

Lesson 5
The Reformation

Part V: The New Trading Empire

Tudors (1485-1603)

1. English Foreign Policy and War with Spain

Henry VII: He had been careful to remain **friends with neighboring countries**. He **avoided war** and built a **huge merchant fleet**.

Henry VIII: He was **ambitious**, fought many wars, but was **unsuccessful** to gain an important role in Europe. However, he made the **English gun the best in Europe**.

Mary: She allied **England to Spain** which was an **unpopular** decision and **politically unwise**.

Elizabeth I: She made **trade** her most important policy. She encouraged **merchant expansion** and recognized **Spain her main trade rival and enemy**.

2. War with Spain:

1. Netherlands

- ❖ Catholic **Spain ruled the Netherlands**. But, many people were Protestant and were fighting for their independence.
- ❖ Spanish soldiers used the **English Channel** in order to get to the Netherlands (because Spain and France were rivals).
- ❖ Elizabeth helped the Dutch:
 - She allowed **Dutch ships** to use **English harbors** from which they attacked Spain.
 - She helped them with **money and soldiers** when they were almost defeated.

2. Problem of Trade:

- **English ships** had already been attacking **Spanish ships** loaded with silver and gold from America since 1570 because **Spain refused** to allow **England to trade with Spanish American colonies**.
- English ships were '**privateers**', but the **treasure** was shared with **the queen**.
- **Elizabeth apologized** to the **Spanish king** who knew that **she was encouraging the 'sea dogs'**.
- **Philip** decided to **conquer England in 1587**. However, before the fleet was fully mobilized, English spies uncovered the plot. Elizabeth sent Sir Francis Drake with 30 ships to the Spanish harbor. His '**Armada**' **was attacked and partly destroyed**.

- **Philip built another fleet** again and was defeated again:
 - **English ships** were **better and faster**.
 - Their **guns could shoot further**.
 - **Elizabeth's speech**: "I am come ... to live or die amongst you all, to lay down for my God, and for my kingdom, and for my people, my honor and my blood even in the dust. I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and a king of England too".
 - **Bad weather**: after some fierce fighting, a southwest wind blew them away from England and northward toward Scotland. Storms around Scotland and the west coast of Ireland **wrecked half the Spanish ships**, while the rest limped back to Spain.
- Peace was only made when Elizabeth died.

3. The Golden Age of Queen Elizabeth I:

a. Foreign Policy:

- She encouraged **English sailors** to continue **attacking Spanish ships**.
- She encouraged **English traders to settle abroad** and **to create colonies** which led to Britain's colonial empire (America, West Africa).
- ❖ Although early colonizing attempts failed, they **awakened England's interest in future ventures**. When Spain's "Invincible Armada" was defeated, England **grew in maritime confidence and Elizabeth supported new trading enterprises** on the other side of the world in Southeast Asia. **The stage was set for the foundation of a British Empire that would eventually encircle the globe.**

b. Development in Art:

- ❖ **Education** was **encouraged**. **New schools** opened giving more students a door to the literary world.
- ❖ **Thirst for literature**, coupled with advances in printing, produced **a cultural explosion**. This was the age of William Shakespeare and other great dramatists. Audiences thronged to newly **opened theaters** to be entertained by their plays. Elizabeth's Golden Age **opened them up to every class of society**. The upper-class nobility, the middle-class merchant, and the commoner all enjoyed this entertainment of the day.
- ❖ **Poets** wrote **eloquent sonnets**, and composers developed **innovative music**. **Skilled artists painted exquisite miniatures** of queen and courtiers.
- ❖ **New Bible translations** took pride of place in churches and homes. But the golden days did not last.