

In 1573 William of Orange, a former Catholic and confidante of Charles V, joined the Reformed church. He brought to it military firmness and great personal courage. Although assassinated in 1584, he brought a measure of unity and stability to the Dutch resistance that effectively curbed the Spanish inroads. He was providentially aided by Philip's bungling of the leadership of the Spanish forces. By 1609 the wars were concluded and the Low Countries were divided on a Protestant/Catholic line but they were all free of Spain. The division has persisted ever since and whatever else may be true, the Low Countries permitted greater tolerance in religious diversion than was permitted anywhere else on the continent.

Scandinavia

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Scandinavia is composed of Denmark, Norway and Sweden. Denmark was for many centuries the dominant force and controlled the territories of Norway and Sweden. Danish rule in Sweden was ended after 1523 and in Norway after 1905. (Further study: the Union of Colmar, 1397)

Denmark

The Reformation in Denmark was accomplished over the years 1518-1533. The villain, I suppose, was King Christian II, a chameleon-like figure who changed sides and loyalties as it served his own cause. He was deposed in Denmark in 1523, his atrocious conduct in the Swedish revolution part of the problem, and succeeded by Frederik I, a protestant. The chief missioner was the Lutheran, Hans Taussen, although he had a lot of support from disenchanted Carmelites. A Bible translation was effected in 1529 by Christian Pedersen and in 1533 with the coming of Christian III, Denmark became a thoroughly protestant country, adopting a confession of faith in 1536 and institutionalizing a Danish Lutheran State church.

Sweden

Sweden began a vigorous rebellion against Danish authority about 1512 and the effort was finally successful under Gujstavus Vasa about 1523. Vasa, from 1523 to 1529, strove to build Swedish national identity and confiscated the wealth of the church to aid the recovery of the edonomics of his land in 1527. The Petri brothers were the instrumental evangelicals and Vasa supported the reformed