

# Absolutism in Spain

# Background

## **Unification of Spain(11<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> centuries):**

The Christian kingdoms warred intermittently against the Muslims and slowly expanded Christian rule in Spain.

In 1469 Ferdinand of Aragon married Isabella of Castile, thus uniting Christian Spain. In 1492 their armies finally conquered Granada, the last Moorish stronghold, thereby ending Moorish rule in Spain.

# Reconquista



# Ferdinand and Isabella



- a. **Absolutism.** Ferdinand and Isabella increased royal power considerably. They weakened 1. the nobility by destroying the nobles' fortified castles, 2) the Catholic Church by gaining the right to nominate important Church officials 3) the Cortes, the Spanish legislature, by enacting laws without its approval.
- b. **Religious Unity.** Persecuted Jews and Muslims and expelled them from Spain. Spain loses energetic workers and skilled workers.
- c. **Foreign Affairs.** They laid the foundation for Spain's brief period of world power. 1. They financed Columbus' expedition that reached the New World. Spain acquired a large New World colonial empire with great wealth in silver and gold. Their daughter married the prince of the House of Hapsburg (Catholic Austria). The heir is Charles V, uniting Austria and Spain.





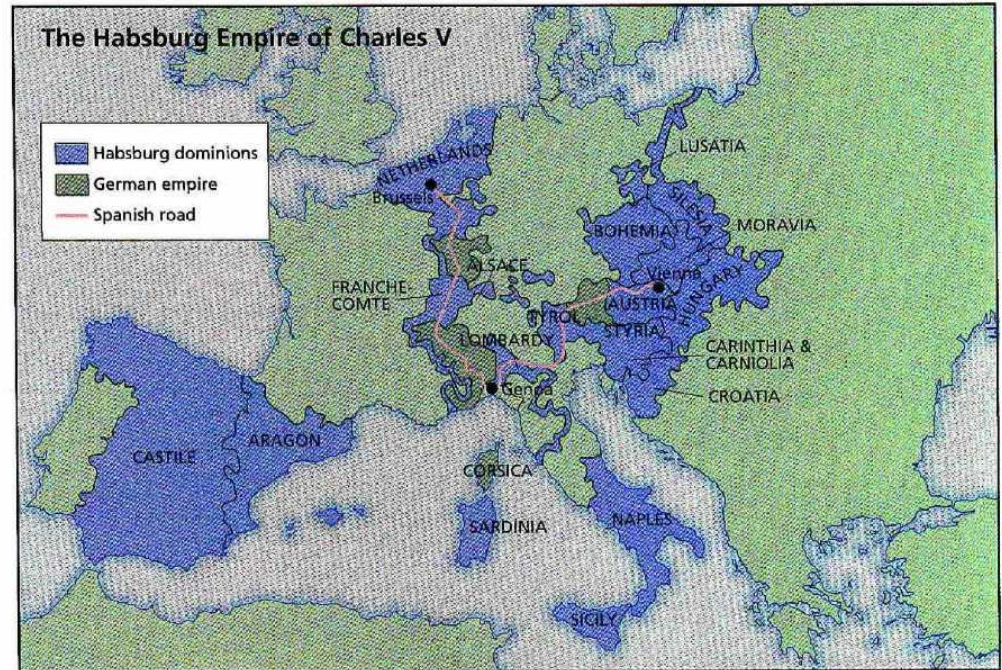
# Charles V (1519-1556)



- a. **Rules an Empire:** Charles of Hapsburg, absolute monarch of Spain and leading ruler of Europe, controlled not only Spain and its colonial empire but also the Netherlands, Sicily, southern Italy, Austria and other lands in central Europe. In 1520 he became Holy Roman Emperor.
- b. **Dominates European Affairs:** To defend his domains, Charles repeatedly fought the French, the Muslim Turks, and the protestant Germans. A devout Catholic, he most regretted his failure to stop the spread of Protestantism. His son becomes Philip II of Spain.



# Territories Ruled By Charles V



# Philip II (1556-1598): Spanish Power Declines



In foreign affairs, Philip II expended military power and money but

- a. Was unable to suppress the Protestant Dutch revolt,
- b. Could not halt English raids on Spanish merchant ships and colonies, and
- c. Failed to conquer England with the Spanish Armada in 1588.

# Philip II

In Spain Philip's autocratic rule produced inefficient government, a crushing tax burden and a stagnant economy. Spain begins to decline in world prestige and power.

