A Research Guide for
Sixteenth-Century Europe

A research guide is an introduction to researching a topic. It lists the best introductory sources to help you start your research, but it is not a comprehensive bibliography of the topic. Please ask a reference worker for further help.

Scope

This guide suggests resources for the study of sixteenth-century Europe. The reference works provide background information about people, places, events, and movements. Use them to acquaint yourself with a topic and to provide lists of further reading. The suggested call numbers and subject headings will help you to find more works on relevant topics.

The library contains many works by sixteenth-century authors, for example, Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Erasmus, More, Machiavelli, Cranmer, Montaigne, and Castiglione. Check the online catalog to find these sources.

Reference Works

Reference works include encyclopedias, dictionaries, handbooks, and almanacs. They are available in the reference section.


Contains annotated lists of the best history books, arranged topically, chronologically, and geographically (e.g., “British Isles, 1450–1800” and “Low Countries and Switzerland”). Use this list as a starting point for reading secondary sources.


The best collection of Christian creeds and confessions. Includes the original texts with English translations and brief introductions and notes. Though this work supersedes Philip Schaff’s Bibliotheca Symbolica Ecclesiae Universalis: The Creeds of Christendom (238 Sch14), you may also wish to consult Schaff.


The best encyclopedia of the Reformation. Includes maps and a synoptic outline.


The best encyclopedia on the Renaissance. Contains many maps and genealogical tables.


Lavishly illustrated, but at the expense of the length and detail of the articles. Contains several indexes by topic.

Besides the concise articles, this work includes tables of the ruling houses and a thematic index.


With very brief articles, this is more a dictionary than an encyclopedia. Contains a chronological table.


This excellent work summarizes the historiography of topics in British history. Use it to find the key secondary works on a topic and to place your work in the context of existing historiography.

**Call Numbers and Subject Headings**

*Call numbers* are places to check in the library. Go to that location, and browse the shelves for books on that topic. *Subject headings* are suggested terms to use when searching the library catalog. Search for them by “subject,” not by “keyword.”

These subject headings will direct you to specific topics in the history of the sixteenth century. Only selected subheadings have been given, so you may wish to examine the general headings for others. For example, the heading “Reformation” has many more subheadings than can be given here. Detailed entries about particular countries or regions have been provided only for Spain and France. You can easily find similar lists for other countries in the online catalog.

| Armada, 1588                      | Philip II                        |
| Art—History                      | Reformation                      |
| Art—Renaissance                  | Reformation—(see specific countries) |
| Catherine de Medicis             | Reformation—Bibliography         |
| Creeds                           | Reformation—Biography            |
| Creeds—Comparative studies       | Reformation—Dictionaries         |
| Creeds—History and criticism     | Reformation—Encyclopedias        |
| Creeds—(see specific churches and denominations) | Reformation—Historiography |
| Elizabeth I                      | Reformation—Theology             |
| France—Calvinism—History         | Reformation—History              |
| France—Church history—16th century| Renaissance—(see specific countries) |
| France—History                   | Renaissance—Bibliography         |
| France—History—16th century      | Renaissance—Biography            |
| France—History—Wars of the Huguenots | Renaissance—Dictionaries       |
| France—Huguenots                 | Renaissance—Reference Works      |
| France—Huguenots—History         | Spain—Catholic Church—History    |
| France—Reformation               | Spain—Church history             |
| France—Religion                  | Spain—Civilization—16th century  |
| France—Religious tolerance       | Spain—Colonies                   |
| France—Renaissance               | Spain—Explorers                  |
| History—Modern                   | Spain—History                    |
| History—Modern—16th century      | Spain—History—Philip II          |
| Huguenots                        | Spain—Inquisition                |
| Huguenots—History                | Spain—Jews—History               |
| Literacy—Europe—History          | Spain—Music—16th century          |
| Medici                           | Spain—Muslims—History            |
| Medici—House of                  | Spain—Reformation                |
| Piety—History                    | Spain—Religious life and customs |
270—Church history
   .5—Late Middle Ages through Renaissance, 1200–1517
   .6—Period of Reformation and Counter-Reformation, 1517–1648
271—Religious congregations and orders in church history
272—Persecutions in general church history
   .2—Persecutions by Inquisition
   .4—Persecution of Huguenots
   .6—Persecution of Anglican Reformers by Mary I
   .7—Persecutions of Roman Church by Elizabeth I and Anglicans
273—Doctrinal controversies and heresies in general church history
   .6—Sixth through sixteenth centuries
274—Christianity in Europe
280—Denominations and sects of Christian church
940—History of Europe
   .21—Renaissance period, 1453–1517
   .22—1517–1789
   .23—Reformation period, 1517–1648
941—British Isles
942—England and Wales
943—Germany /Central Europe
944—France
945—Italy/Italian peninsula
946—Spain/Iberian peninsula
947—Russia/Eastern Europe
948—Scandinavia
949—Other parts of Europe

Periodicals
Periodicals are published regularly, and they are usually indexed. They can be found in the periodicals room on first floor.

- Church History
- English Historical Review
- Fides et Historia
- Renaissance Quarterly
- Sixteenth Century Journal

Electronic Resources
Electronic resources are subscription databases available from a link on the library’s website.


Gives biographical information on more than one million people throughout history, around the world, and across all disciplines. Combines 250,000 biographies from Gale Group sources with nearly one million biographies from The Complete Marquis Who’s Who. This source is also useful for searching Contemporary Authors to find profiles of historians.


The Oxford DNB is a collection of 56,521 specially written biographies, which describe the lives of people who shaped the history of the British Isles and
beyond. Published in a 60-volume print edition and online, the dictionary is an essential resource for checking facts, learning about people involved in a historical event or associated with a place, or undertaking new research into any aspect of the British past.


This multi-disciplinary database provides full text for more than 4,500 journals, including full text for more than 3,700 peer-reviewed titles. It includes many history journals, such as Church History, the Journal of American History, the New England Quarterly, and the American Historical Review.


This database indexes journal articles, book reviews, and collections of essays in all fields of religion, with full text for many of the journals. It covers biblical studies, world religions, church history, and religious perspectives on social issues. Though the database is more about religion than history, it is valuable for the study of church history.

Other Resources at the Mack Library