LESSON 1

Europe in Crisis

What effect might social, economic, and religious conflicts have on a country?

READING HELPDESK

Academic Vocabulary

- conflict
- policy

Content Vocabulary

- heretic
- armada
- inflation
- national sovereignty

TAKING NOTES

Key Ideas and Details

Monitoring As you read, complete the chart by filling in key details for each topic.

	Spain	England	France
Government			
Religion			
Conflicts			

IT MATTERS BECAUSE

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, conflicts between Protestants and Catholics in many European nations resulted in wars for religious and political control. Social and economic crises also contributed to instability during these centuries.

Spain's Conflicts

GUIDING QUESTION *What roles did France and Spain play in religious conflicts?*

By 1560, Calvinism and Catholicism had become highly militant, or combative, religions. They were aggressive in winning converts and in eliminating each other's authority. Their struggle was the chief cause of the religious wars that plagued Europe in the sixteenth century. However, economic, social, and political forces also played an important role in these conflicts.

Spain's Militant Catholicism

The greatest supporter of militant Catholicism in the second half of the 1500s was King Philip II. He was the son of Charles V—the Holy Roman Emperor, King of Spain, and Archduke of Austria. Charles V's brother, Ferdinand I, succeeded him as Holy Roman Emperor. Philip II inherited the kingdoms of Milan, Naples, Sicily, the Netherlands, and Spain and its empire in the Americas from Charles V. Philip, who reigned from 1556 to 1598, ushered in an age of Spanish greatness. To strengthen his control, Philip insisted on strict conformity to Catholicism and strong monarchial authority. He also had the powerful Spanish navy at his command.

Around 1500, Catholic kingdoms in Spain had reconquered Muslim areas there and expelled Spanish Jews. Muslims were forced to convert or go into exile. Spain saw itself as a nation chosen by God to save Catholic Christianity from Protestant heretics. Philip II, the "Most Catholic King," championed Catholic causes. His actions led to

spectacular victories and defeats. Spain's leadership of a Holy League against the Turks resulted in a stunning victory over the Turkish fleet in the Battle of Lepanto in 1571. Philip was not so fortunate in his other **conflicts**.

Resistance From the Netherlands

One of the richest parts of Philip's empire, the Spanish Netherlands, consisted of 17 provinces (modern-day Netherlands and Belgium). Philip's attempts to strengthen his control in this region caused resentment and opposition from the nobles of the Netherlands. Philip also tried to crush Calvinism in the Netherlands. When violence erupted in 1566, Philip sent 10,000 troops to crush the rebellion.

Philip faced growing resistance from the Dutch in the northern provinces led by William the Silent, the prince of Orange. The struggle dragged on until 1609 when a 12-year truce finally ended the war. The northern provinces began to call themselves the United Provinces of the Netherlands and became the core of the modern Dutch state. In fact, the seventeenth century has often been called the golden age of the Dutch Republic by scholars because the United Provinces held center stage as one of Europe's great powers.

Protestantism in England

Elizabeth Tudor ascended the English throne in 1558. During her reign, the small island kingdom became the leader of the Protestant nations of Europe and laid the foundations for a world empire.

Intelligent, careful, and self-confident, Elizabeth moved quickly to solve the difficult religious problem she inherited from her Catholic half-sister,
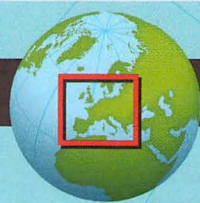
heretic one who does not conform to established doctrine

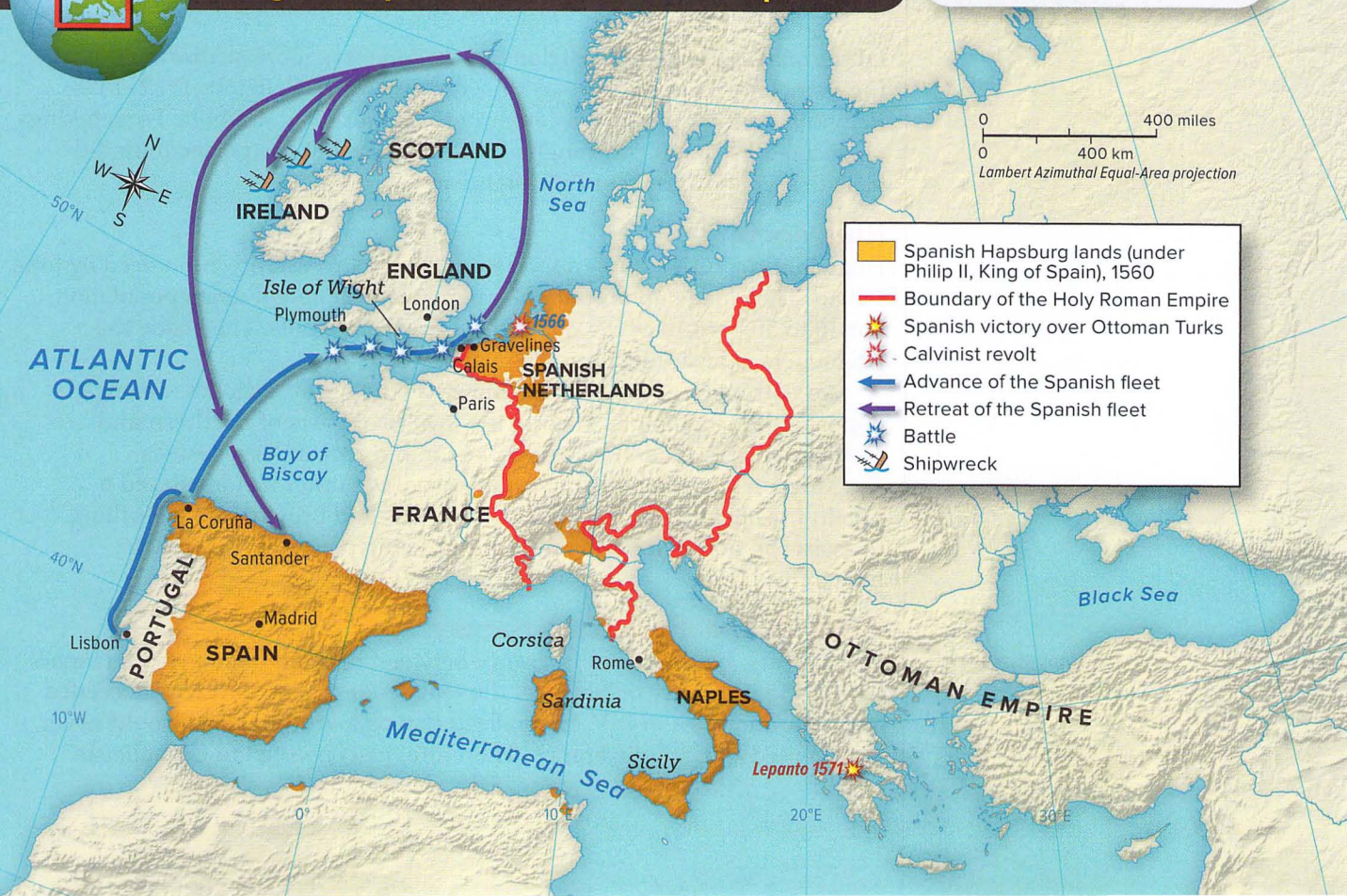**conflict** opposition; a fight, battle, or war

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GEOGRAPHY CONNECTION

Spain's Philip II ruled the world's largest empire at the time.

1 **HUMAN SYSTEMS** *How might the distribution of Philip's empire have made it difficult to administer?*

2 **PLACES AND REGIONS** *Why was Philip's relationship with the Holy Roman Emperor important?*

Height of Spanish Power Under Philip II 1560

0   400 miles
0   400 km
Lambert Azimuthal Equal-Area projection

Spanish Hapsburg lands (under Philip II, King of Spain), 1560
Boundary of the Holy Roman Empire
Spanish victory over Ottoman Turks
Calvinist revolt
Advance of the Spanish fleet
Retreat of the Spanish fleet
Battle
Shipwreck

SCOTLAND
IRELAND
North Sea
ENGLAND
Isle of Wight
Plymouth
London
1566
Gravelines
Calais
SPANISH NETHERLANDS
Paris
ATLANTIC OCEAN
Bay of Biscay
La Coruña
Santander
FRANCE
PORTUGAL
Lisbon
Madrid
SPAIN
Corsica
Rome
Sardinia
NAPLES
Sicily
Mediterranean Sea
Lepanto 1571
OTTOMAN EMPIRE
Black Sea

Queen Mary Tudor. Elizabeth repealed the laws favoring Catholics. A new Act of Supremacy named Elizabeth as "the only supreme governor" of both church and state. The Church of England under Queen Elizabeth followed a moderate Protestantism that kept most people satisfied.

Elizabeth was also moderate in her foreign **policy**. She tried to keep Spain and France from becoming too powerful by balancing power. If one nation seemed to be gaining in power, England would support the weaker nation. The queen feared that war would be disastrous for England and for her own rule; however, she could not escape a conflict with Spain.

Defeat of the Spanish Armada

In 1588, Philip II made preparations to send an ==armada==—a fleet of warships—to invade England. A successful invasion of England would mean the overthrow of Protestantism. The fleet that set sail had neither the ships nor the manpower that Philip had planned to send.

The hoped-for victory never came. The armada was battered by the faster English ships and sailed back to Spain by a northern route around Scotland and Ireland where it was pounded by storms.

By the end of Philip's reign in 1598, Spain was not the great power that it appeared to be. Spain was the most populous empire in the world, but it was bankrupt. Philip II had spent too much on war. His successor spent too much on his court. The armed forces were out of date, and the government was inefficient. Spain continued to play the role of a great power, but the real power in Europe had shifted to England and France.

✓ READING PROGRESS CHECK

Drawing Conclusions Why might the overthrow of Protestantism in England have been important to Philip II?

The French Wars of Religion

GUIDING QUESTION *What fueled the French civil wars of the sixteenth century?*

Of the sixteenth-century religious wars, none was more shattering than the French civil wars known as the French Wars of Religion (1562–1598). Religious conflict was at the center of these wars. The Catholic French kings persecuted Protestants throughout the country, but the persecution did little to stop the spread of Protestantism.

Huguenots

Huguenots (HYOO • guh • nahts) were French Protestants influenced by John Calvin. They made up only about 7 percent of the total French population, but 40 to 50 percent of the nobility became Huguenots. This made the Huguenots a powerful political threat to the Crown.

An extreme Catholic party—known as the ultra-Catholics—strongly opposed the Huguenots. Having the loyalty of parts of northern and northwestern France, they could pay for and recruit large armies.

Religion was the most important issue, but other factors played a role in the ensuing French civil wars. Towns and provinces were willing to assist the nobles in weakening the growing power of the French monarchy.

Henry IV and the Edict of Nantes

For 30 years, battles raged in France between the Catholics and the Huguenots. In 1589, Henry of Navarre, the Huguenot political leader, succeeded to the throne as Henry IV. He realized that as a Protestant he would never be accepted by Catholic France. Therefore, he converted to Catholicism.

▲ Queen Elizabeth I of England

policy an overall plan embracing the general goals and acceptable procedures of a governmental body

armada a fleet of warships

The Print Collector/Age Fotostock America

When Henry IV was crowned king in 1594, the fighting in France finally came to an end.

To solve the religious problem, Henry IV issued the Edict of Nantes in 1598. The edict recognized Catholicism as the official religion of France. It also gave the Huguenots the right to worship and to enjoy all political privileges such as holding public offices. This edict appeased both Catholics and Huguenots.

✓ **READING PROGRESS CHECK**

Identifying What was the purpose of the Edict of Nantes?

Crises in Europe

GUIDING QUESTION *How was Europe affected by social and economic crises in the seventeenth century?*

In addition to political upheaval and religious warfare, severe economic and social crises plagued Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. One major economic problem was **inflation**, or rising prices. A growing population in the sixteenth century increased the demand for land and food and drove up prices for both.

inflation a rapid increase in prices

Economic and Social Crises

By 1600, an economic slowdown had begun in parts of Europe. Spain's economy, grown dependent on imported silver, was failing by the 1640s. Its mines were producing less silver. Its fleets were subject to pirate attacks. Also, the loss of Muslim and Jewish artisans and merchants hurt the economy. Italy, the financial center of Europe in the Renaissance, was also declining economically.

Population figures in the 1500s and 1600s reveal Europe's worsening conditions. The 1500s were a period of growing population, possibly due to a warmer climate and increased food supplies. Europe's population probably increased from 60 million in 1500 to 85 million by 1600. By 1620, the population had leveled off. It had begun to decline by 1650, especially in central and southern Europe. Warfare, plague, and famine all contributed to the population decline and to the creation of social tensions. One source of tension involved the witchcraft trials.

The Witchcraft Trials

A belief in witchcraft, or magic, had been part of traditional village culture for centuries. The religious zeal that led to the Inquisition and the hunt for heretics was extended to concern about witchcraft. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, an intense hysteria affected the lives of many Europeans. Perhaps more than a hundred thousand people were charged with witchcraft. As more and more people were brought to trial, the fear of witches grew, as did the fear of being accused of witchcraft.

Common people—usually the poor and those without property—were the ones most often accused of witchcraft. More than 75 percent of those accused were women. Most of them were single or widowed and over 50 years old.

Under intense torture, accused witches usually confessed to a number of practices. For instance, many said that they had sworn allegiance to the devil and attended sabbats, nightly gatherings at which they feasted and danced. Others admitted to casting evil spells.

By 1650, the witchcraft hysteria had begun to lessen. As governments grew stronger, fewer officials were willing to disrupt their societies with

▲ Witch-burning in the County Reinstein (Regenstein, Saxony-Anhalt, Germany) in 1555

trials of witches. In addition, attitudes were changing. People found it unreasonable to believe in the old view of a world haunted by evil spirits.

✔ **READING PROGRESS CHECK**

Identifying What sources of social tension existed in Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries?

The Thirty Years' War

GUIDING QUESTION *What were the causes and effects of the Thirty Years' War?*

Religious disputes continued in Germany after the Peace of Augsburg in 1555. One reason for the disputes was that the peace settlement had not recognized Calvinism. By the 1600s, Calvinism had spread through Europe.

Religion played an important role in the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War, called the "last of the religious wars." However, political and territorial motives were also evident. Beginning in 1618 in the Holy Roman Empire, the war first involved the struggle between Catholic forces, led by the Hapsburg Holy Roman emperors, and Protestant (primarily Calvinist) nobles in Bohemia. As Denmark, Sweden, France, and Spain entered the war, the conflict became more political. For instance, France, directed by the Catholic Cardinal Richelieu, fought against the Holy Roman Empire and Spain in an attempt to gain European leadership.

All major European powers except England were involved in the plundering and destruction of Germany during the Thirty Years' War. The Peace of Westphalia officially ended the war in 1648 and gave Sweden, France, and their allies new territories. The treaty firmly established the concept of ==national sovereignty== and is regarded by many scholars to herald the rise of the modern state system in Europe.

Sweden's acquisitions in the Baltic Sea region increased its power in northern Europe. The peace settlement also divided the more than 300 states of the Holy Roman Empire into independent states, each with the freedom to determine their own religion and conduct foreign policy. The Holy Roman Empire ceased to be a political entity. Another 200 years would pass before German unification.

✔ **READING PROGRESS CHECK**

Stating Was the original motivation for the Thirty Years' War political or religious?

▲ A villager is attacked by a soldier during the Thirty Years' War.

national sovereignty the independence of a state combined with the right and power of regulating itself without foreign interference

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LESSON 1 REVIEW

Reviewing Vocabulary
1. *Identifying* Explain why King Philip II viewed Protestants as heretics and why that view may have met with conflict.

Using Your Notes
2. *Comparing and Contrasting* Use your notes to choose one of the topics discussed in the lesson. Write several sentences comparing how the government, religion, or conflicts affected each power.

Answering the Guiding Questions
3. *Applying* What roles did England and Spain play in religious conflicts?

4. *Exploring Issues* What fueled the French civil wars of the sixteenth century?

5. *Examining* How was Europe affected by social and economic crises in the seventeenth century?

6. *Identifying Cause and Effect* What were the causes and effects of the Thirty Years' War?

Writing Activity
7. *Informative/Explanatory* In two or three paragraphs, compare Elizabeth I of England and King Philip II of Spain in terms of their personalities as rulers, their relationship to religion, and their foreign policy. Use descriptive language.