



Marriage Reforms of Religious Reformers in Early Modern Europe

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Abstract

The Reformation in the 16-17th century was in a transition period from Middle age to Modern time. During this time, politics, economy, religion and culture developed rapidly. Through the Reformation, people were liberated from control of church and diadem, and some new credos of ethic and morality were constituted. The marriage reform was one of many reform projects by religious reformers, who presented their opinions on marriage and made their own marriage become true. Their married practice made a big blow on the celibacy of Catholic. The marriage reform which was proposed by reformers affected the development of matrimony in Europe, and it was an important progress in the history of human marriage. However, the statuses of women were still lower, and the reformers also emphasized patriarchy, which was a shortage of the reformation in marriage.

Key words: The reformation; Religious reformers; Marriage; Europe

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In the time of Reformation, the marriage was one side of the whole Reformation, which was very significant. But until now, Chinese historians seldom paid attention to this area, and international historians did not do more researches on this, so it was worthwhile to do some deeper researches on this subject. (Elliot, 1993; Petersen, 1997; Mansch and Peters, 2016; Mason, 2004, etc.; Lin, 1997; Zhang, 2005, etc.)

THE CHRISTIAN VIEWS OF MARRIAGE BEFORE THE REFORMATION

In the first chapter of Genesis in Bible, there was a story about how God created male and female. God wrote in his books: “Man should not be alone, and he needs a helpmate”(Genesis, 2: 19). In ancient rules of Judaism, Jews emphasized the importance of marriage. They thought the purpose of sexual intercourse was in order to multiply and procreate, and sex was one demand of the God. If anyone who did not dedicate to do this, his or her behaviors were like putting humans’ blood out, which could weaken the essence of deity, and the intention of deity would be apart from Israel. The Creation story said that God intended men and women to love and cared for each other as “partners” who supported and helped each other, neither superior to the other. (Guthrie,1994, p. 203) Although Jesus did not oppose marriage, he appeared to approve of singleton, and he could completely devote himself into works of God by celibacy, which also explained the reason why apostles of Jesus abandoned their families and followed Jesus without complaint. Apostle Paul who held the same opinions as Jesus considered unmarried men whose aims were to gain attention of God, should focus on God’s affaires, so marriage was taken for a conflict to combination with spirit of God. Contemporarily, Paul also admitted the necessity of marriage due to the need of human beings’ procreating and multiplying, and he compared marriage as the combination between Jesus and church, which represented a deeper meaning that marriage was a kind of belief. (Elliot, 1993, p. 19)

Celibacy of Catholicism in Medieval time derived from philosophy of ancient Greece and Rome. Plato ever said: “Body was curse of all sins, which impeded men to exert their wisdom. Just by breaking away from lust, people can see the bright truth. (Plato, 1888, pp. 235-240)” Stoic also thought, the presence of fleshliness made

men became their own prisoners, if anyone wanted to be absolutely free, they must hate their bodies and abandon all of enjoyment. (Synnott, 2002, p. 11) St. Augustine considered that there were three motives of marriage: procreation, loyalty, and sacrament. He reckoned that married couples' sexual behaviors should be in order to procreate, and should avoid to have sexual behaviors on the basis of pursuing lust. St. Jerome's opinions were crazier and more fury, he thought that the sexual behavior inside marriage was also a kind of vice. (Garton, 2014, p.66) He disdained that kind of happiness, which was unclean, nauseous, ribald, and corrupt. Theologian Thomas Aquinas much concerned about the status of men and women in marriage, he insisted lust of women were more than lust of men, so husband should shift the lust of wife from time to time, husbands destined to have absolute power of controlling women. The opinions of these philosophers and theologians gradually came into being the theoretical basis of Celibacy in religious philosophy.

Abstinence in Medieval time had been evolving the celibacy of clergy inside the church finally. In A. D. 306, theologians on religious conference in Elvira formally regulated that it was inhibitive that bishops, monks, and priest had wives. In A. D. 567, the religious conference in Tours stipulated that the bishops could not build their family, and their parents, sisters, sons and daughters must reside outside the dwelling place of clergies (if they had). Furthermore, clergymen must guarantee that bishops do not have sexual relationship with their spouses, so they often drove those who were called "strangers" out of churches. In A.D. 1123, leaders in the first Trent religious conference called up all of the senior clergymen must insist their abstinence. St. Augustine thought that although procreation was very important for the multiplying of human beings, but for the significance of religion, sacrament was a gift from God to all the men and women. (Clark, 1996, p.79) Apparently, once marriage was endowed with concept of holy meaning, it was naturally for churches to control all of the marriages and families. From then on, marriages of Christian believers had been dominated by churches everywhere. Finally, canon of religion regulated that anyone could not divorce randomly except death.

Since the 14th century, Italians had been welcoming the time of Renaissance, and the increase of money and fortune in some places were caused by the new open commercial system and development of wisdom of persons. After people had more materials and money, the lust of persons became stronger, and abstinence or celibacy in church was challenged by corporeal demand. The idea that Christianity was a kind of religion and life way was impacted by people's lust. People began to emphasize their own identity, and they accepted the view that their opinion, lust and impulsion were natural requirement. Italians were welcoming a time full of sex and sexuality.

In the time of Renaissance, passion brought great impact on lives in church and secular world. Renaissance was a kind of secular, nude, substantial, ideal movement, and a new social realism was that people could enjoy sex unlimitedly and ideally. But because of its egregious demand, Renaissance had more emphasized on art and individual than religion and politics, there would be a feeling that people in Renaissance had immoderate libido. Marriage in time of Renaissance became more complex and disordered, until 16 century, the time of Reformation, church and government began to adjust the relationship between marriage and family. But women in Renaissance began to liberate from control of men, and they believed that God also created women who should have the same right and character the same as men. (Bouwisma, 2000, p. 33.)

THE PRACTICE OF RELIGIOUS REFORMERS ON MARRIAGE

In the 16th century, Reformation broke out in Germany. One important side of reformation was the problems of marriage of clergy. As a priest and leader of reformers, Martin Luther thought that celibacy of clergies in Church was unreasonable in theory and unworkable in practice according to basic tenets and experience of Jesus. In 1525, Luther who was 42 years old, made his oath become true, he married Katharina von Bora. When Luther married, his opponents said that devils and common people should laugh at him. Most Catholics said Luther committed a sin and his sons and daughters would be cursed, and his offspring can be opposed the spirit of God. To the contrary, Luther appeared to be very glory about his marriage, he thought that someone may disdain him because of his marriage, but angels would bless his family, and demons would cry because of his happy. Luther had 6 children, but one child was aborted at 1 year old, and another died at 14 years old. In fact, Luther's marriage life did not affect his business, on the contrary boosted his status in the Reformation. On one side, his wife helped him manage his family, on the other side, his children could bring glee to him, and his family was a model of all of the protestant family after them.

Reformer Melanchthon had always lived in Wittenberg during his young time, and University of Saxony was his home. He often complained of his poor salary, although he had much opportunity to go out, but always gave it up. So he had always been a poor professor in that small city. Melanchthon was a knowledgeable man, but he was not necessarily a good hand in other affairs, and he was not very enthusiastic about dealing with problems, and often panicked at the crisis. Melanchthon faced students from all over Europe every day, which made his life colorful. Melanchthon married Katharina Krapp whose father was a councilor in parliament in 1520. (Schaff, 1888, p. 478)

Although Melanchthon was not a priest, as a famous Protestant reformer, his marriage practice was a great support for Luther's marriage reform, and it was also the best way to oppose Catholic celibacy.

Zwingli, as a reformer and priest, himself entered into the marriage relation in 1522, but from prudential reasons he did not make it public till April 5, 1524 (more than a year before Luther's marriage, which took place June 13, 1525). Such cases of secret marriage were not infrequent, but it would have been better for his fame if, as a reformer, he had exercised self-restraint till public opinion was ripe for the change. His wife, Anna Reinhart, was the widow of Hans Meyer von Knonau, the mother of three children, and lived near Zwingli's house. (Hottinger, 1856, p. 162) Anna was two years older than Zwingli. Their enemies spread the report that Zwingli married for beauty and wealth, but in fact Anna possessed only four hundred guilders besides her wardrobe and jewelry. Moreover, Anna ceased to wear her jewelry after she married this reformer.

In 1536, Calvin accepted a duty as a church clergy in Geneva. From that time, he began to do his Reformation business in Switzerland. Before we discussed marriage of Calvin, we must talk about the character of Calvin, because his motive to marry was different from another reformer. Calvin, who appeared to have no lust on sex, treated everything absolutely serious. He frequently warned the readers not to think, at least not in the first place, of lust and sex. (Oberman, 2003, p. 138) Calvin oppressed all of his desire and lust, and lived in a world full of ideal language and Holy Spirit by his fanatical intellect to God. Marriage of Calvin was wholly arranged by his friends, so the only thing he needed to do was to say yes or no. At last, Bucer arranged Calvin's matrimony with Idelette de Bure, who was a widow of an Anabaptist from the law lands (Belgium). (Picken, 2012, p. 54) Calvin and his wife enjoyed nine years of married life (1540-1549). Although Idelette lived in the shadow of Calvin, she meant a great deal of him. Calvin called her "a woman of matchless type". (Balke, 1999, p. 136) Calvin was really sad at the death of his wife (in 1549) who was a woman of great faith and deep spirituality.

John Knox, a priest and reformer in Scotland, always strived with Queen Mary in Scotland. In 1555, when he was 50 years, he married Margaret Bowes who was from Berwiuk. His wife's mother, Mrs. Elizabeth Bowes, was a faithful follower of Knox. When Margaret married Knox, Mrs. Bowes left her husband (Catholic) and fled to Geneva with her daughter and her pastor son-in-law, because Knox was being persecuted by the Scottish Church at that time. (Petersen, 1997, p. 223) After 5 years, Knox's wife died, Elizabeth Bowes still followed Knox. So, historian Will Durant thought them as 'such three strange people. In 1564, Knox remarried. His wife was a distant relative of the Irish royal family and was only 17 years old, about three times younger than Knox.

However, few people criticized this. She gave birth to three daughters for Knox.

Table 1
Reformers and their wives

Reformers	Marital time	Wives of reformers	Remarks
Luther (Germany)	1525	Katharina von Bora	-
Melanchthon (Germany)	1520	Katharina Krapp	-
Münzer (Germany)	1523	Ottilie von Gersen	-
Carlstadt (Germany)	1521	Anna Von Mochau	-
Zwingli (Switzerland)	1524	Anna Reinhart	-
Calvin (Switzerland)	1540	Idelette de Bure	In 1549, remarry after death of first wife
Bucer (Switzerland)	1522	Elizabeth Silverstein	Remarry after death of first wife
Knox (Scotland)	1555	Marjory Bowes	In 1564, remarry after death of first wife
Hans.Towson (Denmark)	1526	Marry his sister	-

Sources: Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church: Modern Christianity. The German Reformation, A. D. 1517-1530*, Division Second, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1888, p. 478; Johann Jakob Hottinger, *The Life and Times of Ulric Zwingli*, Harrisburg: Theo. F. Scheffer, 1856, p. 162, etc.

THE VIEWPOINTS ON MARRIAGE BY RELIGIOUS REFORMERS

The reformers not only practiced marriage reform by themselves. They also formed and elaborated the Protestant marriage view, and used it to carry out their marriage reform propaganda.

First of all, the reformers first put forward the view against celibacy and in favor of marriage. In 1520, Martin Luther launched an attack against clerical celibacy in his *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation* and declared the papal law on celibacy to be an invention. Like other reformers before him (including Erasmus), on several occasion Luther expressed his view on celibacy and clerical marriage. He declared marriage to be an estate pleasing to God and distinguished it with severity from all forms of fornication and sexual misconduct. (Burghartz, 2004, p. 81) He said: "Although Pope argued against marriage of monks, when the status of marriage was higher than tenet of Pope, the tenet was meaningless. Nobody had the right to detach men and women, having marriage was an order of deity, which was higher than demand of Pope. (Mansch and Peters, 2016, p.144)" Besides, Luther took into consider of benefit of marriage from Physiology, he considered if men were single for long time, they would be weak, fragile, unhealthy, disable, sweating, and odorous, which was dangerous

for anyone. Melancthon thought such enforced celibacy and depriving men of marriage (which God Himself has instituted and left free to men) had never produced any good results, but had brought on many great and evil vices and much iniquity. In 1523, Zwingli said in 49th item in his Sixty-seven Conclusions, “No scandals were serious than scandal that forbidding marriage of clergies on one side, but acquiescing monks to store up their mistresses on the other side, which was a disgrace phenomenon. (Schaff, 1892, p.53)” Calvin pointed out in his book *Institutes of Christian Religion*: “That whether celibacy or marital life was free choice of clergy, nobody was born for singleness, which went against rules of nature, if a clergy thought celibacy was proper for him in his own business, and then we could do not compel him to marry...The marriage of priests, therefore, continued sacred, and was neither regarded as a disgrace, nor thought to cast any stain on their ministry. (Calvin, 2008, pp.257,826)” Knox thought the Catholic’s demands that forbade the marriage of clergy of were against the tenets of gospel, and became tenets of evil, because deity could admit it was free for marriage or not. In his eyes, church in Rome was a place full of whores and prurience.

Secondly, reformers have discussed the relationship between sex and marriage, most of them affirmed it was natural to have sex in life of marriage, but all combat the unnatural sexual behaviors. Luther thought sex intercourse was natural behavior firstly in *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation*: “the pope had as little power to command celibacy as he had to forbid eating, drinking, the natural movement of the bowels, or growing fat. Therefore, no one was bound to obey such a command.” (Luther, 2016, p. 427) Here, Luther looked sexual intercourse as natural movement of bodies. He figured that the oath of singleness would bring person to abyss of demon. Although Minzel praised the priests’ marriage, he refused to accept the marriage concept guided by sexual behavior. He thought there was only one aim of marriage that was to multiply the electorates of God. He quoted the words from Bible: Godly and sapient spirit can prevent procreation from joy of beastly sex intercourse. Such view made Münzer always want to endure marriage with some holy meaning. (Gritsch, 2006, p.43) Melancthon tried hard to oppose unnatural sexual relationship except for behavior of marriage, he thought unnatural and deviant lust could induce devils and make people into unchaste, disorder, and immoral situation. This was not a natural need for blood and flesh and it would make people indulge in the rampant carnal behavior and sexual intercourse. The final result of this behavior was that God would hate you and be angry because of such behavior. Calvin said in *Commentary on Genesis*: “Now, what I have said concerning marriage must be kept in mind; that God intends the human race to be multiplied by generation indeed, but not, as in brute animals, by promiscuous intercourse. For he had joined the man to his wife, that

they might produce a divine, that was, a legitimate seed. Let us then mark whom God here addresses when he commanded them to increase, and to whom he limited his benediction. Certainly he did not give the reins to human passions, but, beginning at holy and chaste marriage, he proceeded to speak of the production of offspring. (Calvin, 1847, p. 98)” For Calvin, marriage was a remedy for sin but not a sin for itself.

Thirdly, reformers also discussed that whether love was needed in marriage and the status between husbands and wives. One side, Luther put forward that both side of spouse should love each other, and love could nourish fortunate marriage. He thought if there was no affection between sex and marriage, there was no meaning in marital life, maybe person would walk up to abyss full of evil, love can conciliate sins between sex and marriage. Another side, Luther held traditional German attitude: Except for procreating, cooking, women had better not ask anything else. Luther had ever said to his wife: “I wish women to recite the Lord’s prayer before they speak.” (Xiao, 2001, p. 114) Wife should respect, love and obey his husband, because men were masters of women. (Kvam and Schearing, 1999, p.252) Luther thought, as a husband, man should properly respect his wife, and he must affirm the contribution of wife who did so much housework, which was a kind of solicitude, even a kind of deference. About housework, Luther seemed to have accepted his wife’s domination with dignity, in area of housework, he complied with his wife, but on other business, he complied with deity. Toward the status of women in family, Calvin deemed that house was proper to women, who should submit the control of husbands. Calvin thought a disloyal wife should be sentenced to death. Although the marriage life of Calvin was less romantic than life of Luther, Calvin also considered husbands and wives should respect each other. He had praised his wife: “She was always my loyal helper when I did my work, and she never made any trouble in my job, even little trouble. When in crisis, hardship and exiling, she never chose to leave me.” (Calvin, 2001, p. 52) At the same words, Knox also thought perfect women should be subject to men, moreover, wife should be helper of his husband. He quoted the words of Paul: man was not one part of women, but women were one part of man. (Dennis, 2003, p. 24) At the same time, Knox thought: against God can nothing be more manifest than that a woman shall be exalted to reign above man. And woman cannot have virtue in equality with man. (Mason, 2004, pp. 12-43) In the background of battling with Queen Marry in Scotland, Knox admitted the necessity of marriage, but he failed to admit the right and power of women.

Fourthly, about divorce and bigamy, reformer also put forward some suggestions. To Martin Luther, marriage was not always fortunate, since there was marriage, there must be divorce, adultery, bigamy. Luther thought reasons of divorce and adultery was very complex

and must be discussed for long time. He believed that marriage was only a suggestion, not an order. To his point of view, adultery can destroy matrimony naturally, and if a wife declined his husband's right, that also means unsuccessful marriage, if any side of spouse declined to have sexual relationship with another side, that also can lead to divorce. (Olsen, 1971, p. 52) Melancthon once made it clear that adultery was immoral, and people must remember that virtue was bound to exist under the control of evil. (Pauck, 1969, p. 75) Although he and Luther acquiesced the remarriage of Philip of Hesse, but that was took into account factors of politic business. In his heart, he disliked any divorce, since divorce meant betraying God, and he said repeatedly: "God had linked the flesh and blood of two people in marriage. They should not be separated. Once marriage was established, there should be no extramarital relationship. (Mansch, Peters, 2016, p. 287)" Zwingli held the same view on this issue as Busser in Strasbourg, which was relatively tolerant, although he also advocated that divorce was not allowed at will. Zwingli believed that in the Gospel of Matthew, there was only one case of adultery after the betrothed, and this was coupled with its reasonable factors. In addition to adultery that can lead to and allow divorce, factors such as abandonment, threat to life, mental derangement can also lead to divorce, which were within the legal scope. Calvin thought any sexual relationship out of marriage was criminal; any person who committed sin of adultery should be sentenced to death; great was the grief of Calvin when the wife of his brother Antoine was found guilty of adultery with Calvin's servant, and the similar behavior of his now married stepdaughter, Judith Stordeur, still more poignantly wounded him. However, Calvin also showed no mercy and believed that they had committed adultery and should be condemned and punished. According to the municipal laws of Geneva, they were exiled. (McNeill, 1967, p.189) When come to divorce, Calvin thought divorce destroyed the holy oath and polluted the purity of spirit of God. However, Calvin accepted reasonable divorce. He suggested to giving advice to couples whose marriage was in crisis. Then, if both sides could not endure with each other, they could divorce, because it was so difficult for a man or women to be always abstinent. There were three situations that divorce was valid: Illegitimate sexual relationship, desertion, and different religions.

Finally, reformers figured matrimony was not a kind of sacrament. To Luther, the sacrament existed in the combination of God's promise and sign, which was a promise accompanied by a sign set by God, or a sign accompanied by a promise. In 1520, Luther wrote in his book *On the Babylonish Captivity of Church*, there were seven Sacrament, and must lay it down, for the time being, that there were only three, baptism, penance and the bread... Matrimony was not a sacrament. (Reynolds, 2016, pp.746-747) Whereas, it did not mean that marriage was not important, holding matrimony can stabilize

the relationship between two people, it was important for family and society. About sacrament, Zwingli explained it with dichotomy, the internality and outside of sacrament both were independent, he denied the surface of sacrament had influence on internality, sacrament was not a miracle, but a kind of symbol, so marriage was not sacrament. (Lindberg, 2002, p.161) Wedding as one kind of sacrament was ascertained by Catholic, Calvin thought it was paradoxical in this ritual, on the one hand, Catholics treated matrimony as holy matter, on the other hand, they forbade the marriage of clergy withal. (Witte, 2012, pp.174-179) Calvin thought marriage was not a sacrament, nothing in Scripture to countenance the idea that marriage was a sacrament. No man ever saw marriage to be a sacrament, until the time of Gregory. And what sober man would ever have thought it such? Marriage was a good and holy ordinance of God; and farming, building, cobbling, and barbering were lawful ordinances of God, and yet were not sacrament. For it was required that a sacrament be not only a work of God but an outward ceremony appointed by God to confirm a promise. Even children would discern that there was no such thing in Matrimony. He thought those sacraments which were falsely so called, included confirmation, penitence, extreme unction, orders and marriage. (Calvin, 1995, pp. 172-173)

All in all, all kinds of viewpoints of marriage put forward by reformers had only one key point, that marriage was better than celibacy of Catholicism. Roland Bainton ever said that the thought of reformers in sixteen century was basis of thought of marriage after sixteen centuries. In Reformation time, marriage was endowed with advanced meaning. Most Protestants held a pragmatic opinion, that the aim of marriage was to procreate babies and bring up children, which was acknowledged by God, everyone in the world had right to marry. At the same time, people began to make a clear distinction that sex was different from marriage, relationship between them was not excluded each other, and also not debases each other, and even not a kind of spiritual marriage relationship. People began to believe marriage was a perfect and complete secular life, which was contacted with economy, politic, and religion. In eyes of reformer, marriage was not a sacrament, so ethic of Protestantism prescribed new tenets and rules in marriage, which only depended on words and practice of reformers. Therefore, transformation of marriage in Reformation time was just commence.

THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF MARRIAGE REFORMS BY RELIGIOUS REFORMERS

Reforms of marriage was not a simple religious change, it also affected politics, economy, and society of Europe. In the first place, the reformation of marriage boosted the

Religious Reformation in Europe. From the 16th century, the sign to differentiated Protestants and Catholics was whether their clergy could marry. Protestants in many countries began to make their marriage became true gradually. In 1525, after Zwingli published his book *Sixty-seven Conclusions*, many reverends in Switzerland began to deny celibacy of Pope. In 1524, parliament in Zurich gave orders that closed most abbeys or transferred them as hospital and schools. Moreover, many monks and nuns who left abbeys were demanded to have marriage. From this we can see, allowing marriage of clergymen had a big shot on Catholicism, at the same time, marriage became a kind of weapon that Protestant opposed Pope. By calling up practice of marriage, situation of corruption in church were controlled, the air of society became fresh, because unnatural sexual behavior was limited. The number of prostitutes and whorehouse were decreased, and the view of family ethic was strengthened. However, the transformation of Protestant marriage sometime looked like too ossified, and reformers just quoted and used theories and evidences of patriarchy from Bible. Because of movement of iconoclast, they forbade and closed too many abbeys, which were safe refuges for many women.

In the second place, there was a great impact on Catholicism by marital reformation of Protestant. Firstly, some Catholic reformers participated in discussion on marriage. In 1563, 'that filthy beast and shameless apostate and back-slider', the radical Italian, Bernardino Ochino, made the mistake of publishing his support for polygamy in print and was banished from church. (Irvin, 2017, pp. 82-83) Secondly, from 1545 to 1564, church of Rome held a series of conferences to discuss marriage, one of the most important was held in Trent, a result of the conference was that Catholics would continue to insist celibacy of priest, and purity or chasteness was more significant than marriage. Moreover, the secular marriage can only be carried out with the consent of the parents. At the same time, the private marriage without the presiding of the priest was declared invalid, and the marriage notice must be made before the marriage. From all of these, although Catholics clung to singleness, the corruption inside church was ameliorated. Pope felt if there were no efficient rules on changing corruption in church, they would lose more disciples. For example, Pope ordered to put clothes on naked figures on walls of churches, which pictured by Michelangelo, although it appeared to be ridiculous, we can see decision from Pope to reinforce disciplines in Rome church. (Porter and Prince, 2003, p.20)

In the third place, the reformation of Protestant marriage had impact on transformation of politic in Europe. One side, Protestant had ever participated in dispute of marriage between church and royal members, for example, taking part in marital problems of Philip of Hesse in Germany, Henry VIII in England, and Queen

Mary in Scotland. No matter what the aims of the reformers were (involving in royal marriage issues), the key point was that they could get more opportunity to participate the business of royal family, they could elevate their status in Europe business and weaken influence of Pope, the situation in Europe began to become more and more complex. At the same time, those kings and sovereignties in Europe who want to be strong and carry out feudal autocracy also benefited from it. On the other side, because reformers denied marriage as a kind of sacrament, they tended to return right of managing marriage to secular systems, the power of judge systems in secular world become stronger. (Witte, 1997, p.71) However, churches still had some power on business of secular marriage, and theologians still maintained the final right to explain the holy marriage. Such changes on marriage were both beneficial to the development of feudalism and early capitalism.

In the fourth place, reformation of marriage elevated the status of wives, but failed to elevate the status of women. Reformation made marriage become a secular matter, but that not meant to enhance the status of women. Almost all of Protestant reformers thought the perfect hierarchy in society was: Wives obey husbands, children obey parents, and servants obey masters. (Wiesner, 2019, p. 242) In eyes of reformers, as a good wife, she could learn from her husband, who would handle all the difficult matter while she took care of the housework. Reformers accepted whole contents in Bible without any new creation, because Bible just emphasized the status of women were lower than that of men. For reformers, woman was needed to bring about the increase of the human race; God created for purpose of nurturing children. A wife fulfilled additional roles, such as housekeeping, but reproduction was her original and primary function. Luther said that "the entire female body was created for the purpose of nurturing children. (Snyder, 1992, p. 139)" So in time of Reformation, the Patriarchy was intensified in some sense. When Protestants insisted on returning to the Bible and considering its Christians must accept, they provoked a wholesale reconsideration of its true meaning. However, the newly critical attitude to orthodoxy did not immediately change attitude to women, and Protestants were not protesting against doctrines of female subjection. Martin Luther and other reformed divines accepted most of the traditional Catholic teaching on women and marriage, but with one significant exception: these clerics wanted to marry.

Finally, the transformation of marriage boosts development of family in Europe. In the area of children's education, parents reinforced the management on children. They bore the burden of bringing up and educating their children, and marriage of children must be acceded by their parent, or else the marriage is invalid. More important was that, the monogamy endorsed by

Protestant which was the basis of new family style: model-nuclear family, which did not like the family in medieval time, in which people had little opportunity to set up relationship between wife and husband, the development of individualism was limited greatly. (Luebke and Lindemann, 2014, p.3) The gradual rise of monogamous nuclear families had reduced the number of illegitimate children in society. Moreover, it had a huge impact on the social structure of the early bourgeoisie. The businessmen cultivated from this family were more independent and confident. Compared with the messy and mindless businessmen in the past, they can better adapt to the needs of social development. Historian Collinson said: "The Reformation had led to the gradual rise of the modern model of family, and fostered the sense of independent thinking of people at that time." (Collinson, 1988, p. 62)

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