

Pope Gregory XIII introduced the Gregorian calendar in **1582**, replacing the Julian calendar in Catholic Europe.

EUROPE DID NOT ADOPT IT ALL AT ONCE.

The adoption

- **1582** — Spain, Portugal, much of Italy, Poland and Catholic regions adopted it.
- **1582–1587** — France and other Catholic territories followed.
- **1700** — Protestant states such as Denmark and parts of Germany adopted it.
- **1752** — Britain and its colonies adopted it.
- **1873** — Japan adopted it (outside Europe).
- **1918** — Russia adopted it after the Revolution.
- **1923** — Greece became one of the last European states to adopt the Gregorian calendar for civil use.

The reason for the reform was astronomical: the **Julian calendar was slightly too long**, causing the calendar to drift relative to the solar year. By 1582 the accumulated error was about **ten days**.

So when the Gregorian reform occurred, **Thursday 4 October 1582 was followed by Friday 15 October 1582** in the countries that immediately adopted it.

But here's the philosophical wrinkle

A calendar seems like a neutral measurement of time.

It isn't.

We commonly think:

time → calendar

But historically, it's closer to:

astronomical cycles → human measurement → calendar → social reality

The Gregorian reform therefore illustrates something directly relevant to your recent question:

Is time a thing, or is time something we organize our experience of change around?

The Earth did not suddenly jump forward ten days in 1582.

The numbering of time changed.

And yet people's lives, dates, contracts, festivals, births, deaths and historical records all became organized according to that new numbering.

So there is an intriguing distinction between:

time itself

our measurement of time

our experience of time

the social construction of time

And those four things are not necessarily identical.

That distinction becomes especially interesting when you put **the Gregorian calendar, modernity, modernist literature and the twentieth-century crisis of representation** next to each other.