



## Original Research Article

# A Historical, Social and Theological comparison of Wahhabism and Protestantism

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**Abstract:** The Wahhabi school of thought is a religious and political movement that emerged in the Arabian Peninsula under the leadership of Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, with the aim of purifying the Islamic faith of heresies and superstitions and reviving a pure understanding of monotheism. Protestantism, on the other hand, is a religious movement that emerged in Germany and was shaped by Martin Luther and his followers against the authority of the Catholic Church, based on the principles of "The Book Alone" and "Salvation by Faith." Both movements share similarities in their emphasis on challenging traditional religious institutions, calling for a return to sacred texts, and simplifying religious life. However, while Protestantism spearheaded processes of modernization, secularization, and individualization in Europe, Wahhabism became a regional focus of religious and political authority, merging with political power. Furthermore, while Protestantism gave rise to diverse sects and churches, Wahhabism maintained a more centralized and monistic structure within itself. Although Wahhabism and Protestantism share a common call for "Repurification" and "Return to the Text," they have produced quite different theological, social, and political outcomes due to their development within different historical contexts. This study first provides a historical, theological, and social assessment of the Wahhabi movement, which emerged in the 18th century in the Islamic world, and the Protestant sect, which emerged in the 16th century in Christianity. It then examines the treatise "The Wahhabi Sect and Its Comparison with Protestantism," written in Ottoman Turkish by Erzurum Deputy Mehmed Salih Yeşilzâde (d. 1373/1954), from a comparative perspective. The aim of the study is to examine the reasons for the emergence of both movements, their attitudes towards religious authority, their similarities and differences, their approaches to sacred texts, and their socio-political consequences using an analytical method.

**Keywords:** Wahhabism, Protestantism, Religious Reformation, Theological Comparison, Religious Authority, Sacred Text, Modernization.

## INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, religion has not only shaped individuals' worlds of belief but also played a decisive role in social structure, politics, and cultural norms. In this context, reform movements that emerged at specific periods have profoundly influenced individuals' religious understandings and social relations within societies. Wahhabism, which emerged in the 18th century in the Islamic world, and the Protestant movement, which took shape in the 16th century in Europe, are among the most prominent examples of these reform initiatives.

Wahhabism, a religious reform movement, advocated a simplification of worship and a return to sectarian practices. Protestantism, a religious and social reform movement launched against the Catholic Church, assumed a central role in individual beliefs and the interpretation of sacred texts. Both movements, in their respective contexts, redefined the concept of authority, proposed changes and innovations in religious practices, and profoundly influenced social structures, albeit regionally.

The primary objective of this study is to examine the Wahhabi and Protestant movements from a comparative perspective, systematically presenting the reasons for the emergence of both movements, their theological foundations, similar and different aspects, their approaches to religious authority, and their social impact. It also examines the treatise "The Wahhabi Sect and Its Comparison with Protestantism" by Erzurum Deputy Mehmed Salih Yeşilzâde, exploring the similarities and differences between the two movements from a historical and theological perspective. This approach not only facilitates a historical comparison but also allows for an understanding of the universal dimensions and social impact of religious reform movements.

The research was conducted using historical and comparative methods. While the historical method is used to understand the conditions of emergence, development processes, and social impact of both movements, the comparative method aims to systematically reveal the theological and sociocultural parallels between Wahhabi and Protestantism.

The scope of this study is limited to the fundamental principles of faith, approaches to sacred texts, understandings of religious authority, and social impact of both movements. While briefly touching on their modern implications, the study primarily focuses on historical and theological comparison. This allows us to understand the uniqueness of both the Wahhabist and Protestant movements and to reveal the social impact of religious reforms throughout history.

## **2. Wahhabism**

### **2.1. Reasons for the Emergence of the Wahhabi School: Historical, Social, and Theological Background**

The Wahhabi school, which emerged in the 18th century and has since established a widespread influence in the Islamic world, particularly in the Arabian Peninsula, is a religious and political movement. The school has exerted its influence particularly in religious, political, and scholarly spheres. The school takes its name from Muhammad ibn Abdul-Wahhab ibn Sulayman al-Tamimi al-Najdi (d. 1206/1792) (Sabri, 1876), who was born in Uyeyne, Nejd, and laid the foundations for the school's establishment. Adherents of the school disliked the term Wahhabiism and preferred to be referred to as ahl al-tawhid (Muwahhidun), ahl al-hadith, or salafiyya. Due to their strict and harsh attitude towards Muslims, some have compared them to the Kharijites. Scholars such as Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728/1328) and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d. 751/1350) played leading roles in the formation of the Salafiyya faith, the foundation of the school of thought.

Wahhabism is a religious and political movement that emerged through the reinterpretation of the Hanbali school of thought, founded and systematically developed by Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 241/855), and the Salafism systematized by Ibn Taymiyyah. Wahhabism, which embraces the philosophy of simplifying and freeing religion from later practices, emerged with the claim of being a revival and reform movement (Kalaycı, 2014).

In Saudi Arabia, whose social structure was shaped by tribal hierarchy and local traditions, the social order often failed to shape religious authority, and the economy was agricultural and resource-based. This environment provided a suitable environment for the society's renewed demand for religious purity and the emergence of a reform movement centered on authority.

Wahhabism, which has become the official school of thought in Saudi Arabia today, has undertaken actions aimed at changing the region's existing religious and political structure by openly challenging the religious and political structures and traditions perpetuated by the Ottomans. To achieve this, the school's founder, Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, centralized the school's focus on monotheism and polytheism. Based on this, he legitimized the killing and looting of Muslims who committed heresy, branding them with serious accusations of polytheism and blasphemy (Abdulwahhab, 2013).

The Wahhabis, who label many rituals held dear by Muslims in terms of religious and customary values as heresies and superstitions, are a movement that emerged with the aim of eradicating these heresies and reviving and restoring religion to its original state. Over time, this movement, having secured the political support of the Saudi Arabian government, revealed its true intentions and adopted a harsh stance against the Ottoman Empire, of which they were subjects. Some argue that Wahhabiism arose to undermine the Ottoman Empire, its official school of thought, the Hanafi school, and the Ottoman Empire's influence on the religious life of the Arab people in the Arabian region (Şahin, 2022). Indeed, according to Abdul-Wahhab, the Ottoman Empire and the Sunni line it represents are incompatible with true Islam. Therefore, the Ottoman Empire and its sultan are far from representing the Islamic Ummah (Abdulwahhab, 2013). Driven by these motivations, the Wahhabis launched a rebellion against the Ottoman Empire in Arabia. Although the central government, the Ottoman Empire, suppressed this widespread rebellion for a time, it was unable to end it, leading to the state's decline and collapse. Consequently, the Hejaz Region, which remained under Ottoman rule for nearly four centuries, was separated from Ottoman territory through the collaboration of the Wahhabi and Saud families.

Wahhabism became the official sect and religious ideology of the Saudi State, which seceded from the Ottoman Empire, from its founding. The sect continues to exert this influence today, primarily in Arabia, as well as in the Arabian Peninsula, Africa, and Asia. Furthermore, with the unconditional support of the Saudi Arabian State, this sect continues its efforts to spread throughout the Islamic world, recruit followers, and establish its ideology among Muslims. These expansions have increased its influence among certain groups and movements associated with political Islam, radicalism, and religious extremism, gaining widespread acceptance among these groups (Büyükkara, 2012).

## 2.2. Theological and Practical Views of the Wahhabi School

Despite the emergence of many similar ideas, Wahhabiism has been the most rapidly and easily spreading movement throughout Islamic history. This school strives to build Islam on a new understanding and rigorous principles, creating its own system of belief and practice. Although they claim to be affiliated with the Hanbali School, they are often considered a separate school of thought, separate from the Ahl al-Sunnah school, because they possess principles different from the Ahl al-Sunnah school, a new doctrine, and a new discourse.

There are several reasons why this movement is considered outside the Ahl al-Sunnah. These include their proposition of some new principles in belief and practice, their adoption of only their own religious understanding while marginalizing others, their takfiri religious discourse and their propensity for violence, and their lack of respect for freedom of religion, conscience, and thought (Bulut, 2019).

The formation of the school's views was influenced by the Hanbalis' rejection of reason in religion and their war against heresies (innovations), their interpretation of religious texts based on their literal meanings, their rigid, harsh, and fanatical understanding of piety, and their understanding of deeds as part of faith and monotheism (Kutlu, 2019).

The fundamental tenets of Wahhabiism (Okşar, 2019), from a theological and practical perspective, can be listed as monotheism and polytheism, intercession, intercession, bid'ah, enjoining good and forbidding evil, and the relationship between faith and deeds. The school derives its fundamental principles from the Kitab al-Tawhid (Abdulwahhab, 1429/2008), written by its founder, Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, and the views of Ahmad ibn Hanbal and Ibn Taymiyyah.

Wahhabis embrace an exoteric and formalistic understanding of Islam. According to them, the verses in the Quran concerning God's essence and

attributes should be understood in their literal sense, and interpretations of ambiguous verses should be avoided. In particular, the literal meaning of ambiguous concepts attributed to God, such as hand, face, istiwa, direction, finger, etc., should be acted upon. In this respect, the school of thought follows a typical Hanbali line (Işık-Güneş, 2024).

### 2.2.1. Tawhid and Shirk

The fundamental core of Wahhabi belief is the belief in monotheism. The school of thought placed great importance on monotheism and rejected any idea that contradicted this principle. Therefore, Ibn Abd al-Wahhab and subsequent members of the school of thought established their understanding of monotheism based on Quranic verses (Joseph 108, Nisa 48, Yunus 105-107, Presidency of Religious Affairs, 2007) and authentic hadiths. According to them, recognizing God as one in worship is the most important obligation revealed by the Prophet (Abdulwahhab, 2013). This obligation is more important and greater than prayer, fasting, Hajj, and Zakat. Just as denying any of the obligations revealed by the Prophet is considered a disbelief, denying the creed of monotheism, the fundamental principle of belief for all prophets, is also considered blasphemy (Kutlu, 2019, Bulut, 2019).

Ibn Abd al-Wahhab does not consider it sufficient for a person who believes in monotheism to simply verbally acknowledge this belief to qualify as a believer. According to this understanding, monotheism also has a practical aspect. Therefore, the belief in monotheism must be manifested through the affirmation of the heart, the affirmation of the tongue, and the actions of the limbs. If any of these are missing, a person cannot be considered a believer (Ecer, 2001, Bulut, 2016). This is because it defines monotheism as worshipping God and avoiding taghut. There are many verses and hadiths regarding the belief in monotheism in the Quran and authentic hadiths. Ibn Abd al-Wahhab also sought to base his belief in monotheism by quoting some of these verses and hadiths (Nisa, 48).

Ibn Abd al-Wahhab divides monotheism into three categories. He classifies these as "Unity of the Great God," based on the fact that attributes such as the creation and management of the universe belong solely to God; "Unity of the Divine Rububiyyah," based on the fact that He is the sole authority for worship and supplication, protection from His wrath, and hope in His mercy; and "Unity of the Names and Attributes," based on the fact that God is the possessor of absolute perfection and beauty, possesses no partners with Him, and possesses names worthy of His glory (Abdulwahhab, 2013, Fiğlalı, 2008, Büyükkara, 2012, Bulut, 2019, Kutlu, 2019).

According to Islamic theology, the opposite of

monotheism is polytheism. Ibn Abd al-Wahhab also considers polytheism to be the opposite of monotheism. According to him, polytheism is divided into three categories: major, minor, and hidden. He defines associating partners with Allah as major polytheism, hypocrisy, ostentation, and desiring the worldly life but preferring it to the hereafter as minor polytheism, and obeying priests and saints other than Allah as hidden polytheism (Abdulwahhab, 2013).

#### 2.2.2. Intercession

The subject of intercession has been a topic of debate from the formation of Islam to the present day. Every sect or school of thought has attempted to evaluate the function and conceptual framework of intercession from its own perspective. Some have accepted intercession, while others have opposed it. Some have conditioned its existence and fulfillment on various conditions. This topic has even been addressed in other divine and superstitious religions.

The literal meaning of the word intercession is the supplication of prophets or certain virtuous individuals to God for believers who, due to their sins or deeds, deserve to enter Hell, to avoid Hell or to raise their rank in Paradise (Abdulwahhab, 2013). The overwhelming majority of the Ahl al-Sunnah consider intercession a right, and this authority is granted to certain individuals permitted by God (Güneş, 2024).

Ibn Abd al-Wahhab and his followers also evaluated this current issue and expressed their views. According to them, intercession cannot be hoped for from angels, prophets, or any other being (Yörük, 1953). Therefore, directly requesting intercession from prophets means associating that prophet with God (Güneş, 2024). The authority to intercede and to permit intercession is a special right that belongs only to God (Kutlu, 2019). According to Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, God has granted the right to intercede to prophets, angels, and children who die young. This intercession will also occur with God's permission. However, one must directly seek intercession from God. One who seeks the intercession of a prophet must obey and abide by God's commands and prohibitions. What Ibn Abd al-Wahhab opposes is seeking intercession directly from the prophet, instead of God (Abdulwahhab, 2013, Kutlu, 2019). Consequently, this school of thought considers it permissible to seek intercession from God, but considers seeking it directly from the prophet or virtuous individuals as polytheism, (Bulut, 2019).

#### 2.2.3. Tawassul

Using something as a means or intermediary for something else is called tawassul. A means of approaching something or someone through it. According to Wahhabis, using something or someone as a mediator to draw closer to God or seek

forgiveness for sins is shirk and bid'ah (innovation). According to them, this practice is more prevalent among mystical figures such as Sufis and Shia. They argue that Sufism and Sufi orders are innovations that emerged long after the emergence of Islam. To envision certain powers, both during their lifetime and after death, to seek sustenance from certain saints, sheikhs, Mahdi, or other individuals, to seek their sustenance, to seek their help, and to accept them as intermediaries are both bid'ah and shirk. Because such actions constitute an intermediary between God and His servants, those who commit them must repent. Otherwise, those who engage in this type of polytheism are killed. According to them, believing in tawassul is polytheism, just like the pre-Islamic Arabs using idols as intermediaries (Fırlı, 2008). Consequently, using anyone other than God—prophets, angels, saints, spirits, or others—as intermediaries leads to disbelief (Kutlu, 2019; Kocabıyık, 2025).

#### 2.2.4. Bid'ah

Bid'ah, meaning something that did not previously exist (Ibn Manzur, 1884) but emerged after the religion reached perfection, is a system of belief and practice that is debated by Islamic schools of thought, categorized as bid'ah al-hasanah or bid'ah al-sayyiah, and is primarily applied to the theological and practical aspects of Islam. Bid'ah is one of the primary beliefs and practices vehemently opposed by the Wahhabis, who hold a Hanbali-Salafist understanding. They consider all religious beliefs and practices outside the Quran and Sunnah to be bid'ah. They consider bid'ah to be elements of polytheism and innovation that non-Arab communities later incorporated into the religion after embracing Islam, bringing their own customs and traditions with them (Gulverdi, 2024).

According to them, bid'ah refers to practices used for religiously instilled beliefs and practices that did not exist during the time of the Quran, Sunnah, or the time of the Righteous Salaf. There is no good or bad innovation in religion. Anyone who invents a innovation is accursed, and any innovation they create is rejected. This is because most of these innovations lead Muslims into polytheism (Kutlu, 2019). Those related to faith and practice are disbelief, while those related to morality and customs are heresy (Yörük, 1953).

Wahhabis, unlike any other sect or system of thought, have broadened the scope of innovations, and have considered many religious matters and practices that the majority of Muslims have valued and believed in since the time of the Prophethood to be innovations. These include addressing religious matters through the methods of philosophy and theology, visiting graves and shrines (Büyükkara, 2012), making vows at these shrines and hoping for

intercession through them, building domes and shrines over graves (Abdulwahhab, 2013), visiting the graves of the Prophet Muhammad, and Celebrating the Prophet's birth and holy nights, repeating dhikr and prayers not found in the Quran and hadith, reciting the Quran in a melodious and melodious manner, reciting the Mawlid, using prayer beads, visiting dervish lodges and lighting candles, making vows to these lodges, visiting the tombs of saints, telling fortunes, considering many things as unlucky, practicing magic, performing incantations, making prophecies, establishing religious and political sects and orders, engaging in theology and philosophy, visiting the grave of the Prophet Muhammad in the hope of reward, and engaging in alcoholic behaviors such as smoking tobacco are considered bid'ah by the Wahhabis (Abdulwahhab, 2013, Çubukçu, 1985, Yörükan, 1953, Bulut, 2016, Kutlu, 2019, Büyükkara, 2012).

Wahhabis also considered performing prayers for show and ostentation (Abdulwahhab, 2013), acting pious, decorating mosques and masjids, building minarets, reciting salutations and greetings outside the call to prayer, visiting the blessed cloak and beard, performing prayers without congregation, wearing evil-eye beads, etc., as bid'ah (innovation) and considered them to be abandoned (Kutlu, 2019). According to them, in addition to these bid'ahs, there are other bid'ahs in every aspect of life.

As can be seen, the most important characteristic of the Wahhabis and the main purpose of their existence is their attitude towards the bid'ahs they define. This strict and harsh attitude has led to their separation from, alienation from, and isolation from many religious and practical schools or sects. This strict and harsh attitude has exposed them to considerable criticism. As with many views, regarding bid'ahs, Ahmed b. The school of thought inspired by Hanbal and Ibn Taymiyyah left these individuals behind in this sense and adopted the hadith, "Everything invented later is bid'ah. Every bid'ah is misguidance. And every misguidance is in the Fire," (Muslim, 1421, Ahmad İbn Hanbal, 1316) as its principle.

#### **2.2.5. Commanding What Is Good And Forbidding What Is Evil**

Enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong is among the most important principles of Islam. This principle is crucial for the reform of society, the sharing and dissemination of knowledge and good morals, the education of those in society who lack full understanding or access to knowledge and religious practices, and the attainment of the moral virtues that Islam deems ideal. This principle, which applies to all Islamic sects or groups, is a duty and an indispensable element of faith for every Muslim.

While many sects moderately implement the principle of "Commanding the Good and Forbidding the Good of Munkar," the Kharijites and Wahhabis, who are extreme and extreme in some respects, have also taken an extreme tack in this regard, accusing sects other than their own of polytheism and advocating the necessity of fighting them, and fighting Muslims whenever they had the opportunity (Kutlu, 2019).

Abd al-Wahhab believes that the principle of "Commanding the Good and Forbidding the Good of Munkar" is necessary for the belief in monotheism to be firmly established in hearts, eradicating polytheism and heresy from hearts and removing them from society. According to him, God has explained the fundamentals of religion in the Quran and the Prophet Muhammad's Sunnah, commanding us to follow the Quran and Sunnah, to act according to what is known, and to explain it to other Muslims (Kutlu, 2019). A Muslim who undertakes this duty must know what to enjoin and what to forbid, and must apply this principle in their own lives. Haram (forbidden), evil deeds, imitating unbelievers, and the practices of the pre-Islamic period of ignorance are also matters to be avoided. It is obligatory upon every Muslim to avoid them (Bulut, 2019).

Wahhabis generally understood this principle as "fighting against innovations" (Bulut, 2016). They went to extremes in this regard, and in applying this principle, they displayed a coercive and alienating attitude towards Muslims. The Wahhabis, the current version of Kharijism, added another element to their extremist views, using the metaphor of takfir (disbelief) to categorize people. They even considered the lives and blood of those they declared takfir permissible. In line with this understanding, they did not shy away from armed struggle against the Ottoman Empire, the Shia, and other rivals. According to them, people cannot become Muslims merely by confessing and affirming. For a person to become a Muslim, practical monotheism must also be achieved. Adhering to Islam without fulfilling its rules does not protect them from war against themselves (Büyükkara, 2012, Kutlu, 2019). They argued that the principle of enjoining good and forbidding evil could only be achieved through a just, knowledgeable, charismatic, and powerful ruler governing Muslims (Okşar, 2019).

#### **2.2.6. The Relationship Between Faith and Action**

The Wahhabis' understanding of faith and action differs from the classical Sunni understanding (Güneş, 2014). In this respect, they take the Ahl al-Sunnah as their role models. According to them, faith is a matter of affirmation, acknowledgment, and action (Abdulwahhab, 2005). Faith increases and decreases (Kutlu, 2019, Bulut, 2016, Büyükkara, 2012).

To possess faith, verbal affirmation or heartfelt affirmation is not enough. True faith consists of affirmation with the heart, acknowledgment with the tongue, action, and fulfilling the pillars. Actions are an inseparable part of faith. In fact, they have made action a part of monotheism, calling this understanding practical monotheism. Therefore, they view the relationship between faith and action as a relationship between monotheism and action. This understanding led them to equate their struggle for the abandonment of deeds and the eradication of heresies with the fight against disbelief, declaring Muslims who committed these crimes to be disbelievers and leading to the shedding of numerous Muslim blood (Kutlu, 2019). They declared disbeliever anyone who neglected any of the obligatory acts of worship and deemed it permissible to kill such individuals and plunder their property (Bulut, 2019).

The Wahhabis placed great emphasis and insistence on the issue of prayer. According to them, performing the five daily prayers in congregation is obligatory and obligatory (an-Najdi, 1407). Laziness in not performing prayer in congregation is sufficient grounds for discredit and blame (Ecer, 2001).

They issued significant fatwas on the ruling on those who do not pray, establishing both worldly and otherworldly consequences. The most important fatwa in this regard was issued by Muhammad ibn Salih al-Usaymin (d. 1421/2001), one of the school's most prominent advocates (Useymen, 1436).

According to them, the treatment that those who do not pray will face in this world is as follows. A person who does not command his family members to pray and persistently refuses to pray himself has become an apostate. Anyone who deliberately abandons prayer is considered a disbeliever. The rules of apostasy apply to them. Since a person who abandons prayer becomes a disbeliever, a Muslim woman cannot marry such a person. A marriage performed by a person who does not pray is invalid. If a married person abandons prayer after the marriage, their marriage is invalid. The animals slaughtered by such a person cannot be eaten. They cannot enter Mecca or the sanctuary. They cannot inherit from their relatives. If the son of a person who prays does not pray, that child cannot inherit from his father (Useymen, 1436).

According to them, the treatment that disbelievers who apostatize will face in the afterlife is as follows: They will be subjected to the scolding and beatings of angels. They will be resurrected with the disbelievers and polytheists, for they are among them. They will remain in Hell forever. If they repent, the door of repentance is open. They will not be washed or shrouded upon death. Funeral prayers are not

performed, and they are not buried in Muslim cemeteries (Useymen, 1436). They are thrown into a well dug in the desert with their clothes (Kutlu, 2019).

The most stringent and harsh rulings in Islamic history regarding abandoning worship were issued by the Kharijites. They stated that those who commit major sins and do not act according to what God has revealed will abandon the faith (al-Baghdadi, 2017). These harsh and merciless rulings issued by the Wahhabis regarding those who do not pray have surpassed the Kharijites even. It is clear that there were hypocrites in the time of the Prophet Muhammad and among those who sided with him. Although the Prophet knew about these people, he did not treat them as the Wahhabis did. He treated them with tolerance and leniency. According to the Sunni schools of thought (Hanafi, Shafi'i, and Maliki), neglecting or incompletely performing prayers and other acts of worship despite having faith, out of negligence, laziness, without mocking or belittling them, constitutes a major sin, but does not exclude a person from the fold of faith or make them an apostate.

This rigid and alienating stance of the Wahhabis has been unacceptable and criticized within the Islamic intellectual world. These attitudes and behaviors of the sect undermine Islam's status as a religion of love and peace, alienate rather than unite, and provide an opportunity to the enemies of Islam on a silver platter. At the same time, this rigid attitude and behavior has paved the way for the emergence of several illegal organizations within the Islamic world that frame themselves as Muslims and claim to operate in the name of Islam, damaging the image of Muslims both intellectually and actively. This attitude has also provided a window of opportunity for unwitting and unconscious individuals to abandon Islam and paved the way for the propagation and spread of other religions (al-Tahawi, 1415, al-Juwayni, 2007, Daqiq al-Id, 1983).

### 3. Protestantism

#### 3.1. Reasons for the Emergence of the Protestant Sect: Historical, Social, and Theological Background

Protestantism, meaning "to protest," refers to a movement that began with the Reformation movements in Europe in the 16th century under the leadership of the German Martin Luther (d. 953/1546), who was previously a Catholic priest, and was led and developed by prominent Christian theologians such as Ulrich Zwingli (d. 938/1531) and John Calvin (d. 972/1564). It expresses a different theological and moral interpretation of Christianity, and refers to the community of churches and congregations that emerged in parallel with this idea (Waardenburg, 2007).

In other words, Protestantism is the movement that

criticized the practices of the Catholic Church and advocated for a return to the original Christianity in the 16th century, using the Bible as a basis. Because the Reformation supporters protested the Catholic Church, the name "Protestantism" was given to this movement not by the Reformation supporters themselves, but by the Roman Church (Waardenburg, 2007, Erbaş, 2022, Parlak, 2022).

Although the term "Protestant" was used in earlier times, the term "Protestantism" began to be used in the 17th century to refer to the churches and movements that emerged immediately following the Reformation movement initiated by Martin Luther (Bost, 1992).

### **3.2. Reasons That Led to the Emergence of Protestantism**

Every historical event, sociological, or religious movement has many causes. Therefore, many factors paved the way for the emergence of Protestantism. Some of these reasons can be listed as follows.

#### **3.2.1. Indulgence Practices of the Catholic Church**

According to Christian belief, sinners who act contrary to their beliefs have the right to regret and repent, confess their sins, ask for forgiveness, and receive forgiveness. This process involves a priest interceding for the sinner, confessing their sins in the presence of the priest, and then being absolved of their sins under the priest's supervision.

This practice, which was widespread throughout Christian history and involved the exploitation of the religious act of repentance by churches and priests, was practiced at a high level in Medieval Europe, and thus the religious authority of the Catholic Church began to be questioned. Consequently, this religious exploitation, which spread throughout Christian history as "indulgences," was strongly criticized by Martin Luther and became the most important justification for the emergence of the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century, (Bayrakdar, 2016, Olgun, 2005, Bayındır, 2023).

#### **3.2.2. The Catholic Church's Violation of the Principle of Simplicity**

The principle of simplicity, known as "economy," "frugality," and "the principle of parsimony," also encompasses the meanings of "not being entangled," "eliminating excess," "applying to few things," and "avoiding abundance" (Ural, 2011). This school of thought advocates the principle of not multiplying intermediaries between God and servants, eliminating excess, and prioritizing what simply comes to mind. The principle of simplicity, based on the principle of avoiding unnecessary hypotheses and entities, not only functions as an epistemological principle but can also be encountered as an ontological principle, (Sober, 1981).

This principle, which operates on the principle that "entities should not be multiplied unless necessary," has also been used as an epistemological and methodological principle by some thinkers. The question of the binding nature of sacred texts in Christianity is the deepest source of division between Catholics and Protestants. Lutheranism, a Protestant movement, bases its teachings on sacred text, while Catholics accept sacred text more as a historical authority (Bayındır, 2023).

Martin Luther and his followers, because they opposed this Catholic understanding of religion and interpreted it exoterically, claimed that the Catholic Church had strayed from the principle of simplicity, making religion complex and unviable. This desire to break free from this idea influenced the emergence of Protestantism.

#### **3.2.3. The Catholic Church's Intervention Between God and Servants**

According to Christian belief, a sinner is absolved of their sins if they confess their sins and repent in the presence of a priest. Martin Luther and his followers vehemently rejected this ritual, which took the form of a confession (Penance Ceremony), and this approach. Luther, stating that this ritual meant intervening between God and servants, advocated for a person to pray directly to God or confess their sins, removing any intermediary institutions or individuals. According to him, sacred texts are sufficient to reach God. There is no need for councils or churches to interpret these texts (Kalin, 2016, Bayındır, 20123; Kocabıyık, 2024). A Christian individual simply has the opportunity to pray and believe in God directly. This war, launched by Martin Luther and his followers, who criticized the church's stance, led to the emergence of Lutheran Protestantism.

#### **3.2.4. The Role of Islam and the Ottoman Empire**

Historians have debated the role of Islam and the Ottoman Empire in the emergence and growth of Lutheran Protestantism, which was founded and grew by Martin Luther and his followers. The issue has two aspects: political and theological. Western scholars argue that the Ottoman Empire (Islam and Muslims), governed by Islamic law, played a role in the political power and spread of Lutheran Protestantism. Suleiman the Magnificent, by siding with Luther, pursued a policy that led to a rift between Germany and Spain. This is because the Lutheran movement was founded in Germany and caused a rift between Germany and the Catholic states, especially Spain. These same scholars assert that the Ottomans had no direct influence or role in the theological rise and spread of the Lutheran movement. Furthermore, these authors deny that Luther was an Ottoman ally or made an agreement with the Ottomans (Hıdır, 2016). From a theological

perspective, we have no evidence to prove such an influence. It is an undeniable fact that Luther was a follower of Paul (d. 64-65 AD) and Augustine (d. 430 AD). However, it can be said that Islamic philosophers such as Ibn Rushd (d. 520/1126) and Ibn Sina (d. 428/1037) had a greater influence on Augustine and St. Thomas (d. 72 AD). Therefore, while there may be a further interpretation of Luther's theology through Augustine and St. Thomas, an indirect influence can be mentioned (Hıdır, 2016; Kocabiyık, 2025). However, no evidence of such an influence has been found in historical sources, existing information, or documents.

It is a fact that Martin Luther, although he occasionally held positive views, generally held a negative attitude towards Islam, the Prophet Muhammad, the Quran, and the Ottomans. Therefore, we can say that he constructed his theological thought in this direction.

### **3.2.5. Martin Luther's Excommunication from the Church**

The German government launched an investigation into Luther, who had challenged the sacred doctrines of the papacy and the church and had become embroiled in numerous disputes. On June 15, 1520, Pope Leo X (d. 921/1521) issued a papal bull, denouncing Luther's errors and errors in a 41-point critique of the church, condemning him as "heretical, offensive, false, shameful to the people, corrupting the minds of the common people, and contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church."

This bull called for the Lord to rise up and defend his cause, for Peter (d. 64 AD) to fulfill his shepherding duties, for the martyr Paul to rise to prevent those who violate his teachings, and for the church to rise up and pray for the salvation of the sacred scriptures. This decree condemned Luther's 41 articles, which denounced the errors and mistakes of the Church. It was ordered that all his writings be burned. He and his students were ordered to recant their teachings, repent, and submit to Rome to obey. It was declared that if they failed to obey, they would be excommunicated and excluded from the Church (papalencyclicals.net, 2025).

When this decree, which placed Luther under heavy accusation and obliged him to recant, reached Luther, he tore up the decree and the church's rules in a public demonstration in December 1520, demonstrating his anger against the church and Rome and calling for the convening of a council capable of independent decision-making (Erbaş, 2022). Following this development, Pope Leo X issued a papal bull titled "Decet, Romanum Pontificem" on January 3, 1521, definitively excommunicating Martin Luther from the Church.

The church's rigid stance and its inability to accept ideas and teachings outside its own sacred teachings paved the way for a significant schism within the Catholic world, the spread of Lutheran Protestantism, and the formation of a new Protestant sect (papalencyclicals.net, 2025).

After being excommunicated from the church, German theologian Martin Luther hung a ninety-five-article manifesto on the wall of his church in Wittenberg, Germany, containing his own teachings and criticizing Catholicism. With this manifesto, Protestantism began to spread throughout Europe, particularly in Germany, and through its expansion and organization Waardenburg, 2007).

### **3.3. Protestant Understanding of Faith, God, and the Church**

Protestants positioned their understanding of religion in direct opposition to the hegemonic understanding of the papacy and the church, opposing these institutions and practices that perform all kinds of actions in the name of God, as well as any hegemonic understandings carried out in the name of God, a transcendent being.

Individualism is prominent in the Protestant understanding of faith. There is no need for the help or teachings of any person or institution to have faith or to express this faith. What matters is the love that comes from within. It is not the belief in others or the fulfillment of certain rituals, but the fulfillment of one's own will. Being a good believer does not require affiliation with a church. What truly matters is that these beliefs and practices are carried out with love for God.

According to Protestants, God's justice is known through faith. Faith is trust. When God punishes a person, the person immediately turns away from their sins and justifies God. Faith is a grace bestowed upon humanity by God (Chevalier, 1993). With these teachings of faith, Protestants have adopted an understanding of God that is completely opposite to the church.

Protestants, who hold a belief in God that parallels the understanding found in Christianity, aim to draw closer to God and establish a relationship with Him rather than materializing Him, locating Him in a specific place, and viewing Him as a punishing entity. According to them, God does not take sides or side with the powerful. God stands with the poorest and weakest, the undervalued, and the marginalized. God enters into objective and concrete relationships with humans to save humanity from evil (Erbaş, 2022).

Protestants also place great importance on the metaphor of the Bible. One of their core principles is

to distribute and encourage, even teach, the reading of the Bible to non-Christians. According to them, every Protestant should dedicate themselves to the path of the Bible. In doing so, they should not explain the Church's scriptures or interpretations of the Bible, but rather the Bible itself. Protestants have followed this path from its inception to the present day (Erbaş, 2022). According to the Church, the Church owns the Bible. According to Protestants, the Bible owns the Church. The Church should submit to the Bible and accept its criticisms (Chevalier, 1993). According to them, the Bible is the only tool God has given to humanity.

While Catholics attribute holiness to the church, Protestants reject its sanctity. According to them, churches are places where the Bible is taught and the sacraments are used. While the church cannot be a place of divine grace, it is also not a place where sins are forgiven. Christ is the head of the church. Churches cannot excommunicate. They cannot be governed by a single system. Churches cannot exclude or alienate people. They are not ornate, but simple structures. The church is a means, not an end. The church should seek solutions to people's problems (Erbaş, 2022).

In addition to the religious beliefs listed above, the following points reveal that Protestants also have certain theological and ethical elements that distinguish them from Catholics.

Protestants' general character is characterized by rebellion against the church and the hierarchical order. They reject the bond established between the Holy Spirit and tradition, as well as the bond established between official doctrine and the Catholic Church. They believe in a living God who intervenes in order and history. They reject idolatry and icons. God speaks only through the divine word and fulfills His will in this way. A Christ-centered understanding of faith prevails. The only sacred text accepted as the truth of faith is the Bible. The church should be an institution formed by believers. Totalitarian powers must be opposed. Local congregations should be more independent. Based on all this, Protestantism believes in the Bible, its unquestionable authority, and that salvation is achieved solely through divine grace. According to this doctrine, because God creates and brings salvation only through the word (the word), this religion has also been called the "religion of the word" (Waardenburg, 2007).

#### **4. Comparison of Wahhabism and Protestantism**

Protestantism is a religious and political movement that emerged as a reaction against the practices of the Catholic Church, using the Bible as a reference. Wahhabism is a religious and political movement that emerged by using the Quran and early Muslims as references to critique traditional religious

understanding. While Protestantism advocates for the return of Christianity to its original form, Wahhabism is a movement that arose with the aim of eliminating heresies and superstitions, reviving and returning religion to its original state. Both sects arose for religious reasons but later evolved into both religious and political movements. In this respect, the reasons for the emergence of both sects and their modes of spread are parallel.

Social and economic developments also played a role in the emergence of both sects. In Europe, the socio-economic situation before the Reformation was marked by urbanization, commercial developments, the widespread spread of plague, famines, and wars, leading to a period of stagnation. This period paved the way for the Reformation, the Renaissance, and Protestantism (Parlak, 2022). Factors such as the political authority gap in the Arabian Peninsula, differences in interpretation and understanding of religion, the belief that religion had drifted away from its primary source, and the rapid religious and political persuasion and frequent shifts of direction among the region's tribes also paved the way for the emergence of Wahhabism.

Martin Luther rejected the authority of the church and asserted that the Bible was the sole and authoritative authority in religion. Wahhabism, on the other hand, is the Islamic understanding of the era of the Book, the Sunnah, and the righteous predecessors.

Martin Luther can be said to have adopted the principle of simplicity in theology and religious practices. It can be seen that modern Wahhabism, which approaches religious matters from an exoteric perspective, was guided by the logic of the principle of simplicity in its formation (Bayındır, 2023).

Martin Luther vehemently opposed the Catholic Church's practice of confessing by the Church and priests, the Church's role as an intermediary, and any intermediary between God and servants (Ural, 2011). Wahhabism, on the other hand, rejected intercession and intercession as understood and accepted by the Sunnites, considering them as polytheism (Abdulwahhab, 2013).

After providing general information about Wahhabism and Protestantism and highlighting their similarities, a comparison of Wahhabism and Protestantism will be made within the context of the treatise "The Wahhabi Sect and Its Comparison with Protestantism" written by the former Deputy of Erzurum, Mehmed Salih Yeşilzâde (Yeşilzade, 1924), and the work will be reviewed. The treatise, which begins with the title "The Wahhabi School of thought, a Comparison of Protestantism," describes Wahhabiism as a school that sows unacceptable

seeds of discord and division between Islam and Muslims, deliberately weakening and impotent Muslims. Based on the fact that the school's founder, Muhammad ibn Abdul-Wahhab, was an ungrateful son of the eighteenth century, he states that his education was under British protection and that he was a person contrary to the Sunni tradition. Yeşilzade, who heavily criticizes the Wahhabi School, claims that this school was founded by a mercenary and favored by the British. Providing information about the school's spread, the author notes that its adherents have begun to proliferate in places such as the Hejaz, Iraq, Egypt, India, and so on. He states that the reason for this is that this sect, known for its brutality and ignorance, harbors inflammatory, numbing, and evil ideas opposed to reform and new ideas. He states that the acceptance of these ideas in the Islamic world would be the most significant distortion of the Islamic world. He states that this sect would plunge its followers into a sleep of ignorance and inertia, depriving them of development, progress, advancement, and evolution (Yeşilzade, 1924).

He states that the Wahhabis attack any obvious signs that would awaken a sense of "religion," a taste for "servitude," or even a love for Islam and humanity, believing that all of these, especially scientific and technical progress, development, and evolution, are "bid'ah" and "seyyiah" (innovation) and argue that their elimination is obligatory. The author states that Wahhabis are ignorant people who wander aimlessly in sandy deserts, growing up there and living naked in cave-like homes. He states that people with this mindset consider the adornment and magnificent structures of Islamic mosques, the presence of inscriptions and precious illumination scripts and figurative artists, and even the gilding of the Quran, etc., to be heretics. He states that good intentions, refinement in their schools, and respect for divine creation and human perfection are absent from the minds of those with such a mindset (Yeşilzade, 1924).

The author provides examples of Wahhabis' opposition to Islamic art in sacred places, which moderate and Sunni Muslims consider permissible, even considered "sha'ir" (i.e., illumination, calligraphy, etc.). "For example, the holy places like the Ravza-i Mutahhara, the Kaaba-i Mukarrama, the Masjid-i Muazzama are decorated with ornaments, illuminations, magnificence, especially those precious inscriptions embroidered with golden ink, those beautiful chandeliers, etc (Yeşilzade, 1924).

The author explains how Wahhabis are against Islamic art in holy places, which is considered permissible and even considered as a symbol by moderate and Sunni Muslims, by giving examples of such arts as illumination, calligraphy, etc. "For example, even the sacred places like the Ravza-i Mutahhara, the Kaaba-i Mukarrama, and the

Masjid-i Muazzama, with their ornaments, illuminations, and splendors, especially those precious inscriptions embroidered with golden ink, those unique chandeliers, and especially the luminous lamps representing the stars in the sky, increase anyone's sense of beauty, natural pleasure, and increase their respect and devotion to religion. There is no doubt that these spiritual, emotional, and spiritual people will still excite their spiritual pleasure. The sunnah of our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is based on the recitation of the sacred prayers, the recitation of the tasbeeh, The Wahhabis, who display hostility towards the green dome of the Ravza-i Münevvere, the tombstones that commemorate the service and history of the Ahl al-Bayt and the honorable Companions, and the essence of the age's virtues and progress, consider such beauties and virtues, which catch their eye due to the brutality of their disposition and the misguidedness of their sect, to be heretics and evil innovations. They are determined, whenever possible, to render all prosperous things a desert and reduce Muslims to servants and subservient servants (Yeşilzade, 1924).

The author states that, as every sensitive Muslim and all scholars and intellectuals know, there were many good innovations and desires of the self that did not exist in the early years of Islam's rise, and that these were inspired by necessity, and that they should not be considered strange. Considering that the Wahhabis interfered with the implementation of the Sunnah of our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in the Hijaz continent and in the places they occupied by force, namely, the recitation of the Salawat-i Sharif, the respect of the Ravza-i Mutahhara, the recitation of the rosary, the recitation of "Muhammadun Rasulullah" and the performance of the Madhahib-i Arba'ah, he states that the enemies of Islam, the British, the French and the Italians, displayed such behaviors that were most in their interests and served their politics. According to the author, the durability, solidity and spread of Islam in Africa, India, Tripoli and many other places is preserved solely thanks to the Sufi orders. In fact, two centuries ago, the spread of Islam in Africa and the They are members of the Sufi order, which has brought thirty million people to the world and has been instrumental in granting faith to many hearts and turning people away from idolatry. Wine, pork, gambling, sodomy, theft, and similar things are forbidden in Islam. Muslims are aware of all this. According to the author, it is a conscientious duty and obligation for every discerning Muslim to criticize and rebuke the ignorant and brutal "Wahhabis and Wahhabism" who declare tobacco, hookah, snuff, and the like forbidden, beat those who do so, break the tombstones of the Companions and the Ahl al-Bayt out of heresy, destroy Islamic monuments, demolish mosques and mausoleums

because of their ornaments, prohibit drinking water and sherbet from transparent glasses, and attempt to convert Muslims to their own base sect (Yeşilzade, 1924).

According to the author, who says, "Let us also recognize the Wahhabis, who apparently claim to be the believers of Almighty God and the people of the qibla, as Muslims," the Wahhabis, who emerged in the waterless deserts and hot plains of Nejd, deprived of being people of wisdom and city dwellers, deprived of the lofty and sanctity of religion and human feelings, invaded the Hijaz continent for the third time in two centuries and plundered and pillaged the holy places with the sole purpose of robbing Muslims and filling their stomachs, and in their last occupation they killed many innocents and extinguished the hearths, they shed blood in the Kaaba, they said that there was no basis for prophethood and intercession after the passing of Hz. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) to the hereafter, and that Hz. He states that, based on our knowledge that they disrespected our Prophet, believers viewed the Wahhabis with suspicion due to their despicable behavior, considering them "enemies of the Messenger of Allah" and opponents of the Ahl al-Sunnah, and harboring hostility towards them. The author, who notes that some people claim that public order in the Hijaz is perfect, states that it is impossible for common bandits to move in the presence of bandits. While once upon a time, only a thousandth of pilgrims and Hijazi residents were robbed on the pilgrimage routes, now the religious sensitivities of all pilgrims and Hijazi residents are being offended in the Kaaba and the Masjid an-Nabawi. Instead of the "poor people of Hijaz," the money extorted from pilgrims is being fed by the "bandits of Najd," and all pilgrims are being robbed.

The Prophet (pbuh) The author states that as long as disrespect for the Prophet, insults to the Ahl al-Sunnah, violence and rudeness/hurt towards Muslims, excessive insults towards pilgrims, and interference with sects trusted by the people continue, the number of traders and pilgrims in the Hejaz Region will gradually decrease, and that Wahhabis will ultimately be destroyed by hunger, poverty, misery, or bloodshed. He also states that the Wahhabis will suffer the consequences of all these actions. Because it is impossible for ignorance to prevail over knowledge, nomadism over civilization, or misery over happiness. The author states that the members of the Wahhabi sect, under the guise of religion and civilization, are trying to weaken the Ahl al-Sunnah and, with their ignorant policies, on the one hand, take money from pilgrims under the pretext of Hajj, and on the other hand, they will one day sell all the mines in the Hijaz continent to British patrons for a pittance to satisfy their hunger. He also states that their behavior and greed will lead to the

Hejaz becoming a colony. The author, who states that it cannot be denied that Wahhabism is partially similar to "Protestantism" and Protestantism to "Wahhabism" in some respects, states that just as the respect and interest of some Christians for "Religion" decreased or disappeared due to the blow dealt to Christianity by the Protestant priests "Baur and Istirius" with their sectarian sticks, the corrupter Adul-Wahhab also wants to render Muslims helpless and corrupt and destroy Islam with the sect he established. Protestantism has not provided any benefit or good to Christianity other than atheism, and Wahhabism, which is condemned to savagery and ignorance, has not been of any benefit to the Islamic world and Muslims. There is a truth known by all religious people that just as Protestantism is the first step taken towards atheism called "Khurandashi", "Wahhabism is also a path to savagery and wickedness." It is believed to be the first stage (Yeşilzade, 1924).

The Wahhabis, who claim to be members of the Hanbali school of thought and a branch of the Hanbali school of thought, follow the path of Ibn Taymiyyah. According to Yeşilzade, while it is well known to all jurists that Ibn Taymiyyah opposed the Hanbali school in many matters, the Wahhabis and Wahhabism, who are among the companions of the deviant, have no connection with the Hanbali school of thought found in the Ahl al-Sunnah. The author states that he dislikes the Wahhabis, who are enemies of the Prophet Muhammad and his Sunnah in both word and deed, due to the deviance of their school and the savagery of their disposition. He states that they recognize the Wahhabis as believers of a "deceased god" and opponents of the Prophet Muhammad, and that they harbor hostility towards them (Yeşilzade, 1924).

Yeşilzade concludes his treatise on the subject with the following meaningful couplets: "I intended to perform the Hajj, the Wahhabis raided Mecca, I wanted to become a dervish, the hurricane destroyed the Tekke." (Yeşilzade, 1924).

### Conclusion

Wahhabism and Protestantism, although products of different religious traditions and geographies, have gained significant historical significance as two major reform movements that emerged with the claim of "religious purification" and "return to its original state." Wahhabism emerged in the Nejd Region in the 18th century, claiming to purify Islam of heresies and superstitions based on the Hanbali-Salafi line. However, it quickly acquired a political character. Thanks to its alliance with the Saud family, it transformed from a religious reform movement into an ideology legitimizing political authority, influencing regional balances of power. Protestantism, on the other hand, arose in 16th-century Europe as a reaction to the decay of the Catholic Church. As a movement centered on sacred

text, emphasized individual belief, and limited church authority, it paved the way for both religious and social transformations in Europe, spearheading processes of individualization, modernization, and secularization. These two movements, which share similarities in their call to return to the sacred text, their desire to simplify religious life, their tendency to challenge traditional authorities, and their tendency to view religious reform as a "return to the original," developed in response to the rise of the bourgeoisie in Europe, the spread of the printing press, and the corrupt practices of the Catholic Church. In this context, Protestantism, with its ability to foster individualized piety and secularization, emerged in a tribal society during a period of political centralization and challenge to Ottoman authority. Consequently, Wahhabism, which became a tool for the pursuit of political legitimacy, brought its distinct aspects to the forefront.

Mehmed Sâlih Yeşilzâde's treatise represents a late-era Ottoman intellectual perspective comparing these two movements. Yeşilzâde's treatise is notable for being one of the first to draw comparisons between Wahhabism and Protestantism. While the author likens Wahhabism to Protestantism, he considers both movements destructive to existing religious structures and dangerous to the social order. According to him, Protestantism led to secularization and the weakening of religious authority in the Christian world, while Wahhabism caused fragmentation, discord, and the erosion of Ottoman authority in the Islamic world, even being presented as a "danger" fueled by the support of external powers. This approach reflects the deep theological and political concerns felt towards Wahhabism within Ottoman intellectual circles of the period.

Modern literature supports many of Yeşilzâde's harsh criticisms expressed in this treatise. Research has shown that Protestantism had a profound impact on individualization, modernization, and the development of capitalism in Europe. Wahhabism, particularly with its takfiri rhetoric, its strict anti-bid'ah approach, and its exclusionary stance, is argued to have led to social conflict in the Islamic world and, over time, paved the way for radical movements. This movement even created an exclusionary and conflictual religious climate in Muslim societies, leading to its comparison with the Kharijites. In this respect, Wahhabism, unlike Protestantism, did not contribute to modernization and secularization; on the contrary, it transformed into a centralized ideology of political power. Thus, although the two movements produced different outcomes in their respective contexts, they demonstrate how closely religious reforms were linked to social transformation. Yeşilzade's treatise is not merely a critique of sects, but also a reflection of Ottoman concerns about

modernization and religious reform movements. Addressing the parallels and divergences between Wahhabism and Protestantism offers an important perspective in understanding contemporary religious movements. This comparison demonstrates that movements claiming religious reform are always shaped by their historical and social contexts, and that religious discourses are often intertwined with political interests.

Consequently, the comparison between Wahhabism and Protestantism demonstrates that religious reform movements are not limited to theological discourses but must also be considered within their historical, social, political, and cultural contexts. While Wahhabism challenged Ottoman authority and paved the way for the establishment of the Saudi state in the Arabian Peninsula, Protestantism limited the power of the Catholic Church in Europe, contributing to the emergence of modern nation-states and secular societies. Therefore, comparing these two movements offers a significant opportunity to understand the universal dimensions of religious reforms and how religious movements integrated with political, social, and cultural contexts.

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