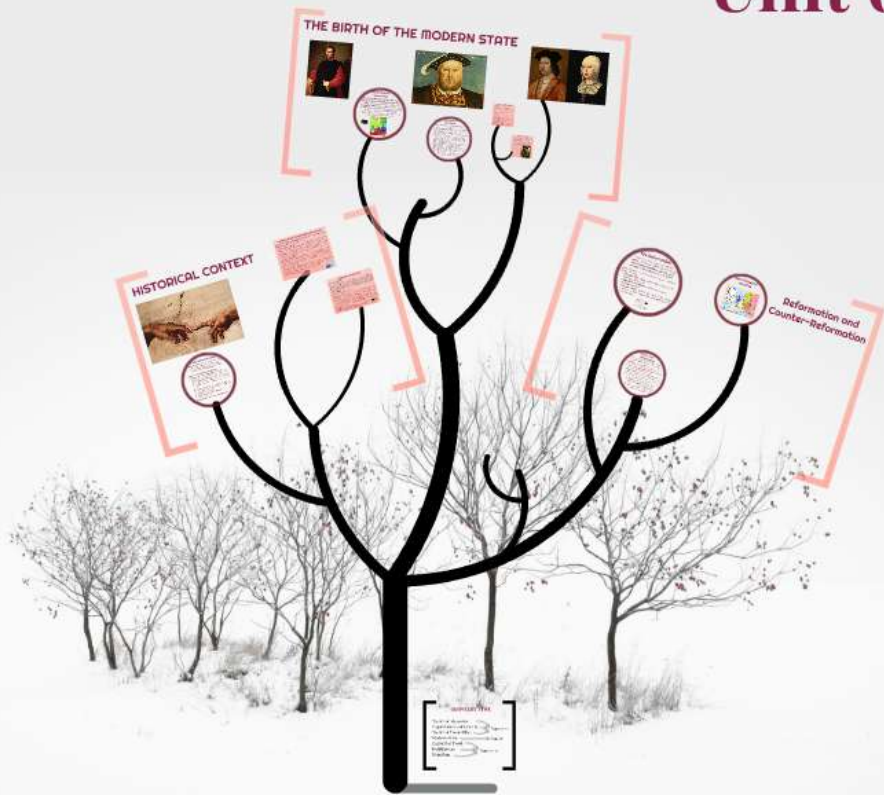
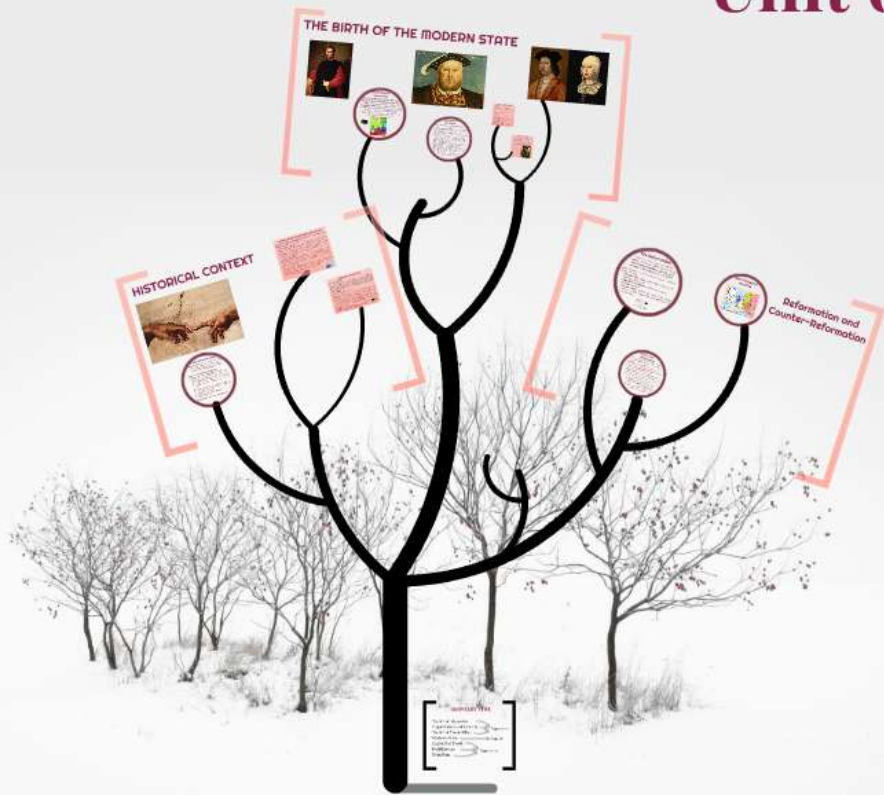


Unit 6: The start of the Modern Age (XV and XVI centuries)



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HISTORICAL CONTEXT



A new historical period

The **Modern Age** is the historical period from the 15th to the 18th century. It's often divided into a number of sub-periods: **Renaissance period** (XVI century), **Baroque period** (XVII century) and **Absolutism** (XVIII period).

CHANGES IN THE XV AND XVI CENTURIES:

- **Changes in the international panorama:** the disappearance of the Byzantine Empire by the Turks in 1453, the geographical discoveries made by portuguese and castilians in Africa, America and Asia, and finally the struggle for European hegemony between the major states.
- **The feudal system entered a period of crisis:** the feudal kingdoms were substituted by the modern State and authoritarian monarchies.
- **Western religious unity collapsed:** due to the Protestant Reformation.
- **Medieval culture was replaced by Humanism.**

The discoveries. Causes behind the process

The **extension of European knowledge of the world** and the exploration of new **geographical spaces** is due to a range of causes:

- **Political and economic causes:** for the monarchs who were establishing their authority (like the Catholic Monarchs did), the conquest of territories was an opportunity to acquire gold and silver to finance their rules as well as gain personal glory. Although, the fall of the Ottoman Empire closed the traditional European trade routes that brought supplies from Asia. Therefore, it was necessary to use a new route.
- **Scientific and technical causes:** during this period, books argued that the Earth was round and much smaller than it really is, waking up sailors' curiosity. In addition, sea navigation improved thanks to the widespread use of compass, the astrolabe, the development of the cartography and the construction of new types of ship (the caravel).
- **Religious and ideological causes:** the peninsular kingdoms maintained their desire to fight against the infidel and to create alliances against them. The ideal and cultural attitude of the era encouraged a thirst for adventure, fame and wealth.



Journeys and travelers

Portuguese explorations

From the XV century, **Portugal's** aim was to gain access to the East by sea routes. In consequence, prince Henry the Navigator, encourages the development of navigation skills and the exploration of the African coasts. The rivalry with Castile in this region was resolved with the sign of the **Treaty of Alcaniz** (1479). After the course of a series of exploratory journeys, the Portuguese occupied **Madeira, Azores, Cape Verde and the Gulf of Guinea.**

Castilla. The discovery of America.

Christopher Columbus, a sailor who may have been born in Genoa, had the conviction that the world was round, so he was to sail westwards across the Atlantic to reach India. He first presented his project to King John II of Portugal, but he rejected it due to his friendship with queen Isabella's religious advisor, so shifted the request to the Catholic Monarchs, who accepted it in their **Capitulations of Santa Fe** (1492). Columbus set sail with three boats from the port of Palos (Huelva) and on 12 October 1492, he landed on the Caribbean island of San Salvador, which he renamed San Salvador. After his return to the New World of three further occasions, he died believing he had reached the Indies.

HOMEWORK: Find information about the journeys made by Vasco da Gama, Magellan, Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, Hernán Cortés, Pizarro and Pedro de Alvarado.



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Trade routes before the discoveries



Trade routes added after the discoveries



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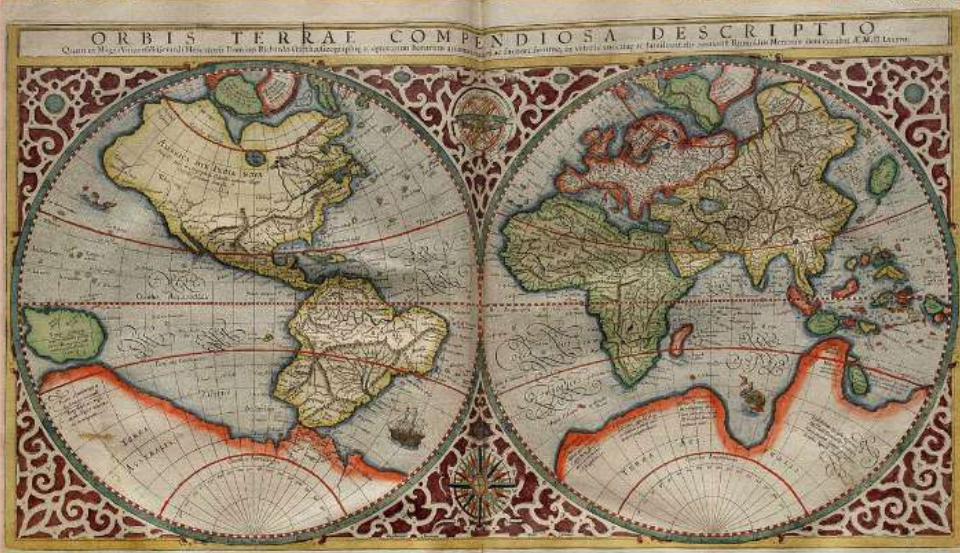
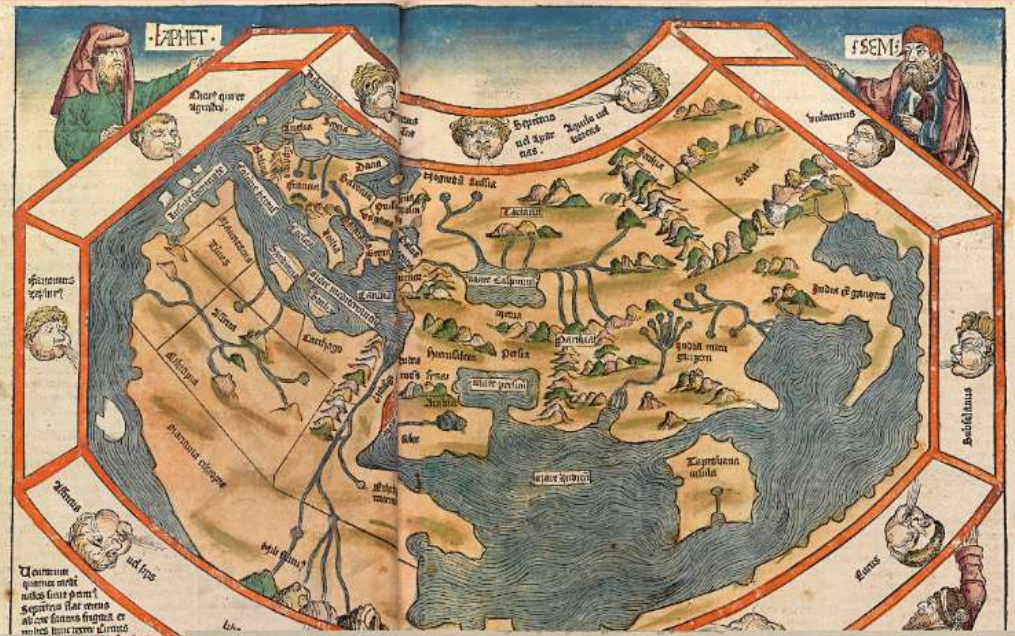
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HOMEWORK... Find information about the journeys made by Núñez de Balboa, Magallanes, Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, Hernán Cortés, Pizarro and Pedro de Alvarado



THE BIRTH OF THE MODERN STATE



Authoritarian monarchies

During the Modern Age, the feudal European monarchies became authoritarian monarchies. The king reinforced his power above the kingdom by imposing his authority over the nobility and limiting the autonomy of the municipalities. This new way of organising the State is referred to as the **Modern State**. In Europe, authoritarian monarchies took place in France, England and on the Iberian Peninsula.



Instruments of royal power

The monarchs reinforced their power in a number of ways:

- **National territory:** the monarchs considered the kingdom to be patrimony of the royal family that needed to be preserved and defended against outside attacks.
- **Bureaucracy:** it was created and managed by civil servants paid directly by the king to serve in his name. This period also saw efforts to control over the territory.
- **Permanent court:** the king, flanked with the travelling courtiers of the Middle Ages.
- **Permanent Army:** was funded by the monarch and served only under his orders. In the Middle Ages, the army was composed of aristocratic soldiers of the nobility.
- **Diplomatic service:** it was made up of ambassadors, who represented the monarchs in other countries in order to secure foreign relations.
- **Taxation systems:** to help pay for the financial costs of the new state apparatus.

ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATIONS

Monarchical centralism
 During the 16th century, monarchs began to centralise power in their hands, reducing the influence of nobles and the church. This led to the creation of a more unified state apparatus.

Administrative centralism
 Monarchs established permanent courts and bureaucracies to manage the state's affairs more efficiently.

Centralised taxation
 Monarchs sought to increase their revenue by imposing taxes directly on the population, bypassing the nobles.

Centralised justice
 Monarchs created a system of royal courts to resolve disputes, reducing the power of local lords.

Centralised military
 Monarchs began to maintain permanent standing armies, reducing their dependence on feudal levies.

Social changes

Emergence of a middle class
 The growth of trade and commerce led to the rise of a new social class, the bourgeoisie, which began to challenge the traditional power of the nobility.

Urbanisation
 People moved from rural areas to cities in search of work and better living conditions, leading to the growth of urban centers.

Religious changes
 The Protestant Reformation challenged the authority of the Catholic Church, leading to the emergence of new religious movements.

Education
 The spread of literacy and the founding of universities led to the rise of a more educated population.



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MIDDLE AGES

FEUDAL MONARCHIES:
Kings' power was limited.
Nobility & clergy had power inside their fiefs.



MODERN PERIOD

AUTHORITARIAN MONARCHIES:
Kings' power becomes unlimited.
Kings reinforce their authority & power by weakening the power of others (nobles, clergy, parliaments, cities).

Instruments of royal power

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- **National territory:** the monarchs considered the kingdom to be patrimony of the royal family that needed to be preserved and defended against possible attacks.
- **Bureaucracy:** it was created and managed by civil servants paid directly by the king to serve in his name. This permitted a more effective control over the territory.
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ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATIONS

Demographic growth

During the XV and XVI century, population growth was favoured by **better harvests**, the **eradication of the plague** and **relative peace**. However, this increase was slow as a result of the **high death rate** due to infectious diseases, the limited development of medical practice and the lack of hygiene.

Number of inhabitants in some of the European's countries (XVI century):

- Spain and Portugal: 8,5 mill.
- France 15,5 mill.
- England: 3,6 mill.
- Germany: 10,8

Economic growth

- **Increased artisan production**: due mainly to population growth.
- **Agricultural growth**: due to the rising demand for food. Furthermore, farming techniques improved and new lands are used for farming.
- **Urban growth**: although they rarely exceeded 30.000 inhabitants, cities became industrial and commercial centers.
- **Expanded trade**: new long-distance routes were opened. They were linked to luxury goods like silk, precious metals and spices.
- **Development of commercial capitalism**: exchanges agents, bankers and moneylanders arose, introducing financial practices that reduces the amount of physical cash required for transactions.

Social changes

- **Clergy and nobility:** were still the most privileged social groups because they didn't pay taxes. They held the most important administrative posts and they owned most of the land.
- **Bankers and merchants:** became very wealthy through their commercial activities. They formed a powerful *bourgeoisie* that played a key role in many parts of Europe.
- **Peasants:** in some European regions were liberated from the *feudal* lords and became free, but the feudal system was still used in many other regions.

Matrimonio Arnolfini. Jan Van Eyck



Reformation and Counter-Reformation

The Reformation

It was a religious movement in the XVI century that divided Catholicism and created **Protestantism churches**, inspired by some humanist thinkers like Erasmus of Rotterdam

The Reformation criticized certain practices of the medieval church, including:

- **Lifestyles of the clergy:** some members of the Catholic hierarchy lived in luxury.
- **Opposition to indulgences:** which forgave sins in exchange for money.
- **Excessive liturgy:** Catholic rites made it difficult for worshipers to have a more intimate devotion based on reading the Bible.



New Protestant churches



The Counter-Reformation

The spread of the Protestant Reformation caused reactions inside the Catholic Church:

- **Persecution of Protestants:** the Pope restore the Inquisition to punish heretics. A special committee was created, the **Sacred Congregation of the Index**, which created a list of books that were banned.
- **Church reform:** celebrating the **Council of Trent**. The practice of indulgences was prohibited and bishops were forced to live in their dioceses and not in palaces and castles. Catholics rally the Pope as its universal leader.
- **New religious orders:** the most important was the **Society of Jesus**, founded in 1540 by Ignacio de Loyola. The Jesuits directly obeyed the Pope and expanded the Church's Counter-Reformation in America.

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Reforms and reformers

THE LUTHERAN REFORMATION

It all started when the Augustinian monk **Martin Luther** rejected the sale of **indulgences** carried out by Pope Leo X to pay for the building being undertaken at the Vatican. In 1517, Luther displayed his **95 theses** against this practice and the pope condemned and excommunicated him 6 years later. Lutheran doctrine spread through a number of German states and central and northern Europe.



THE CALVINIST REFORMATION

It was preached by John Calvin from 1536 in Geneva (Switzerland). Based on the belief of predestination, according to which people are destined by God to be saved or condemned. This doctrine was popular amongst the Netherlands, Scotland, France and England.

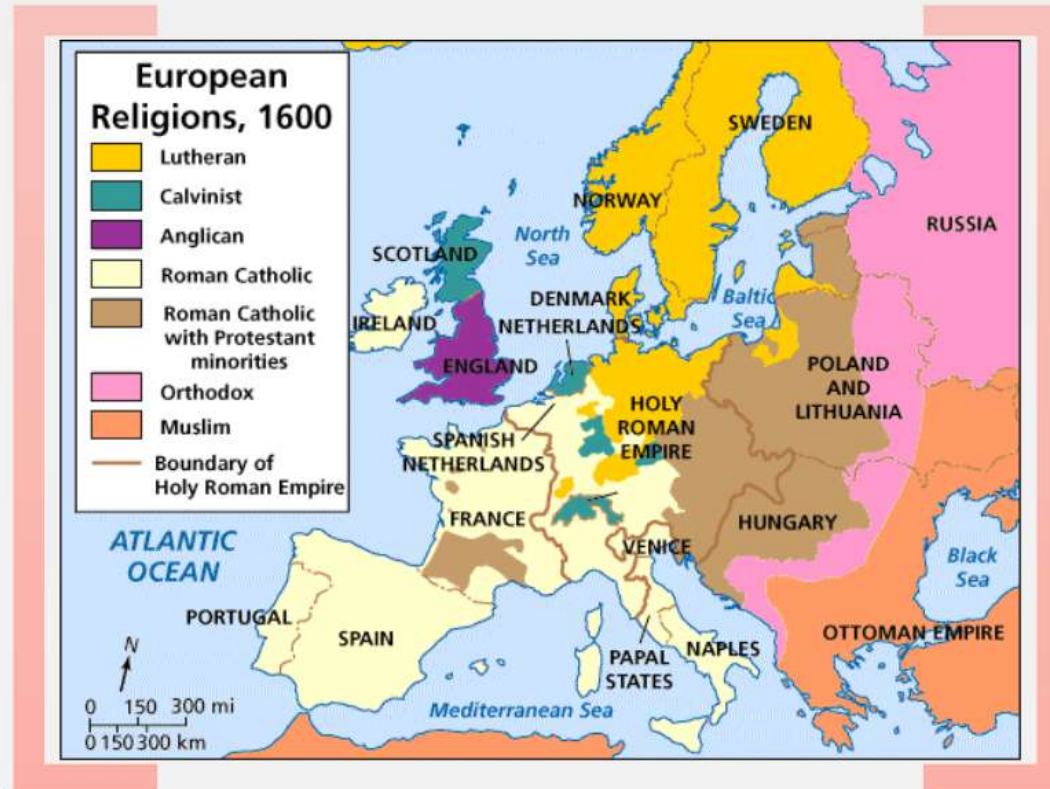


THE ANGLICAN REFORMATION

This doctrine emerged in England with Henry VIII when he declared himself head of the church of England following the papal rejection of his request for a divorce from his wife, Catalina of Aragon.



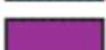
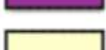






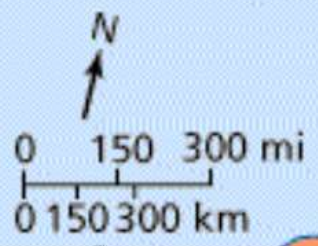
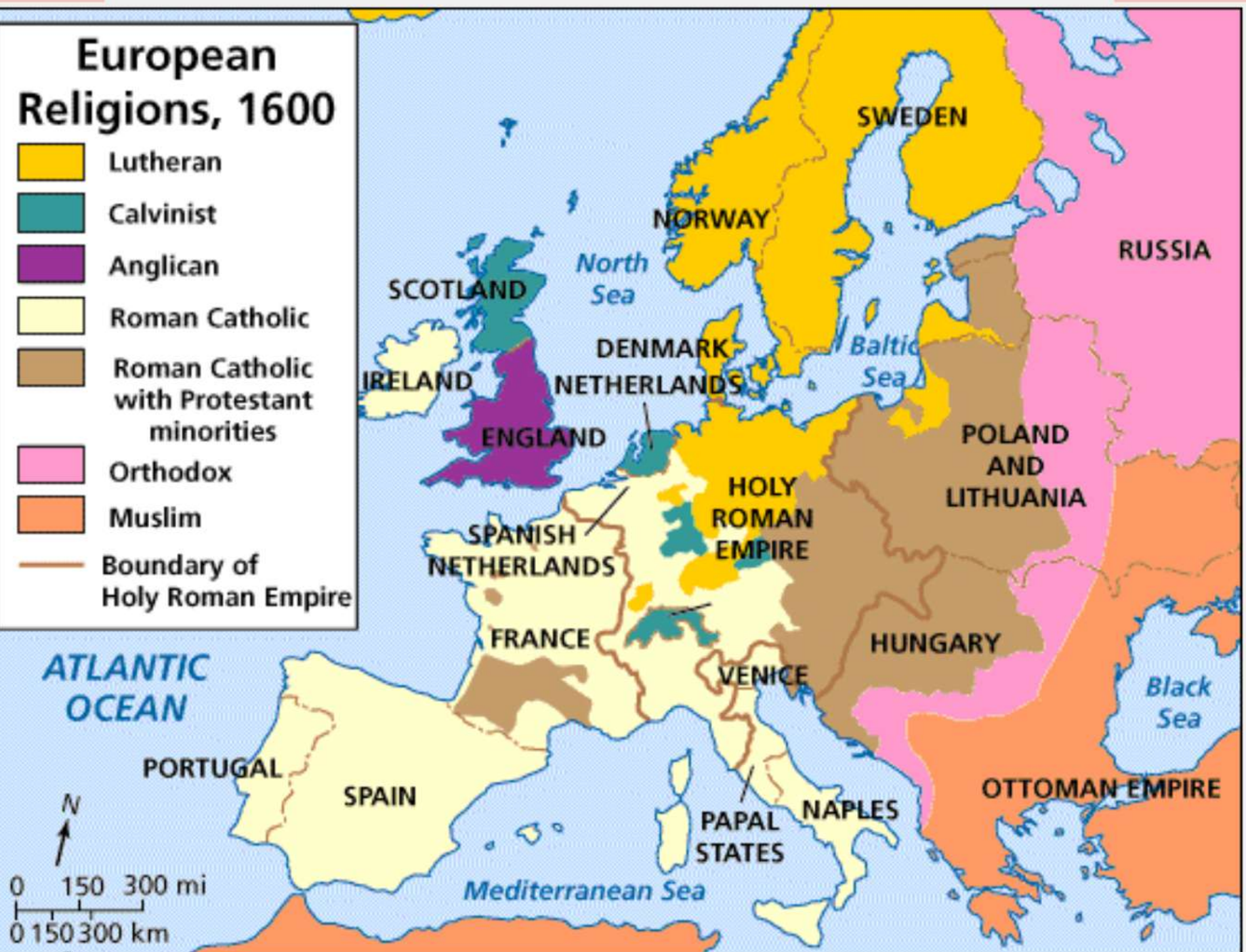
New Protestant churches



C

European Religions, 1600

-  Lutheran
-  Calvinist
-  Anglican
-  Roman Catholic
-  Roman Catholic with Protestant minorities
-  Orthodox
-  Muslim
-  Boundary of Holy Roman Empire



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GLOSSARY TIME

Treaty of Alcaçovas

Capitulations of Santa Fe

Treaty of Tordesillas

Modern State

Council of Trent

Indulgences

Nepotism

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Unit 6: The start of the Modern Age (XV and XVI centuries)

