RELIGIOUS TOLERATION IN THE REFORMATION ERA

RELIGIOUS UNIFORMITY IN THE NEW MONARCHIES

During the Reformation era, New Monarchs in Spain and England mandated religious uniformity as part of their efforts to create centralized states led by strong monarchs.

SPAIN (Catholic Uniformity)

After completing the *Reconquista* in 1491, **Ferdinand and Isabella** forced Spanish Jews and Muslims to convert to Catholicism or be expelled from their kingdom. They created the **Spanish Inquisition** to make sure that these converts did not return to their former faiths. Jews who converted to Catholicism were called *conversos*.

Philip II was a staunch Catholic who persecuted Protestants in Spain and in the Spanish-ruled Netherlands. He sent the **Spanish Armada** to England in a failed effort to restore Catholicism there.

Religious policy in Spain can be used as evidence that some monarchs used Catholic religious uniformity as a tool to build centralized states.

ENGLAND (Protestant Uniformity)

Henry VIII created the **Church of England** (Anglican Church) after the pope refused to annul his first marriage. The English Parliament supported Henry with the **Act of Supremacy**, declaring him to be the Supreme Head of the English Church.

Mary I, Henry's Catholic daughter, briefly returned England to Catholicism during her five-year reign. Her sister, **Elizabeth I**, reestablished the Church of England according to the principles of the **Elizabethan Religious Settlement**, which incorporated some elements of Catholic worship (e.g., candles and clerical vestments).

In the 1600s, disputes between Anglicans and **Puritans** (English Calvinists) led to the **English Civil War**.

TOLERATION IN THE NETHERLANDS

Calvinism became a popular religion in the Spanish-ruled Netherlands. Philip II persecuted Calvinists, which led to the **Dutch Revolt** and the establishment of an independent **Dutch Republic**. The merchant oligarchs of the Dutch Republic established the Dutch Reformed Church as the state religion while allowing Catholics, Jews, and other Protestants to worship privately without interference. **Amsterdam** became a refuge for European Jews and a center of global trade.

THE FRENCH WARS OF RELIGION

By the mid-1500s, France had a Catholic majority and a growing minority of **Huguenots** (French Calvinists) that included influential nobles in Southern France.

The **French Wars of Religion** (1562–1598) were a series of armed conflicts between Catholics and Huguenots. These wars finally ended when **Henry of Navarre**, a Protestant nobleman, inherited the French throne as **Henry IV** and converted to Catholicism. Henry, France's first Bourbon monarch, was a ***politique*** who placed political concerns over religious purity.

In 1598, Henry issued the **Edict of Nantes**, which recognized the rights of Huguenots to practice their religion openly in specific areas of France.

LOCAL RULE IN THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE

Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor, tried to maintain Catholic dominance and outlaw Lutheranism in the Holy Roman Empire, but agreed to the **Peace of Augsburg** (1555) after years of religious conflict. The Peace of Augsburg enabled local rulers to choose either Catholicism or Lutheranism in their territories.

Local rulers practiced varying degrees of toleration. One Habsburg emperor issued the **Letter of Majesty**, which granted religious toleration to Protestants in Bohemia. When another Habsburg ruler refused to honor the letter's terms, religious violence in Bohemia led to the **Thirty Years' War** (1618–1648).

The **Peace of Westphalia** (1648) established freedom of private worship throughout the Holy Roman Empire and allowed princes to choose Calvinism as their religion.