the coming election of a new elector of the Holy Roman emperor, the pope sent several people to try to deal with the problems in Saxony that were related to the reform movement. In his attempts to maintain the political and military support of the elector of Saxony, the pope employed 28-year-old Charles von Miltitz (1490—1529) as his envoy.

Luther here met the 50-year-old Cajetan,

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ K. G. Bretschneider et al., *Corpus Reformatorum*, I (Berlin and Leipzig: C. A. Schwetschke, 1834 ff.), clvi.

the papal legate, who as an older representative of the church establishment tried to adjudicate the matter in spite of the fact that Luther had been declared a notorious heretic by the pope himself. The cardinal was cagey enough to try to win over Luther and thus his protector, the elector, lest the vote of the Saxon be committed against the papal candidate for emperor. Von Miltitz came to negotiate with Martin Luther in 1518 and to bring the coveted Golden Rose for Frederick of Saxony. This meeting of youthful Germans took place in Spalatin's home at Lochau Jan. 4—6, 1519. Luther agreed to submit himself to the pope, and apparently a reconciliation had been effected. The pope, however, did not receive a true picture of the situation. The aged emperor, Maximilian, died a week later and the political scene changed again.

The election of the new emperor was completed on June 28, 1519, and the Spanish king, Charles I, began his rule after being crowned at Aachen in 1520. He was only 19 at this time. As the grandson of Ferdinand and Isabella he followed in the footsteps of "the most holy and Catholic emperors" of the Spanish line.

Another opponent of Luther was John Maier of Eck (1486—1543). He had received his doctor of divinity degree at the age of 24 and spent the remainder of his life as a professor at Ingolstadt. His dislike of Luther showed itself quite early in his attacks on the theses of 1517. At Leipzig in 1519 this 33-year-old leader of the papal position challenged Andrew Bodenstein of Carlstadt (1480—1541) to debate propositions they had both submitted which were based on Luther's theses. Carlstadt, who was 39 and a professor at Wittenberg,

was no match for the wily Eck. The disputation then continued between Luther and Eck.

In addition to Carlstadt there were a number of young men present at Leipzig to support the German reformer. John Agricola (1499—1566), an early friend of Luther, was an auditor at the meetings. The duke of Pomerania, Barnim XI (1501 to 1573), who later was the instrument for bringing the reform movement to his own areas through Bugenhagen, was an 18-year-old guest at the debate from the lay side of the church. Among the clerical friends of Luther was Caspar Cruciger (1504—1548), present at the tender age of 15. This man, who later became professor of theology and preaching at Wittenberg, has been called "the youngest and most precocious"⁷ of the followers of the German Reformation. Numbered also among the supporters at this confrontation was George Rhau (1488 to 1548), the 31-year-old cantor of the church of St. Thomas in Leipzig, who had been graduated from the university in the previous year. After he joined the Lutheran cause he wrote music for the new church movement.

Not everyone who came to Leipzig could be listed with the youthful corps, however. John Lang (1480—1548), an early friend of Martin Luther who had been with him the previous year at Heidelberg and who was destined to help him with both Hebrew and Greek, was 39 years old. The meeting was called by 48-year-old Duke George of Albertine Saxony (1471 to 1539), who was not at all sympathetic to the Lutheran cause. Frederick the Wise

⁷ Walter G. Tillmanns, *The World and Men Around Luther* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1959), p. 94.

(1463—1525), elector of Ernestine Saxony and protector of the teacher from his Wittenberg University, likewise could not have qualified as a young man.

After the debate failed to settle the problems in the church, the lines were more sharply drawn between Luther and the papal party. Eck departed to convince the pope that Luther was a heretic and should be condemned. Leo's bull *Exsurge domine* was burned by Martin Luther at the Ulster Gate on Dec. 10, 1520, along with a number of other works including Gratian's *Decretals*. In that year Luther also published his three great tracts. That he had not yet felt himself to be outside the Roman Church can be shown by his *Freedom of a Christian Man*, which was dedicated to the pope himself.

Meanwhile, Charles V as the newly crowned emperor was ready to meet the problems of the reform movement in German lands. The pope had completed his condemnation of Luther with the bull *Decet pontificem romanum* on Jan. 3, 1521. The 21-year-old emperor, needing to meet with the German estates, called for a diet at Worms and cited Luther to appear. In spite of the counsel of his friends who were concerned for his life after the bull of condemnation, Luther was elated, since he had earlier called for a meeting before the German estates to consider religious matters in the German areas.

The papal nuncio sent to Worms to meet the religious problems created by the Lutheran cause was the 41-year-old Aleander (1480—1542). Luther, now 38 himself, chose as his companion Nicholas von Amsdorf (1483—1565), to whom Luther had dedicated his *Address to the Christian No-*

bility in 1520 and who remained a staunch supporter of Luther in many times of controversy.

The leaders of both parties at the diet were older men: Spalatin (1484—1545); Contarini (1483—1542); Capito (1472 to 1541). But youth was also represented. Luther had brought with him Petzensteiner, probably a young monk, as his road companion, and also Peder von Swaven (1496—1551), a young Danish student who was later to play a major role in the reformatory work of the Danish church under Christian II. Among those who gathered to hear the fateful words of Luther at Worms was Philip of Hesse, who was 17 years old.

Luther left Worms before the imperial edict against him was promulgated by Charles. He was spirited off by some of his friends to the Wartburg Castle near Eisenach. While he was hiding there and working on his translation of the New Testament, the scene in Wittenberg was changing severely and the riots of the iconoclasts were causing several radical developments to occur. In the latter days of the year three men had come to Wittenberg who are often called the "Zwickau prophets," Thomas Drechsel, Mark Stübner, and Nicholas Storch.

The 25-year-old Melancthon did not know what to do about them. They made a more favorable impression on 22-year-old Martin Cellarius (1499—1564), who was moved by their argument. He later left the side of Luther and turned to a moderate form of Anabaptism because of his views on the baptism of children.

In the early months of the following year Luther preached a series of eight sermons in which he attempted to restore both

religious and political order to the town and university. Carlstadt was alienated by Luther's action and left to join the followers of Ulrich Zwingli, stopping for a short time at Strassburg before eventually becoming a professor at the University of Basel until his death.

By 1525 it was clear that a serious problem over the Lord's Supper was developing between Luther and Zwingli. A written work by Cornelius Hoen (or Honius), a Dutch physician, had been circulating among both Lutheran and Reformed churches. It opted for a spiritual interpretation of Christ's presence in the sacrament against Luther's view of the real presence of His body and blood in the sacrament.

Philip of Hesse, who was then 25 years old, urged Luther and Zwingli to resolve the problem before it would split the movement of reform in the church. Forty-year-old Jacob Sturm (1489—1553) is usually credited with the suggestion that both Luther and Zwingli meet at Marburg in 1529. At this meeting it became evident that age was beginning to creep up on the movement and that the number of younger men being attracted was growing smaller. Leaders were older and more fixed in their positions. Luther had become intractable in his position, and Zwingli was likewise firm.

One of those supporting Zwingli along with Sturm was Ambrosius Blaurer (1492 to 1564), 31 years old and later destined to carry out several Zwinglian reforms in southwestern Germany. He and Erhard Schnepf (1495—1558) were the early reformers of Württemberg when Ulrich was recalled as duke in 1534.

The Swiss reformer was supported also by John Oecolampadius (1482—1531), who had already brought about the reform

of Basel in 1523. His work on the sacrament, *Wahre und ächte Erklärung der Worte des Herrn: das ist mein Leib*, had supported Zwingli's position and had irritated the Lutherans.

Luther counted on men like Andrew Osiander (1498—1552), who is known primarily for the controversy over justification that bears his name. Caspar Cruciger, 25-years-old, also stood staunchly by the side of Luther. John Brenz, one of the very early young followers of the German reformer was at Marburg too. Though only 30, he was already a veteran in the struggle over the sacrament. In 1526—at the age of 27—he had produced his *Syngramma Suevicum* on the sacrament, a work which Luther regarded so highly that he wrote an introduction to the subsequent German version of it.⁸ Brenz, who was destined to become the dynamic and controversial leader of southwestern Germany, supported his mentor at Marburg and after he rose to power in Württemberg in 1534 in his 35th year.

Charles V had been reconciled with Clement VII and had been crowned by him at Bologna in February 1530. He returned to Germany for the first time in almost 10 years. It was evident to the emperor that the cause of reform was divided. He had left the administration of the German area in the hands of his brother, Ferdinand (1503—1564), who was only 19 years old when he inherited the task of dealing with the religious problems in that part of the empire. Ferdinand had had no success in resolving the religious problems.

The Diet of Augsburg was called for the

⁸ Johann George Walch, ed., *Dr. Martin Luther's Sämmtliche Schriften*, XX (St. Louis: Concordia, 1881—1910), 521—81.

spring of 1530. Charles, now 30, presided. The Roman position was represented by Eck and the cardinal legate, Lawrence Campeggio (1474—1539). Brenz, 31 at this time, found himself counselor to Melancthon. Chancellor George Brueck (1483 to 1557) was the more renowned member of the delegation. He had been at Worms in 1521 and held a position of greater respect than the younger theologians, since he had been a law professor at Wittenberg. It was he who wrote the introduction to the Augsburg Confession and read it publicly before the emperor.

In the year that Luther posted his theses a movement called the Oratory of Divine Love came into existence when about 50 Italian religious and lay leaders assembled at Rome. Their desire was for reform of the church under papal leadership, but their position brought some of the "members close to the Lutheran emphasis of justification by faith alone."⁹ Several leaders were contemporaries of Luther in their early 30s when they began their reform programs. Jacob Sadoletto (1477—1547) and Gasparo Contarini (1483—1542) like Luther had a strong interest in advancing theology through a study of the Scriptures. Other Roman reformers were Giovanni Caraffa (1476—1559), who chose to attempt reform of the Establishment by fostering the Theatine Order and by establishing the Sommaschi and Barnabites, and Reginald Pole (1500—1558), who had been in Italy during the rise of these orders (1521 to 1527).

When violence broke out in Switzerland, Ulrich Zwingli, both spiritual and political leader of several Swiss cities, lost his life in 1531 at the second battle of Kappell. Hein-

rich Bullinger (1504—1575), his 27-year-old son-in-law, succeeded him as leader of the reform efforts in Switzerland. In 1549 he joined the surviving Zwinglian church with that of John Calvin in the *Consensus Tigurinus*.

Youthful leaders were also found in the radical wing of the Reformation. In some cases they represented the inheritance of the Zwickau prophets and in others they demonstrated an entirely new area of dissent from the Establishment. They were dissenters not only from Rome but also from Lutheran and Calvinistic positions. These figures represented, perhaps more than the others, those types that Roszak characterizes as

scarcely disciplined . . . a variegated procession constantly in flux, acquiring and losing members all along the route of march . . . it finds its own identity in a nebulous symbol or song that seems to proclaim little more than "we are special . . . we are different . . . we are outward-bound from the old corruptions of the world."¹⁰

A number of those who became followers of Luther in their teens or early 20s later became "radicals" or Anabaptists. Wolfgang Capito (1478—1541), who had been an ardent admirer of Luther and who had been active in Strassburg before Bucer came, found himself in a mediating position as he attempted a reconciliation between the rapidly disintegrating reform positions. Sebastian Franck (1499—1543) was one of the young men at Heidelberg who found a strong interest in Luther's views. He ministered for two years as a Lutheran pastor at Ansbach-Bayreuth (1525—1528), but by 1529 was a leader

⁹ Grimm, p. 372.

¹⁰ See note 1 above.

among the "spirituals" at Strassburg. Melchior Hofmann (1500—1543) cast his lot with the Lutheran cause at Livonia when he was 23. His disillusionment with the German cause took place three years later in his dispute with Bugenhagen in Stockholm over the Lutheran sacramental position. At 33 he was at Strassburg attempting to set up his "New Jerusalem," an experiment which ended in his being sentenced to life imprisonment for opposing the Establishment.

Thomas Müntzer (1490—1525) was a Lutheran pastor in Zwickau and there joined those who were dissatisfied with the conservative nature of the Lutheran reform. He was 30 when he had to flee Zwickau because of his views on infant baptism. After bad experiences at Prague and Allstedt, he returned to Mühlhausen in 1525 to help lead the disastrous Peasants' Revolt, during which he lost his life.

At 33 Caspar von Schwenkfeld (1489 to 1561) came to Wittenberg and was impressed by Luther. Like many others, he too found his path away from the Wittenberg position and into Strassburg. After flirting for a time with the Zwinglian position, he fathered his own movement and became prominent in Silesia.

In south Germany two men stood out for their Anabaptist leadership. Hans Denck (1500—1527) had studied at Ingolstadt and at Basel. Only 27 at the time of his death, he had been influenced theologically by the Zwinglian ideas of Oecolampadius and the Anabaptist tenets of Müntzer. In 1523 he was an active worker in Nürnberg, but eventually he was tried and banished because of his views. He spent the last two years of his life in Augsburg and there succumbed to the plague.

Conrad Grebel (1498—1526) was the acknowledged leader of the Swiss Brethren. Much of the history of his 3-year prominence in the movement is obscured by the lack of adequate records. Georg Blaurock (1492—1529), a youthful supporter and friend of Grebel, had defended Grebel's viewpoint on infant baptism before the Zurich Council and argued against the stance of Zwingli and Bullinger in 1525.

David Joris (1501—1556) was a Dutch Lutheran who turned to the Anabaptist movement. By his 25th birthday this painter of stained-glass windows had run into much trouble in his zeal for the Lutheran cause. Roman Catholic authorities fined him, whipped him, and banished him for three years. He turned from Lutheranism to Anabaptism when a martyr called out to him from the stake, "Brother."¹¹ His extravagant ecstatic claims to be the third David alienated him even from the broad theological positions that were current in Strassburg. In a public burning at Basel in 1559 both his books and his dead body were condemned to the flames.

As the years passed, those who had been the rebellious youth of Germany supporting Luther were, like their mentor, aging. Some, like Gabriel Zwilling (1487—1558), had turned their attention against the "fanatics." Zwilling was an outstanding pulpit orator for the Lutheran cause, which he had joined already in 1517 at the age of 30. His ministry at Torgau was strongly orthodox. George Major (1502—1574), who was later involved in a controversy over good works, had joined the faculty at Wittenberg as a friend and colleague of Luther at 34 years of age. Another who

¹¹ Roland Bainton, *The Travail of Religious Liberty* (New York: Harper, 1951), p. 126.

had come to teach Hebrew at Wittenberg when he was 29 years old was Matthew Aurogallus (1490—1543). His help for Luther in translating and revising the Old Testament was indispensable. Another intimate of the Wittenberg teacher was Frederick Myconias (1491—1546), who had undergone personal spiritual struggles similar to Luther's. As an eloquent preacher, he was chosen by Luther for a commission to England in 1538.

The first "Lutheran" pastor, ordained by Luther himself on May 14, 1525, was George Rörer (1492—1557), who at age 33 was active in editing the works of the Reformer and in conducting church visitations. Another young friend of Luther was Jerome Weller (1499—1576), who was chosen as Hans Luther's tutor. He had taken his master's degree at the age of 20. Among the young students of this generation was also Justus Menius (1499 to 1558). He too found a home at Wittenberg in 1519 after having spent time at Erfurt. His ministry in the Lutheran cause was spent in Eisenach and at Gotha. Rounding out this newer crop of young theologians who gathered about Wittenberg was Vitus Dietrich (1506—1549). He had come to the university town in 1527 at the age of 27. A frequent table companion of Luther, he later served the church at Nürnberg. His commentaries on the Old Testament were some of the earliest and best among the Lutheran party.

Several laymen were drawn to Luther, too, particularly men like Albert Dürer (1471—1528) and Hans Sachs (1494 to 1576). Many of them were quite young. Hans Lufft (1495—1584), who printed many of the Reformation writings, had just reached his 30th year when he became

prominent. The musician John Walter (1496—1570) was only 28 years old when he produced the *Wittenberg Hymnal* of 1524. He made his contribution to the Lutheran way by writing many hymns while serving as court composer of Saxony. Two young biographers of Luther should also be cited. Matthew Ratzeberger (1501 to 1559), a physician, had entered the university in 1516. His life of Luther was one of the earliest to appear in print. The finest Luther biographer of the 16th century was John Mathesius (1504—1565), who also wrote hymns.

When one turns to the second generation of reformers and their movements, one is again impressed by the number of youthful men who contributed to reform movements. The great leader of the Swiss areas in this period, John Calvin (1509 to 1564), was 19 when he came under the influence of Protestant ideas in France, and at 27 he published his first edition of the *Institutes*. The men who stopped him in Geneva in August 1536 were Guillaume Farel (1489—1565), who at 47 was considered "old," and the 25-year-old Pierre Viret (1511—1571). The man who became the successor to Calvin was Theodore Beza (1519—1605), who cast his lot with his tutor when he was 29. Both men had entered the Swiss reform movement after studying law at the University at Orleans.

It should also be remembered that Henry VIII (1491—1547) ascended the English throne at the age of 18, was 28 when he contended for the imperial throne, and was only 30 when he answered Luther with his *Defense of the Seven Sacraments*. His daughter Elizabeth became queen at 25 and forced the Settle-

ment on the English nation one year later. Robert Barnes (1495—1540), an English Augustinian, visited Wittenberg when he was 33. Though he attempted to bring the Lutheran reform to England, he finally lost his life in the ill-fated attempt to bring Germany and England together in the marriage of Henry to Anne of Cleves.

Included among the second generation of Roman Catholic leaders is James Lainez (1512—1565), one of the first Jesuits. In 1534 at the age of 22 he joined the Jesuit order after having studied at Alcala and played an important role at Trent. Along with him was the even younger Alphonsus Salmeron (1515—1585). Both men were companions of Loyola and were leaders for Paul III at the Council of Trent. Salmeron was 31 when the meetings began. Another striking young man during this period of Roman Catholic reform was Charles Borromeo (1538—1584). He served as secretary of state for Pius IV and was only 24 years old when the Tridentine meetings were reconvened in 1562. He had received his doctorate in law at the age of 21. Not only evangelicals but also Roman Catholics had to rely on youth to carry on the reform movements of the 16th century.

Michael Servetus (1511—1553), a "heretic" hunted by all the churches of the Establishment, was only 21 when he wrote his challenging *Errors of the Trinity*. Faustus Socinus (1539—1604) was 23 when he opposed the Establishment by rejecting the divinity of Christ.

The picture would not be complete without considering the twin brothers Juan Valdes (1500—1541) and Alphonse Valdes (1500—1532), who were Spanish humanists. Alphonse wrote an attack on the papacy in 1527 and two years later at

29 wrote a bitter satire on the church. Both men were forced to flee to Naples, where they met Ochino. Sebastian Castellio (1515—1563), who had met Calvin at Strassburg in 1540, joined the Swiss reform movement as a teacher at Calvin's Academy. In 1544 at the age of 29 he broke with his mentor over matters of Biblical interpretation and later attacked him from a safer Swiss area when Servetus was burned. Castellio's *De haereticis* proved that such rebels could argue convincingly for the toleration of those with whom the Establishment might disagree.

"The Danish Luther," Hans Tausen (1494—1561), who directed the Lutheran Reformation in his land, was 29 when he converted to Luther's cause in Wittenberg. He had just passed the "age of trust" by two years when he became the royal chaplain for Frederick I.

John Aurifaber (1519—1575), one of Luther's table companions who later edited both the Jena Edition of Luther's works and the Table Talk, was 27 when Elector John Frederick called him into service during the Smalcald Wars in the year of Luther's death. One of the Lutheran polemicists who took on Calvin in written debate was Tilemann Heshusius (1527 to 1588). At 26 he was working in Wittenberg and in 1556 he was deposed as superintendent at Goslar because of his positions. Even more controversial was Matthias Flacius of Jena (1520—1575), who has been called "the greatest Lutheran theologian of the 'younger generation.'" ¹² He came to Wittenberg at the age of 21. His opposition to Melancthon after the death of Luther caused him to suffer much for his faith.

¹² Tillmanns, p. 121.

THE REFORMATION AS A YOUTH MOVEMENT

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We have attempted to show that there were many similarities between the Reformation era and our own times. We often hear statements today that remind us that this is a revolutionary age in which youth must be heard. While it would be diffi-

cult to prove that in the 16th century youth even considered themselves to be "revolutionary," it is nevertheless demonstrable that young men were heard and heeded in that century.

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