Lesson: 7-17th Century European Crisis: Economic, Social and Political Dimensions

Lesson Developer: Santosh Kumar Rai

College/Department: S.G.T.B. Khalsa College, University of Delhi

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7.1 MEANINGS OF THE 17th CENTURY CRISIS IN EUROPEAN CONTEXT

The early seventeenth century in Europe has often been regarded as a period during which a single general crisis afflicted the entire continent to some degree, affecting the economy, demography and the political stability of most countries. The idea of a "General Crisis" or just a "Crisis" of the seventeenth century was formulated by Eric J.Hobsbawm. He used it in an effort to explain the commercial collapse and retrenchment of productive capacity in both the agricultural and industrial sectors of the European economy from the 1620s through the 1640s. Certainly there were problems, with revolts breaking out in France, England, the Spanish Empire and elsewhere, and many areas suffering terrible economic difficulties which were in marked contrast to the steady growth of the economy of the sixteenth century, but to classify all of these under the one heading of a general crisis may be more difficult to justify. The extent to which the problems affected the whole of Europe evenly call into question the validity of terming it a general crisis, while questions could be asked about how novel the situation of the early 1600s was: whether it was a crisis at all or simply a continuation of normality. Disagreement has grown around this theory developed in the 1950's that postulated the 17th century as a century of crisis, one in which the feudal system, whether economically, politically, or culturally speaking, was replaced by a modern one involving (from different views) capitalism, absolutism, and the Industrial Revolution. Advocates of the idea speak of a decisive period that runs for a number of decades—as long as 1630 to 1680 or even 1620 to 1690, even though the 1640s and 1650s usually figure as the most intense "moment"—is enough, in some accounts, to disqualify the word. A crisis is supposed to be sharp and short. Furthermore, even if one focuses just on the two central decades, are there not plenty of other decades in this period that merit the designation—the 1550s/1560s, the 1590s, and the 1680s/1690s?In fact the character of the crisis was multilayered.

Voltaire, the philosopher, writer and all-purpose luminary of the French Enlightenment, was apparently the first person to see the events of mid seventeenth- century Britain and Europe as part of a global crisis. In 1741–2 he composed a history book, *Essai sur les mæurs et l'esprit des nations,* for his friend, Mme du Châtelet, who was bored stiff by the past. The seventeenth century, with its numerous revolts, wars and rebellions, presented Mme du Châtelet with special problems of *ennui* and, in an attempt to render such anarchy more palatable, Voltaire advanced a theory of 'general crisis'. Having grimly itemized the political upheavals in Poland, Russia, France, England, Spain and Germany, he turned to the Ottoman Empire where Sultan Ibrahim was deposed in 1648. By a strange coincidence, he reflected:

> This unfortunate time for Ibrahim was unfortunate for all monarchs. The crown of the Holy Roman Empire was unsettled by the famous Thirty Years' War. Civil war devastated France and forced the mother of Louis lost almost all his possessions in Asia, also lost Portugal.

Politically, in seventeenth century Europe three great powers contested for dominance – the Ottoman Empire, the Spanish Empire, and France, under Louis XIV and Richelieu. Each had a mass of about 17 million people. In spite of the presence of these great monarchies, there were still areas all over Europe from southern Italy to Scandinavia and from Scotland to Auvergne where primitive social enclaves

persisted, with hundreds of dialects and local, semibarbaric, religious cults. Attempted control of these numerous pockets sapped the resources of the great powers, similar to the drain on the Roman Empire when it was ringed with barbarians. In addition, after about 1620 the entire continent suffered from food shortages as the population increased to about 118 million by 1648 and the result of this was often political instability. Even by 1640, rebellion was everywhere. Although this is often called the century of scientific revolution, this was completely irrelevant to the mass of Europeans as they squandered most of their energies in massive wars. During the whole of the period there were only seven years of peace in Europe. All of the people tended to revolt against the powers of princes and kings over their bodies and properties and to protest against taxation, interference with trade and arbitrary imprisonment. Over most of Europe the peasantry represented vast numbers of people and in one way or another they were almost always in revolt, with occasional open rebellion, as in Naples in 1647. In Orleans, out of an active population of almost 120,000 there were over 67,000 wage earners, but this did not signal great productivity. Many districts were over-populated with great numbers of unemployed. Vagrants were universally put under lock and key, usually in work-houses.

The last quarter of the century saw the establishment of responsible parliamentary government in most areas. By 1700 the old north-south trade axis had swung almost 90~ and ran east-west from England-Holland to Saxony, Bohemia and Silesia. Population growth at the end of the century had been slowed not only by war and famine but also by plague, so that shortly after the turn of the century (1713) the population had dropped to about 102 million. Still, Europe remained in a favored position when compared to other civilization, particularly in regard to food. Europeans consumed great quantities of meat. Water-mills supplied the chief energy and were owned and supplied by the lord of the manor, while the peasants contributed their labor. The mill, which ground grain, was thus the essential tool of the manorial economy. Otherwise the 17th century civilization was one of wood and charcoal. Buildings, machines, wine-presses, plows and pumps were all made of wood, with a very minimum of metallic parts. Fortunately Europe was well-endowed with forests. Iron, although available, was still in short supply. Wigs and then powdered wigs came into fashion in this century despite initial objection by the church.

Practically all the armies of Europe had adopted the military reforms initiated at the end of the previous century by Maurice of Holland. This resulted in obedient, responsive units of soldiers able to function efficiently in any part of the globe. The new drill and techniques spread from officers trained at Maurice's Military Academy, which was founded in 1619, first to Sweden, then to the northern Protestant European states and finally to France and eventually Spain.

Value addition: Contemporaries
Thomas Hobbes in *Leviathan*, a treatise on political obedience published in 1651,
"There is [now] no place for industry, because the fruit thereof is uncertain, and consequently no culture of the earth; no navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by sea; no commodious building; . . . no arts; no letters; no society. And, which is worst of all, continual fear and

danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short."
Source: Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan; or, The Matter, Forme, and Power of a Common-wealth, Ecclesiasticall and Civill, ed. Richard Tuck (1651; repr., Cambridge, 1996), p.89.

Value addition: Time-Line
17th Century Europe-Society and Politics
1600: Bruno burned at the stake in Rome for heresy 1600-04: British, Dutch and French East India Companies chartered 1602-03:The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark written by Shakespeare 1616: Catholic church issues edict against Copernicanism 1618-48: Thirty Years' Wars 1624-42: Richelieu prime minister 1631: 1st newspaper published (Paris) 1633: Galileo convicted of heresy 1642-46: English Civil War 1643: Louis XIV takes throne 1648: Treaty of Westphalia (ending Thirty Years' War) 1649: Charles I beheaded 1653: Cromwell named Lord Protector 1662: Restoration of English monarchy - Charles II takes the throne 1665: Great Plague in London 1682: Peter I (the Great) becomes tsar. 1688: "Glorious Revolution" 1692: Witchcraft trials in Salem 1694: Bank of England incorporated
Source: Stephan J. Lee, *Aspects of European History, 1494-1789,*London, 1984.

7.2 FEATURES OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY CRISES

7.2.1 Political Nature of the Crisis

The mid-seventeenth century saw more cases of simultaneous state breakdown around the globe than any previous or subsequent age. War and rising taxes provoked a set of popular reactions. The case of France – no longer fully feudal but likewise not fully bourgeois – is especially arresting. The King's alliances with Protestant powers against the Austro-Spanish Hapsburgs caused discontent among Catholics, including members of the royal family. The exactions of tax farmers weighed heavily on the people. Public debt was not yet perfected – the English did that for us from 1699 on – so hard-pressed monarchs had to find new revenues however possible.In the 1640s, Ming China, the most populous state in the world, collapsed; the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the largest state in Europe, disintegrated; much of the Spanish monarchy, the first global empire in history,seceded; and the entire Stuart monarchy rebelled—Scotland, Ireland,

England, and its American colonies. In addition, just in the year 1648, a tide of urban rebellions began in Russia (the largest state in the world), and the Fronde Revolt paralyzed France (the most populous state in Europe); meanwhile, in Istanbul (Europe's largest city), irate subjects strangled Sultan Ibrahim, and in London, King Charles I went on trial for war crimes (the first head of state to do so). In the 1650s, Sweden and Denmark came close to revolution; Scotland and Ireland disappeared as autonomous states; the Dutch Republic radically changed its form of government; and the Mughal Empire, then the richest state in the world, experienced two years of civil war following the arrest, deposition, and imprisonment of its ruler.

Value addition: Interesting facts
Heading text Welsh historian James Howell, writing in 1649
Body text: God Almighty has a quarrel lately with all mankind, and given the reins to the ill spirit to compass the whole earth; for within these twelve years there have the strangest revolutions and horridest things happened, not only in Europe but all the world over, that have befallen mankind, I dare boldly say, since Adam fell, in so short a revolution of time . . . [Such] monstrous things have happened [that] it seems the whole world is off the hinges; and (which is the more wonderful) all these prodigious passages have fallen out in less than the compass of twelve years.
Source: James Howell, *Epistolae Ho-Elianae*, 3 vols. (London, 1650), 3: 1–3, to Lord Dorset, January 20, 1646.

The frequency of popular revolts around the world also peaked during the mid seventeenth century. In China, the number of major armed uprisings rose from under ten in the 1610s to more than seventy in the 1620s and more than eighty in the 1630s, affecting 160 counties and involving well over 1 million people. In Japan, some forty revolts (*ho ki*) and two hundred lesser rural uprisings (*hyakusho ikki*) occurred between 1590 and 1642—a total unmatched for two centuries—and the largest uprising, at Shimabara on Kyushu Island in 1637–1638, involved some 25,000 insurgents. In Russia, a wave of rebellions in 1648–1649 shook the central government to its foundations; of the twenty-five major peasant revolts recorded in seventeenth century Germany and Switzerland, more than half took place between 1626 and 1650; the total number of food riots in England rose from twelve between 1600 and 1620 to thirty-six between 1621 and 1631, with fourteen more in 1647–1649. In France, finally, popular revolts peaked both absolutely and relatively in the mid seventeenth century.

Value addition: Did you Know
Major Revolts and Revolutions, 1635–1666
EUROPE 1636 1. Croquants Revolt (Périgord) 2. Revolt in Lower Austria 1637 3. Cossack Revolt [⑦ 1638] **4. Scottish Revolution [⑦1651]** 5. Évora & S. Portugal Revolt [⑦ 1638] 1639 6. Nu-pieds Revolt (Normandy) 1640 **7. Catalan Revolt [⑦ 1659]** **8. Portugal rebels [⑦1668]** 1641 **9. Irish Rebellion [⑦ 1653]** 10. Andalusia : Medina Sidonia conspiracy 1642 **11. English "Great Rebellion" [⑦ 1660]**

1647 **12. Revolt of Naples [⑦ 1648]**
13. Revolt of Sicily [⑦ 1648]
1648 14. France: Fronde Revolt [⑦ 1653]
15. Russia: Moscow and other cities rebel [⑦ 1649]
16. Revolt of Ukraine against Poland [⑦ 1668]
17. Istanbul: Ottoman regicide
1649 18. London: British regicide
1650 **19. Dutch regime change [⑦ 1672]**
1651 20. Bordeaux: Ormée Revolt [⑦ 1653]
21. Istanbul riots
1652 22. "Green Banner" revolts in Andalusia
1653 23. Swiss Revolution
1656 24. Istanbul riots
1660 **25. The "Danish Revolution"**
26. "Restoration" in England,Scotland, and Ireland
1662 27. Moscow Rebellion

AMERICAS

1637 28. Pequot War
1641 29. Mexico Revolt [⑦ 1642]
30. Portuguese Brazil rebels against Spain
1642 31. English colonies in America take sides in Civil War
1645 **32. Portuguese colonists in Brazil rebel against Dutch [⑦ 1654]**
1660 33. "Restoration" in English colonies
1666 34. Revolt of Laicacota (Peru)

ASIA AND AFRICA

1635 35. Popular revolts spread from NW China to Yangzi valley [⑦ 1645]
1637 36._Revolt at Shimabara [⑦ 1638]
1639 37. Revolt of Chinese (Sangleys) in Manila
1641 **38. Revolt of Portuguese in Mombasa, Mozambique, Goa, and Ceylon against Spain**
1643 **39. Li Zicheng declares Shun Era in Xi'an**
1644 **40. Li Zicheng takes Beijing and ends Ming rule**
41. Qing capture Beijing and occupy Central Plain
1645 **42. Qing invade southern China; "Southern Ming" resistance [⑦1662 in southern China; ⑦ 1683 in Taiwan]**
1651 43. Yui conspiracy in Tokyo
1652 44. Colombo rebels against Portugal
1653 45. Goa rebels against Portugal
1657 46. Anatolia: Revolt of Abaza Hasan Pasha [⑦ 1659]
1658 **47. Mughal Civil War [⑦ 1662]**
1665 **48. Overthrow of Kongo kingdom**
49. Shabbatai Zvi proclaimed Messiah at Izmir

Events listed in bold are those that produced regime change.

Source: Geoffrey Parker, "Crisis and Catastrophe: The Global Crisis of the Seventeenth Century Reconsidered" ,*American Historical Review*,Vol.113, No.4,October 2008,p.1055.

The mid-seventeenth century also saw a third major anomaly: more wars took place around the world than in any other era until the 1940s. In the six decades between 1618 and 1678, Poland was at peace for only twenty-seven years, the Dutch Republic for only fourteen, France for only eleven, and Spain for only three. Jack S. Levy, a political scientist, found the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Europe to be "the most warlike in terms of the proportion of years of war under way (95 per cent), the frequency of war (nearly one every three years), and the average yearly duration, extent, and magnitude of war." The historical record reveals at least one war in progress between the states of Europe in every year between 1611 and 1669.

Beyond Europe, over the same period, the Chinese and Mughal empires fought wars continuously, while the Ottoman Empire enjoyed only seven years of peace. The global "Conflict Catalogue" compiled by Peter Brecke, another political scientist, shows that, on average, wars around the world lasted longer in the seventeenth century than at any time since 1400 (when his survey begins). War had become the norm for resolving both domestic and international problems. These underlying factors have been seen as coming to a head with the political crises of the 1640s which shocked the world and were seen at the time as being the expression of a single great crisis. Jeremiah Whittaker in a sermon in 1643 said, "These days are days of shaking, and this shaking is universal." The clustering of the revolts across Europe and their coincidence with underlying problems suggest both that the revolts are likely to be linked and that they are the result of Europe-wide trends. However, the timing of the revolts could just be coincidence: "...it is open to question whether our persistent search for 'underlying social causes' has not led us down blind alleys...Political disagreement may, after all, be no more and no less than political disagreement - a dispute about the control and the exercise of power." It is also questionable whether the early seventeenth century can be called a time of crisis simply because of the volume and seriousness of revolts. "...If, in England, dysfunction began to appear in 1529 when was there a period of equilibrium, which one would have to assume to have been at least reasonably long to contrast with the hundred years of dysfunction? The fifteenth century, the age of the great defeat in France and the Wars of the Roses? the fourteenth century, with the Black Death, its popular rebellions and the deposition of two kings? In between the disasters there were some relatively short periods of calm and equilibrium. But why should they have any greater claim to be the norm than the rather longer periods of unrest and confusion?"

It is also hard to find any common threads which run through all of the major revolts in Europe, and any attempt to generalise is bound to lead to the inclusion of exceptions to the rule. In the very broadest terms, the growth of absolutism coming into conflict with local powers can be seen as the rule for many of the rebellions, but their courses and the issues which were fought over of course vary from country to country. In England, the king's encroachment on vested interest in the areas of religion, finance and foreign policy caused open constitutional debate in Parliament where the tensions between the centralising king and the conservative local powers developed into war. Likewise, the Fronde in France was a reaction to royal centralisation fought over issues like the sale of offices, the introduction of the intendants, and the increases of the taille. Castile's economic weaknesses at a time of war caused it to shift its burdens onto the shoulders of its subject provinces, a move which Portugal, Catalonia and Naples were unwilling to accept. In the Netherlands, conflict arose over the Prince of Orange's right to control the army, while Poland was driven into chaos as a result of attempts to suppress the autonomy of the Cossacks. An exception can be found in the case of Sweden, which saw a genuine peasant's revolt, but overall, this broad model can be seen to work across Europe. It is, however, "...not even theoretically possible to construct a comprehensive theory or model for the revolutions of the seventeenth century." From the 1580s, Europe moved into an era of greater international hostility, with wars occurring more frequently and becoming increasingly costly to fight. As each country's military capacity increased, others had to follow in order to compete, and a form of arms race developed in which the size of armies rose dramatically. The Spanish army, which in 1550 had stood at 150,000 men rose to 300,000 by the

1630s, the French increased from 50,000 to 150,000, and the English from 20,000 in 1550 to 70,000 in 1650. "The only way to pay for all this was through higher taxation: in Spain taxes increased fivefold under Philip II, in France the tax burden quintupled between 1609 and 1648. Fiscality since it tested the capacity of both rich and poor to contribute to the unprecedented demands of the state, became the crucial ingredient of crisis." The increased tax burden affected industry in Europe in much the same way as it affected agriculture, by taking money out of the private market and channelling it through the public sector. Manufacturers who had previously catered for private domestic markets found that the state had taken the money from their customers who were now understandably more anxious to feed themselves than to buy industrial products, undermining the whole basis of the traditional industries. The state, and in particular the military, became the major buyer in the market, but was interested in war industries rather than those which had served domestic demand. Historian Lublinskaya picks up the theme of the fall of Huguenot resistance in La Rochelle; Richelieu is organically tiedin with his predecessors. She devotes especial attention to the Assembly of Notables of 1626-27 which is usually treated rather offhandedly, because the tangible results of its deliberations on reform were so meagre. This is precisely the reason why this assembly was so important, not just because it proved to the king's government the uselessness of such gatherings, but because it thwarted Richelieu's favourite scheme of reforming government finance by redeeming the royal domain and forced the Cardinal to relay on the *taille* and other traditional taxes to pay for his ever more expensive policies. The consequences for French society were incalculable. Incidentally, Lublinskaya shows that it was not the extravagance of the court, but the military establishment that was mainly responsible for draining the treasury.

Figure 1 Cardinal Richelieu

Value addition: Biographical Sketches

Cardinal Richelieu

1st Chief Minister of the French King

In office	12 August 1624 – 4 December 1642
Monarch	Louis XIII of France
Succeeded by	Cardinal Mazarin
Born	9 September 1585 Paris, France
Died	4 December 1642 (aged 57) Paris, France
Nationality	French
Alma mater	Collège de Navarre
Occupation	Clergyman, cardinal
Profession	Statesman, nobleman
Religion	Roman Catholicism
Signature	

Born in Paris, Armand du Plessis was the fourth of five children and the last of three sons: he was delicate from childhood, and suffered frequent bouts of ill-health throughout his life. His family, although belonging only to the lesser nobility of Poitou, was somewhat prominent: his father, François du Plessis, seigneur de Richelieu, was a soldier and courtier who served as the Grand Provost of France; his mother, Susanne de La Porte, was the daughter of a famous jurist. When he was five years old, his father died fighting in the French Wars of Religion, leaving the family in debt; with the aid of royal grants, however, the family was able to avoid financial difficulties. At the age of nine, young Richelieu was sent to the College of Navarre in Paris to study philosophy. Thereafter, he began to train for a military career. His private life seems to have been typical of a young officer of the era: in 1605, aged twenty, he was treated by Theodore de Mayerne for gonorrhea. Consecrated as a bishop in 1608, he later entered politics, becoming a Secretary of State in 1616. Richelieu soon rose in both the Church and the state, becoming a cardinal in 1622, and King Louis XIII's chief minister in 1624. He remained in office until his death in 1642; he was succeeded by Cardinal Mazarin, whose career he fostered.

The Cardinal de Richelieu was often known by the title of the King's "Chief Minister" or "First Minister." As a result, he is considered to be the world's

first Prime Minister, in the modern sense of the term. Cardinal Richelieu's policy involved two primary goals: centralization of power in France and opposition to the Habsburg dynasty (which ruled in both Austria and Spain)He sought to consolidate royal power and crush domestic factions. By restraining the power of the nobility, he transformed France into a strong, centralized state. His chief foreign policy objective was to check the power of the Austro-Spanish Habsburg dynasty. Although he was a cardinal, he did not hesitate to make alliances with Protestant rulers in attempting to achieve this goal. His tenure was marked by the Thirty Years' War that engulfed Europe. Richelieu was also famous for his patronage of the arts; most notably, he founded the Académie Française, the learned society responsible for matters pertaining to the French language. Richelieu is also known by the sobriquet *l'Éminence rouge* ("the Red Eminence"), from the red shade of a cardinal's vestments and the style "eminence" as a cardinal.As an advocate for Samuel de Champlain and of the retention of Quebec, he founded the Compagnie des Cent-Associés and saw the Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye return Quebec City to French rule under Champlain, after the settlement had been captured by the Kirkes in 1629. This in part allowed the colony to eventually develop into the heartland of Francophone culture in North America.He is also a leading character in *The Three Musketeers* by Alexandre Dumas, père and its subsequent film adaptations, portrayed as a main antagonist, and a powerful ruler, even more powerful than the King himself, though events like the Day of the Dupes show that in fact he very much depended on the King's confidence to keep this power.

Source: http://en.wikipedi.org/wiki/Cardinal_Richelieu

7.2.2 The Thirty Years Wars

Europe had expected that the struggle between Catholic and Protestant would be renewed in 1621, when the truce between Spain and the northern provinces of the Netherlands came to an end. But it began in the Empire several years earlier and gradually most of Europe became involved. Since Charles V, backed by the power of Spain, had been unable either to strengthen his authority at the expense of the territorial princes or to wipe out Protestantism, it was natural that his immediate successors preferred to leave the constitutional and religious issues alone. Ferdinand I (1556-1564) and Maximilian II (1564-1576) devoted most of their energy to fighting the Turks, while Rudolf II (1576-1612) preferred to dabble in astrology and to search for the philosopher's stone to turn base metals into gold. During their reigns, however, the Catholic revival was gathering momentum, and it remained only for Ferdinand II (1619-1637) to put the new Catholic fervor into action.

7.2.2.1 Ferdinand II

The red-haired, red-faced, good-natured Ferdinand was not a great man, but he possessed more virtues than most kings. He was both a devoted husband and father and a conscientious ruler interested in the welfare of his people. It was said with exaggeration no doubt that when he was Duke of Styria, he knew the names of all

his subjects and that he provided free legal service for the poorest of their number. Above all else, however, he was a Habsburg: he was dedicated to the twofold task of re- storing the authority of the emperor in the Empire and of re-establishing Catholicism in central Europe.In his desire to restore the authority of the emperor, he could count on the support of Spain. Spain was only awaiting the end of a twelve-year truce made in 1609 to renew its efforts to reconquer the rebellious provinces in the Netherlands. Because of Dutch naval strength, the Spanish would have to send their troops to the Netherlands by way of Italy, the Al- pine passes, and the Rhine River Valley. A strong emperor meant greater imperial authority in the Rhineland and with it more ease in moving troops. Indeed, Ferdinand had already promised Alsace to his Spanish cousins in return for supporting his candidacy to the imperial throne, and he was to promise more in return for military assistance.

Ferdinand could rely on the forces of the Catholic Reformation in his efforts to roll back the tide of Protestantism. The Catholic revival had already recouped a few losses in southern Germany, and Ferdinand himself had stamped out Protestantism in his duchies. Unfortunately, his allies were at cross purposes. The Spanish emphasized the need to increase imperial authority because it was essential to their reconquest of the Netherlands, but the German Catholic princes were only willing to help Ferdinand against the Protestants and strongly opposed any increase in imperial power that might curb their own independence.

More serious still was the interest of foreign powers in Germany. Would France permit Spain to take Alsace, the rest of the Rhineland, and the Netherlands, thereby drawing a tight net around its borders? Would Denmark and Sweden sit quietly by while the Habsburgs extended their power to the Baltic Sea and suppressed their fellow Lutherans? Or would they intervene to maintain their security and, perhaps, to add to their lands in northern Germany? Germany was in central Europe, and the German problem could not be settled without the intervention of surrounding states. It was not enough for Ferdinand to win the allies necessary to defeat the German Protestant princes. He ought to have been less ambitious or else prepared to fight both France and the leading Protestant states. lt was not, however, left to him to decide to break the peace. The first step was taken by his rebellious subjects in Bohemia. Gradually and inevitably, the struggle spread to the rest of Germany and then to Europe.

The majority of the inhabitants of Bohemia were Lutheran, Calvinist, or members of one of the Hussite sects, although the Catholic minority supported by the Habsburgs was growing in strength. In addition, the Bohemian nobles were opposed to the encroachment by Habsburg officials on their power. This dissatisfaction with the religious and political policies of the Habsburgs, taken with the certainty that Ferdinand would push them further when he came to power, led to the revolt. On May 23, 1618, a year before Ferdinand was named emperor, the Bohemian leaders unceremoniously threw two imperial officials out of a window in the palace at Prague. They fell seventy feet, but escaped with their lives, either because of the intercession of the Virgin Mary, as Catholic propagandists confidently asserted, or because they landed in a dung hill, as Protestants claimed. In any case, civil war was now inevitable and a European conflict almost certain.

The rebels quickly seized control of Bohemia, won assistance from Transylvania, elected as king the Calvinist Elector Frederick of the Palatinate, and marched on Vienna. Ferdinand had neither money nor troops, but he had to regain Bohemia. That wealthy country furnished half the imperial revenue, and its king held one of the seven electoral votes that determined who would be emperor. Since three votes already belonged to Protestant princes, the loss of Bohemia might mean the choice of a Protestant instead of a Catholic Habsburg in an imperial election.

Ferdinand turned to Maximilian (1597-1651) of Bavaria and Spain for assistance. Maximilian was an able prince who had consolidated his hold over his duchy and had organized a Catholic League. Furthermore, he had the rare good fortune to have an army under an able, loyal commander. To him, Ferdinand promised the upper Palatinate and Frederick's title of elector. To Spain, he offered the control of Frederick's Rhineland possessions. With these allies, Ferdinand quickly reconquered Bohemia. Catholicism and imperial authority were ruthlessly restored. The once elective monarchy was made an hereditary Habsburg dominion. By 1623, Ferdinand and his Catholic allies had also occupied Frederick's hereditary lands. Southern Germany was theirs, but the Protestant princes in northern Germany had become alarmed, and foreign. powers determined to intervene before the Habsburgs could consolidate their position. France took steps to cut the Spanish supply route through the Alps, and the Danes, financed in part by the English, the Dutch, and the French, marched into Germany with 30,000 men.

7.2.2.2 Wallenstein

However, Ferdinand had come to realize that he could not achieve his objectives if he had to depend solely on allies. He therefore accepted the offer of a Bohemian nobleman named Albrecht von Wallenstein (1583- 1634) to raise an imperial army. Born a Lutheran, Wallenstein had become a Catholic to qualify for imperial favor. Certainly religion was not the motivating force in this tall, thin, forbidding man. It was to the stars that he turned for guidance when he doubted the conclusions reached by his own brilliant but undisciplined mind. He was born under the conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter. The great astronomer Kepler informed him when he cast his horoscope that be had "a restless, exacting mind, impatient of old methods and forever striving for the new and the untried, secretive, melancholy, suspicious, contemptuous of his fellow men and their conventions. He would be avaricious, deceitful, greedy for power, loving no one and by no one beloved, changeable in his humours, quarrelsome, friendless and cruel." Seldom have the stars spoken more truly.The first step the wily Wallenstein took toward greatness was to marry a wealthy widow who conveniently died soon thereafter, leaving him her estates and the freedom to espouse the daughter of one of Ferdinand's councillors. To wealth and influence he added a businessman's instinct for organization and profit. He managed his estates so well that he came to control a quarter of the land in Bohemia and was able to offer to raise, quarter, and provision 50,000 men at his own expense, leaving to Ferdinand only the responsibility of their pay. The emperor recognized the danger of giving too much power to this powerful subject but the alternative was continued dependence on the Spanish and Bavarians. He therefore accepted Wallenstein's offer and was rewarded with quick victories by the Bavarian and imperial forces over the Danes. Much of northern Germany was

occupied, and the ascendant Wallenstein was given Mecklenburg as a reward for his services, the former ruler of this Baltic duchy having made the mistake of siding with the Danes. Internal developments caused France and England to withdraw, and by the end of 1626 it looked as though the war might come to an end.

The fate of Germany rested upon Ferdinand's next step. He could accept Wallenstein's advice and use his great power to create a more centralized Germany, or he could satisfy the Catholic Reformation's demand for the restoration of the Church lands seized by the Protestants since the Peace of Augsburg in 1555. To choose the former course would alienate Maximilian and other Catholic princes who were opposed to any increase in imperial power. To choose the latter would frighten the remaining Protestant princes, some of whom had thus far been neutral. Ferdinand lacked the strength to take both courses simultaneously. He hesitated but finally chose Catholicism and political disunity. By the Edict of Restitution in 1629, he ordered the restoration of the former ecclesiastical territories to the Catholics, and to placate Maximilian, he dismissed Wallenstein. By placing his reliance on Maximilian and the Catholic League, Ferdinand had condemned Germany to more than two centuries of political disunity.

7.2.2.3 The Swedish Intervention

The folly of his choice was soon revealed. On July 4, 1630, Gustavus Adolphus (1611-1632) landed in Germany with a well-trained, well- disciplined army. The Swedish king was a tall, broad-shouldered man with a big appetite but simple tastes. From childhood he had been trained to he a king. When he was six, he began to accompany the army on campaigns; when be was ten, he began to sit at the council table and give his opinions; and when he was in his teens, he received ambassadors unaided. Now thirty-six, Gustavus had already given evidence of being one of the greatest men of his age. In his nineteen years as king, be had proved himself to he as able an administrator as Maximilian of Bavaria and as careful a military organizer as Wallenstein. He was now about to show that he was a gifted diplomat, a devout Protestant, and at the same time one of the greatest field commanders of his age.

His tactics deserve special comment. He abandoned the current emphasis on mass battle formations in order to achieve greater mobility and firepower. Cavalry and infantry were deployed in a series of alternating small squares so that they could turn easily in any direction. Light artillery was substituted for heavy artillery because it could be advanced rapidly, fired from the front lines in battle, and withdraw quickly if necessary. Musketeers were organized in files five deep. The first file was taught to fire and step back to reload. Then the second file fired and stepped back to reload, and then the third and the fourth and the fifth, by which time the first file was ready to fire again. Thus, continuous fire emerged from the Swedish lines.

The one important advantage that Gustavus Adolphus lacked was money, for Sweden was a poor country. When the French offered financial assistance, he therefore accepted hut was careful never to let French wishes interfere with his policy. During his brief, glorious career in Ger- many, he was clearly his own master.

Many considerations led Gustavus Adolphus to enter the war. First, he dared not

permit the Habsburgs to consolidate their hold on the southern shores of the Baltic Sea. Sooner or later, they were sure to use the ports of this area as a jumping of place to attack Sweden. Their ally, the Catholic Sigismund of Poland, had a good claim to the Swedish throne. All he needed was imperial assistance to seek to depose Gustavus Adolphus and re-establish Catholicism in the northern kingdom. But if Sweden seized the southern shores of the Baltic, no invasion was possible. "It is better,'' the Swedish estates declared when they learned of the situation, "that we tether our horses to the enemy's fence, than he to ours.'' Second, the Swedes had long desired to turn the Baltic into a Swedish lake, and northern Germany would have to become theirs to make this dream a reality. Already a large part of the royal revenue came from Baltic commerce. Third, Gustavus Adolphus, a sincere Lutheran, was genuinely distressed to see the plight of his coreligionists in Germany.

Value addition: Did you Know/Image

Sachlisch Comfect or Saxon Sweetmeats for the Lion of the North.

A 1631 broadside which circulated throughout Germany before the Battle of Breitenfeld, showing Johann Georg I Elector of Saxony, King Gustavus II Adolphus of Sweden, and the Imperialist Count Tilly, around a table with a series of bowls holding nuts in them (sweatmeats meaning "nuts,"). Adolphus is seen holding a chalice of justice and is about to clock Tilly across the head if he touches any of the bowls. The broadsheet says, in effect, that if the Emperor tried to touch the hitherto untouched "confection" of Saxony, they would find that it contained some hard nuts to crack (meaning the will of Gustavus II Adolphus).

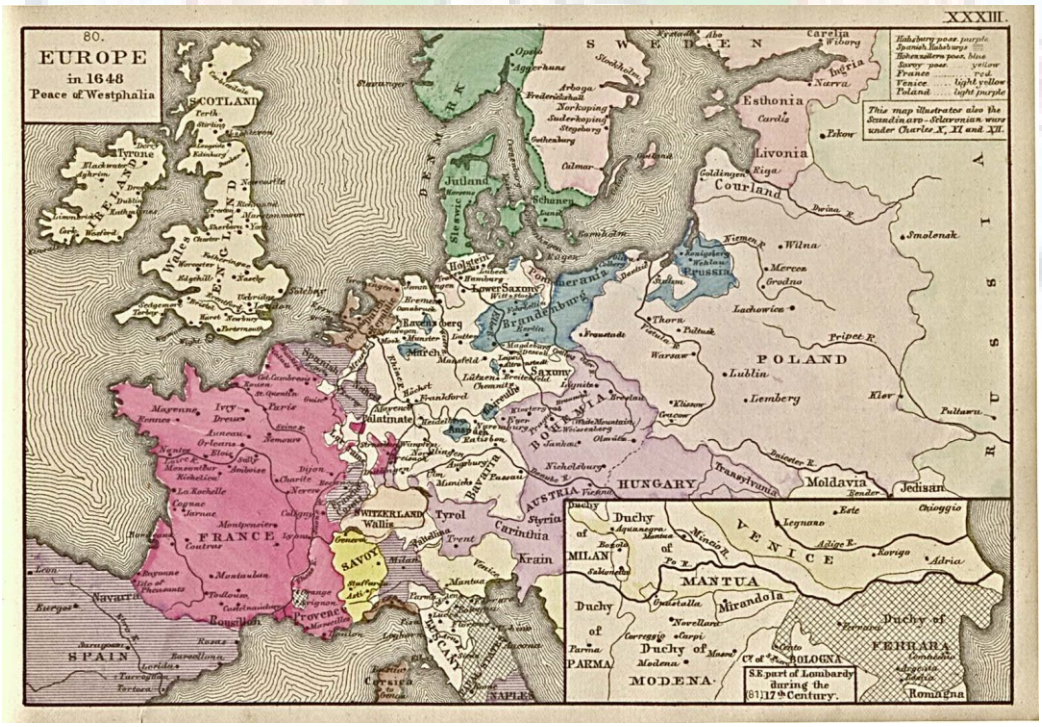
Source: http://www.lukehistory.com/resources/30yrswar.html

The Swedish invasion completely altered the situation in the Empire. After a great victory in the battle of Breitenfeld, Gustavus Adolphus was free to march where he

pleased. Ferdinand had no choice but to recall Wallenstein. The two generals fought an indecisive battle at Nuremberg, and Gustavus Adolphus withdrew to the north. Once more they clashed at Lützen, and this time the Swedes were victorious, but at the cost of their king's life. The death of Gustavus Adolphus gave the Catholics new hope, but the rivalry between Maximilian and Wallenstein weakened their cause. The Bohemian, who had never forgiven Maximilian and Ferdinand for his first dismissal, plotted with the Swedes and French. Some think that be wanted to create a great middle European empire in which Catholic and Protestant could live in peace. Others see him as a Czech patriot who sought to re- vive the Bohemian state with himself as king. More probably he was motivated only by his selfish, restless ambition. Whatever Wallenstein's plans, Ferdinand knew that he could not be trusted. He was declared guilty of treason and was murdered, defenseless in his bedroom, by a disloyal contingent of his own troops.

Ferdinand was freed from one peril, and in September, 1634, six months later, he was relieved of another. The imperial forces defeated the Swedes at Nördlingen. The northern kingdom was no longer a serious threat, and one by one the German Protestant princes made peace in return for the abandonment of the Edict of Restitution. Ferdinand kept the gains he had made before 1627, and he now had the united support of the German princes. Their support was an important asset, because nine days before the terms of the peace were published, France had declared war in order to check the power of Spain.

Figure 2 **EUROPE IN 1648: PEACE IN WESTPHALIA**



Source:http://www.zum.de/whkmla/histatlas/europe/haxeurope2

7.2.2.4 The French Intervention and the Treaty of Westphalia

The conflict entered a new phase. Spain, Austria, and the other German states were pitted against the French, the Dutch, and what was left of the Swedes. Religion had become a secondary issue, and the old struggle between the Habsburgs and the French, now ruled by the Bourbons rather than the Valois, held the center of the stage. There were no decisive battles, with the possible exception of Rocroi in 1643 where the young Duke of Enghein-later Prince of Conde-won a victory over the Spanish.

Peace negotiations were begun in 1643, but they proceeded slowly. Not until 1648 was the Treaty of Westphalia signed by most of the conflicting powers, France and Spain alone continuing the struggle. Finally, with the Treaty of Pyrenees in 1659, even this conflict was brought to an end. The Habsburgs had lost the first round of their struggle with the Bourbons.

The results of the war and the two peace treaties were highly significant. France replaced Spain as the greatest power in Europe. With Sweden, France had blocked the Habsburg efforts to strengthen their authority in the Empire. At Westphalia, the right of the individual states within the Empire to make war and conclude alliances was recognized. In theory as well as in fact, the most important of these states became virtually autonomous, and German unity was postponed for more than two centuries. The Empire was further dismembered by the recognition of the independence of Switzerland and the seven northern provinces of the Netherlands. Two new powers emerged in northern Germany. Sweden received part of Pomerania and the bishoprics of Bremen and Verden; Brandenburg-Prussia added the rest of Pomerania and several secularized bishoprics to its possessions. In southern Germany, the Bavarian rulers were permitted to keep the upper Palatinate and the title of elector, but the Lower Palatinate was restored to Frederick's son and an eighth electorate was created for him. France received most of Alsace by the Treaty of Westphalia, and by the Treaty of Pyrenees parts of Flanders and Artois in the Spanish Netherlands and lands in the Pyrenees.

The religious settlement at Westphalia confirmed the predominance of Catholicism in southern Germany and of Protestantism in northern Germany. The principle accepted by the Peace of Augsburg of 1555 that Catholic and Lutheran princes could determine the religion practiced in their territory was maintained, and this privilege was extended to include the Calvinists as well.

The Austrian Habsburgs had failed in their efforts to increase their authority in the Empire and to eradicate Protestantism, but they emerged from the war stronger than before. In Bohemia, they had stamped out Protestantism, broken the power of the old nobility, and declared the crown hereditary in the male line of their family. With Bohemia now firmly in their grasp and with their large group of adjoining territories,

they were ready to expand to the east in the Balkans, to the south in Italy, or to interfere once more in the Empire.

The real losers in the war were the German people. Over 300,000 had been killed in battle. Millions of civilians had died of malnutrition and disease, and wandering, undisciplined troops had robbed, burned, and looted almost at will. Most authorities believe that the population of the Empire dropped from about 21,000,000 to 13,500,000 between 1618 and 1648. Even if they exaggerate, the Thirty Years War remains one of the most terrible in history.

7.2.3 The English Civil War

The English Civil War was as much the response to the effects of the Reformation as it was a response to the needs of the rising middle classes, the landed gentry. The war itself involved the king, Parliament, the aristocracy, the middle classes, the commoners, and the army. The War tested the prerogative of the king and challenged the theory of divine right. War raged between Parliamentarians, Royalists, Cavaliers and Roundheads and every religious sect in England. The transition from Queen Elizabeth I (1533-1603, r.1558-1603) of the Tudor House to that of James I (1566-1625, r.1603-1625) and the Stuarts was quite dramatic. Elizabeth refused to marry and so the successor to the throne remained a thorny problem. A crisis was avoided when her chief minister, Robert Cecil (1563-1612), arranged for the king of Scotland, James Stuart, or James VI, to succeed the throne upon Elizabeth's death in 1603. There were other dangers that confronted the English government under Elizabeth. Throughout the late 16th century economic forces had transformed English society. The nobility no longer had a vital military role to play in England. They were also losing their authority in government while the House of Commons was becoming the near equal of the House of Lords in Parliament. Finally, the nobility seemed to be losing out in terms of England's increasing prosperity, as new elements, such as the gentry, entered the scene. The gentry was a broad group of people that had done quite well since the early 16th century when they purchased the land the English crown had confiscated when the monasteries were closed. The gentry also found themselves more thoroughly involved in the commerce of the nation which found them at odds with the nobility who were traditionally aloof from business matters. Integral to the administration of the local parishes, the gentry now wanted a voice in Parliament. Their argument was simply that since they had helped increase the wealth of the nation they too ought to share in the governing of the nation. The existence of the gentry in the early 17th century was not enough to stimulate a civil war. What helped create the foundation for the Civil War was the fact that many of the gentry were sympathetic to the Puritans, who argued that the Anglican Church established by Elizabeth was far too close to Roman Catholicism, and so they sought to reduce the influence of ritual and hierarchy within the Church. Elizabeth refused to do so.

Despite the incompetence of the Puritan Revolt, the Revolt was rejected by almost all English people in 1660. After forty years of parliamentary and military strife, Charles II returned to England. He was not a popular king. He was absorbed into the opulent life at court, had numerous mistresses and was probably a Roman Catholic. This all begs an important question: why did the English people accept the Restoration of a

Stuart King? Why did England revert to a state of affairs that existed before 1640? The answer to these questions lies in the combined constitutional and religious nature of the 1640 revolt. At this time, the majority of Englishmen opposed the king's arbitrary rule over Parliament. The people were united in their desire and insistence on their political liberties and it was on this basis that the Puritan Revolt began. However, events led to the seizure of power by Cromwell's New Model Army, which placed religious liberty above political freedom. For Cromwell and his followers, the liberty of the people of God, that is, the chosen or elect, were more important than the civil liberties of the nation. In other words, this limitation on the potential sovereignty of the people in the interests of a minority was not acceptable to those forces who opposed Charles. So, in 1660, Levellers and Presbyterians combined with the Royalists, attempted to secure the peaceful restoration of Charles II. However, as a reaction to Puritan tyranny under Cromwell, the English restored too much autocratic power to the king. The result was that political and religious liberties had to be rescued by the Glorious Revolution of 1688.

Value addition: Did you Know

The Bill of Rights 1689

Whereas the said late King James II having abdicated the government, and the throne being thereby vacant, his Highness the prince of Orange (whom it hath pleased Almighty God to make the glorious instrument of delivering this kingdom from popery and arbitrary power) did (by the advice of the lords spiritual and temporal, and diverse principal persons of the Commons) cause letters to be written to the lords spiritual and temporal, being Protestants, and other letters to the several counties, cities, universities, boroughs, and Cinque Ports, for the choosing of such persons to represent them, as were of right to be sent to parliament, to meet and sit at Westminster upon the two and twentieth day of January, in this year 1689, in order to such an establishment as that their religion, laws, and liberties might not again be in danger of being subverted; upon which letters elections have been accordingly made.

And thereupon the said lords spiritual and temporal and Commons, pursuant to their respective letters and elections, being new assembled in a full and free representation of this nation, taking into their most serious consideration the best means for attaining the ends aforesaid, do in the first place (as their ancestors in like case have usually done), for the vindication and assertion of their ancient rights and liberties, declare:

- 1. That the pretended power of suspending laws, or the execution of laws, by regal authority, without consent of parliament is illegal.
- 2. That the pretended power of dispensing with the laws, or the execution of law by regal authority, as it hath been assumed and exercised of late, is illegal.
- 3. That the commission for erecting the late court of commissioners for ecclesiastical causes, and all other commissions and courts of like nature, are illegal and pernicious.
- 4. That levying money for or to the use of the crown by pretense of prerogative, without grant of parliament, for longer time or in other

manner than the same is or shall be granted, is illegal.

- 5. That it is the right of the subjects to petition the king, and all commitments and prosecutions for such petitioning are illegal.
- 6. That the raising or keeping a standing army within the kingdom in time of peace, unless it be with consent of parliament, is against law.
- 7. That the subjects which are Protestants may have arms for their defense suitable to their conditions, and as allowed by law.
- 8. That election of members of parliament ought to be free.
- 9. That the freedom of speech, and debates or proceedings in parliament, ought not to be impeached or questioned in any court or place out of parliament.
- 10. That excessive bail ought not to be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.
- 11. That jurors ought to be duly impaneled and returned, and jurors which pass upon men in trials for high treason ought to be freeholders.
- 12. That all grants and promises of fines and forfeitures of particular persons before conviction are illegal and void.
- 13. And that for redress of all grievances, and for the amending, strengthening, and preserving of the laws, parliament ought to be held frequently.

And they do claim, demand, and insist upon all and singular the premises, as their undoubted rights and liberties....

Having therefore an entire confidence that his said Highness the prince of Orange will perfect the deliverance so far advanced by him, and will still preserve them from the violation of their rights, which they have here asserted, and from all other attempt upon their religion, rights, and liberties:

The said lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, assembled at Westminster, do resolve that William and Mary, prince and princess of Orange, be, and be declared, king and queen of England, France, and Ireland....Upon which their said Majesties did accept the crown and royal dignity of the kingdoms of England, France, and Ireland, and the dominions thereunto belonging, according to the resolution and desire of the said lords and commons contained in the said declaration.

Source: *The Statutes: Revised Edition* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1871), Vol. 2, pp. 10-12.

The Fronde was a French civil war resulting from the conflict between and increasingly absolutist monarchy and the nobels of France. It occurred during the monarchy of King Louis XIV, while he was still a child. It occurred at about the same time as the later stages of the Civil War in England and immediately after the Thirty Years War in Germany. All three of these conflicts were caused by the attempt of the monarchy to expand the authority of the monarchy at the expense of the nobility and wealthy merchants. The outcome in each country was radically different. The name Fronde was derived from a play sling used by the boys of Paris in mimic street fights. His father Louis XIII had died at a relatively young age (1643). Thus Louis became king when he was only 5 years old. The Fronde was to put the monarchy

and the royal family in danger. Louis would go on to become perhaps France's most powerful king, but at the time of the Fronde he was still a child and in mortal danger. It was an experience that he would never forget.

The Fronde occurred at about the same time as the later stages of the Civil War in England and immediately after the Thirty Years War in Germany. All three of these conflicts were caused by the attempt of the monarchy to expand the authority of the monarchy at the expense of the nobility and wealthy merchants. The outcome in each country was radically different. The failure of the Fronde enabled Louis XIV to establish an absolutist monary. The English Civil War on the otherhand confirmed and expanded constitutional limits on the British monarchy. The Thirty Years War in German not only essebntially destroyed the authority of the Germany monachy (Holy Roman Emperor), but left Germany disunited for over three centuries

Cardinal Mazarin was the protege and successor of Cardinal Richelieu who served Louis XIII and worked tirelessly to centalize the french state and expand the powers of the monarchy. Mazarin attempted to bring the finances of the French Government under control. The royal finances had been strained by French participation in the Thirty Years War againstv both the Hapsburgs in Germany and Spain. For his austere financial measures and other reasons the Italian-born prevalent became very unpopular, the nobels accusing him of despotic behavior. Mazarin's appointment of foreigners was especially unpopular. The Parlement of Paris thought its prerogatives were threatened. People complained of excessive taxes and administrative abuses.

The Parlement launched the Fronde when they refused to approve royal edicts and Mazarin's economic program. Under Richelieu the Parlement had been a subservient body, routinely endorsing royal edicts. This was initially a limited action and within constitutional lines, although not what Mazarin expected. Gradually the French nobles expanded the confrontation into a struggle aimed at regaining the privliges they had enjoyed before Richelieu. The leaders of the Fronde were first president of Parlement Mathieu Molé and councilers Blancmenil and Broussel.

France had aided the northern Protestant princes in the Thirty Years War to oppose the Hapsburgs which it faced in Germany, Spain, Italy, and the Netherlands. Finally France entered the War directly to avoid a Hapsburg victory. This proved very costly and was a major reason Mazarin needed additional taxes. The ending of the War in Germany and the French victory over the Spanish at Lens (1648) by the Prince de Condé (1648) strengthened the position of Mazarin and the court as it ended foreign distractions and freed a trained army for domestic uses if Mazarin struck the first blow, ordering the arrest of Parelment councilors Blancmenil and Broussel (August 1648). Mazarin hoped to destroy the Fronde before opposition grew any further. The people of Paris took up arms, attacked and dispersed the royal guard, and erected barricades around the Palais Royal. The young Louis XIV was inside the palace and was in fear for his life. The people of France and the Parlement were joined by some nobels. This is a time that King Louis XIV as an adult would look back on with great fear.

Negotiations followed. Mazarin approved an ordinance regulating financial and judicial matters (August 1, 1649). There was some reduction of taxes, but Mazarin

and his aides retained their offices. This placated some, but not the nobels who insisted on removing Mazarin. The two sides observed each others movements closely, with great distrust. The Court party began calling the Parlement party "frondeurs"--loosely"

Mazarin made another attempt to end the Fronde by arresting its leaders. This time he moved against some of the most important nobels. He had the Prince de Condé (Duc de Longueville) and Armand de Bourbon (Prince de Conti) arrested by royal decree (January 1650). This act aroused the provinces. The Duchess Longueville, Conde's sister, persuaded the Vicomte de Tuerenne to lead an army against the Court party. Tuerenne scored some initial successes, but was defeated at a battle near Rethel. Despite this victory, Mazarin had become so unpopular; he had to release the arrested nobles and flee to the Netherlands.

Following the battle at Rethel, Mazarin and Louis gradually out maneuvered the Fronde leaders in domestic political infighting and intrigue. Basically instead of arresting the leaders, Mazarin and the Court bought off important leaders, leaving the remaining opposition leaders too weak to defy the Court. The conflict which began over the oppression of the people and oppresive tactics turned to court intrigue. The Queen Mother and regent, Anne of Austria, convinced Turenne to transfer his allegiance. Mazarin bribed another imprtant Fronde leader, Jean François Paul de Gondi with the offer of a cardinate. Condé who had made himself unpopular by his obnoxious behavior fled to Guienne southwest France. Louis XIV by this time was 14 years old and beginning to take a more prominent role in the affairs of state. He tried to convince Condé to return to Paris. Condé having been arrested once did not trust the King and formed an army. Condé's forces fought with a royal army commanded by Turenne (July 2, 1652). Parelement again negotiated with the Court over the removal of Mazarin who had returned from the Netherlands. Louis agreed to this and declared a general amnesty. Condé still distrustful offered his services to the Spanish crown and Louis declared him a traitor. Soon afterwards, Mazarin returned again. The victory of the Court party led by Mazarin effectively removed all organized constitutional restraints on royal power. This left Louis open when he assumed his majority to rule as an absolute monarch. And this is precisely what he did, summarizing his rule with the statement, "I am the state".

7.2.4 Economic Character of the Crisis

This was also a period in which all or most of the European economy was simultaneously gripped by a depression. In Spain, for example, economic and population decline was at its worst from 1590-1630 a period in which, however, the Dutch "economic miracle" reached its height. Likewise, when Spain embarked on a fragile economic recovery after 1670, the Low Countries, southern France and much of eastern Europe tumbled into deep and protracted economic recessions. This diversity makes it impossible to reduce to a simple formula a series of regional economic crises which, while exhibiting certain similarities, varied widely in their timing and intensity. Despite an understandable scepticism about the existence of a general crisis, historians nevertheless agree that the European economy experienced profound problems in the seventeenth century and they continue to use the concept of crisis as a major organising theme of the economic history of the period. However,

the defining feature of the crisis is now seen as the divergence rather than convergence in the economic performance of Europe's major economic regions. First, there was the diverse character of the regional cycles of growth and depression spread over the period 1590-1720. Second, the divergence between the economic development of western Europe, whose economy was based on free labour, and eastern Europe, where serfdom was greatly extended in the seventeenth century. Third, in western Europe, economic recession in the Mediterranean contrasted with economic expansion in north-west Europe, although even in the north-west there was a divergence between France, where cycles of growth alternated with deep agrarian recessions, and England, where the crisis was conspicuous by its absence.

These divergent regional developments are central to the approaches adopted by historians since the 1970s to explain economic developments in population, agriculture, and in trade and industry. First, research on population has identified that demographic trends in north-west Europe, where population grew quite rapidly from 1600 to 1650 and then stagnated, contrasted with the rest of Europe, where population fell sharply to 1650 and then regained its former levels by 1700. Historians have vigorously debated the relative weight which should be given, in accounting for these contrasting regional trends, to Malthusian positive checks, that is mortality crises, and to Malthusian preventive checks, in which population was controlled by late marriage and low fertility rather than by upsurges in mortality. Second, historians have explained divergences in regional economic development in terms of the differing outcomes of rural class struggles between landlords and peasants. Thus, in eastern Europe, landlords imposed the economically-crippling system of serfdom whereas in much of western Europe the state protected peasant communities against predatory landlords. Even in the West, however, peasant agriculture could not escape the cyclical crises inherent in the system's static technology and lack of investment. Economic progress was thus fastest in England, where landlords expropriated the peasants and created a dynamic agrarian capitalism. Other historians argue, however, that the crisis of peasant farming was the result of forces external to agriculture, principally the crushing increase in state taxation on the rural sector; taxation peaked at different times in different countries, providing the best explanation of the diffused pattern of economic crises. Third, the collapse of Europe's great urban industries in the period has been explained, within the proto-industrialization model, in terms of the advantages enjoyed by rural industry, such as access to cheap peasant labour. The competition between urban and rural industry occurred at the international level, that is between rather than within regional economies, which explains the shift of industrial power from the declining urban industries of central and Mediterranean Europe to the rising rural industries of the north-west. The thesis that industrial development was dominated by the dynamic properties of rural industry has been vigorously challenged on the grounds that urban and state institutions continued to curb the growth of manufacturing in both town and countryside. This shift of demand seriously destabilised national economies, causing unemployment at a time when money was short as a result of a depressed agricultural market and high taxes, and caused a further fall in living standards. The best available evidence for industrial change in the first half of the seventeenth century concerns the important cloth industry, which although confirming severe industrial difficulties in some areas of Europe, far from conclusively shows a general industrial crisis. All areas suffered some problems, the most severe coming in the traditional Mediterranean centres, but the industry of

England and the Netherlands hardly saw any decline at all, England's production actually increasing on the strength of the new draperies. In addition, decline in the urban centres came at the same time as an increased tendency to 'put out' work to rural industry, the increase of which went largely unrecorded. International trade, like industry, was characterised by a shift in balance away from the traditional centres to England and the Netherlands. Spanish trade with the Americas which had been so strong in the sixteenth century hit major problems in the first decades of the seventeenth, while Baltic trade was certainly not booming. These weaknesses were seized upon by the Dutch and English merchants though, who moved into the gaps left by the declining powers. While the change in the balance of European trade was unsettling (the new merchants did not instantaneously move into the vacant markets), it would be hard to say that there was a general crisis in European trade when there were countries whose traders were witnessing the dawn of a golden age. Trade crises tended to be local, and even for those areas with the greatest problems such as Spain the century was not one of unfailing decline. The overall economy of Europe during the first half of the seventeenth century did see a number of problems which in many areas combined to make up a local crisis. The climatic change, which affected Europe more-or-less evenly, affected demography and to a lesser extent agriculture to varying degrees (although all areas suffered, some were harder-hit than others), and it would be hard to identify a general European crisis in trade and industry when there were countries which saw little if any decrease in trade volume and industrial production. It should be said, however, that the patterns of the early seventeenth century were in marked contrast to the 'golden age' of the previous century, and with the slowing down or reversal of economic growth, discontent was bound to be aroused among people who expected to see the continuation of the good times. "...Revolutions do not usually erupt during a long period of a declining standard of living but rather at the end of a period of a rising standard which, for whatever reason, has just begun to decline." Whether there was a general economic crisis or not, economic difficulties and high taxes created a level of discontent which political revolts could feed off.

7.2.5 Social Character of the Crisis

The new scenario created tremendous tensions on the traditions of society. Customs such as law were ignored, as the king developed his own system which optimized his personal values. Roman law was sought most often, since it gave him more power. France had many different systems which now became just one single system of the king. Local autonomy was eliminated, such as mayors being appointed by the state now, instead of elected. Privileges were suddenly lost, such as the nobles' rights to bear arms, or wear fur. Some historians have argued that the nobility in many parts of Europe suffered a crisis in the seventeenth century. This is difficult to maintain, but it is true that in some countries (e.g. France, Sweden) kings asserted increasing control over the aristocracy, and allied with non-nobles to limit the power of the nobility. Elsewhere (e.g. Brandenburg-Prussia) the ruler shared power with the nobles (***Junkers*** in Brandenburg-Prussia) but kept the lion's share for himself. In Poland (in many ways an exceptional country in the seventeenth century), the nobles increased their power at the expense of the king and of non-nobles. The proportion of nobles to the general population varied sharply across Europe. In France and England about 2% were noble (the English nobility divided themselves in a higher branch which had titles, and a lower untitled one called the **gentry**). In

Spain, the figure was over 5% and in Castile it was around 10%, as it was in Poland. In all these places, some nobles were relatively poor, while others were extremely rich and powerful. Peasants (or small farmers) varied in wealth and status depending on how much land they held, and on the conditions upon which they held it. The latter was probably the more important factor. Where tenures were insecure and onerous, peasants were unproductive. Where peasants were freest they were most productive, since they were working for themselves - as in the Dutch Republic, England, and Catalonia. It was in those places that the agricultural revolution began. Wise governments protected free peasants against local lords. Prosperous peasants were able and wiling to pay higher taxes. Where this did not happen (Castile, Poland), decay was the result. Certain aspects would now be applied to all classes, especially by the 18th century. The previous ability for specific families, groups or entire cities to escape paying taxes was a thing of the past. This created tensions of course, since the exemption was thought of as a privilege. All levels of society grumbled over this new process of control, from nobles to peasants and the middle class between them. Nobles wanted to hold onto their powers, leading to tensions between groups, and between court and country. The revolts from various groups were now conservative in nature, intending to halt or change the growth of the state. Even the French nobles revolted in the Fronde after the Thirty Years War. The political revolution of the state led to conditions which had never coexisted before, such as increased war, decreased population, heavy tax burdens, and state control of rural areas. These all had economic, intellectual, and legal implications, as when Roman Law was used in place of the customary law. The growth of the modern state led to social, economic, and political crises. This basic 17th century blueprint leads one to ask if change without disruption or loss of rights is possible? The rest of the course examines the political, intellectual, and economic changes of the early modern period.

In almost every community of early modern Europe where historians have studied the complete data, the unpredictable yet irresistible rhythm of bread prices appears to have controlled the level of marriages, conceptions and deaths: whenever bread prices and deaths rose, marriages, conceptions and therefore births all fell. The experience of Baugé in Anjou (France) between 1691 and 1695 offers a typical example of the demographic consequences of the 'subsistence crises' that apparently struck most European communities at least once per generation during the early modern period.But the frequency of crises could sometimes increase dramatically Significantly, no less than three occurred in the mid-seventeenth century: one in 1643–4, a second (the worst of the entire century) in 1649–50, and a third in 1652–3. These harvest failures affected all Europe, from Poland to England and from Sweden to Italy .In many cases harvest failure also precipitated industrial and commercial crises, for the sharp rise in food prices led to a falling demand for manufactured goods, which in turn led to widespread unemployment among wage-earners. Many families therefore lost their main source of income just as the price of essential items escalated. Niels Steensgaard , Sheilagh Ogilvie and Ruggiero Romano all agree that these recessions became particularly common during the seventeenth century. Romano, writing originally in 1962, saw the crisis of 1619–22 as the decisive break, since in its wake international trade, industrial output, silver imports from America, and coinage issues all fell. Recovery was inhibited, he argued, by a crisis in agriculture, where tillage had lost ground to stock-raising and refeudalization had spread (especially in eastern Europe.) Steensgaard, however, writing in 1970, perceived a problem of distribution, rather than of production, caused by the

enormous growth in the public sector. Government spending rapidly increased, causing the diversion of economic endeavour to meet the demands of the public sector through the transfer of resources to the state via heavy taxation. Ogilvie, in 1992, demonstrated that neither model entirely fits Germany—an area omitted from most accounts of the General Crisis—where regional diversity makes any generalization hazardous. However, her data largely support Steensgaard's argument that the growth of taxation to finance armies put pressure on economies lacking large surpluses, causing both widespread suffering and, in many cases, in Germany as elsewhere, rebellion. 'The peasant revolt,' wrote Marc Bloch, 'was as common in early modern Europe as strikes are in industrial societies today.' Astonishing numbers of rural uprisings took place in certain areas: Provence, for example, saw 108 popular rebellions between 1596 and 1635, 156 between 1635 and 1660 (16 of them associated with 'Fronde' of 1648–53) and a further 110 between 1661 and 1715. For a region of barely 600,000 people, a grand total of 374 revolts over scarcely more than a century is impressive!. Certain German and Dutch towns also experienced numerous uprisings in the seventeenth century. However, an important difference distinguished popular revolts from strikes: the latter aimed to influence the employer, landlord or owner for whom the strikers worked, while the early modern revolt was directed overwhelmingly against the state, particularly during the period 1625–75. Neither the exactions of the Church and nobles, nor their exemption (in many countries) from taxation, seem to have triggered a widespread revolt in the West at this time. Such burdens were normally regarded in the same light as freak weather or a bad harvest— unpleasant, but immutable and inescapable. Rather, rebels tended to target grievances that could, in theory, be redressed —the policies and demands of government—and the commonest victims of the rioters were normally the officials who tried to enforce those policies, especially tax-collectors. The pattern of each of these rebellions reflected a tradition of popular uprisings that went back at least to the fourteenth century and continued down to the late eighteenth century, and perhaps beyond. Even the actions of the crowd remained the same, as if the oral culture of a community kept alive the traditions of 'proper behaviour' during a riot. Thus the crowd that rallied to the *'standardo rosso',* the red flag raised above the city of Naples in 1647, did much the same things, in much the same ways, as their predecessors during the risings of 1510, 1548 and 1585. Their descendants would follow suit during the rising of 1799.Rural areas, too, could serve as semi-permanent oases of revolt. The estates of the Schaunberg family lay at the heart of each one of the Upper Austrian peasant revolts in 1511–14, 1525, 1560, 1570, 1595–7, 1620, 1626, 1632–3 and 1648. In Aquitaine in south-western France, few major popular uprisings in the seventeenth century took place without the participation of men from the *vicomté* of Turenne, the heathland estates of Angoumois or the marshlands around Riez. Men from the Cornish parish of St Keverne in south-western England participated in the revolts of 1497, 1537, 1548 and 1648.

7.2.6 Climatic and Demographic Character of the Crisis

Most historians know about the 'Little Ice Age', once parochially described in English school textbooks as 'the time the Thames froze'. The problem has always been to explain it. The work of an American astronomer, John Eddy, on the scarcity of sunspots during the late seventeenth century (the so-called 'Maunder Minimum') suggests an important new explanation for the phenomenon. The leading

astronomers of the late seventeenth century—including Johan Hevelius (1611–87) in Poland, G.D.Cassini (1646– 1712) in France and John Flamsteed (1646–1719) in England—all recorded an almost complete absence of sunspots between about 1645 and 1715, while noting that their predecessors Galileo and Scheiner had observed them earlier in the century. These skilful European astronomers also failed to see either aurora borealis (northern lights) or a corona during solar eclipses during this period. Such data cannot be dismissed as absence of evidence: they constitute genuine evidence of absence. When Flamsteed, the Astronomer Royal, saw a sunspot in 1684, he wrote a learned paper on the subject because he had searched in vain for one during the previous eight years (see p. 268). Recent research on glacier movements and harvest dates in Europe has shown that harvests in the mid seventeenth century occurred far later than normal, and suggests long winters and excessive rain as the principal culprits.

There is a good deal of evidence that one of the main roots of the economic problems which affected Europe in the early 1600s was some kind of climatic change. Here, too, four types of record possess special relevance for the period before scientific instruments became available to track climate change:

- *Ice cores*: the annual deposits on ice caps and glaciers around the world, captured in deep boreholes, provide evidence of changing levels of volcanic emissions, precipitation, air temperature, and atmospheric composition.
- *Glaciology*: the alternating advance and retreat of glaciers, together with an analysis of the debris left behind, sheds light on both precipitation and ablation.
- *Palynology*: changes in pollen and spores deposited in lakes, bogs, and estuaries reflect the natural vegetation at the time of pollen deposit.
- *Dendrochronology*: the varying size of growth rings laid down by trees during each growing season reflects local conditions in spring and summer. A thick ring corresponds with a year favorable to growth, while a narrow ring indicates a year of adversity.

Europe, experienced winters of extreme severity—from Scandinavia (which suffered the coldest winter ever recorded in 1641–1642) to Macedonia (where that same year "there was so much rain and snow that many workers died through the great cold"). In the Alps, fields, farmsteads, and even whole villages disappeared as glaciers advanced to their maximum extent between 1640 and 1644. Summers as well as winters were unusually cold in those years. In eastern France, cool summers delayed every grape harvest between 1640 and 1643 by a full month and reduced harvest yields.45 Hungary experienced a run of unusually wet and cold summers in the 1640s; while in Bohemia, frosts in late May and early September, and occasionally also in summer, ruined several harvests. Perhaps most striking of all, a soldier serving in central Germany recorded in his diary in *August* 1640 that "at this time there was such a great cold that we almost froze to death in our quarters. On the road, three people did freeze to death: a cavalryman, a woman, and a boy." In the Northern Hemisphere as a whole, 1641 was the third-coldest summer recorded over the past six centuries, 1643 was the tenth-coldest, and 1642 was the twenty-eighth coldest— three landmark winters in a row. These extremes have led historians and climatologists alike to speak of the period as "the Little Ice Age."

Responsibility for this development rests with two natural phenomena that began in the mid-seventeenth century and persisted until the early eighteenth century, when the global climate changed again and became more benign. First, solar activity reached the lowest level in two millennia. Fewer sunspots—those dark, cooler patches on the solar surface surrounded by "flares" that make the sun shine with

greater intensity—appeared between 1645 and 1715 than in a single year of the twentieth century. Whereas more than 100,000 sunspots now come and go in a sixty-year period, the last six decades of the seventeenth century saw scarcely 100.54 Other observations by astronomers of the time confirm a striking reduction in solar energy. The ***aurora borealis*** (the "northern lights," caused when charged particles from the sun interact with the earth's magnetic field) became rare for two generations after 1640—so rare that when Edmond Halley, England's Astronomer Royal, saw an aurora in 1716, he wrote a learned paper describing the phenomenon because it was the first time he had seen one in almost fifty years of observation. Likewise, the brilliant corona nowadays visible during every total solar eclipse also disappeared: descriptions by astronomers between the 1640s and the 1700s mention only a pale ring of dull light, reddish and narrow, around the moon. The energy of the sun appears to have diminished, a condition normally associated with reduced surface temperatures and extreme climatic events on earth.

Deposits of carbon rose enormously during the seventeenth century, a phenomenon closely associated with a cooling climate, and possibly related to the reduction in the occurrences of sunspots which was recorded at the time. The 'Little Ice Age' is generally reckoned to have seen a fall in temperature across Europe of 1°C, the effect of which "restricts the growing season of plants by three or four weeks and reduces the maximum altitude for cultivation by about 500 feet." In a world in which the vast majority of the population depended directly on agriculture in order to make a living, and where the growth of population which took place in the previous century had driven most of Europe to the limits of subsistence, such a change produced a disastrous relative overpopulation, allowing both starvation and disease to take a heavy toll. The climatic change and its impact on agriculture across Europe is echoed in the population statistics.

There is scarcely any doubt now that the increase in population during the sixteenth century was followed in the seventeenth century by a decline, by stagnation, or at any rate by retardation in the rate of growth. The demographic peak seems to have been reached earlier in southern Europe than in the north, so that throughout the century a shift in the balance of the population occurred from the Mediterranean towards the Channel regions. Castile, the Italian peninsula (though not the islands) and Germany suffered a considerable decline in population in the first half of the seventeenth century. The population of Catalonia continued to increase slightly in the first part of the seventeenth century, but from about 1630 onwards it stagnated. Both the south and the north of The Netherlands seem to have suffered a corresponding fate, the turning-point nevertheless lying nearer the middle of the century. Denmark and Poland suffered a considerable loss of population in connection with the Northern War at the end of the 1650s. England's population is supposed to have increased in the seventeenth century, but it is probable that the increase took place chiefly in the first half of the century. As far as France is concerned, the century began with an increase in population, which must nevertheless be seen in the light of the losses incurred during the Wars of Religion at the close of the sixteenth century. Further development shows quite considerable regional variations, but the general impression is nevertheless that of a moderate increase in population until the middle of the century in northern France, continuing until 1675–80 in southern France, and thereafter stagnation or a decline. In 1693, after the 'hunger year', France is said to have had the same population as she had a century earlier at the close of the Wars of Religion.

Even in 'ordinary' years, from the later sixteenth century onwards population drifted from smaller villages towards towns and cities. In the Montes region,south of Toledo in central Spain, 'Smaller villages located in higher, less fertile regions became overpopulated at an early date, with a consequent migration to larger settlements.' The grain harvest records for the area reveal a dramatic, sustained fall in yields from 1615 onwards, and entire hamlets in the uplands were abandoned. Many of the 'lost' inhabitants migrated to the cities, especially to Madrid, which increased in size from 65,000 people in 1597 to 140,000 in 1646, thanks largely to the influx of almost 5,000 migrants per year. But Madrid constituted one of seventeenth-century Spain's few success stories; most other towns failed to increase and, in some cases, the growth of one town involved the decline of others—in particular, Madrid gained at the expense of Toledo. The urban history of England in the seventeenth century differed little. Perhaps 10 per cent of the English population lived in towns in 1500 and perhaps 20 per cent in 1700, but London alone, which grew from 25,000 to 575,000 people during this period, accounted for over half of this increase. In effect, these economic migrants constituted a permanently mobile population: in the small Essex town of Cogenhoe between 1618 and 1628, 52 per cent of the population changed. Much the same turnover rate characterized the much larger port city of Southampton. The literature of the period bristles with fear of these migrants, and an awareness of their growing numbers.

Value addition: Did you Know

European Population

Table 1. *Population of selected European countries, 1300–1800 (in thousands)*

	1300	1400	1500	1600	1700	1800
England and Wales	5,750	3,000	3,500	4,450	5,450	9,250
Netherlands	800	600	950	1,500	1,950	2,100
Belgium	1,250	1,000	1,400	1,600	2,000	2,900
Italy	12,500	8,000	9,000	13,300	13,500	18,100
Spain	5,500	4,500	5,000	6,800	7,400	11,000
Total Europe	94,200	67,950	82,950	107,350	114,950	192,230

Source: Paolo Malanima (unpublished manuscript).

Source: http://premodeconhist.files.wordpress.com/2009/02/picture-4.png

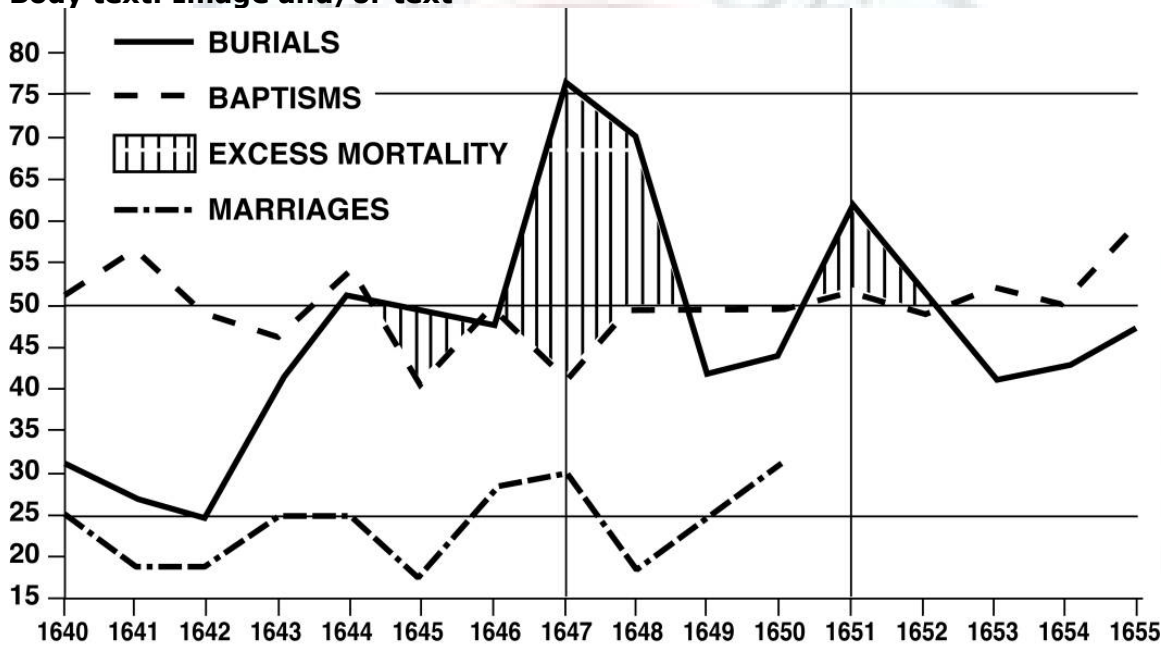
The general figures show that the sixteenth century saw a rise to a peak European population of 100 million in 1600, followed by stagnation and then decline to a low of around 80 million some 50 years later. Some areas saw a far more disastrous decline than others, Spain, for example, losing around 1/3 of its population from 1600 to 1650. Others were more fortunate, some, such as England, actually continuing to see population growth, although this was at a much reduced rate. It can therefore be said that although we cannot speak of a uniform population decline across Europe, the demographic growth of every country in Europe was slowed or retarded in the seventeenth century when compared to that of the previous hundred years. Agriculture, influenced to a large degree by the difficulties of both demography and climate, suffered in many areas of Europe. As the agricultural labour force declined and the weather generally worsened, yield ratios began to stagnate or decline with

worsening harvests, notably in Eastern Europe which had been the major food-producing region of the continent. In spite of lower production though, food prices actually fell, reaching their peak from the inflation of the sixteenth century during the first decades of the seventeenth and remaining low for the remainder of the century. This points to a decline in demand which was faster than the fall in production, a factor partly explained by falling population levels, but also as a result of "the inability of the population to buy corn and their inability to survive"

Value addition: Did you Know/Image

Heading text

Body text: Image and/or text



The consequences of a subsistence crisis in the Madrid parish of Santa Marı´a de la Almudena. The registers of births, burials, and marriages in 1640–1655 reveal a major mortality crisis that peaked in January and February 1647, just as the granaries of the capital ran out of flour. Based on Larquie´, "Popular Uprisings,p."97.

Source: Geoffrey Parker, "Crisis and Catastrophe:The Global Crisis of the Seventeenth Century Reconsidered",*American Historical Review*,Vol.113, No.4,October 2008,p.1064.

7.2.3 Decline of Spain

The western world of the 16th century consisted of one power far stronger than its contemporaries, namely Spain. Its power and prestige reached their greatest height under Philip II, 'El Prudente', who reigned from 1556 to 1598. Yet by 1700 all this lay in tatters as Spain's stature had been reduced to that of a second division European

state, its new king (Philip V) a French Bourbon rather than a Habsburg. The most obvious issue concerns causation: what caused a once formidable power to collapse so spectacularly? Was its decline in some sense inevitable, or more a result of accidents and avoidable mistakes? There is also the question of chronology: when did decline set in? Was it progressive and linear, or was it more spasmodic and uneven? Finally, there is the issue of prioritisation: did economic failings beget military defeat or vice versa.

Henry Kamen, one of the leading experts on the period, has argued that talk of a decline is misleading for three main reasons. Firstly, the argument runs, Spain (above all its heartland of Castile) never really rose in the first place. Its path to great power status was largely through inheritance lather than military conquest. The golden age' of the 16th century was largely the product of Castile's partners in the monarchy: the Genoese, Neapolitans and the finances of Antwerp and Italy. It was the loss of these allies, starting with the Dutch that put an intolerable strain on Castile and thus provoked the crisis that became a collapse, not least on the military front.

Secondly, Kamen states that there is no substantial evidence of progressive economic decline during the 17th century. Spain, like most other European states, suffered economic problems during the first half of the century, but after 1650 there were clear signs of recovery in areas such as the Segovian wool industry and farm yields in Cordoba. Birth-rates too began to rise after 1660, reversing a population decline dating back to the 1580s.

The third reason evidenced is that Spain's problems were already being revealed in the 16th century. It was finding it harder to defeat its foes, such as the English and the Dutch from the 1580s, as well as experiencing periodic currency devaluations and crown bankruptcies. Any student tackling the question of 'if' rather than 'why' or 'when', needs to have an awareness of the Kamen thesis, but also to set it alongside more traditional accounts such as those of Jonathan Israel and J.H. Elliot. These historians argue that during the 17th century Spain did suffer real internal economic problems which, while not unique to Spain, were far harder for her to resolve given her huge imperial commitments and the resources they consumed. They also give greater credibility to the writings of the 'arbitristas' (contemporary Spanish observers/critics) and their talk of 'decadencia' and 'ruina total'. A careful read through the key articles enables students to be aware of both sides of the debate.

Some comment could also be made of the cultural aspect. The 17th century did at least see a golden age for many of the arts, with painters such as Velasquez and dramatists such as Lope de Vega active at the time. A safe conclusion to reach might be that the decline of Spain has been exaggerated but not entirely fabricated. It was a decline both absolute and relative, but from an unpromising 16th-century base.

Economic explanations of the decline highlight the problems of balancing vast military expenditure, at least up till 1659, with a weak economic base. The factors behind an economic decline are, as intimated earlier, rather complex; but one needs to have an awareness of the problems concerning bullion imports (much of which was going straight to pay off Crown debts), and the state of various domestic industries especially textiles and farming. There is no doubt that the Spanish Crown encountered growing problems maintaining its armies in the field. During the brief war against France in 1683-4, for example, Spain could only muster a Flanders army of 20,000 compared to one of 90,000 in 1640. Frequent short-term expedients such as currency debasement, suspension of debt repayments, new taxes such as those

on playing cards and a stamp tax only made matters worse in the long term. There needs to be an awareness too of the unfair burden of taxation both on Castile (as opposed to other parts of Spain such as Aragon) and on the peasantry (with the nobility being exempt from many taxes such as the servicio and the sisa). The worsening economic climate clearly affected Spain's ability to recover from military setbacks during the 30 Years' War and the subsequent war with France which lasted until 1659, and periodically thereafter.

There is also the matter of the fiscal legacy of Philip II; he bequeathed debts of 85 million ducats in 1598. Any examination of the economic causes of decline needs to balance the blame between Philip and his successors. Spain was in a weak position to begin with in 1598. Turning to personalities again requires a balanced view of the achievements and failures of the key monarchs and ministers. None of the three kings who graced the Spanish throne in this period (Philip III, Philip IV and Charles II) can be viewed as a great ruler. Nor can their chief ministers (validos) escape criticism. All had their faults. Philip III was lazy and over-keen to delegate, Philip IV presided over the greatest defeats for Spain at the hands of the French and her allies, while Charles II with his impaired mental state presents a pathetic and tragic final note for the Spanish Habsburgs. Their ministers too had weaknesses: Lerma's lack of internal reforms, Olivares' reckless, expensive and ultimately unsustainable foreign policy.

7.3 Historiographical Interpretations

In historiography the 17th century in Europe is usually portrayed both as a time of war and crisis, social unrest and civil resistance, and as a period of almost unequalled material progress, a new world order, and restoration. Few historical controversies have been as prolonged, wide-ranging, and fruitful as the debate over "the crisis of the seventeenth century." The emergence of capitalism, the development of the modern state, the history of revolts and rebellions, population growth, price history, the question of unequal development—these are just some of the subjects that fell within its purview. In addition, the crisis debate drew upon and stimulated some of the best and most interesting new developments in historical methodology, such as British Marxism, historical sociology, the Annales school, the new social history of the 1960s, modernization theory, historical demography, and world systems studies. Historians' have taken recourse to the crisis concept for the seventeenth century across the various sub-fields of their discipline.

7.3.1 The Argument for Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism

In 1954 E. J. Hobsbawm published his essay "The Crisis of the Seventeenth Century" in the English Journal *Past & Present*. This essay was the first one to be collected in Trevor Aston's *Crisis in Europe, 1560-1660*, as a review of the academic debate published in the mid-1960's. A Marxist historian and scholar of English history, Hobsbawm saw an economic crisis in the 17th century that was the final break from the feudal economic system that had been in place for centuries to the capitalistic economy of the Industrial Revolution. For Hobsbawm, capitalism had in some areas almost taken hold at different times up to the 16th century. By the 18th century it was established in the rising bourgeois society, so that the change must have taken place in the interim of the 17th century.

Capitalism during the 17th century is generally described as a parasite operating under the constraints of a feudal apparatus. Hobsbawm held that if capitalism is to rise, feudal or agrarian society must be revolutionized. In his paper The Crisis of the Seventeenth Century, he outlined the criteria necessary for capitalism to become dominate. First, there must be enough accumulated capital to fund capitalistic expansion. Second there must be increase in the division of labor so production can increase to capitalistic levels. A large quantity of wage earners who exchange their monies for goods and service at market is also required. And lastly the current colonial system must be revolutionized as well.

The obstacles to the fulfillment of these criteria are as follows. Peasants and much of the general population rarely used money except when dealing with the state. Under the self sustaining localized agrarian economies of feudalism, there are an insufficient number of buyers of mass produced goods. This makes mass production uneconomical and thus capitalistic profits impossible. Under feudalism and the absence of a mass market, sellers would opt to make the most profit possible per sale by limiting production and focusing on luxury goods (ie silk and pepper) instead of more revolutionary commodities (ie sugar and cotton) which should be mass produced and sold at lower prices to generate maximum aggregate profits. With the lure of these revolutionary capitalistic profits absent, so is the fundamental motivation for establishment of capitalism.

In discussing this change, he divides his essay into two portions: the first provides his evidence for and explanation of this economic crisis and the second details the changes it produced and how it was overcome. In Hobsbawm's articles, the crisis stands in for the revolutionary situation that allows the contradictions of the prevailing mode of production (feudalism, in this case) to be overcome and then superseded by a new mode of production (capitalism). The dramatic narrative was pure Marxist. "Why," Hobsbawm asked, "did the expansion of the later fifteenth and sixteenth centuries not lead straight into the epoch of the eighteenth and nineteenth century Industrial Revolution? What, in other words, were the obstacles in the way of capitalist expansion?" His answer was that the capitalist elements of sixteenth-century Europe expanded "within a [feudal] social framework which it was not yet strong enough to burst, and in ways adapted to it rather than to the world of modern capitalism." In this framework, the crisis represents the ultimate success of the new mode of production in sundering the fetters of the feudal social order and refashioning the world according to its own needs. This is not merely a period of economic distress; it is a seminal historical event—the transition to capitalism.

The advance of capitalism is the key theme for Hobsbawm. He asserts that Europe in the early 17th century was faced with a number of obstacles to economic development. Population declined or stagnated, the gains of the northwestern states not exceeding the losses of the Mediterranean world. He argues for a distinct period of crisis in commerce from the 1620's to the 1650's, citing as evidence the Sound tolls of the Baltic, trade of foodstuffs, the poor profits of the Dutch and English East India companies as well as Amsterdam's Wisselbank's profits. He argues that the expansion of Europe experienced contraction from 1600-1640 while at home it experienced a socio-revolutionary crisis from 1640-1660. Hobsbawm says one of the only positive results of this crisis was the rise of absolutism, since for him it solved three main problems in Europe. Government became enforced over large areas; it could gather enough capital for lump-sum payments; and it could now run its own armies. But even absolutism was a result of economic crisis. For the causes of this

crisis, Hobsbawm cites four areas: the specialization of `feudal capitalists' in the case of Italy, the contradictions of expansion in Eastern Europe, the contradictions of expansion in overseas and colonial markets, and the contradictions of home markets. To Hobsbawm, Italy was a prime example of how the capital up to this point was poorly invested. The poor economic choices of the wealthy (investment in the arts and architecture instead of improved means of production) created the economic decline of Italy. In the old colonial system he sees initial costs followed by a crisis because of rising protection costs and limited technological advancement. This same lack of innovation meant the slow growth of capitalism, or as Hobsbawm states it, "economic expansion took place within a social framework which it was not yet strong enough to burst". These obstacles combined with the sharp deflation following the Thirty Years' War created a European-wide economic crisis.

Stripped down to its basics, Hobsbawm's period of crisis begins in 1620's, enters an acute phase between 1640-1670, and carries on until the 1680's, although in weakening form. This crisis aids the Industrial Revolution in two ways. First, the resulting economic concentration in the state sped the process of capital accumulation that favored the `putting-out' industry at the expense of craft production and second, it helped solve the problem of providing surplus agricultural goods by creating a market that led peasant farmers to adopt higher yield per acre crops. So for Hobsbawm, the crisis provided its own solution by forcing a change in production methods, increased capital investment to answer needs of colonial system and war production, and the creation of a regional `home market' among the northwestern Atlantic states. Criticism can be laid against Hobsbawm for working backward through English history to find a suitably Marxian explanation of why England was the first country to industrialize. The last two sentences of Hobsbawm's conclusion proved more insightful than perhaps even he imagined, saying his theory, "may not resist criticism. However, it is to be hoped that they will serve to stimulate further work on the origins of modern capitalism."

7.3.2 The Argument against Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism

The first major response to Hobsbawm's economic crisis theory appeared in *Past & Present* in 1959. Hugh Trevor-Roper, another English historian but not a Marxist like Hobsbawm, also accepted the idea of general crisis but perceived it differently. In his article "The General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century", Trevor-Roper called into question Hobsbawm's interpretation and found a general lack of solid evidence for the `economic crisis'.Rather he saw it as a general political crisis, i.e., a crisis in the relationship between state and society. This theory, conceived by Trevor-Roper, takes as its point of departure the contemporaneous revolutions in the middle of the century, the economic crisis being regarded as an established fact. According to Trevor- Roper the crisis was the result of a conflict between a puritanically minded opposition (the 'country') and a parasitic bureaucracy created by the Renaissance state during the boom of the sixteenth century, but which became unendurable during the period of decline and the lengthy wars in the seventeenth century. Trevor-Roper goes so far as to assert that Hobsbawm was looking for a capitalistic, violent revolution that fit Marxist historical thought, as opposed to viewing the data objectively and then drawing conclusions. Trevor-Roper narrows the period of crisis

from the century-long frame of Hobsbawm's article to the years between 1640-1660. In this period Trevor-Roper sees a plethora of revolutions that are indicative of his `spreading disease' metaphor of the crisis (Theodore Rabb will later use this same metaphor). These revolutions result from the widening cracks in society. The cause of these disparate revolutions is a "crisis in the relations between society and State." At the heart of his thesis is the idea that the 16th century saw the growth of princely courts at the expense of city autonomy. As the power of these princes grew and solidified, the wealthy, independent Renaissance cities lost ground, or as he puts it, "surrender was the price of continued prosperity." With this growing court was a burgeoning bureaucracy tied to the court. These officers lived less off official pay and more from wealth they could `extract' from their position. Thus, as these bureaucracies grew they became top-heavy and extended into jurisdictions previously held by local lords and townspeople. This infringement of traditional arrangements and increased squeezing of the peasantry was tolerated so long as Europe prospered. However, with the general economic slump of the 1620's this top heavy bureaucracy met with a state unable to deal with its demands. A fissure between Court and country led to European-wide revolutions.

For Trevor-Roper each state was faced with the need to decrease this `parasitic bureaucracy' and renew its efforts at a mercantilist policy. He uses the examples of Spain, the United Provinces, France, and England to determine how each managed the crisis. He finds that France managed to change enough to maintain the ancien régime for another 150 years. England, which had not experienced any kind of cleansing revolution in the last half of the 16th century like the other countries, was most affected by the crisis in the form of the English Revolution in the years between 1640 and 1660. Hinging his theory on England much like Hobsbawm, Trevor-Roper says: "In England therefore the storm of the mid-century, which blew throughout Europe, struck the most brittle, most overgrown, most rigid Court of all and brought it violently down."

The dualism between a parasitic bureaucracy and an indignant, puritanically minded country opposition does not explain the revolts in the middle of the seventeenth century, which formed the starting-point of Trevor-Roper's discussion. The revolts were by no means directed against a stagnating parasitism, but against a dynamic absolutism which, with its taxation policy, violated the customary laws and threatened to disrupt the social balance or deprive parts of the population of their livelihood. In Catalonia and Portugal the revolts were precipitated not by dissatisfaction with the established order, but by dissatisfaction with Olivares's attempt to alter the established order when he demanded that the vice-royalties should contribute towards the costs of Spain's foreign policy side by side with Castile. The revolt in Naples followed after a number of years of large contributions to the Spanish war chest, which not only had been economically devastating, but also had created chaos in the traditional distribution of authority and wealth
In Alexandra Lublinskaya' s book, *French Absolutism: The Crucial Phase*, Lublinskaya challenges many of the premises of Hobsbawms argument. Hobsbawn claims that in the 17th century, wealth became more concentrated than in previous times. In fact he uses this argument as a distinguishing factor between the 17th century and the crisis of the 14th century which had many similarities but did not lead to a capitalist society and an industrial revolution. He goes on to make the claim that the level of

accumulated wealth prior to the 17th century is insufficient to jump start capitalism. He argues that while there may have been enough concentrated wealth to fund the building of factories and machines, it was still insufficient for the development of other instruments of industry primarily that of infrastructure. Lublinskaya argues that while levels of accumulated capital were probably less than optimal, there were avenues one could pursue to overcome this barrier. There were a large number of commercial and industrial companies to finance and invest in businesses requiring large sums of capital. Thus apparatuses for acquiring large sums of capital to enable capitalistic enterprise did exist prior to the 17th century. However even if it is a given that there was an inadequate concentration of capital in prior to the 17th century to establish capitalism, Hobsbawm still fails to demonstrate how the crisis affected to use of capital. Hobsbawm argues that there was no division of labor under feudal society to enable mass production leading to capitalistic profits. However Lublinskaya shows that there was a concentration of disperse manufactures in Germany, Spain and especially France who had already established large scale manufacturing using division of labor since the early 16th century. So it can hardly be said that this necessary criteria for capitalism was missing in, or originated by the 17th century.

7.3.3 Regional Variations and Wars as the Crisis?

Trevor-Roper's theory seems to have elicited a much wider debate than Hobsbawm's, and in 1960, a symposium was held in which scholars questioned his thesis. In two cases, scholars of particular countries examined Trevor-Roper's ideas in the context of their state's history. Roland Mousnier (who himself had postulated a crisis-like theory in 1954, the same year as Hobsbawm) studied the relevancy of the theory to France and J.H. Elliott examined its applicability to Spain. In both cases they leveled criticism at the theory, and Trevor-Roper himself rounded out the symposium by refining some of his ideas.

For Mousnier, the participation of the nobility in the peasant revolts of the Fronde argues against Trevor-Roper. Trevor-Roper does not distinguish between the powerful, high level bureaucrats (people like the Cecils or Olivares) and the lower, moderate officials. To Mousnier, the struggle is less one between Court and Country, and more a struggle between the last vestiges of feudalism and emerging, modern government. The Fronde is not the critical moment in early modern France but instead the French Wars of Religion of the late sixteenth century. Mousnier does admit that Trevor-Roper is on the right track, but says that the revolutions of this period need to be exhaustively re-examined. For him too, it was less an economic crisis but one involving changes in the social framework. For Mousnier the seventeenth century was a time of crisis which affected all Mankind … The crisis was permanent with, so to say, violent shifts in intensity The contradictory tendencies had coexisted for a long time, entangled with each other, by turns amalgamating and combating, and there is no easy way of discerning their limits nor the date at which their relationship changed. Not only did these tendencies coexist at the same time throughout Europe, but even in the same social group, even in the same man, they were present and divisive. The state, the social group and the individual were all struggling ceaselessly to restore in their environment and in themselves order and

unity. On the social plane the contrasts become acute: nobility and bourgeoisie fly at each other's throats to preserve their own existence; the rising power of the sovereign steers a middle course through this conflict, confusing and extending it. The broad substratum of the population tries in vain to shake off their lot of hunger and misery by revolt and resistance. Internationally Europe is experiencing the decline of the supra-national power of the Pope and of Habsburg, the rise of an expansionist France with all its consequent wars. In matters of culture, Church and science are in a state of uncertainty and confusion, art flares up in the uncontrolled tragic baroque form. The struggle against this general crisis fails: all sober forms of government organization, of systems of thought such as Cartesianism or of soberness of style as in Classicism, of international ideas regarding balance of power and international law were unable to check the crisis. This period therefore also ends in crisis: economic depression, lengthy, expensive wars, new uncertainty in thought and faith.

Elliott disagrees with Trevor-Roper over the issue of Court vs. Country also, claiming that Spain spent considerably more on war and navies than on Court and offices. In the case of the Catalonian revolt of the 1640's, he finds no parasitic bureaucracy, since that province did not even pay for her own defense. That burden lay on the taxpayers of Castille. Elliot reasons instead that the revolts of the 1640's (Catalonia, Portugal, and Naples) were caused by the Count Duke Olivares' attempts at extending taxation to areas outside Castille, and this policy threatened their identity as separate kingdoms from Castille. In essence, Elliott says it is "the imperious demands of war" that brought about revolt.

In the following year, 1961, Elliott produced a more thorough essay concerning the `crisis', and then he introduced those ideas into his next book in 1963. In the first article, "The Decline of Spain," Elliott acknowledges that by 1640 the Spanish empire was on the verge of collapse, yet for Elliott this precarious situation can be traced back to the `crisis' of the 1590's, or even further to the 1560's. Elliott posits that even contemporary *arbistristas*, educated reformers who advised the government on numerous reform projects, were aware of a decline in Spanish power. This decline can be traced back to Castille, the source of the Spanish power base, and its losses in three areas: population, productivity, and overseas wealth. As the Castillan population moved from country to towns and from the northern regions south towards Andalusia, the countryside was stripped of agricultural production. Increasingly crowded towns were then ravaged by plague in 1599-1600, and combined with the expulsion of 90,000 moriscos in the following decade, the Spanish monarch's tax base dwindled significantly. Elliott sees this movement of population and loss of agricultural producers, combined with backward agricultural technology, as the crisis of the 1590's. Thus, by the 1640's the increased taxation on a relatively smaller base, the drain of capital from productive investment into personal government loans, and the drop in Castillan purchasing power created for Spain not only general economic downturn but also an end to Spanish hegemony.

Although Elliott wrote about a general crisis in Spain during the early 17th century he never accepts the frameworks developed by Hobsbawm and Trevor-Roper. This becomes clearer in his 1963 book, Imperial Spain 1469-1716. While supporting his previous claims that Spain actually experienced a crisis in the 1590's, adding

comments about the failure of the Armada and the declaration of bankruptcy in 1596, Elliott goes further and establishes a claim that there was also a crisis in the 1560's. This crisis came in the form of heresy and perceived threats, internally with Catalonia and the morisco revolt in Granada, and externally with war in the Netherlands, and against the Ottoman Turks. Over the course of three essays, Elliott shifted the focus of a `crisis' theory back an entire century (at least in the case of Spain). In 1986, H. G. Koenigsberger pushed the argument farther still, suggesting that political violence was in fact the normal condition of early modern life. Models imported from the social sciences, he suggested, had misled historians into imagining a baseline equilibrium against which the seventeenth- century rebellions exploded. In fact there was no such equilibrium. Instead, he suggested, the chaos and competition of early modern life ensured that some form of rebellion could be found throughout the period.

7.3.4 How Great was the Economic Crisis?

Up to this point we have only discussed proponents of a general crisis, or in the case of Mousnier and Elliott, scholars who accept its existence while modifying its scope. However, in the same year as Elliott's Imperial Spain there began to appear some dissension in the ranks of Western European historians. The first of these was the Dutch scholar Ivo Schöffer. In his article "Did Holland's Golden Age Coincide with a Period of Crisis?," Schöffer questions the validity of a general 17th century European crisis during the same period that the Netherlands experienced their most profound successes. For Schöffer, the idea had grown beyond usefulness. He begins by discussing the futility of trying to peg history into nicely packaged century-sized units (i.e. 1560-1660) and how this tendency allowed the initial idea of an Age of Crisis to be accepted to fit between an Age of the Renaissance and Age of Absolutism. Next, Schöffer questions the use of the word `crisis': "Can the word `crisis' really encompass a whole century? Is the term not more appropriate when referring to a condition of short duration, or even a decisive moment of great tension?" Schöffer also questions the reliance on revolutions and changing artistic movements as indicators of a crisis, claiming that by such criteria a crisis could be found in almost any century. For Schöffer, the 17th century holds little difference from the preceding ones, and it was not until the 18th century that many of the epidemics cease to exist, or at least lessen considerably. "Therefore, when the pattern of unrest in seventeenth-century Europe is examined, no sufficient reason can be found for saying that this century was in an exceptional situation of crisis." For him, the problems of the 17th century were the continuing problems of the ancien régime and the lack of geographic expansion which was "stopped by the limits of its own possibilities." Schöffer admits that there was a general economic slump after the 1650's but that if indeed it is to be labeled a crisis, he feels it needed to be "unrelieved gloom".

In *The Economy of Europe in an Age of Crisis, 1600–1750*, Jan de Vries likewise made crisis the organizing concept for a long stretch of European economic history, and he defined it in terms that Hobsbawm could easily have endorsed. Although industrialization came only later, the "age of crisis" was necessary to change the rules of European economic life. Increasing the supply of Europe's productive resources "could not be accomplished without altering the very structure of the society, for they were hidden in an economy of households, villages, and economically autonomous market towns and small administrative cities. Primarily labor, but also foodstuffs, raw materials, and capital had to be liberated from this

bound, localized economy to be marshaled for use in the larger-scale regional and international economies." The seventeenth century's harsh conditions—its wars, soaring taxation, bankruptcies, and famines—did the job. The eighteenth century could advance in fundamentally new directions, with market-driven labor and large agrarian enterprises, sufficiently capitalized to supply the needs of a growing non-agricultural population. From the high Middle Ages until the beginning of the nineteenth century, prices (mainly agricultural commodity prices) traced out two sweeping cycles, or logistics. Rising in the thirteenth century, prices broke at the time of the Black Death and fell thereafter. They revived beginning in the late fifteenth century and trended sharply upward throughout the "long sixteenth century," the era of the price revolution. In the first half of the seventeenth century—the infection point came earlier in the Mediterranean region than in Northern Europe—prices began to decline, and, with interruptions, trended downward to the mid-eighteenth century. Thereafter, they began to rise again, peaking in the Napoleonic era. In each of these cycles, the components of the overall price indexes also showed systematic movements relative to each other: Arable agricultural prices (especially bread grains) rose most rapidly in the upswings and fell most precipitously in the downswings. The amplitude of livestock-related prices (meat and dairy products) was more muted, while the prices of industrial products varied even less. These patterns endowed European economic history with a periodization of its own. They liberated economic history from the conventional periodization and labels of political and cultural historians. There was no further need for economic historians to refer to Renaissance or Baroque economies; they spoke instead of *la longue durée,* of eras of growth and depression, and, more abstractly, of Phase A and Phase B.

The survey of the most important economic sectors indicates that the seventeenth-century crisis was not a universal retrogression, but that it hit the various sectors at different times and to a different extent. The long-term trends in trade and industry are unclear: there were crises at one time or another in every European production centre and in all branches of European trade, but it is impossible to pinpoint a time or a period when European trade and industry as a whole was hit by a depression. On the other hand, the demographic trends and agricultural prices and production indicate that there was something seriously the matter with the European economy, and the low relative prices combined with the failing yield indicate that we should seek the explanation not solely in poorer climatic conditions or in population pressure—for in that case the prices would have been rising—but in the inability of the population to buy corn and their inability to survive. Finally, if we take a look at the public sector and reckon protection to be a service, in the economic-theoretical meaning of the word, the whole question of a seventeenth-century crisis falls to the ground. Never before was Spain so thoroughly protected as under Philip IV; never before was Germany so thoroughly protected as during the Thirty Years' War; and never before was France so thoroughly protected as under the cardinals and Louis XIV! The production of protection was the seventeenth century's 'leading sector'. It would be reasonable to suppose that these phenomena were interrelated. An increase in taxation in the widest sense, which exceeded the increase in production in an economy still chiefly based on subsistence agriculture, would have precisely these effects. Part of the population was always living at or near subsistence level, and an increase in the tax burden would reduce their chances of surviving an especially difficult year. Furthermore, it may be regarded as probable that a population would react to a drop in its available income by a reduction in the birth

rate, e.g., by raising the age at first marriage. The effect in the agricultural sector would, with the exception of a few privileged localities, be purely negative, as the decrease in private demand would not be compensated for by an increase in public expenditure. For industry and trade the effects would be more complicated. Increased public demand would probably more than compensate for the reduced private demand, but not necessarily within the same production areas. Moreover, the difference in the level of taxes and in the tax systems would have different effects on the production costs and thereby on the ability to compete in the various production centres.

7.3.5 The Role of Absolutism and Distribution ?

Niels Steensgaard, published his essay in 1970. By this time the debate over a `general crisis' had been active for over 15 years. Steensgaard accepts that the idea of a crisis has become synonymous with the early modern period. In reviewing the literature, he says the term had been used in four distinct ways: a general economic crisis, a general political crisis (Trevor-Roper), a crisis in the development of capitalism (Hobsbawm), a crisis in all aspects of human life (Mousnier), and he goes on to add that a possible fifth category could be created to include opponents of the theory like Schöffer. In his approach to establishing the existence of crisis, Steensgaard divides his essay into three parts. He examines the validity of economic crisis, political crisis, and the issue of absolutism. For him, the economic crisis was not universal, but instead affected different regions of Europe at different times. He takes the idea a step further by claiming that if protection as a service (meaning the cost of creating, supplying, and maintaining state armies) is considered, then there is definitely no economic crisis in the period. He suggests that the crisis was one of distribution (money, goods, services) and not one of production. Both from an economic and from a political point of view, the tracks pointed in the same direction; those symptoms of crisis that may be demonstrated led to an already well-known phenomenon: the growing power of the state, frequently characterized by the introduction of absolutism. The crisis was not a production crisis but a distribution crisis; the revolts were not social revolutionary, but reactionary against the demands of the state. Behind the conflict we find the same thing everywhere: the state's demand for higher revenues. In some cases the tax demands were coupled with financial reforms that were not necessarily unfair, but which undermined customary rights; in other cases the increased burden of taxation came to rest on the population groups already living below the bread line. The different reactions in different countries, regardless of whether or not it came to armed conflict, or whether the protests led to any results, depended on the social and economic situation of the country in question and on the policy chosen by the governments (not least upon the choice of the social groups with which they chose to cooperate and the social groups upon which they chose to lay the burden of the increased taxation). But in every case it was the governments that acted in a revolutionary manner: the tax demands disrupted the social balance. They did not create a revolutionary situation: they were in themselves a revolution.The six contemporaneous revolutions can only be seen as one if we rechristen them 'the six contemporaneous reactions'.

Behind the symptoms of economic crisis, and behind the internal conflicts in the European countries in the middle of the seventeenth-century, we find the same factor: the growth of state power and the increased fiscal demands. The problem of the crisis is therefore the problem of absolutism. According to preference, we can reject the concept of crisis altogether or couple it with the problem of absolutism. But this very coupling of the two problems seems to provide possibilities for a fruitful resumption of the discussion. If the governmental actions were revolutionary and the revolts reactionary, if we are to seek the dynamic factor in conjunction with the State and not with the people, we must abandon the stereotype conception of absolutism as a passive instrument for the nation or a class, and resume the analysis of early modern monarchy as a political system, on the assumption that governments were not only products of that society in which they arose, but were also instrumental by means of their policy—i.e. in the choice of whom they taxed and whom they subsidized—in forming that society.

On the question of political crisis, Steensgaard disagrees with Trevor-Roper's "Court vs. country" thesis, asserting that in battles over state finances revolutions were reactions against growing governmental demands for higher revenues. As he puts it: "in every case it was the governments that acted in a revolutionary manner: the tax demands disrupted the social balance." In the final section, Steensgaard also disagrees with the Russian scholar Porshnev's idea that absolutism was a conscious effort to subjugate and exploit the masses by the nobility, and that the key issue is not the existence of absolutism itself but the nature of any exploitation that may or may not have occurred.

Perhaps the most useful aspect of Steensgaard's critique of the general crisis theory is his assertion, in concurrence with J. H. Elliott, that the 17th century, and specifically the mid-century revolutions, have increasingly become viewed through the distorting lense of the 19th century. Steensgaard calls into question the very nature of these mid-century `revolutions' and asks whether they are in fact comparable to later ideological movements. For him, the debate has become one influenced by Cold War debates, as in the case of Mousnier and Porshnev's interpretation of the Fronde. Ultimately, with the rise of absolutism in this period, Steensgaard feels that we should rethink the effects it had on shaping the society of Europe.

Value addition: Did you Know

Armed forces in the 17th Century

Year	Spain	Dutch Republic	France	England	Sweden	Russia
1590	200,000	20,000	80,000	30,000	15,000	-
1630	300,000	50,000	150,000	-	45,000	35,000
1650	100,000	-	100,000	70,000	70,000	-

1670	70,000	110,000	120,000	-	63,000	130,000
1700	50,000	100,000	400,000	87,000	100,000	170,000

One major consequence of the military revolution was that warfare became increasingly expensive. To fight successfully, governments had to recruit more men and raise more money than ever before. Large armies required the expansion of central government and gave it the power to overcome opposition from local elites (nobles and cities). In most European states, this extension and consolidation of central power was controlled by kings and took place at the expense of representative assemblies. "Emergency" powers to tax and make laws were obtained in time of war and never surrendered thereafter.

France and Brandenburg/ Prussia were the clearest examples of absolutist regimes; but even in England and the United Provinces (where representative bodies remained important), the power of central government increased. In fact, by 1700 these constitutional monarchies were better able to tap growing wealth than were absolute monarchs like Louis XIV or Frederick I.

Source: http://history.wisc.edu/sommerville/351/351-01.htm

In the second edition of *Europe in Crisis*: 1598-1648 Geoffrey Parker took up the question of 'absolutism' as a political response to those conditions; he discusses the international wars of the period, the civil wars and rebellions which proliferated across the continent and, as stated earlier, concludes by examining what might be termed the 'cultural superstructure' which was produced by these decades of crisis. In his discussion of 'absolutism', Professor Parker contrasts the inflated theoretical claims made on behalf of 'absolute monarchy' in the seventeenth century (and propagated through the printed word, sermons, paintings, music and other means) with the hard realities of government and administration, wherein a host of practical factors, such as geographical distance, provincial rights, the ability of central and provincial administrators to undermine unpopular policies, severely curtailed the exercise of monarchic power.

In one of the most stimulating of the new sections, however, Parker argues that if one wishes to observe 'absolutism' at work in this period, one should look at the churches, Catholic and Protestant alike (how far the same may be said of Orthodoxy is a different matter). The Council of Trent and the various doctrinal agreements within Protestant churches afforded religious leaders a degree of ecclesiastical authority which secular monarchs could but envy. The Tridentine Catholic Church, for instance, possessed a well-defined doctrine which was steadily imposed throughout the Catholic world, a precisely-structured ecclesiastical hierarchy, efficient (by the standards of the day) administrative support, an obedient membership (heterodox tendencies did emerge, as with Jansenism, but they were handled without another Reformation crisis occurring), and although the precise nature of papal authority remained in question, the Pope exercised a leadership whose 'princely' attributes and powers outshone those of many secular monarchs. As regards the various Protestant churches, they might have rested on doctrinal foundations which differed from each other as well as from those of Catholicism, but even so they managed to secure from their members a commitment, enthusiasm and obedience which contrasted with the

resistance which monarchs frequently encountered among their subjects. The character, purposes and limitations of 'absolute monarchy' remain a subject of investigation among historians, but one approach is to perceive it as an attempt by secular rulers to adapt to their own purposes the techniques of indoctrination (in the neutral, non-pejorative sense of that word) and control achieved by the churches. It is no accident that much monarchic propaganda appealed to the divine right of kings, thereby making a direct connection between obedience to God via the churches and to the monarch. This was a strategy not without considerable risks. In so far as rulers legitimated themselves through religious criteria, in like measure did they expose themselves to criticism on doctrinal grounds? Thus, the denunciation of Charles I of England by his enemies that he was, in Biblical terms, a 'man of blood', who therefore could no longer command obedience from his subjects, proved fatal to his cause. And although Charles is an extreme case, he does illustrate the general point: that the appeal to divine approbation in support of monarchic authority might have closed down certain avenues of criticism, but it opened up others. To take this comment a stage further (and beyond the chronological scope of *Europe in Crisis*), it is possible that the resurgence of state-sponsored religious persecution that characterised several parts of Europe from about the 1670s to the turn of the century, was in part an attempt by rulers to suppress the 'religious' criticism of their regimes which was a consequence of monarchic insistence on the divine right of kings.

7.3.6 The Role of Climatic Changes ?

Geoffrey Parker assimilated much of the previous scholarship with new studies in areas such as climate to expand on a crisis theory. In introducing the works of Steensgaard, Schöffer, and others in his *The General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century*, edited with Lesley Smith, Parker discussed how certain periods of history contain widespread examples of crisis. He asserts that these crises must be linked by specific global causes, and in the case of the general crisis of the 17th century Parker cites recent climatic studies that reveal cooling trends worldwide corresponding to agricultural crisis. Poor harvest led to rising bread prices for a growing worldwide population. The instability this caused created or exacerbated political unrest that was matched by rising religious tension. Parker emphasizes the worldwide nature of the crisis, and like Rabb, calls for continued scholarship in other areas of the world. Parker does this not to raise doubts about the existence of the crisis but to further understand it. For him, the crisis is a certainty.He argues that no convincing account of the General Crisis can now ignore the impact of the unique climatic conditions that prevailed. Indeed, the wealth of data in both the human and natural "archives" encouraged Le Roy Ladurie to write the *Comparative Human History of Climate* that he had abandoned in 1967 for lack of evidence. The first volume, which appeared in 2005, proclaimed that

> The history of climate, which has made considerable progress since the publication of our *History of the climate since the year 1000*, has now won full legitimacy . . . The days are gone when modish historians disparaged this new discipline with taunts such as "bogus science." The time for such irreverent barbs is past, and this book seeks to provide a *human* history of climate, dealing with the impact of climatic and meteorological fluctuations on societies, above all through the prism of famines and, in some cases, of epidemics.

In addition, the author boasted that he had produced "a comparative history: following in the footsteps of Marc Bloch, who wanted to compare what is comparable,

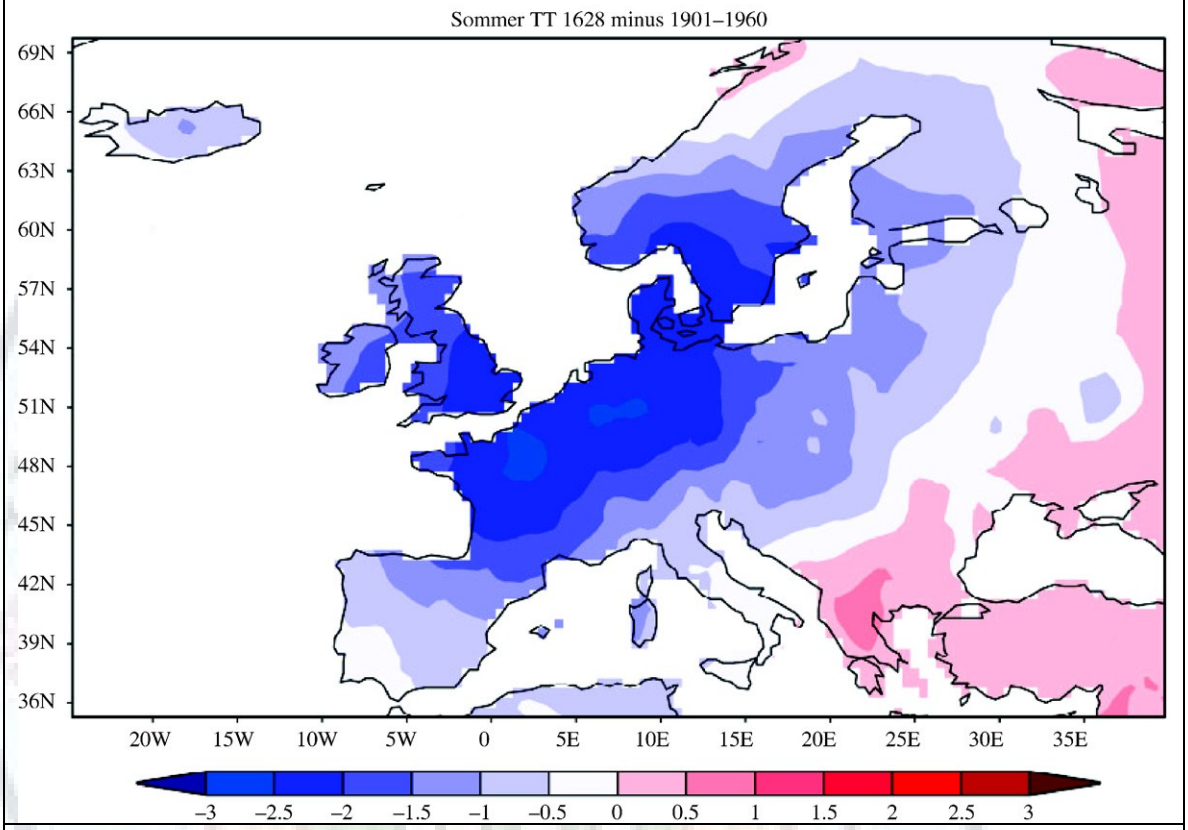
we shall focus inter alia on the temperate zones of France: the north and centre. That will be at the foreground of our research," accompanied by "constant—or, depending on the evidence, frequent—comparisons with England, Scotland, sometimes Ireland, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany (not only western); and when possible Bohemia and Poland, sometimes the three Scandinavian countries, Finland or even Iceland." "Le PAG" ["petit aˆge glaciaire": Little Ice Age] forms the backbone of Le Roy Ladurie's new book, with special attention devoted to what he calls "le Hyper-PAG" of the mid-seventeenth century. He even included a whole chapter on "L'e´nigme de la Fronde" that connected climatic anomalies with political upheavals in France and England between 1648 and 1650.

Reduced solar energy received on earth—whether due to fewer sunspots, more volcanic activity, or both—not only lowers the global temperature; it also changes the climate. In normal summers, a column of rising heat over Central Asia attracts the monsoon system, which means that easterly winds blowing from equatorial America bring heavy rains to East and Southeast Asia. By contrast, reduced solar energy means that the snow lingers in Central Asia, reflecting the sun's heat instead of absorbing and radiating it as dark land surfaces do; without the column of rising heat, westerly winds blowing from equatorial Asia to America take the monsoon rains eastward, a phenomenon called El Nin˜o (or, properly, ENSO: El Nin˜o/Southern Oscillation). This shift dramatically affects the world's climate: whereas in normal years heavy rains nurture the harvests of South and East Asia, in El Nin˜o years they bring floods to Central and South America instead and create drought in Asia and Australasia. The "global footprint" left by El Nin˜o also includes three other regions: the Caribbean almost always suffers floods; Ethiopia and northwest India usually experience droughts; and Europe frequently experiences harsh winters.On average, these disruptive El Nin˜o episodes occur only once every five years, but the mid-seventeenth century they happened twice as often: in 1640, 1641, 1647, 1650, 1652, 1655, and 1661. Each time, the regions normally affected all experienced abnormal weather. Besides increasing the frequency of El Nin˜o episodes, reduced solar energy affects the global climate in two other significant ways. First, mean temperatures decline far more in the Northern Hemisphere (home to the majority of humankind and the site of most mid-seventeenth-century revolts, wars, and mortality) than at the equator, in part because increased snow cover and sea ice reflect more of the sun's rays back into space. Thus any significant extension of the polar ice caps and glaciers (both of which occurred in the mid-seventeenth century) further reduces temperatures in northerly latitudes. Second, any fall in overall temperature triggers extreme climatic events. To pluck three notable mid-seventeenth-century examples: In the winter of 1620–1621, the Bosporus froze over so hard that people could cross on foot between Europe and Asia. In 1630, torrential rains in Arabia and western Asia (which an Ottoman chronicler compared with "the times of Noah") caused floods so severe that they destroyed two walls of the Kaaba in Mecca (a place that normally sees little rain) and caused "the Tigris and Euphrates to overflow, and floods to cover the whole Baghdad plateau." Finally, in the Baltic, where Sweden and Denmark were at war, an "extraordinary violent frost" early in 1658 "increased to such a degree, that the Little Belt which divides Jutland from the isle of Funen was so intensely frozen, as suggested to the Swedish king an enterprise (full of hazard, but not disagreeable to a fearless mind edged with ambition) of marching over the ice into Funen with horse, foot and cannon." The astonished Danish defenders "made large cuts in the ice, which were soon congealed again"

because of the extreme cold. Each of these extreme climatic events remains unparalleled; each occurred in the Little Ice Age.

Value addition: Concept Maps

Temperature Distribution in Europe in the 'Year without a Summer' (1628)



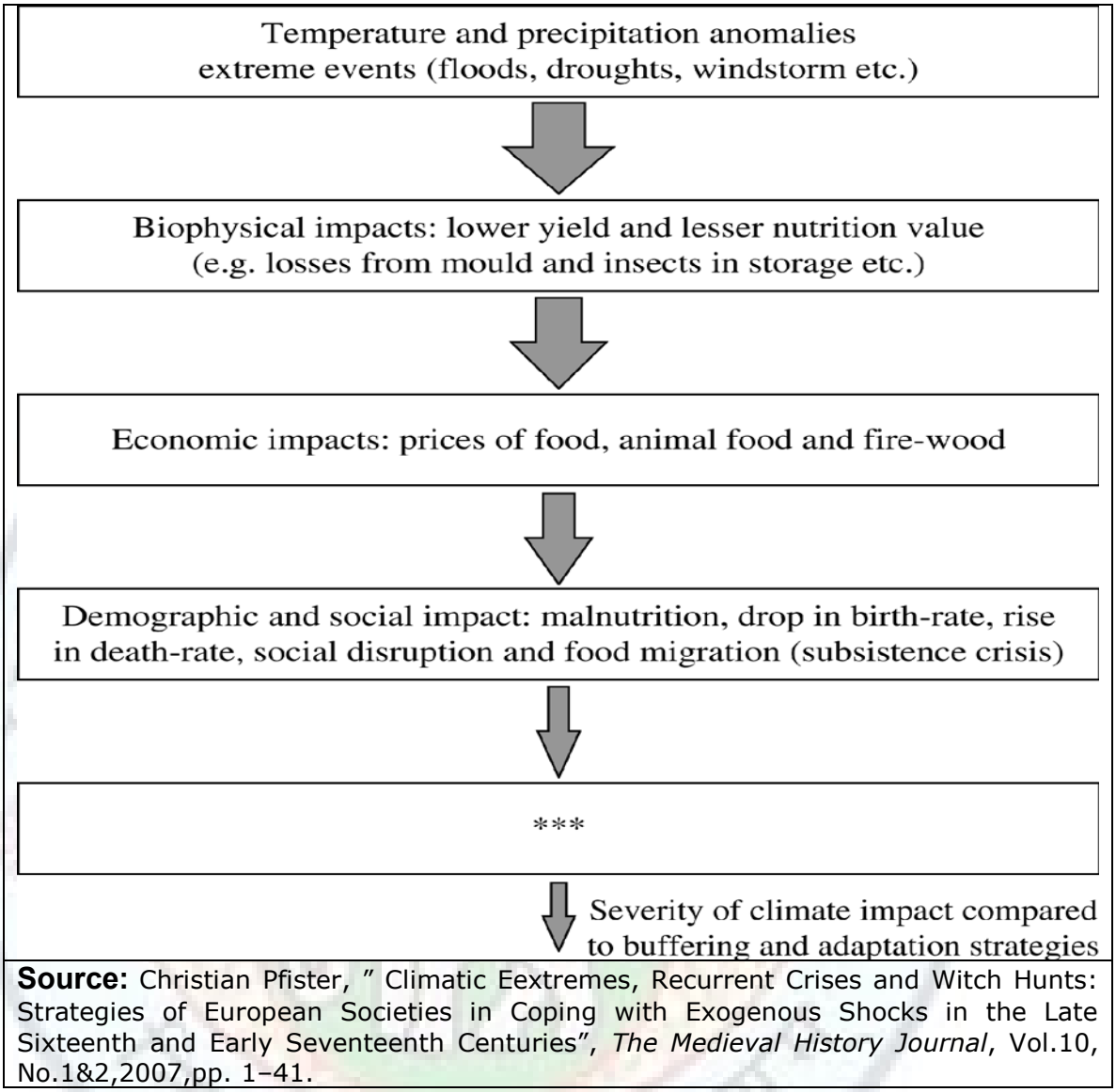
Source: Christian Pfister, "Climatic Eextremes, Recurrent Crises and Witch Hunts: Strategies of European Societies in Coping with Exogenous Shocks in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries", *The Medieval History Journal*, Vol.10, No.1&2,2007,pp. 1–41.

Thus Parker asks that HOW, PRECISELY, CAN HISTORIANS LINK the harsh winters, cool summers, droughts, and floods of the 1640s—to say nothing of the sunspot minimum, the volcanic maximum, and the more frequent El Nin˜os—with individual cases of state breakdown such as the revolts of Scotland, Ireland, and England against Charles I, or the collapse of Ming rule in China? And he believes that we must not paint bull's-eyes around bullet holes and argue that since climatic aberrations seem to be the only factor capable of causing simultaneous upheavals around the globe, therefore those aberrations "must" have caused the upheavals. In several cases, however, the human and natural climatic archives show exactly how extreme weather anomalies triggered or fatally exacerbated major political upheavals. Thus much of southern Portugal rebelled in 1637 when drought forced

the price of bread to unprecedented heights; popular revolts spread throughout Catalonia in spring 1640 as prolonged drought threatened catastrophic harvest failure; and the first urban riots of the Tokugawa era occurred in 1642 when rice ran short in Osaka, the "kitchen of Japan." Three disastrous harvests preceded the Irish Rebellion in 1641; the catastrophic harvests of 1647 and 1648 helped to precipitate major revolts in Sicily, central Italy, Poland, and Russia; while the harvest of 1650 was the worst of the century in Sweden, creating the backdrop for near-revolution when the Estates of the kingdom met in Stockholm.

Parker cites the example of Scotland which offers an excellent example of the role of climate in producing catastrophe. King Charles I made no secret of his desire to create "one uniform course of government in, and through, our whole monarchy" and to impose a single "form of public worship," so that "as it has but one Lord and one faith, so it has but one heart and one mouth . . . in the churches that are under the protection of one sovereign prince." In Scotland, this process gathered momentum in 1634, when Charles ordered the bishops to prepare a new Prayer Book based on the one used in England. Haggling over minor details between the king, his Archbishop of Canterbury William Laud, and the Scottish bishops delayed production for three years, so that when in June 1637 the Scottish Privy Council decreed the compulsory and exclusive use of the new Prayer Book on pain of outlawry, the kingdom faced not only a "scarcity of victuals" and a "scarcity and want of monies" but also a plague epidemic.In addition, it faced a severe if not unprecedented drought. According to the Earl of Lothian, one of Scotland's worried landowners, "The earth has been iron in this land . . . and the heavens brass this summer, till now in the harvest there have been such inundations and floods and winds, as no man living remembers the like. This has shaken and rotted and carried away the little corn [that] came up." His Lordship did not exaggerate. Scotland's "natural archive" reveals that 1637 was the driest year in two decades. Indeed, the kingdom experienced the worst recorded drought in a millennium from 1636 until 1649, when food of all sorts became so scarce that "the like had never been seen in the kingdom before heretofore, since it was a nation." Small wonder, then, that Charles I's innovations, coming at a time of acute climate-induced adversity, should produce popular riots and lead landowners such as the Earl of Lothian to join the Covenanting Revolt and raise an army to secure guarantees that the king would respect their political and religious autonomy. Likewise, a decade of cold, wet summers, ruining one harvest after another, explains the eagerness of the Scots to appropriate England's resources throughout the 1640s—billeting as many of their troops as possible south of the border and extracting a huge ransom before they agreed to withdraw—despite the knowledge that their perceived rapacity discredited and alienated their English supporters. Many Covenanters felt that unless they exploited their assets in England to the hilt, Scotland would starve.

Value addition: Did you Know
A Basic Model of Climatic Impacts on Society (Modified after Kates 1985) (Pfister and Brazdil 2006: 18)
Body text:



Source: Christian Pfister, " Climatic Eextremes, Recurrent Crises and Witch Hunts: Strategies of European Societies in Coping with Exogenous Shocks in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries", *The Medieval History Journal*, Vol.10, No.1&2,2007,pp. 1–41.

7.3.7 Was it a General Crisis ?

For Immanuel Wallerstein, who set out to write a history of the Europecentered capitalist world economy, the answer was a firm "no." He opened the second volume of his study, which focused on the seventeenth century, with an introductory section on the crisis concept: "The term *crisis* ought not to be debased into a mere synonym for *cyclical shift.*" From his perspective, the genesis of the system under which we continue to live is found in the long sixteenth century. From that point onward, despite periods of expansion (Phase A) and contraction (Phase B), the emphasis should be placed on continuity: competition among countries, the geographical expansion of this world economy, booms and depressions—all of them contributing to the development of a capitalist system already firmly in existence. The major problem with the idea of a "general crisis" is that it is impossible to identify a period in which all or most of the European economy was simultaneously gripped by a

depression. In Spain, for example, economic and population decline was at its worst from 1590-1630 a period in which, however, the Dutch "economic miracle" reached its height. Likewise, when Spain embarked on a fragile economic recovery after 1670, the Low Countries, southern France and much of Eastern Europe tumbled into deep and protracted economic recessions. This diversity makes it impossible to reduce to a simple formula a series of regional economic crises which, while exhibiting certain similarities, varied widely in their timing and intensity.

7.4 The Crucial Transition and Discontinuity from Turmoil to Relative Tranquility

Students of the early modern period who studied this continuing debate in the early 1970's were faced with a variety of opinions and contending scholarship. Even with the brief glance provided below it is easy to see how confusing the subject can become.

Value addition: Historical /Intellectual Context
Scientific and intellectual revolution
During the seventeenth century, European science made the transition to the modern era. Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) and Johannes Kepler (1571-1630) produced the first astronomical theories based on accurate telescopic observations. Isaac Newton (1642-1727) and Robert Boyle (1627-91) made path-breaking discoveries in physics, mechanics, mathematics and chemistry. William Harvey (1578-1657) discovered the circulation of the blood - a breakthrough for modern medicine. The Scotsman, John Napier (1550-1617) invented logarithms, making accurate calculations of large figures practicable for the first time. Isaac Newton and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz (1646-1716) independently devised calculus and Simon Stevin (1548-1620) invented a decimal system of expressing fractions. Blaise Pascal designed a calculating machine that is sometimes called the first computer. Scientific advances took place in the context of wider intellectual change. Thus, Blaise Pascal was not only a distinguished mathematician, but a philosopher, a theologian and a satirist. René Descartes (1596-1650), an important founder of modern philosophy also worked on physics, optics and mathematics. Francis Bacon (1561-1626) stressed the importance of observation and experiment in his influential writings on scientific method. Benedict Spinoza (1632-77) is famous for his bold philosophical insights, but earned his living grinding precision lenses. Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) - who shared many of Spinoza's materialist views and was also attacked for atheism - much admired Galileo (condemned by the Roman Catholic Church for teaching that the Earth rotated around the Sun). The new science and new philosophy were widely resisted by the established churches of both Protestant and Catholic countries, where clergy feared a loss of their power, if reason were freed from Scripture. And indeed, during the seventeenth century, the Church's authority over knowledge and education was undermined.

The scientific revolution in theory was linked to important technical advances, such as the telescope (invented by Hans Lippershey, 1570-1619) and the microscope (developed by the Dutchmen, Hans and Zacharias Janssen, by the English chemist, Robert Hooke, and by the inventor, Anton van Leeuwenhoek).

Source: http://history.wisc.edu/sommerville/351/351-01.htm

7.4.1 The Cultural Reflections of the Crisis

An American scholar of the 17th century, Theodore K. Rabb, produced a short book-length essay with the goal of consolidating the many arguments about a `general crisis' and providing his pupils with a digestible and meaningful study of the subject. Drawing on Paul Hazard's description of intellectual ferment in the years around 1700 and Roland Mousnier's identification of a broad "century of crisis," Theodore Rabb outlines an era of turmoil, insecurity, and uncertainty extending from the early sixteenth to the mid-seventeenth century that was resolved by institutional transformation and intellectual reorientation exemplified by the "scientific revolution."

The result, his *The Struggle for Stability in Early Modern Europe,* has gone through 20 printings and even today, 35 years after its publication, still serves as an introduction and review of the debate. He shows, in splendid illustrations, how painters, like writers and scientists, reflected the change that is the main theme - the shift from belligerence to restraint, from upheaval to calm. But Rabb not only reviews the argument, he also attempts to formulate his own hypothesis.

The first few chapters of Struggle serve as a historiographic review of the evolution of the `general crisis' theory, placing its development in the broader context of European studies following the two World Wars. Then Rabb jumps right in, taking the word `crisis' itself to task. In the footsteps of Schöffer he argues for a rigorous definition of crisis and assumes as his working model that a crisis has three distinct

characteristics. It must be short-lived (a couple of decades), distinct (from what comes before and after), and it has to be worse than what it follows. For Rabb, the crisis must be followed by a resolution, and this leads him to adopt a metaphor of sickness shared by other scholars of the crisis theory. Rabb also adopts a metaphor of a storm, but to him it is not the crisis itself that is most important but the discontinuity of the period before and after it occurs. Rabb's crisis is a crisis in the "location of authority", and his approach is to contrast the end of the 16th century with the end of the 17th century so as to evaluate the changes brought about by this crisis. The key decades of crisis more or less match those of Trevor-Roper, 1630-1660.

Rabb begins with changes that occurred throughout the 16th and early 17th centuries, or in accordance with his analogy of a sickness, the growing fever. During this century or so there is growing tension in the culture of the period as authors like the brash Machiavelli are not replaced by men like the uncertain Montaigne. This `growing unease' experienced a rapid acceleration at the end of the 16th and beginning of the 17th century. Rabb cites several factors as evidence of this unease including the rise of mysticism, the larger than life Baroque art of Bernini and Rubens, and a growing emphasis on introspection and restraint. In politics, Rabb mirrors the ideas of past scholars. Like Elliott and Steensgaard, he asserts that the main impetus for the centralization of state power was warfare, and goes further claiming this was least intense in England because that nation was least involved in land warfare. At the same time, Rabb disagrees with Elliott's crisis of 1560 because he does not find any long lasting resolution resulting from it. Like Mousnier, Rabb sees the growing conflict as a struggle between royal authority and independent nobles. Focused on resolution as he is, for Rabb the crisis has passed by the late 1660's because the political structure of Spain, France, and England have all become established for several decades after.

In economics, Rabb feels that a crisis theory cannot be founded on economics or demography (thus refuting Hobsbawm) but that both factors can support any theory as supplemental evidence. He agrees that all areas of Europe experienced economic stagnation at some point in the late 16th and 17th centuries and that most areas were hit by the particularly severe years of 1619-1622. Yet like Hobsbawm, Rabb feels these difficulties opened the door for the growth of capitalism.

The arts are especially central to Rabb's thesis because throughout his essay he emphasizes perception of realities, not realities. The change from the strong passions in the arts of the late 16th century and early 17th century to the passivity and subdued feelings of the late 17th century are a clear sign that the crisis occurred and has passed. He says: "Henceforth painting was to be pleasing rather than exciting, decorative rather than powerful." In considering the reasons for a general crisis, Rabb explores a variety of possibilities including a change in the focus of the aristocracy and a "critical mass" theory of bureaucratization but in the end places the strongest emphasis on war and its effects. "The revulsion against the excesses of war was one of the fundamental reasons that stability returned in the mid-seventeenth century." Finally, Rabb suggests continued scholarship on changes in the arts, the position of the aristocracy, and on comparative studies to more fully understand the `discontinuity' of the 17th and early 18th centuries.

In the world of the arts, connections, as Peter Burke emphasizes,(In "The Crisis in the Arts of the Seventeenth Century: A Crisis of Representation?" in *Journal of Interdisciplinary History,* Volume 40, Number 2, Autumn 2009, pp. 239-261) are inherently more elusive. The arts suffered no crisis in the middle of the seventeenth century, although major changes in style took place around the year 1600. However, a crisis of representation that began in natural philosophy was eventually to become more general. A contrast in tone or mood that was evident between the arts in the first and the second half of the century may be interpreted as a response to economic, social, and political crises.Although Burke sees analogies for the structural shifts visible in other areas of life, such as politics and the economy, they are much harder to pin down in the arts. If the transformations represented by the Baroque are to serve this purpose, their appearance in painting, sculpture, architecture, and music follow different paths, and arise earlier in the seventeenth century. If the response to upheaval is the key, different kinds of evidence come into play. Overall, however, Burke finds, both in the historiography and in a wide range of creativity, the quest for new directions that links the arts to the general transformations of the Crisis. Seventeenth-century painters had other goals besides this one, while architects and composers were still more distant from it, but the idea of a paradigm that is first followed with enthusiasm and later rejected, for whatever reasons, may still be helpful in this brief survey of the arts, provided that all necessary changes are made.

Figure 3: *The Adoration of the Magi*, a 1624 oil-on-canvas painting by Peter Paul Rubens. The painting is 447 by 336cm (15 by 11 feet) and is currently displayed at the Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten in Antwerp, Belgium.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adoration_of_the_Magi

Edward Bever, (in "Witchcraft Prosecutions and the Decline of Magic" in *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*,Volume 40,Number 2, Autumn 2009,pp. 263-293)addresses an aspect of seventeenth- century history that takes us into the realm of mentalities. Through attitudes to witchcraft, one can enter a realm of feeling and gain access to a society-wide outlook that is not available through other forms of research. Bever's conclusion—that a "Crisis of Confidence" in mid-century affected demonology, the persecution of witches, and the belief in magic—offers a powerful endorsement of the Crisis thesis. Drawing his evidence from a variety of settings across Europe, he is able to show that the progression took place not only in theoretical discussions and the assumptions of the elite, but also in legal procedures and popular behavior. The witch trials, also influenced social trends. They came to an end in part because they changed reality, marginalizing or suppressing roles and behaviors that had once flourished in European society. Similarly, the larger campaigns of confessionalization and social discipline may well have dissipated because their success made them obsolete. It has become fashionable to stress the limited effectiveness of these efforts, but in actuality the quality of life in the late eighteenth century was appreciably different from that in the early sixteenth century. Innumerable forces contributed to the change—among them, printing, education, economic growth, political consolidation, and the development of transportation infrastructure—but, as we have seen, deliberate cultural reform was also a major contributor to it. Finally, carrying the examination of the rejection of witchcraft beliefs forward from the crisis of confidence into the eighteenth century shows that, far from being a minor episode in the pre-Enlightenment, it was critical to the larger decline of magic. From an intellectual and social standpoint, the demonology was the most vulnerable part of magical belief. It conflated a wide variety of phenomena, distorting their nature, cohesiveness, and significance, and countless innocent lives were sacrificed in its name. In the process, however, the witch hunts changed the reality that had given rise to them, thereby contributing to the eventual discrediting of the demonology and ultimately of magical beliefs in general.

Disbelief in magic developed a vitriolic tone because it was becoming a critical social marker, a sign of membership in the forward-looking, modern- thinking, cosmopolitan elite, as much opposed to staid, conservative provincial leaders as to the great unwashed. It played into a dramatic schism between the upper and lower strata of society that had been forming for centuries, and that increased sharply in the late seventeenth century. The ruling classes gradually gave up their campaign to reform the masses and their traditional culture in favor of celebrating their superiority over them and their emancipation from outmoded thinking. The "theater of everyday life" saw the upper classes adopt an ever-more elaborate set of mannerisms, behaviors, beliefs, and taboos to distinguish them from their social inferiors. Not only were expressions of disbelief in magic used to proclaim membership in the cultural leadership but also, whether manifested as a regal hauteur or a levelheaded practicality, to sustain an immunity to the unreasonable fears and hopes through which magical beliefs could become self-fulfilling prophesies, a visceral imperviousness that was both a sign and effect of membership in the new elite. This elite was further defined along gender boundaries. A well-bred woman might be susceptible to the fear and the allure of the occult, but a well-bred man could no more succumb to an old woman's curses than indulge in some ritual hocus-pocus to advance his own interests. Disbelief in magic played a critical role in

defining the new autonomous individual in rational control of his own actions and feelings, internally integrated and essentially isolated from the outside world.

7.4.2 The Climate and Culture

In a seminal article published in 1995, Wolfgang Behringer initiated a major revision of the prevailing interpretations of the major witch hunts in Central Europe, the core area of persecution, from the period of 1560 to 1630. He observed a supra-regional chronological pattern in terms of waves and conjunctures. 'If we imagine the waves statistically', he wrote, 'the largest ones structure a general pattern along a time line: the gravest persecutions of witches in France, Germany, Scotland and Switzerland occurred in the same rhythm'. He asserted that the long-, medium- and short-term conditions for these waves of persecutions were related to subsistence crises, which, in turn, were an outflow of extreme climate. Indeed, peaks of persecution coincided with critical points of climatic deterioration. One frequent ground for persecutions appears to have been accusations of indulging in weather magic that was responsible for 'unnatural weather'. This is a term which appears in protocols to designate climate anomalies deviating from long-experienced norms. Many historians fail to take contemporary pronouncements to that effect seriously. However, modern Historical Climatology concludes that contemporaries' observations were usually quite accurate. Witches were blamed for destroying the wine crop, making the harvest go to rot and driving up grain prices, despite the official teaching of theologians who rejected popular beliefs in weather magic. That is to say, climate anomalies and the ensuing subsistence crises were attributed to the deeds of so-called 'evil persons', transformed and personified as enemies in accordance with popular beliefs in the occult. This was the most important charge against suspected witches. Whereas accusations of witchcraft for all kinds of personal bad luck were often a matter among individuals, whole peasant communities demanded persecution in cases of 'unnatural weather' and collective damage. 'In comparison to individual accusations which tended to lead to trials of individual suspects, collective demands for persecution—when accepted by the authorities'—regularly resulted in large scale witch hunts. Charges of crop destruction by climatic anomalies were directed against a fictive collective because it seemed inconceivable that a single person could wield power over larger scale weather patterns. The persecution of an occult sect allowed torturing the victims until they revealed the names of other members of the sect.The persecuting impulse was fostered almost completely 'from below', from communities and their representatives. A key statement is contained in the Gesta Treverorum written by Hans Linden:

> Hardly any of the [prince-]archbishops governed their diocese with such hardship, such sorrows and such extreme difficulties as Johannes [Prince- Archbishop Johannes VII von Schönenberg, reigned 1581-99]. During the whole period he had to endure a continuous lack of grain, the rigours of climate and crop failure with his subjects. Only two of the nineteen years [from 1581 to 1599] were fertile, the years 1584 and 1590 [...]. Since everybody thought that the continuous crop failure [emphasis by C.P.] was caused by witches of devilish hate, the whole country stood up for their eradication.

Again, we have to stress the fact that Linden's diagnosis of the climatic situation and its consequences is appropriate. Climate between 1585 and1597 was indeed an experience without parallel, probably within the entire last millennium. It resulted in a more or less continuous crop failure, which is demonstrated at least for the grape crop north of the Alps from Switzerland to western Hungary, so that the deep-rooted angst of the populace—described in many sources—becomes plausible. The last of

the major witch hunts took place in the lands of Catholic prelates in the Rhine basin (the three western archbishoprics of Mainz, Cologne and Trier) between 1626 and 1631.The mania was triggered off by an extreme event which remains unique in the weather history of the last 500 years. On 24 May 1626, astronomer Friedrich Rüttel reported a hailstorm in the Stuttgart area which brought hailstones the size of walnuts and that allegedly accumulated to a depth of 7ft. On the afternoon of 26 May, he observed a sharp icy wind. The subsequent night was so bitterly cold that on the morning of 27 May, ice was found on the water in several places. Overnight, grapevines, rye and barley were completely destroyed. The leaves on trees turned black. These devastating events together with subsequent crop failures, cattle diseases, price-rises and epidemics shaped the persecutions of the following years. It was only from the early 1630s that the prosecution and execution of witches entered a new phase marked by a general decline in the number of trials.

Figure 4: **Magic and Witches**

Body text: A bizarre pamphlet was published in 1648 attributing magical powers to Boy, the famous war poodle of the Royalist Cavalier Prince Rupert of the Rhine. The crowded title page notes that the fearsome canine was only felled thanks to the counter-acting magical powers of a "Valiant Souldier, who had skill in Necromancy.


DOG'S ELEGY,
OR
RVPERT'S TEARS,
For the late Defeat given him at *Marſton-moore*, neer *York*, by the Three Renowned Generalls; *Alexander Earl of* Leven, *Generall of the Scottiſh Forces*, Fardinando *Lord* Fairefax, *and the Earle of* Manchester *Generalls of the* Engliſh *Forces in the North.*
Where his beloved Dog, named *BOY*, was killed by a Valliant Souldier, who had skill in *Necromancy.*
Likewiſe the ſtrange breed of this Shagg'd Cavalier, *whelp'd of a Malignant* Water-witch; *With all his Tricks, and Feats.*

Sad Cavaliers, *Rupert* invites you all
That doe ſurvive, to his Dogs Funerall.
Cloſe-mourners are the Witch, Pope, & devill,
That much lament yo'r late befallen evill.
Printed at *London*, for *G. B.* July 27. 1644.

Source:http://resobscura.blogspot.com/2010/08/witches-familiars-in-17th-century

In general, Behringer does not mention indirect effects of climatic anomalies such as the death of cattle and the running dry of cows. Bovine animals had a key role in human survival as they provided both driving power and dung for grain cultivation as well as milk for human consumption. The running dry of cows or their death from cattle plague was thus likely to destabilise any small property. It follows that manifold popular beliefs had developed around the animals, including the fear of destructive forces and witchcraft. In the Vaudois region of western Switzerland, no fewer than 971 persons were executed between 1580 and 1620.The hunts did not take place in the region of the vineyards, as might be supposed, given the biophysical vulnerability of vines to climatic hazards, but in the grain-growing regions in the hinterland of Lake Geneva. This region witnessed a deep structural crisis between 1580 and 1620. A memorandum drafted in 1591 points to the fact that large parts of the land were laid fallow in the wake of an acute shortage of cattle. Indeed, tithes paid in grain from this region declined sharply from the mid-1580s. This picture points to a dramatic loss of cattle, perhaps as a consequence of a cattle plague, which might be related to the witch hunts. Noteworthy is the fact that the German-speaking region of the Republic of Bern, in which the Vaudoise was located, experienced neither substantial cattle losses nor large-scale witch hunts. Of course, as Behringer has pointed out, the synchrony of subsistence crises and witch hunts ought not to be read in terms of a deterministic relationship. As a second important factor shaping the dynamics of witch hunts he points to a radical transformation of mentality, after 1560, towards a gloomy depressive world view shared by elites, which explains the sudden decision of ruling elites in some areas to give in to popular demands for persecutions. The traditional rejection of popular belief in weather magic was temporarily rolled back. Behringer was the first scholar to calculate, on the basis of available literature on witch hunts the total number of victims for each period of persecution. The dynamics of witch hunting appear to comprise two distinct components: a long-term trend of persecution amounting to roughly a hundred cases per year provides the basis. It is thought that this trend represents charges against individuals which were not related to communal hunts and to climate. Superposed on the long-term trend is the effect of mass persecutions of witches. The latter trend rises substantially from 1580 to 1600, then it levels off for about 15 years. A second rise starts in 1618 and culminates in the late 1620s. From the early 1630s, the number of executions falls back to the long-term level of individual persecutions.

Value addition: IMAGES

The witch hunter Mathew Hopkins' infamous pamphlet *The Discovery of Witches* (London, 1647). his crude woodcut depicting the familiars of a coven of witches that Hopkins claimed to have discovered in Essex.

Here's Hopkins' explanation from *The Discovery of Witches* itself, which is available online for free as a Guttenberg E-Book:

The Discoverer [Hopkins] never travelled far for it, but in *March* 1644 he had some seven or eight of that horrible sect of Witches living in the Towne where he lived... who every six weeks in the night (being alwayes on the Friday night) had their meeting close by his house and had their severall solemne sacrifices there offered to the *Devill*, one of which this discoverer heard speaking to her *Imps* one night, and bid them goe to another Witch, who was thereupon apprehended, and searched, by women who had for many yeares knowne the Devills marks, and found to have three teats about her, which honest women have not: so upon command from the *Justice* they were to keep her from sleep two or three nights, expecting in that time to see her

familiars, which the fourth night she called in by their severall names, and told them what shapes, a quarter of an houre before they came in, there being ten of us in the roome, the first she called was 1.*Holt*, who came in like a white kitling. 2. *Jarmara*, who came in like a fat Spaniel without any legs at all, she said she kept him fat, for she clapt her hand on her belly and said he suckt good blood from her body.

3. *Vinegar Tom*, who was like a long-legg'd Greyhound, with an head like an Oxe, with a long taile and broad eyes, who when this discoverer spoke to, and bade him goe to the place provided for him and his Angels, immediately transformed himselfe into the shape of a child of foure yeeres old without a head, and gave halfe a dozen turnes about the house, and vanished at the doore.

4. *Sack and Sugar*, like a black Rabbet.

5. *Newes*, like a Polcat. All these vanished away in a little time. Immediately after this Witch confessed severall other Witches, from whom she had her *Imps*, and named to divers women where their marks were, the number of their *Marks*, and *Imps*, and *Imps* names, as *Elemanzer*, *Pyewacket*, *Peckin the Crown*, *Grizzel*, *Greedigut*, *&c.* which no mortall could invent; and upon their searches the same Markes were found, the same number, and in the same place, and the like confessions from them of the same Imps...

Source:http://resobscura.blogspot.com/2010/08/witches-familiars-in-17th-century.html

7.4.3 Military Revolution

Military needs also both stimulated and benefited from scientific advance: the telescope was invented for military reasons; the same mathematics that Galileo applied to ballistics (calculating the trajectories of canon balls) helped explain the movement of planets. Simon Stevin (1548-1620) applied his knowledge of mathematics, hydrostatics and surveying, to the construction of military fortifications. The 17th Century was an age of almost continual warfare in Europe, and military tactics and technology improved with practice. During the "military revolution", defensive and offensive advance leapfrogged until European armies were the most effective in the world.

When the Turks laid siege to Vienna in 1529, their forces were only narrowly defeated, and continued to hold much of Balkans and Central Europe. When they repeated their invasion in 1683, the 150,000 Ottoman troops were comprehensively defeated by a Polish/German army of 68,000. At Zenta (1697), the Turkish army

suffered at least 20,000 casualties (and lost its artillery and provisions and ten of the Sultan's wives/ concubines) while the Imperial armed forces lost only 300.Elsewhere in the world (India, China, Africa) European armies easily defeated native soldiers.

The acquisition of military power through funds, and of funds (in the form of enforced collection of taxes, duties, or tribute) through military power, simultaneously demanded and contributed to the centralization of political power. The process was hardly a smooth one, as many battles and even wars in the 16th century ended without resolution due to scarcity of funds, even bankruptcies of state. In the 17th century, however, following the Thirty Years War, the foundations of permanent standing armies with clear command structures, at the disposition of the monarchs or governing bodies of states were laid. This both discouraged internal rebellion (either by the populace or the nobles) and further improved the efficiency of the fiscal collection process, providing even greater opportunity for the maintenance of military power, and thus of consolidation of control of the state. Simultaneously, the advantage of the besieged over the besieger made territorial gains (except abroad, as in the colonies in the New World and the East) prohibitively expensive, fixing European national borders to an unusual degree. The development of fast, maneuverable warships, capable of transoceanic voyages, with large cargo capacities and heavy armaments carried European disputes abroad. Thus it could likely be more profitable to fight battles over foreign colonies, goods, and trade routes, than to attempt wars of conquest within Europe. The revolution of military science may be seen as necessitating an efficiency and efficacy of force that only a strong national power could maintain. Once in place, that same force served to protect the interests of, and maintain, the head of that state—thereby ensuring the place of the national army, and navy, as permanent fixtures of the political landscape.

Warfare enabled the nobility to fulfil its 'natural' social function of military activity. The conventional medieval division of society into those who pray (clergy), those who fight (nobility), and those who labour (commoners or Third Estate) was never other than an ideal typology, but the wars of the seventeenth century gave it new vigour, as the nobility of Europe had ample opportunity to exercise its military calling. Commoners did occasionally rise to positions of military command, but the officers and generals of European armies came overwhelmingly from the ranks of the nobility and aristocracy. To this extent, warfare reinforced bonds between crown and nobility. European monarchs looked chiefly to the nobility for their commanders, while the latter accepted that their military eminence depended in the last resort on royal favour. Warfare confirmed the mutual dependence of crown and nobility and helped to ensure that, even though crown and nobility sometimes might be in conflict over domestic issues, they would abandon that mutual dependence only under the most exceptional circumstances, as happened, for example, in Portugal in the 1640s. Normally, whatever the seriousness of the disputes between them, crown

and nobility accepted that the social system within which they lived required them to establish a *modus vivendi*.

Value addition: Interesting Facts
Wars in Europe
During the 17th century, the major European powers were constantly involved in military conflict: the Austrian Hapsburgs and Sweden two of every three years; Spain three years of every four; Poland and Russia four of every five
Source: http://history.wisc.edu/sommerville/351/351-01.htm

7.4.4 Elements of Continuity

Numerous empirical and theoretical aspects of the seventeenth-century crisis therefore remain subject to debate. Moreover, neither Hobsbawm's Marxist teleological stage theory of economic development nor Trevor-Roper's court/country distinction command much assent today. But the concept has been widely if selectively appropriated and—like all intellectually fecund theorizations—continues to stimulate new research and new explanations of existing data. As a result, the outlines of a new interpretation are beginning to appear. It emphasizes continuities—for example, the acceleration of previously initiated regional differentiation, agrarian specialization and commercialization, and ruralization of industry. And, while not denying that significant retrenchment was forced on states and economies, it highlights concomitant opportunities, adjustments, and adaptations to new conditions. Thereby it contributes to a more discriminating understanding of both the significance of the seventeenth century and the nature of crisis in the early modern world.

Despite the revolutionary changes taking place in seventeenth century Europe there were unifying factors. Dynastic intermarriage, a common Latin culture, international mercenaries, trade and other economic links all served to draw Europeans together in a common identity. Despite endemic warfare, European states were closely interconnected by shifting political alliances, cultural exchange and trade.

All the ruling families of Europe intermarried. Indeed, the Hapsburgs of Spain and Austria intermarried so repeatedly that they began to display the birth defects that stem from incest. (Follow, for example, the marriages of the children and siblings of Ferdinand II of Austria or Philip III of Spain and you will continually return to the same people through different links). The French royal family was so closely linked to the Spanish that they had a claim to the throne when Charles II died without heirs in 1701. The royal families of Northern Europe also intermarried extensively. Sigismund III of Poland married two sisters of Ferdinand II - first Anne and then after her death, her sister Constance; his son by the first marriage, Ladislaus IV, first married Ferdinand's daughter (i.e. his cousin, Constance and Anne's niece) Cecily Renate, and then after her death, Louise Marie Gonzaga, who on his death married Ladislaus's half-brother and cousin, John Casimir. The Stuarts of England were linked

by marriage to the monarchs of Bohemia, Denmark, France, Modena, Portugal, and the United Provinces.

The educated elite of Europe shared a common culture. Almost every student learnt Latin and higher education lay in mastering a body of interrelated texts, particularly those of classical antiquity. Because all university courses were taught in Latin, it was easy for students to study abroad. Students from Calvinist countries often went to Leiden or Geneva.

Soldiers were as willing to cross international borders as students. It is estimated that in the period 1620-1640, 10% of the male population of Scotland was fighting abroad. In 1690, Louis XIV created a separate Irish Brigade for Irish soldiers fighting for him. Gentlemen also acquired military experience by fighting in foreign armies. René Descartes fought for the Hapsburgs; Eugene of Savoy (who was a French aristocrat) led Austrian forces in the defeat of the French; the German Prince Rupert of the Rhine fought in the English Civil War.

There were many economic links within Europe. Large quantities of grain, and later cattle, were exported from the Baltic countries to the rest of Europe. Much of this grain was transported in Dutch ships, which also moved the Dutch herrings that were sold throughout Europe. In the Netherlands, Spanish and English wool or partially-made cloth were turned into fully completed cloth, and then re-exported throughout Europe. England imported vast quantities of wine and spirits from France throughout the 17th Century. The Portuguese shipped so much of their "Vinho de Emharque" to England that it simply became known as *Port* (after Oporto, a Portuguese port from which much of it was exported).

Value addition: Did you Know

Controversies about European Dates and Calendar

One thing that did divide Europeans was the date.

When Julius Caesar introduced the "Julian" calendar in 46 BC, he added a day every four years (each leap year) to compensate for the almost six hours that each year exceeds its 365 days. This was roughly 45 minutes too much, with the result that the calendar and the seasons were gradually growing more and more out of sync. By the 1580s, the beginning of Spring (the vernal equinox - important for establishing the date of Easter) was falling early in March. The calendar was ten days behind where it should have been.Pope Gregory got rid of the extra ten days by shortening October 1582 (5-14 October were omitted), and stopped the problem re-occurring by decreeing that years divisible by 100 not be leap years. Most Catholic countries followed his lead at once. But some Protestants wanted nothing from the Pope - not even the right time, so their calendars retained the Old Style. Germany, the Netherlands and Poland did not adopt the "Gregorian" calendar until 1700, and England not until 1752. Another day had crept in by then. (You can be sure that nothing happened in England on the eleven days between the 3rd and 13th September 1752, since statute decreed that the day after 2nd September was 14th September). [Russia did not change until 1918, which is why the "October Revolution" of 1905 happened in November as far as the West was concerned].As a consequence, for most of the seventeenth century

the same event happened on two different dates, according to which calendar was in use. The Swedes thought that they won the Battle of Breitenfeld on *7* September 1631, the Imperial army thought that they lost the Battle of Breitenfeld on *17* September 1631. To simplify matters, most historians simply state up front that all their dates will be New Style (or Old Style)
Source: http://history.wisc.edu/sommerville/351/351-01.htm

Summary

There was no general economic crisis in Europe in the seventeenth century, a time which can be characterized by local crises and a general slowing down of the expansion of the previous century, but above all by a shift from the declining Mediterranean world to the emerging northern powers. The nearest to a general economic crisis which Europe saw was in agriculture, and this was an important issue given the number of people who made a living from the land, and caused a great deal of discontent, but both trade and industry saw a change in balance more than a universal decline. The European economy, however, was not growing fast enough to keep pace with the demands of states for money to pay for armaments, and it became necessary to assert greater state control over the countries in order to secure the necessary revenue. This move towards absolutism grated with a society based on many centres of loyalty and traditional local interests, giving rise to political tensions which frequently developed into reactionary rebellion. Any more specific model, though, would not stand up to detailed examination, and the question remains whether these events amount to a general crisis. While there is a broad theme in the revolts of conflict between the state and the 'country' which might be termed a general political crisis, it is hard to link this to any general economic crisis. Increased fiscal pressure from the government as a result of inadequate revenue seems the only link, and while this might work in the case of somewhere like Spain where there were severe economic problems, it is hard to believe that countries such as England or the Netherlands, on the verge of an economic golden age, found money hard to come by simply as a result of a depressed economy. Economic and political problems were not necessarily connected, and the economic crises were local, not general. Many of the political crises do seem to share the theme of a state versus country conflict, but took varying courses, and without the underlying theme of economic crisis, seem to be little more than an outbreak of rebellions which were hardly a new phenomenon in Europe.

Exercises

1.1 Evaluate the relative importance of the religious rivalries and dynastic ambitions that shaped the course-of the Thirty Year's Wars.

1.2 Describe and analyze the changes in the role of Parliament in English politics between the succession of James I and The Glorious Revolution.

1.3 Trace the development of the English parliament during the 17th century.

1.4 Compare 17th century French Absolutism with 17th century eastern European Absolutism.

1.5 In the seventeenth century, England and the Netherlands developed effective capitalist economies while Spain did not. Why did the economies develop so differently in England and the Netherlands, on one hand and in Spain on the other?

1.6 What conditions aided and helped the development of monarchical absolutism in the seventeenth century?

1.7 Why did so many people believe in witches in the 17th century*?*

1.8 Why did religious conflicts become so deeply entwined with political conflicts during this period?

1.9 What caused the decline of Spain in the seventeenth century?

1.10 How did the numbers and distribution of the European population change from 1300 to 1650? What were the causes and effects of these changes?

1.11 List and describe the economic and social crises Europe experienced between 1560 and 1650.

1.12 Identify how the turmoil in Europe between 1560 and 1650 contributed to the witchcraft craze and to the artistic and intellectual developments of the period.

Glossary

Absolutism - A historiographical term used to describe a form of monarchical power that is unrestrained by any other institutions, such as churches, legislatures, or social elites. Absolutism is typically used in conjunction with some European monarchs during the transition from feudalism to capitalism, and monarchs described as "absolute" can especially be found in the 17th century through the 19th century. Absolutism is characterized by the end of feudal partitioning, consolidation of power with the monarch, rise of state power, unification of the state, and a decrease in the influence of nobility.

Baroque- A period in western art history c. 1580-18th century. In Catholic countries the style formed out of a revolt against Mannerism and a desire to serve the religious impulse of the Counter-Reformation by creating religious artworks that were accessible to the masses. In Northern countries the style reflected the ideas of modern philosophy and the scientific revolution with a move toward greater naturalism. Baroque style is characterized by having

dynamic movement and theatrical effects.

Bull- A formal document issued by the Pope and often sealed with a melted, lead "bulla".

Burghers- They were the Dutch equivalent of the French bourgeoisie, the German Burgers and the English burgesses. in other words the "middle class". When the Dutch Republic (United Provinces) came into existence there was no local aristocracy - remember that this region of Europe had, for centuries, been the property of the Habsburg family (Austrian and Spanish), and it had provided all the nobles necessary to govern this 'economic heartland" of the Habsburg Empire. When independence was achieved the United Provinces was a nation of burghers - merchants, bankers, tradesmen, artisans and artists. The closest that the new nation came to having an aristocracy was the Orange family, but it was of German origin (Duke of Nassau and Prince of Orange were German, not Dutch titles). Although they played a major part in obtaining Dutch independence, after 1649 their influence declined.

Calvinists Followers of the teachings of John Calvin (1509-1564).

Capital- Wealth available for investment to make further wealth.

Cardinal- A small group of Bishops who elect a Pope and act as his advisors.

Cavaliers -Supporters of Charles I in the English Civil War.

Charter- A formal document from a monarch granting a company the exclusive right to trade in a certain area.

Church-of England the Church created by Henry VIII after the Act of Supremacy in 1534. It is similar to the Catholic Church, but has the monarch, not the pope, as its head.

Clergy Men- ordained as ministers or priests of the Christian Church. Corsairs These were sailors who, in time of war, had a very particular role to play. They were not part of a nation's official warfleet (which meant showing the national flag at all times on ships which were obviously ships of war).

Constitutionalism-a system in which the ruler had to share power with parliaments made up of elected representatives.

Corsairs -(or privateers) were on board ships which seemed to be innocent merchantmen about their everyday business, but which, in reality, were small warships armed with cannon to attack the enemy whenever the opportunity arose. Each corsair captain was issued with "letters of marque" which, in case of capture by an enemy, were supposed to protect him and his crew from the crime

of piracy. Piracy was punished by immediate hanging.

Habsburg Dynasty- The rise of the Habsburgs dates back to 1276 when they gained control of Austria and then, by political marriages, Bohemia and Hungary. A member of this family was crowned Holy Roman Emperor in 1452 (Frederick III) and the imperial crown was to remain in the family until 1806 when Napoleon abolished the Holy Roman Empire. Nevertheless the Habsburg dynasty continued to rule the Austrian Empire, later to be known as the Austro-Hungarian Empire, until 1918.

Holy Roman Empire- Founded in the year 800 (as you should well know) when Charlemagne was crowned Holy Roman Emperor. After the Treaty of Meersen (870), the title "emperor" was given to the eastern Frankish kings. In theory the Holy Roman Emperor was the most powerful ruler in Europe, but in practice this was not the case. From the mid-11th to the mid-13th centuries the emperors struggled with the popes in order to decide who really ruled Christian Europe. The Protestant Reformation weakened the authority of the Holy Roman Emperors even further. After the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) the French writer Voltaire described it as being "neither holy, nor Roman, nor an empire".

Maunder Minimum- In 1645 Low solar activity begins. Ice will cut off access to Greenland, canals in Holland will routinely freeze solid, and glaciers will advance in the Alps. This period of low solar activity will last to 1715.

Parish -The area around a Church for which a priest is responsible.

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2.Suggested Readings

Benedict, P. Benedict and M. Gutmann, eds. *Early Modern Europe: From Crisis to Stability,* University of Delaware Press,2006.

Monod, Paul K., *The Power of Kings: Monarchy and Religion in Europe, 1589–1715* London,1999.

Goldstone, Jack A. *Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World.* Berkeley, 1991.

3.Web Links

1. The Rise and Fall of Absolute Monarchy (*http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/bnf/bnf0005.html*)
2. Absolutism: Primary Sources (*http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/modsbook05.html*)
3. Constitutionalism: Primary Sources (*http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/modsbook06.html*)
4. Louis XIV (*http://staff.gps.edu/mines/Age of Absolu- Louis XIV.htm*)
5. The English Civil Wars (*http://easyweb.easynet.co.uk/~crossby/ECW/*)
6. Thomas Hobbes (*http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/phl302/philosophers/hobbes.html*)
7. The United Provinces in the Seventeenth Century (*http://history.wisc.edu/sommerville/351/dutch republic.htm*)