



The Crisis of the 17th Century	Louis XIV	The English Model (Pt. I)	The English Model (Pt. II)	European State System in the 18th Century
Page 5	Page 11	Page 15	Page 23	Page 27

ABSOLUTISM

WE HAVE NOT TALKED ABOUT GOVERNMENT MUCH SO FAR IN THIS COURSE, AND TODAY WE ARE GOING TO MAKE UP FOR THAT A LITTLE BIT. IN WESTERN CIVILIZATION SINCE 1500 ONE OF THE MOST NOTICEABLE TRENDS IS THE STEADILY GROWING INFLUENCE OF GOVERNMENT.

What I mean by that is, in 1500 most of the members of society would never come into contact with someone associated with the central government. A peasant would have no need to. Any dispute one peasant might have with another peasant would be judged by his lord not by a court of the king; likewise, any crime he might commit or would be committed against him would be dealt with by his lord. There was an outside chance he would encounter a tax collector, but, if the village owed money directly to the government, it would more than likely be the village elder who would deal with the tax collector. Same way with the cities. When the king collected taxes from the cities, his agent would deal with the city government. All other issues—justice and local tax collection—would be performed by the city government. There were no censuses in Europe in 1500 because there was no need to have one. The king knew what was owed him from institutions such as cities or duchies or counties, and there was no need to know how many people lived in those cities or duchies or counties or how much they earned or how much they might be able to pay.

Only the nobles might have direct contact with the central government, either in their capacity as advisers to the king or officers in his armies. But even that was fading. Nobles were no longer called upon to serve in the army, and the kings now were looking for advisers who were clever, literate, and could count, qualities that most noblemen did not possess.

But that is not true today. Everyone now has contact with the central government. We pay taxes directly and indirectly to the central government; we have to get licenses of various kinds to use things; we have to deal with government regulations all of the time; and we have to buy stamps from government agencies. We do get more in return than they did in the 16th century, of course, from roads to defense to social security programs to health to education. But, whatever the tradeoff is, the growing power of the government that we are familiar with really begins in the late 16th century with something called Absolutism. The first thing we have to do is give an idea of what absolutism is, and to do that we need to talk a bit about government in general in the 16th century.

16th Century Government

In the political system of Europe, normally speaking, every state, no matter how large or how small, had two institutions. The first is the easy one; that is what we have been calling generically the prince. He might be a great ruler like the king of England, the king of France, the king of Spain, or the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. He might be a minor ruler like the Elector of Saxony, Duke of Bavaria, or Prince of Hesse-Cassel. But no matter how big or how small, a true prince was sovereign in his land. In other words, laws were issued in his name.

But also in just about every state there was another institution, whose main function was to make certain that the prince not only made but also followed the laws in his state, and that institution is generically called the estates. Now that is the generic name for it. In England it was called Parliament; in France it was called the Estates General, in the Holy Roman Empire it was called the Diet. But, no matter what it was called, the estates were assemblies in which sat “the legitimate representatives of the classes privileged by law.” In other words, in these estates might sit noblemen, clergy, and commoners. In Sweden, even representatives of the rural peasants had seats.

These estates usually met according to class. In English Parliament, for example, the lords sit in the House of Lords and the commoners sit in the House of Commons. In France the clergy sat in one house, the nobles in another, and the commoners in a third. In the Holy Roman Empire, the highest princes, called the Electors—and there were only seven—sat together and all of the other legitimate representatives who might be knights, counts, dukes, or even cities, sat in another house.

It is important to realize that these men were usually not elected. They often sat by virtue of their office (clergy), or by birthright (nobility), by distinguished service to the king, or as representatives of a city council. Even in those few places where delegates were elected, such as the House of Commons in England, voting rights in these days were so restricted that the vast majority of the population was ineligible to vote.

So, What is Absolutism?

Absolutism is when the prince or king decides that he no longer has to listen to the estates. In some places, such as France, the king eventually just did not bother to call them together any more. In other places, he just ignored their advice. This does not mean that the king or prince simply does whatever he wants. In Absolutism the king still respects the laws and customs of the land—this is not a dictatorship—he just does not consult the estates any more.

Origins of Absolutism

Absolutism arose first and was the strongest in France. When it came to absolutism, France set the standard; it was the model. It arose out of the religious wars in the late 16th century. The religious wars in France were very different from the religious wars in Germany. In Germany religious warfare ended—at least for a while; it will crank up again—in 1555 with the Religious Peace of Augsburg. In France, the wars actually did not begin until 1562 and lasted until 1589. In Germany the wars were between Lutheran and Catholic princes; in France they were between Calvinists and Catholics, and, even though there were great families very much involved, it also was a war among the common people of both faiths. Calvinism had really spread like wildfire through France in the 1540s and 1550s. The French Calvinists are called Huguenots.

As these wars were going on and Frenchmen were killing Frenchmen over church theology and church organization, a new political force emerged in France known as the *politiques*. The *politiques* were made up of many prominent men of both faiths, Huguenot and Catholic. And they argued that the most important thing for the future of France was simply to end the religious warfare. It just had to stop. Too many people were suffering and too much hate was being spread throughout the country.

Well, who or what was going to stop it? The *politiques* declared that there was only one institution in France that had the prestige and the authority to stop the killing, and that was the king. Now, you might ask, “Well, that sounds rather silly; of course the king can stop it and did he not do so?” France had a couple of pretty pathetic kings during this period. In fact, one, Charles IX, was only ten years old when he became king in 1560 and died in 1574. (St. Bartholomew’s Day, August 24, 1572) The next king was Henry III (1579-1589), who was not much better but was at least an adult.

The *politiques* argued that it was not just a person that was needed but a new kind of king. This one must be absolute in his power. He had to respect the laws of the land, but, other than that, he should have no restrictions on his power. He needed to have the right to jail people when he wished, to confiscate property, to impose armed force whenever he saw fit to do away with those who caused internal disorder. And the king needed these absolute powers to stop the killing and unite the country.

Henry IV of France

In 1589 the *politiques* got the kind of king they wanted. He was Henry IV and he just happened to be the heir to the throne when Henry III died in 1589. He had been

Henry of Navarre, the guy whose wedding had provided the excuse for the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre. Henry IV was a Huguenot. In fact, he was the leader of the Calvinist armies in the wars against the Catholics.

But Henry was also a practical politician. He may have been a Huguenot but he realized after a few years that he would never be able to pull the country together as a Huguenot. So, in 1594 he converted to Catholicism. When asked by a Huguenot friend why he had converted, he replied that, "Paris is worth a mass." But, to assure the Calvinists that he still had their interests at heart, in 1598 he issued what is called the Edict of Nantes, which gave substantial freedom—including the right to have their own army to protect their interests inside France—to the Huguenots.

Then he set out to rebuild France in the way the *politiques* wanted. He never called the estates general; he just ignored them. He employed members of the middle class in his government rather than the nobility to cut down on the nobility's prestige and power. He regarded the nobility justifiably as the source of a lot of the trouble during the religious wars. He added experts in law and finance to the central government so that he could have a much better command of local matters. And he sent royal officials to towns to oversee what mayors and town councils were

doing. In other words, he greatly strengthened the power of the central government, and by the way he did it he is considered the first absolute monarch.

Louis XIII and Cardinal Richelieu

Henry died, actually was assassinated, in 1610, and was succeeded by his son, Louis XIII, who was nine years old at the time. As you can probably guess, Louis was unable to continue the policies of his father because of his age and because of the bickering at court that picked up again now that Henry IV was dead, and a lot of his father's work came unstuck. In 1624, however, Louis XIII appointed as his chief minister a remarkable man who got the French government back on the road of Absolutism. This was Cardinal Richelieu, a cardinal in the Roman Catholic Church and a truly remarkable individual. In 1624 he identified three serious problems facing the French monarchy that he needed to deal with.

The first was a leftover from the Edict of Nantes. Richelieu really hated the provision of the Edict of Nantes that gave the Huguenots the right to have an army of their own to defend their religion. To Richelieu that meant that there was a large armed force in France over which the king had no power. Moreover, by having their own army and their own institutions to maintain it, the Huguenots would never consider themselves truly French. He did not want the Huguenots to become Catholic—that was never his intent—he just wanted them to become Frenchmen. The Huguenots refused to give up their right to have an army, so Richelieu simply declared war on them. By 1629, Richelieu had destroyed their independent political and military institutions. He disarmed their armies, tore down the walls of their towns, and left the Huguenots undefended, and then he invited them to be French again. He passed no restrictions on their freedom to practice their religion, but he would not tolerate a nation within a nation.

His second goal was to reduce the power of the nobility. Richelieu believed that the French religious wars of the late 16th century and the problems Louis XIII faced between 1610 and 1624 were caused mainly by noblemen who were too big for their britches. There was even a term for these people in France, the "overmighty subject," a subject of the king who possessed so much wealth and resources that he could actually challenge the power of the king. Richelieu set out to do something about these guys. He did so in many different ways, but the way that made the biggest impression on the nobles when he executed two members of the mightiest families in France.



His third goal was to raise the prestige of France in European politics, and we will talk about that next time. Richelieu was successful in achieving all of his objectives, but at some great cost to the French Treasury, which left his and Louis XIII's successors with some difficulties.

Richelieu died in 1643 and just a few weeks later the king who had relied on him for so much, Louis XIII, died as well. He was succeeded yet again by little boy, just five years old, who took the name Louis XIV. But as you know since we live in a state named after this guy, Louis XIV turned out to be not only a magnificent French king but the greatest absolute monarch of them all. But do not forget that the foundation he built upon was laid by Henry IV and Richelieu. It was Louis XIV whom the other European monarchs wanted to be like—and that meant, as we shall see, that the great monarchs of Continental Europe copied his methods. And that meant the spread of Absolutism.

Louis XIII of France (1610-1643) and his first minister, Cardinal Richelieu (d. 1643). Although Louis was the king, Richelieu was the de facto ruler of France through Louis' reign.





ON THE NIGHT BEFORE ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S DAY IN AUGUST OF 1572 (AUGUST 24, 1572), THE CATHOLIC QUEEN MOTHER AND ACTUAL RULER OF FRANCE, CATHERINE DE MEDICI, AUTHORIZED THE AMBUSH OF FRENCH CALVINIST LEADERS WHO HAD COME TO PARIS TO ATTEND THE WEDDING OF PRINCE HENRY OF NAVARRE, A PROTESTANT.

During the hours after midnight, unsuspecting Protestant leaders were awakened, dragged from their beds, and murdered. Soon all the targeted Protestants were eliminated, but the killing did not stop. Roving bands of Parisian Catholics seized the opportunity to slaughter any enemies they happened upon, Protestant or otherwise. By morning the River Seine was clogged with corpses and scores of bodies hung along the streets of Paris. This event is called the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre.

Had this sad incident been an isolated event it would hardly be worth mentioning, but in fact throughout the hundred years from roughly 1560 to about 1660 outbreaks of religious mayhem—with Protestants the ruthless killers in some cases, and Catholics in others—recurred in many parts of Europe. To make matters far worse, economic hardships and prolonged wars accompanied religious riots to result in a century of pronounced crisis for European civilization.

Economic, Political and Religious Factors

This period of strife came as something of a surprise to Europeans. For almost a century before 1560 most of Western Europe had enjoyed steady economic growth. Additionally, the discovery of the New World seemed to offer a future of even greater prosperity. The political future also appeared rosy. Most Western European governments were becoming more efficient, and efficient government should have provided citizens with both domestic peace and increased trade activity. Yet around 1560, thunderclouds were gathering in the skies that would soon burst upon the European scene.



Charles IX
In 1572, King Charles IX, probably under the influence of his mother, Catherine de Medici, oversaw the massacre of thousands of Huguenots (Protestants) from in and around Paris in what became known as the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre.

The Price Revolution

Although the causes of the this century of strife were interrelated, we can examine each separately. They began with an economic phenomenon called the Price Revolution. In the second half of the sixteenth century, the European economy was thrown into a growing upward price trend that was unlike any previous periods of inflation. The cost of a measure of wheat in Flanders, for example, tripled between 1550 and 1600. Grain prices in Paris quadrupled, and the overall cost of living in England more than doubled during the same period. Certainly the twentieth century has seen worse periods of inflation than this, but the skyrocketing of prices in the later sixteenth century was a novelty. But what caused this “Price Revolution”?

While experts might haggle over the details, there are two broad contributing factors that we should consider.

1. The first is demographic. As you may remember, much of Europe’s population had been wiped out during the plagues that swept the continent in the 14th and early 15th centuries. Starting in the mid-fifteenth century, Europe’s population began to grow again: there were roughly 50 million people in Europe around 1450 and some 90 million around 1600. But, because there was no real advancement in agricultural technology during the period, Europe’s food supply remained more or less constant. Thus, as the demand for food increased, so did food prices. So the cost of living during the period became increasingly burdensome for Europeans.
2. Population trends explain a lot, but they don’t complete the picture. Europe’s population growth slowed after about 1550, yet prices continued to rise. The second piece of the puzzle has to do with silver. Around 1560 the Spanish began exporting vast amounts of silver from Mexico and Peru. In the five years from 1556 to 1560 roughly 10 million ducats worth of silver entered Spain from the New World. Between 1576 and 1580 that figure had doubled, and between 1591 and 1595 it had more than quadrupled. From Spain, this silver quickly spread all over Europe. Spain spent the money to pay off foreign creditors, to pay her soldiers, and to purchase luxury goods. Merchants in countries like the Netherlands became very rich from trade with Spain. This dramatic increase in the amount of silver in circulation further fueled the spiral of rising prices.

Aggressive merchants, manufacturers and landlords profited the most from the changed economic circumstances. The masses of laboring people were hurt the worst. Obviously, merchants in possession of sought-after goods were able to raise prices at will, and landlords could profit directly from the rising prices of agricultural produce. But laborers in country and town were caught in a squeeze because:

1. wages rose far more slowly than prices, and,
2. the steady growth of population guaranteed a surplus labor supply.

3. Poor people had to spend more and more of their low incomes on necessities. In normal years they barely managed to survive, but when disasters such as wars or poor harvests drove grain prices out of reach, some of the poor literally starved to death. So, the picture that emerges is one of the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer.

In addition to these direct economic effects, the inflation of the later sixteenth century had significant political effects as well. Governments were also caught up in the inflation squeeze. In order to function in a period of very high prices rulers had to increase their revenues. In short, rulers had to increase taxes. As we shall see, this was also a period of frequent warfare and wars are always very expensive. The only recourse, then, was for European rulers to squeeze their subjects for every penny of taxes they could get. Such measures incurred great resentment—especially among the bourgeoisie who had most of the real money in the 16th century economy, and thus paid most of the taxes. So, governments faced continuous threats of defiance from a class that had generally support a strong government.

The Price Revolution was followed by a period of economic stagnation. When population growth began to ease and the flood of silver from America slowed around 1600, prices soon leveled off. But the economic damage had already been done. The aristocrats were usually able to survive these hard times, but the middle-class and poor got no relief. Indeed, the lot of the poor in many places worsened because the mid-seventeenth century saw some particularly expensive and destructive wars. Helpless civilians might be plundered by over-enthusiastic tax collectors or soldiers, or sometimes both.

It goes without saying that most people would have been far better off had there been fewer wars during Europe’s “Iron Century,” but religious rivalries made wars inevitable. Simply stated, most Catholics and Protestants viewed each other as minions of Satan who could not be allowed to live. Europeans firmly believed that a diversity of faiths within the same country would eventually plunge the nation headlong into chaos. Rulers as well as their subjects firmly believed that only one religion could exist within one realm. The religion of the king should be the religion of all of his people. So it made sense for a ruler to impose religious conformity within his domain. But to force conformity was to risk civil war, and civil wars had a nasty tendency to become international wars when one or more foreign powers decided to come to the aid of religious allies.

A Half Century of Religious Wars

The greatest upheavals in Europe during this age were caused by war. The greatest single cause of warfare was religious rivalry. The religious warfare began in the 1540s

when Charles V tried to reestablish Catholic unity in Germany by launching a military campaign against German Lutheran princes. But Charles had other fish to fry, and other wars to wage, so he reached a compromise with Lutherans in Germany in 1555. In that year he signed the Peace of Augsburg. The peace rested on the principle of *cuius regio, eius religio* (“as the ruler, so the religion”). This meant that in those principalities where Lutheran princes ruled, Lutheranism would be the sole state religion. Where Catholic princes ruled, the territory would be Catholic. The Peace of Augsburg was a historical milestone because Catholic rulers for the first time acknowledged the legality of Protestantism. But it also created a dangerous precedent. Henceforth princes would be even less likely to tolerate religious diversity within their borders.

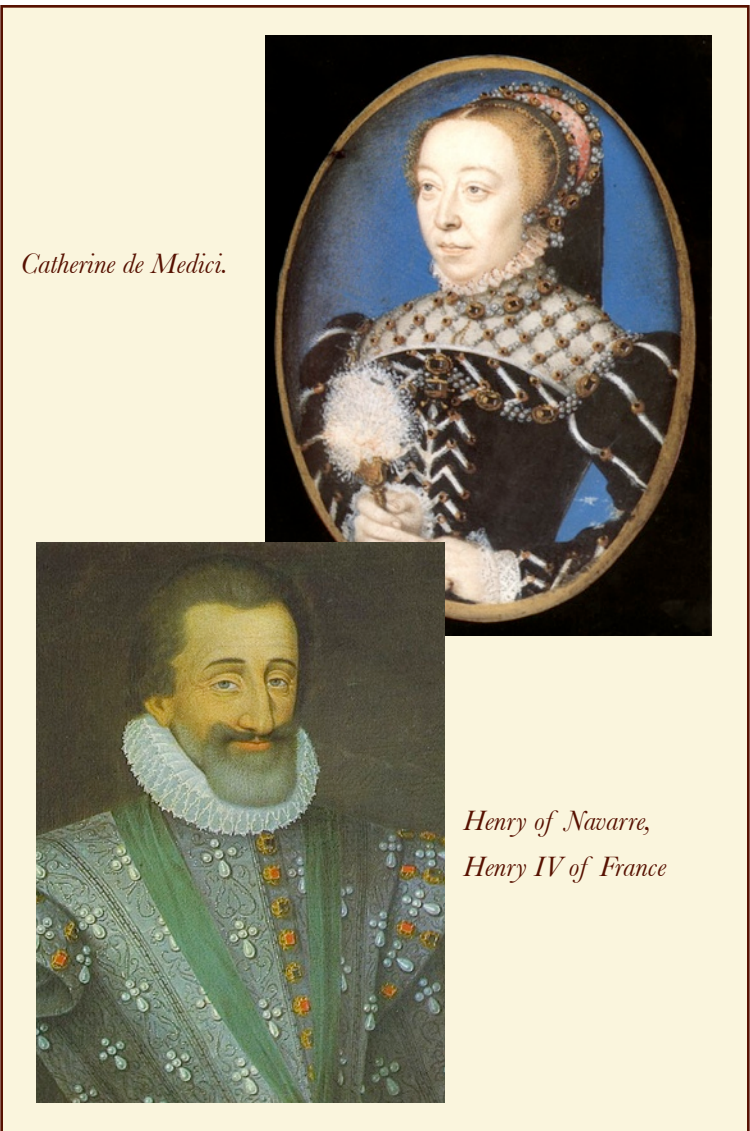
Since Geneva bordered on France, since Calvin himself was a Frenchman who longed to convert his mother country, and since Calvinists had no wish to displace German Lutherans, the next act in the tragedy of Europe’s religious warfare was played out on French soil. Calvinist missionaries had already made many converts in France in the years between Calvin’s rise to power in Geneva in 1541 and the outbreak of religious warfare in 1562. By 1562 Calvinists comprised between 10 and 20 percent of France’s population of roughly 16 million, and their numbers were swelling every day.

Since both Catholics and Protestants assumed that France could have only one *roi, foi, and loi* (king, faith, and law), civil war was inevitable. The struggle for supremacy began as a political conflict between Catholic and Calvinist aristocrats. But, in 1562 this political struggle became violent. Soon all France was aflame. Rampaging mobs ransacked churches and settled local scores. After a while it became clear that the Huguenots were neither strong enough or numerous enough to gain victory, but they were too strong to be defeated. Warfare continued until 1572. Then, as we have seen, on St. Bartholomew’s Day, Catherine de Medici saw to it that most of the Huguenot leaders were murdered and two to three thousand other Protestants were slaughtered in the streets of Paris. When word of the massacre spread, some ten thousand more Huguenots were killed in a frenzy of blood lust that swept through France.

In 1589 the Protestant Prince Henry of Navarre became King Henry IV (1589-1610). In 1593 he converted to Roman Catholicism (“Paris is worth a Mass”). In 1598, he issued the Edict of Nantes which offered limited religious freedom to the Huguenots. Although the Edict of Nantes did not give Huguenots absolute freedom of worship, it did offer them some

degree of toleration and some degree of safety from the Catholic majority. With religious peace established, France quickly began to recover from decades of devastation. Henry IV was not so fortunate. In 1610 he was assassinated by a Catholic fanatic.

While religious warfare raged in France, Catholics and Protestants engaged in equally bitter religious strife in the Netherlands. There national resentments compounded religious hatreds. For almost a century the Netherlands (or Low Countries), which make up modern-day Holland and Belgium, had been ruled by the Habsburg family. The Netherlands prospered from trade. In fact, the Netherlands had the greatest per capita wealth of all Europe, and their city of Antwerp was the leading commercial and financial center in northern Europe. Moreover, the half-century-long rule of the Habsburg Charles V (1506-1556) had been



Catherine de Medici.

*Henry of Navarre,
Henry IV of France*

popular because Charles, who had been born in Belgium, felt a sense of rapport with his subjects, and allowed them a large degree of local self-government and even religious toleration.

But in 1556 Charles V retired to a monastery and he ceded not only the Netherlands, but Spain, Spanish America, and close to half of Italy, to his son Philip II (1556-1598). Unlike Charles, Philip had been born in Spain, and he made Spain his residence and the focus of his policy. He viewed the Netherlands primarily as a rich source of income that he could use to pursue Spanish interests. Philip taxed the Netherlands heavily, and was resented by Dutch leaders. To make matters worse, the Netherlands were a hotbed of Calvinist Protestantism. There were more Calvinists in Antwerp than in Geneva. This was a situation that Philip II could not tolerate. Philip was an ardent Catholic—really a zealot—who subscribed wholeheartedly to the goals of the Counter-Reformation. He was dedicated to wiping out Protestantism all over Europe.

The situation in the Netherlands was far more complex than just a religious crisis. The leader of resistance to Philip, William the Silent, was at first not a Calvinist but a Catholic, and the territories that ultimately succeeded in breaking away from Spanish rule were at first the most Catholic ones in the Low Countries. William the Silent was a prominent nobleman with large landholdings in the Netherlands. In 1566, he and other local Catholic nobles appealed to Philip to allow toleration for Protestants. Philip II decided to dispatch an army of ten thousand to wipe out Protestantism in the Low Countries forever. The Spanish commander, the Duke of Alva triumphed, and set up a tribunal, called the “Council of Blood,” which examined some twelve thousand people on charges of heresy or sedition. Thousands of Protestants were executed. William the Silent fled the country, and all hope for a free Netherlands seemed lost.

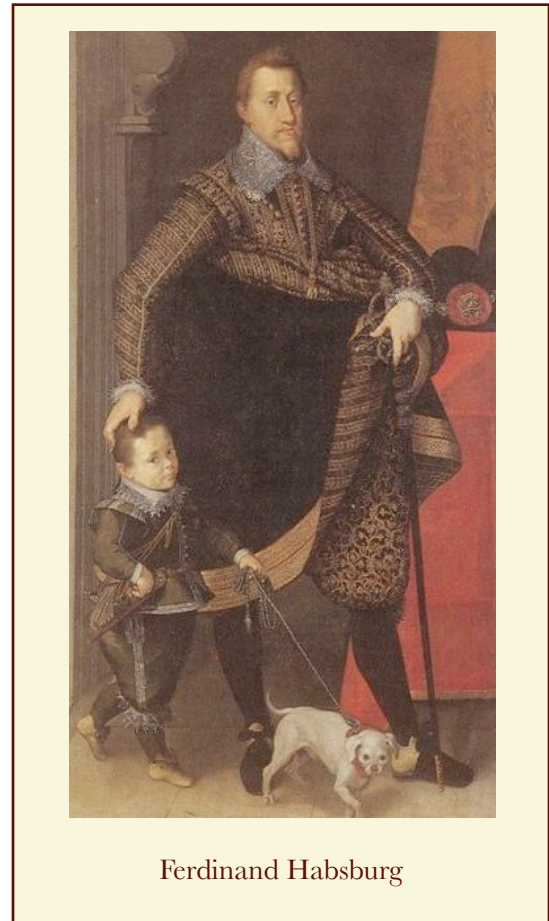
Although the Spanish won the first round, the rebels triumphed. William the Silent converted to Protestantism and sought help from Protestants in France, Germany, and England. He also organized bands of sea rovers to harass Spanish shipping. Additionally, Spanish tyranny helped William’s cause, especially when the hated Spanish governor attempted to levy a 10 percent sales tax. With internal disaffection growing, in 1572 William was able to seize the northern Netherlands even though the north until then had been predominantly Catholic. War continued between Spain and the Netherlands until the Spanish finally agreed to a truce in 1609. Since the Spanish ceased hostilities, the independence of the northern Dutch Republic was assured. Meanwhile, the northern Low Lands (Holland), which had

been Catholic, had converted to Calvinism in reaction to Spanish tyranny, war and persecution. The south (Belgium), which remained Spanish, returned to uniform Catholicism.

The Thirty Years’ War

The origins are tough to understand. The struggle began in a place called Bohemia, which is now the Czech Republic and then was a part of the Habsburg Monarchy. By 1600 Bohemia was mostly Catholic but had a large Calvinist minority, and a number of its nobles were Calvinist. However, the Habsburg family was Catholic and, since Charles V, had been the leader of the Catholic faction in the Holy Roman Empire. But in 1609 the emperor at the time, Rudolph II, granted to the Bohemian estates what was called the *Letter of Majesty* which guaranteed freedom of worship and some civil and political rights for Bohemian Calvinists.

But in 1617 there was a different Habsburg Emperor, Ferdinand II, and Ferdinand II declared that he would not honor certain provisions of the *Letter of Majesty*. He declared that from now on all of the senior positions in Bohemia would be held by Catholics and that certain Catholic church



Ferdinand Habsburg

lands that the Protestants had acquired had to be returned to the Catholic Church.

The Calvinists in Bohemia (and even some Catholics) were infuriated. When, in 1618, representatives from Ferdinand II showed up at the meeting of the Bohemian Estates in the capital city of Prague, the Calvinist members, who dominated the Estates, tossed them out of the window of the palace (Defenestration of Prague). They then declared that Ferdinand II was no longer the ruler of Bohemia and asked a Calvinist prince in Germany, a guy named Frederick of the Palatinate, to be king. Frederick happily accepted and headed for Bohemia. So the crisis in Bohemia, which began as a religious struggle, now assumed a constitutional dimension as well.

Ferdinand was not going to cave in to a bunch of Calvinists. In 1620, Ferdinand became the Holy Roman Emperor in addition to being the Habsburg emperor. He decided he would use his new German Catholic princes to revenge the insult that he had received from Bohemia. He would not only would he go to war against the Bohemian Estates, but he would go to war against Frederick's state in western Germany as well in order to punish Frederick for supporting what he regarded as his rebellious subjects. As you can probably guess, the Protestant princes of Germany, Lutheran and Calvinist, became worried that they would also be attacked, so they formed an alliance to defend themselves. What started as a religious/constitutional crisis in Habsburg lands, now became a German war, with Protestants on the one side and Catholics on the other.

By 1625 the Catholics had won. Ferdinand had retaken Bohemia and taken serious measures against the Bohemian Calvinist nobility, and the German Catholic armies had driven Frederick from his lands in the Palatinate. The other Protestant princes were worried that, if Ferdinand could drive one Protestant prince from his lands, he might be interested in driving them from their lands as well.

In 1625 the King of Denmark, Christian, who was Lutheran and deeply worried about the Protestantism being threatened by defeat in Germany, decided to enter the war on the side of the Protestants. From 1625 Denmark and the Protestant German princes fought against Ferdinand and the Catholic princes, and by 1629 Ferdinand's armies had conquered virtually all of Germany. It was the first time since the reign of Charles V that the Habsburgs had the chance to impose Catholicism back on Germany.

But Ferdinand did not have a chance to do it because the King of Sweden, Gustavus Adolphus, who was another Lutheran and fearful of Protestant defeat in Germany, entered the war on the side of the Protestants. Gustavus

Adolphus was a lot different than Christian of Denmark. Gustav was a military commander of the first order and he had an army that was efficient and highly trained.

And to help him out, Cardinal Richelieu joined the war on his side. Now, you might be saying, "But Richelieu was a Cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church; there would be no way that he would join the war on the side of the Protestants." Wrong-o. Richelieu was intent on restoring French prestige in Europe, and he figured out that the only way to do that was to decrease the prestige of the Habsburgs; religion did not matter. So, he joined the war by supporting Sweden.

The Swedes, helped by the French, defeated the Catholic armies but not decisively. The war simply continued from 1630 to 1648 with ever increasing destruction, chaos, and slaughter. It finally ended with the Peace of Westphalia, which in many ways simply put everything back to where it was in Germany. The only real change that took place was that Calvinism was now a legal religion in the Holy Roman Empire.

The Thirty Years War turned out to be enormously destructive for Germany. Some scholars guess that up to 30% of the population was killed off in the war, mostly by killings by out-of-control military bands or by the disease that soldiers carried with them from place to place. Some scholars have argued that Germany did not recover economically or demographically from this war until the 19th century.

The Fronde

The third major 17th century crisis occurred in France, and it is called the Fronde. This one's origins were constitutional and economic.

In 1643 both Louis XIII and Richelieu died (we'll talk more about these two in the next lecture), and the new king, Louis XIV, was only five years old. He also had an influential minister who was also a Catholic cardinal, named Mazarin. Mazarin's greatest problem was financial. The French involvement in the Thirty Years War had just about bankrupted the French government, and Mazarin decided that he had to come up with some way of raising taxes and using financial gimmicks to escape bankruptcy.

But the measures he came up with alienated the middle classes—the merchants and manufacturers—and they rose in revolt. And here was where the constitutional issue came in because a number of nobles joined the revolt because they wanted to regain the power that they had lost under Absolutism. This was the Fronde. It lasted from 1648 to 1653 and turned into a civil war. But the sides were never strictly drawn

Louis XIV
(below) came to
the French throne
at the age of five.



His chief advisor
was Cardinal
Mazarin (above).

Nobles and towns fought against the government and then they would join the government to fight against other towns and nobles. Mazarin himself twice had to flee the country and twice was called back to save it. Finally in 1653 it all came to an end when everyone decided they did not want to do this anymore. It was as if they all said, “All we are doing is hurting each other and damaging the country; even Mazarin is better than that, so let’s let him run the country.” And that is what happened. Louis XIV remained king and Mazarin remained his chief minister until Mazarin died in 1660.

There was a third major crisis during the 17th century, a series of revolutions in England, that we will cover in separate lectures.

Results of the Crises

In Germany massive death and destruction prevailed, and, when it was all over, things seemed to be pretty much as they were before it happened. In France, nobles take advantage of middle-class unrest to try to undo Absolutism and restore their influence. They could not really agree on what kind of government might be better and so Absolutism was restored because that is better government than none at all. But, there were a few things that were different.

Let’s start with the religious troubles. After the 17th-century crisis, there is a general feeling that religion—that is Protestantism and its variations and Catholicism—is no longer worth killing for. That does not mean that it is unimportant, it is just not something people should kill for. So, the differences in Christianity lose a little of their importance. There is more the feeling that maybe we should let people worship as they choose rather than try to force them to worship as we do.

As to the constitutional case, there is a sense that countries will be better off if nobles and monarchs cooperate rather than resist each other. Monarchs become in Europe the most important part of government—the golden age of kings is about to begin—but these kings use the nobles to exercise their rule. Instead of resisting the monarch, the nobles became the monarch’s army officers, bureaucrats, advisers, and governors, and, as those officers, maintained their influence in government and society. In order to fulfill their new duties as servants of the ruler, noblemen need to be educated and trained at something other than war, so the nobility becomes a more intellectual class than it has been in the past.

As to the economy, after 1655 the European economy began to expand again, and, as part of that expansion, began to create the institutions that would lead soon to the Industrial Revolution. That meant more sophisticated banking, greater overseas trade, expansion of limited liability laws, and other devices that allow for greater investment. The European economy was laying the groundwork for expansion in the 18th century and explosion in the 19th.

Louis XIV



TODAY WE ARE GOING TO LOOK AT THE CAREER OF THE GREATEST ABSOLUTE MONARCH OF THEM ALL, THE KING WHO *DEFINED* ABSOLUTE MONARCHY — LOUIS XIV.

Louis XIV became king of France in 1643 at the age of five at the death of his father and right when Richelieu died as well. He was clearly too young to rule, so government was taken over by his mother and her favorite, Cardinal Mazarin, a cardinal in the cast of Richelieu but a layman. Mazarin was the fellow who fell into the Fronde, but he came out of it in pretty good shape and ruled in the name of Louis XIV until his death in 1661. But do not get the idea that Louis did nothing between 1643 and 1661 when he was without power. He learned a lot. He experienced the Fronde, and learned from that experience that the most important function of government is to preserve order in the country. And to keep order, one must control those most likely to cause disorder—in the case of France, the nobility.

He also learned as a king without power that people respect kings with power. That was true both within the country and outside it. Spain assisted the rebels in the Fronde because they did not respect Louis's power to stop them from doing it. If he had the power, Louis XIV believed, Spain would not have intervened.

In 1661 Mazarin died, and Louis XIV announced that he would be his own chief minister. He would rule, as well as reign, and he decided to put into place those measures he believed necessary to solidify his power. The first thing he did was to create an instrument that would preserve order inside France and protect it from threats from the outside: the army.

Between the end of the Middle Ages and the 17th century, armies in Europe had been private operations. When gunpowder became common, armies of knights gave way to armies of commoners armed with weapons like guns and pikes. Pretty soon kings began to hire people called colonels to raise armies for them when they needed them. The king paid the colonels, and he recruited men, payed them, led them, and then disband them when they were no longer needed. With these men there were no uniforms, no common weapons—the men brought their own—and no supply system.



Warfare in the early 17th century was a come as you are and bring your own stuff affair. Colonels were paid by rulers to hire soldiers and make an army. Armies were poorly-trained, ill-disciplined bodies of men who went where they were paid to go, then became a nuisance when the campaign was over and they marauded their way home. Louis XIV changed all that.

As you can guess, this made for a pretty dangerous military environment. Often a colonel would get money from the king to raise a regiment, keep half of the money, pay the men with half of the money, and then get rid of them when the money ran out. But the men did not just go home. They would wander the countryside stealing, pillaging, and murdering. And they were heavily armed so there was no one to stop them. This is especially what the Thirty Years War was like.

Louis determined to put an end to this kind of army. First, he put soldiers into uniforms. He established recruiting standards that would bring only healthy men into the ranks. Then he gave them training and provided barracks for them to live in so that they would not live among the people. He introduced harsh discipline, and he fed them and equipped them with standard issue weapons. He also went to work on the colonels. He did not get rid of the colonels, but he made certain they followed regulations and had a clear understanding of whose orders they were to follow. He also created standing units like engineers, artillerymen, and supply officers. Under Louis XIV the French army became the best in Europe. When he took power in 1661 the French army was a force of 100,000 poorly disciplined, disorderly soldiers. When he died in 1715 it numbered 400,000 well-equipped, highly disciplined troops.

Creating a National Economy

This is all well and good, but, as you can see, to create a large, well-disciplined, well-supplied army in place of a small rabble of thieves takes money. And that means taxes, and that means a large and efficient bureaucracy that can not only collect but disburse those taxes.

But raising taxes was not all that easy. The Estates-General, the national meeting of the estates and the equivalent of England's Parliament, had not been called for years, but many provinces had their own local estates which had control of taxes. But the most serious opponents Louis had to raising taxes were institutions called the *parlements*, which were not like Parliament in England but local law courts that watched over the laws of France. And they told Louis that he could not raise taxes without their permission; that was the law of France. Likewise, many French towns and cities had substantial rights and privileges that the kings were not to infringe upon either.

Louis decided to change all that. He never called the Estates General; he told the local *parlements* to accept orders no matter what; and he sent his own officials to run the cities and towns and told the local officials that their offices would now be honorary only. The capstone of his

administrative reform was a new official called the *Intendant*, who governed a province. Their job was to make sure that recruits and taxes flowed in for the army and that justice was maintained in the provinces. If the *Intendant* thought that justice was not being done, he was to step in and do it himself.

After these measures, taxes were collected much more efficiently, but expenses were also a lot higher. There was one problem with Louis's system, and that was that the nobility did not pay their fair share of taxes. This went back to the medieval practice that a nobleman served the king with his strong right arm and did not have to pay taxes in addition. Of course, the nobles were not providing military service much anymore and so should pay taxes, but they sure did not want to.

Louis decided to avoid this fight this time, and he sought to raise revenues by other means. One was good—the kind of thing we do, or should do—economic development. He abolished internal tariffs to encourage trade, built canals and roads, made certain that French goods were of high quality and fair price. He gave tax exemptions, subsidies, and other privileges to encourage manufacturing. He built up the navy to protect French commerce abroad and searched for colonies—one of which was Louisiana.

The other way he decided to raise funds was not quite so admirable. He decided to sell offices. He sold government jobs, judgeships, and even commissions in the army and navy. Sometimes he would sell people certain privileges, then revoke them, and then sell them back to the same people.

La Gloire

These measures strengthened France considerably, but Louis knew that he would not be a great king unless the powers outside France recognized him as such. For him, it was important that a king seek glory—“*la gloire*”—because that is what it meant to be a great king.

A great king seeks glory by making war, and Louis fought wars. Between 1661 and his death in 1715, a period of 54 years, he was at war for 35 of them, or 65% of his reign. Louis did not lead his armies into battle, but he enjoyed the spectacle of war. These wars were not known for their great battles but were usually wars of position where armies tried to outmaneuver one another. And the great feature of these wars was the besieging of fortresses. When fortresses were besieged not terribly far from Paris, say in Belgium, Louis would take his entire court—ladies, gentlemen, mistresses, servants, wine cellars, and entertainers—and go and watch. If the fortress fell while

he was present, he would bask in even greater glory, and commanders tried to take fortresses when he was present.

Louis may have fought wars for glory, but the countries that fought against him fought from fear. He fought against England, Holland, Austria, Spain, and various German states, and they were all scared to death of him. In fact, the last of his wars, which was also the largest and lasted the longest, the War of the Spanish Succession, was a world war. It was fought not only on the European continent but also in North America and on the high seas. In this war Louis had virtually all of Europe against him, but he was still able to hold his own.

The Glory of Spectacle

Louis established his power at home by creating a strong government to enforce his wishes, and he established his power abroad by making war. But Louis also knew that there was another method a king must employ to enhance his power, and that was spectacle. One of his most prominent ministers (Colbert) said on one occasion that, if a king does not win wars, he should at least build great buildings. And Louis built great buildings, the most spectacular being his magnificent palace at Versailles, which is often considered the greatest palace built by any king. It is

located a few miles west of Paris, and it is enormous in size, with polished mirrors, gleaming chandeliers, magnificent rugs, and spectacular furniture. It has a huge formal garden with waterworks all over the place and at the bottom of the park is a lake large enough for mock naval battles.

But there was as usual more method than madness in what Louis was doing. He wanted a building so magnificent that it would simply overawe anyone who came to see it. The nobles who came would know that they could never build anything so grand, and so would be persuaded that the king truly was the most powerful man in France. And the location was calculated as well. Remember that story about Louis during the Fronde—the people walking through his bedroom? He wanted his palace outside Paris, away, as he said, from “the stinking common people.” But he also wanted to be away from the mob; he did not want to give the Parisians a chance to march through his bedroom again.

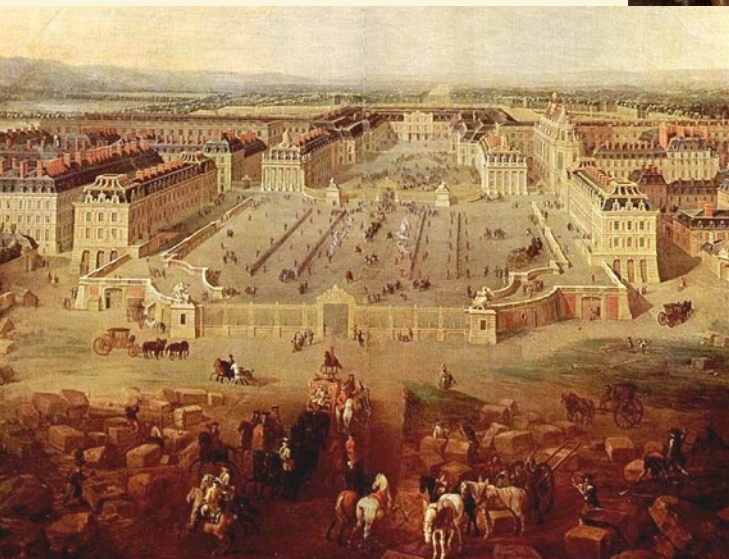
Control of the Nobility

The purpose of this incredible structure was to serve as a stage upon which Louis could daily act out the role of being a king. From the time he arose in the morning to the time he was tucked in at night, Louis was on stage. Just

Louis was on stage all day, every Day. He devoted his life to spectacle and “la gloire.” He is shown at right presiding over a “Classical picnic” with his family, and attended by a few hundred members of his court.



The stage upon which Louis’ life was acted out was his magnificent palace, Versailles Palace (left) is enormous. It housed the royal family and over 3,000 courtiers. Its gardens contained a man made lake upon which mock naval battles were fought.





Louis XIV in military attire

getting out of bed and putting on his dressing gown were acts of great ceremonial significance. Getting up required the entry of six different sets of people at various times. Functions at dressing were so carefully staged that one official was in charge of holding just the right sleeve of Louis's dressing gown when he put it on in the morning.

You might think that this must be the ultimate in vanity, a man surrounding himself with all of these people, demanding to be waited on hand and foot for much of the day. There were noblemen who dressed the king several times a day, who saw to his bath needs.

But, as always there was method in Louis's apparent madness. He knew that, if a man were standing next to him helping him on with his dressing gown, that same man was not out in the countryside stirring up rebellion. He deeply distrusted the French noblemen, and he wanted to make certain that they hung around him so that he could see what they were up to.

Now, you might say that you can certainly understand why the king would create spectacle, but you might also be

wondering why French noblemen would put up with it. Why would a French nobleman try to get a position of holding the king's dressing gown? Why would he stoop to waiting on someone, even a king, at that low a level?

The reason was that that was the time one asked the king for favors. Let's say that you needed a government position or a commission in the army, or a favor for a younger son or a nephew or the son of a good friend. A way to get that post was to ask the king for it. But the king was not really interested in reading petitions or letters from his noblemen; he wanted to be asked in person. At every stage in the elaborate ceremony surrounding the king, there was an opportunity to ask a favor. In fact, asking favors was so common, that there were specific times during, say, dressing in the morning, when people could ask for favors, and, at that time, the others turned away and pretended not to listen.

Louis wanted to make certain that the great men of France would ask for those favors. If they were whispering in his ear, they were not home plotting rebellion. He would grant some favors and not others. And the worst thing he could say about a supplicant was "I do not know that man." In other words, the person for whom the favor was asked had better hang around Versailles more. Louis wanted to see him in the crowd. That way, he would know the guy was not out somewhere causing trouble.

Louis is the greatest of the absolute monarchs; he set the standard. Kings and queens all over Europe copied the things he did from reforming their armies to creating magnificent palaces. They tried to limit the power of the nobility, of the estates, of separate law courts, and of the church. They tried to make their governments more efficient and their economies much better. They fought wars, in some cases for glory, in some for conquest, and in some to protect themselves from Louis XIV.

But Louis was even more of a contributor to western civilization than just as the quintessential absolute monarch. He accelerated the process of the growing power of the state. From now until perhaps the last part of the 20th century, growing power of the central government continues.

And the second thing he did was make French the language of civilized people in Europe. From now until after the end of the Second World War, French was considered the language of culture and of diplomacy and international affairs. Anyone who is anyone from now on can speak French—not Latin anymore, but French. French replaced Latin as the language of the cultured, and it would remain so until it in its turn is replaced by English in our own time.



The English Model (I)

WE HAVE BEEN TALKING A LOT ABOUT FRANCE FOR THE LAST FEW DAYS. TODAY I WANT TO TURN OUR ATTENTION TO ENGLAND. I HOPE TO ARGUE OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS THAT, WHILE FRANCE WAS PERFECTING ABSOLUTISM AS A GOVERNING PRINCIPLE, ENGLISH GOVERNMENT WAS GOING IN A VERY DIFFERENT DIRECTION — ONE THAT IN THE LONG RUN WOULD BE MORE IMPORTANT. WHY THE DIFFERENT DEVELOPMENTS? MAYBE THAT IS WHERE WE SHOULD START.

In the second half of the sixteenth century, changes in military organization, weapons, and tactics sharply increased the cost of warfare. At the same time, European power politics and religious struggles almost guaranteed that the great nations of Europe would be continuously involved in costly wars. Additionally, the cost of governing rose as the size of national bureaucracies increased, and as rulers felt the need to enhance their prestige by living increasingly more lavish lifestyles. Traditional sources of revenue were inadequate to finance these growing costs, so monarchs were forced to seek new sources of income. From the point of view of rulers of the period, the best way to achieve the necessary income to support the policies of the state was to rest all national power in the hands of the Crown—to achieve Absolutist government .

Only monarchies that succeeded in building a secure financial base that was not dependent on the support of the nobility or legislative assemblies achieved absolute rule. As we will see over the next few lectures, the French monarchy succeeded in this effort by the mid-seventeenth century. On the other hand, the English monarchy failed. England's failure and France's success produced two very different models of government—absolutism in France and parliamentary monarchy in England. These two models are very important because they shaped subsequent political development in Europe. It is important to note that at the beginning of the seventeenth century these outcomes were not already apparent. As we will see, rulers in both France and England desired absolute power, but certain factors came into play that promoted absolutist rule in France, and hindered it in England. Let's take a moment to examine them.

Political Factors

In their pursuit of an revenues, English rulers of the seventeenth century threatened the nobility, landowners, and merchants. These politically active groups were able to invoke traditional English liberties in their defense. The English elite protected their interests against the growth of royal power. They were ultimately able to make the king accept them as partners. The experience of Louis XIV, the French king, was different. During the second half of the seventeenth century, he was able to make the French nobility dependent upon his goodwill and patronage. But even the French king's dominance was not entirely complete. He was still forced, to some extent, to share power with national and local interests.

Religious Factors

Religious factors also affected the political destinies of England and France. A powerful group of Calvinist Protestants called Puritans arose in England and actively opposed the Stuart monarchy. Louis XIV had little religious conflict in France because he crushed the French Protestants. He was generally supported in these efforts by Roman Catholics.

Traditional Institutions

There were also major institutional differences between the two countries. The English Parliament had traditionally been a power in English politics. It had not met regularly before the 17th century, and was not yet the powerful legislative institution it would become. But, it was a traditional institution of government in England. Parliament was there and expected to be consulted from time to time. You may remember that, during the English Reformation, Tudor monarchs called upon Parliaments to implement their religious reforms. Now, no Parliament ever told a Tudor monarch, “No! Sorry! We don’t think that we will pass your law!” Since the thirteenth century, Parliaments were summoned and met in order to advise and ultimately confirm the policies of the king. Nevertheless, the Parliament gave a stamp of popular legitimacy to the ruler’s policies, and over time members of Parliament could claim a sort of legitimate legislative political power based on traditional use. The English had a legal and political tradition based on concepts of liberty. The tradition of English liberties provided Parliamentary leaders with a rallying cry in their struggles with the Crown.

France lacked a similarly strong tradition of broad liberties, representation, and bargaining between the monarch and his subjects. Consequently, political interests that might wish to oppose the monarchy lacked both an institutional base from which to operate and a tradition of meetings during which the necessary political skills might have been developed.

Personalities

Finally, personalities played an important role. During the first half of the century, France profited from the guidance of two of its most able statesmen, Cardinals Richelieu and Mazarin. Mazarin trained Louis XIV to be a hard-working, if not always wise, monarch. Louis drew strong and capable ministers about himself. As we will see, the Stuart monarchs of England, on the other hand, had trouble simply making people trust them. They offended significant groups of their subjects. In a nation that saw itself as strongly Protestant, and increasingly Calvinist,

they were suspected of Catholic sympathies. Important segments of the British upper classes came to distrust the Stuart monarchs. They came to see the Stuarts as threats to their liberty, their property and their religious faith. The Growing power of Parliament was the result of the efforts of the English landed classes to protect what they saw as their rights as Englishmen.

Developments of England and France in the seventeenth century would have surprised many people in 1600. It was not inevitable that the English monarchy would become dependent on Parliament. Nor was it a given that French rulers would be able to achieve absolute monarchy.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the English monarchy was strong. Queen Elizabeth, after a reign of almost forty-five years, was loved, and the monarchy respected and obeyed. Parliament met only when called, and gave financial support to the English Crown. France, on the other hand, was emerging from the turmoil of its religious wars. The monarchy was relatively weak. The French nobles had significant military forces at their disposal and were not afraid to use their power to confront the king. These conditions would change dramatically in both nations by the late seventeenth century.

Today and next time we will look at the development of government in Stuart England and the constitutional and religious crises that toppled not one, but two Stuart kings. Then we will examine the constitutional settlement that grew out of 40 years of political struggles.

The Stuart Succession

As we have already seen, the Tudor family had successfully ruled England since the late 1400s. They had managed to centralize royal power over both the English Church and state by their own shrewd policies, and by using Parliament to gain a consensus for their policies. The last Tudor ruler, Elizabeth I was loved and obeyed. Her religious policy had made it possible for various stripes of Christians to worship as Anglicans. This happy combination of experience and circumstance came to an end when Queen Elizabeth — the last of the Tudors — died in 1603. The English crown passed to her cousin, James Stuart, King James VI of Scotland who became James I of England.



King James I of England and VI of Scotland

James I

James had a difficult situation. Elizabeth had been very popular and was totally identified with the nation. James was not well known, would never be popular, and, as a Scot, was an outsider. He inherited not only the crown but also a large royal debt and a fiercely divided church. Elizabeth had been able to keep English Puritans quiet because of her popularity. But James was an unloved stranger. The new ruler strongly advocated the divine right of kings, a subject on which he had even written a book — *A Trew Law of Free Monarchies* — in 1598. He expected to rule with a minimum of consultation beyond his own royal court.

In some ways, James seemed well-qualified for his new responsibilities. He had managed to restore royal power in Scotland without provoking a major rebellion and without using undue force. He was better educated than most kings and was among the more acute political theorists of his day.

He was a peace-loving man who bent his efforts towards preventing war in Europe.

These very virtues, however, contributed to his undoing. His success in Scotland made him overconfident and arrogant. His love of political theory and scholarly debate annoyed his English subjects. James never tired of lecturing Parliament about his powers in terms that seemed extreme to his English subjects. He was equally careless in lecturing his subjects on theology and church organization. His learning and lack of tact led one Continental statesman to refer to him as “the wisest fool in Christendom.” To make matters worse, James was a foreigner who spoke English with an accent and who often chose incompetent Scottish friends over Englishmen for high offices.

James quickly managed to anger many of his new subjects, but he did not wholly alienate them. Parliament met only when the monarch summoned it, which James hoped to do rarely. Its chief business was to grant money to the Crown. The real value of these revenues, however, had been falling during the past half century. So, James developed other sources of income. These new revenues were generally legally acquired, but Members of Parliament saw them as an affront to their authority over the royal purse. They did not seek a confrontation though.

English Catholics didn't like James either. They had hoped that after Elizabeth died they might get a ruler who would either be Catholic and reconvert England, or might extend civil rights to Catholics. James was not Catholic, and viewed Catholics as dangerous, especially since English Catholics kept trying to kill him. In 1603, a Catholic plot to kill the new monarch, the Bye Plot, was a conspiracy by English Catholics to kidnap James and force him to repeal anti-Catholic legislation. The plot was revealed and several Catholics were hanged. In 1605, a group of English Catholics tried to blow up the Parliament. They stockpiled 1,800 pounds of gunpowder in a cellar under the Parliament building and planned to ignite it during the 1605 opening of Parliament when the king addressed both houses. After the explosion, they planned to lead a rebellion to create a Catholic state. This plot failed, and the conspirators were arrested, tortured, tried and executed for treason. Even stricter laws against English Catholics were passed by Parliament in reaction to the Gunpowder Plot.

Neither was James liked by English Calvinists. The Puritan religious problem festered under James. Puritans had hoped that James's experience with the Scottish Presbyterian church and his own Protestant upbringing would incline him to favor their efforts to reform the English church. Since the days of Elizabeth, they had sought to eliminate elaborate religious ceremonies and

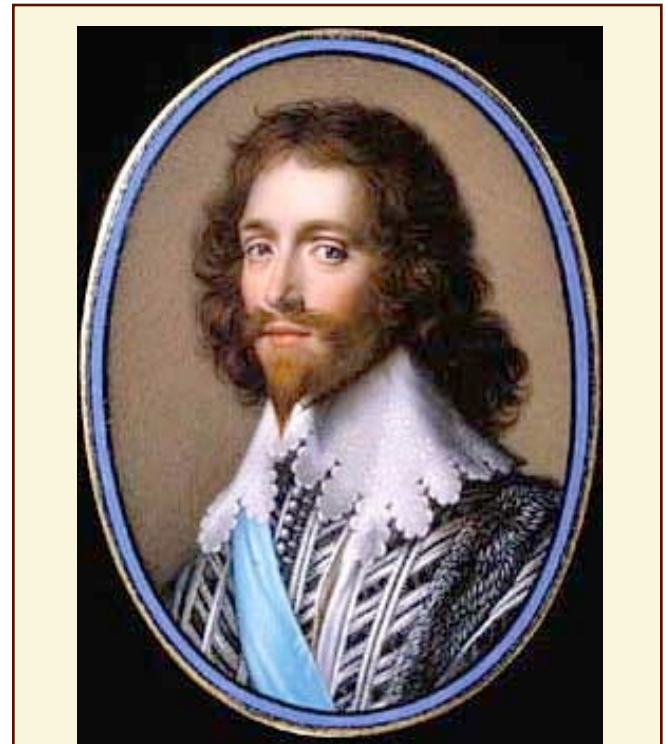
bishops, and to create a more godly and educated clergy. In short, the Puritans wanted the Church of England remolded to resemble the Calvinist churches on the Continent.

In January 1604, the Puritans had their first direct dealing with the new king. At a special religious conference at Hampton Court, they presented a statement of Puritan grievances, the so-called Millenary Petition, to their new ruler. The political implications of the demands concerned him, and their tone offended him. To the dismay of the Puritans, James announced that he favored the Anglican Church, liked bishops, and had no intention of reforming the Church of England. James was not simply being arbitrary. Elizabeth had been just as unwilling to agree to Puritan demands. To have done so would have created strife within the Church of England.

James also offended the Puritans with his opposition to their view of Sabbath observance. The Calvinist Puritans believed that Sunday should be a day devoted entirely to worship and contemplation. James believed that recreation and sports were innocent activities that were good for his people. He also believed Puritan narrowness discouraged Roman Catholics from converting to the Church of England. Consequently, in 1618 he issued the *Book of Sports*, which permitted, actually encouraged, Englishmen to play games on Sunday after attending Church of England services. Permission was given for dancing, archery, leaping and vaulting, and for “having of May games, Whitsun ales and morris dances, and the setting up of May-poles and other sports therewith used, so as the same may be had in due and convenient time without impediment or neglect of divine service.” Puritan clergymen were scandalized by James’s edict. In 1618, James ordered all English clergy to read the declaration (the introduction to the book) from the pulpit, but so strong was the Puritan opposition to Sunday amusements that many English priests refused to read it, and rather than risk a confrontation with the clergy, James prudently withdrew his command.

During James’s reign some religious dissenters began to leave England. In 1620 Puritan separatists founded Plymouth Colony in Cape Cod Bay in North America, preferring flight from England to Anglican conformity. Later in the 1620s, a larger, better financed group of Puritans left England to found the Massachusetts Bay Colony. In each case, the colonists believed that reformation had not gone far enough in England and that only in America could they worship freely and organize a truly reformed church.

James’ Style of Rule



A portrait of the young George Villiers, the 1st Duke of Buckingham, James I’s favorite and one of the most rewarded royal courtiers in all history.

Although James inherited a difficult situation, he also created special problems for himself. His court became a center of scandal and corruption. He governed by favorites. The most influential of the King’s favorites was the duke of Buckingham, who was rumored to be the king’s homosexual lover as well as his first minister. Buckingham controlled royal patronage and openly sold peerages and titles to the highest bidders. To be fair to Buckingham, the money that he raised from the sale of peerages went into the King’s treasury. Nevertheless, the practice angered the nobility because it cheapened their rank. There had always been court favorites, but never before had a single person held so much power or exerted so much control over access to the monarch.

James’ Foreign Policy

James’s foreign policy also roused opposition. He regarded himself as a peacemaker. Wars cost a lot of money; peace saved revenues. The less money James needed, the less he had to depend on the goodwill of Parliament. In 1604, James concluded peace with Spain, England’s chief adversary during the second half of the sixteenth century.

His subjects viewed this peace as a sign of pro-Catholic sentiment. James angered both Anglicans and Puritans when he tried to relax laws against Catholics. The English had not forgotten the brutal reign of Mary Tudor and the acts of treason by Catholics during Elizabeth's reign, and even the attempts against James, himself. In 1618, James wisely hesitated to rush English troops to the aid of Protestants in Germany at the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War. This hesitation caused some to question his loyalty to the Protestant cause. Suspicions increased when he tried to arrange a marriage between his son Charles and the Spanish Infanta (the daughter of the king of Spain).

James' Decline

In the king's last years, his health failed and he became less and less able to perform his duties. The reins of government passed increasingly to his son Charles and to Buckingham. At the same time, both Parliament and Protestant sentiment combined in 1624 to propel England to war once again with Spain. James lived just long enough to see all of his diplomatic efforts toward peace destroyed. He died in 1625, leaving his son Charles with an expensive continental war, a hostile Parliament, and growing religious controversies.

Charles I takes the Throne

Charles I came to the throne with problems to spare. Parliament distrusted Charles and despised his chief favorite, Buckingham. Charles ascended the throne in March 1625 and on 1 May of that year, he married Henrietta Maria of France. His first Parliament, which he opened in May, was opposed to his marriage to Henrietta Maria, a Roman Catholic, because it feared that Charles was soft on Catholics. Charles angered Puritans in 1626, when he protected a critic of Calvinism against Puritan officials. Additionally, Puritans hated Charles for his church policies. Charles was no Catholic, but he liked lots of pomp and ceremony in his church services, which made the Anglican service look more like Catholic ones. He also supported Anglicans who did not believe in predestination, which made him no friends among Puritans.

When he came to the throne, Parliament refused to grant the new king revenues for life that had been granted to English kings at least since the 1400s. Instead Parliament made a one-year renewable grant to the king as an effort to control him. Parliament also insisted that the new king continue an expensive war with Spain and send troops to support the Protestant Cause in Germany, but they refused to grant the king funding for the military activities that they demanded.

So, Charles was stuck between a rock and a hard place. If he made peace with Spain, Parliament would conclude that he was soft on Catholics and their hostility would increase. On the other hand, if Charles became too energetic in his attempts to raise money to pay for the war, Parliamentary leaders were likely to accuse him of threatening the liberty and property of his subjects. In short, Charles had to fight a war that Parliament wouldn't pay him to fight. Thus, Parliament forced Charles I to resort to extra-parliamentary measures to raise funds. He levied new tariffs and duties and attempted to collect discontinued taxes. He even subjected the English people to a so-called forced loan (a tax theoretically to be repaid) and imprisoned those who refused to pay.

The government quartered troops in transit to war zones in private homes. All these actions violated what his subjects understood to be their rights as Englishmen.

Parliaments of 1628 and 1629

When Parliament met in 1628, its members were furious. Taxes were being illegally collected for a war that was going badly for England and that now, through royal blundering, involved France as well as Spain. Parliament expressed its displeasure by making the king's request for new funds conditional on his recognition of the Petition of Right. This petition prohibited taxation without the consent of Parliament. It banned the use of private houses to board soldiers. It forbade the king to declare martial law in time of peace, and banned arbitrary arrests. Charles' acceptance of the Petition of Right encouraged Parliament to increase their demands while the King's position was weak. Parliament received additional encouragement when, in August 1628, Charles's chief minister, Buckingham was assassinated. In January, 1629, members of the Commons held their unwilling speaker in his chair while they passed resolutions declaring that the introduction of religious innovations leading to "popery" — by this it meant Charles's high-church policies — and the levying of taxes without parliamentary consent were acts of treason. This action left Charles no choice but to arrest the leaders of Parliament and to



John Pym was one of the most effective Puritan leaders in Parliament, and a constant critic of Charles I.

dissolve that assembly. The King did not recall Parliament until 1640, when war with Scotland forced him to do so.

Personal Rule

After dissolving Parliament, Charles realized that, to avoid the necessity of recalling it he would have to cut costs. To conserve his limited resources, Charles made peace with France in 1629 and Spain in 1630. This policy again roused fears among some of his subjects that he was too friendly to Roman Catholic powers. Rumors of Charles' Catholic sympathies were increased because of his French wife, Princess Henrietta Maria. Part of her marriage contract permitted her to hear mass daily at the English court. Charles's attitude toward the Church of England also raised suspicions. He supported a group within the church, known as Arminians, who rejected many Puritan doctrines and favored elaborate, high-church practices. The Puritans were convinced these practices would bring a return to Roman Catholicism.

During the next eleven years, Charles governed without Parliament. By withdrawing from the continental war and reducing his expenditures, he managed to raise enough money to support his government. This he did by stretching his prerogative still further. In addition to the various forms of unparliamentary taxation practiced before, he extended ship-money, a tax that had hitherto been levied only on the seaboard towns to support the navy, to the entire kingdom. Meanwhile, the headstrong king continued to anger the Puritans by his support of the high-church Anglican policy of Archbishop Laud and by his leniency towards Catholics, the landowners by his desire to protect the peasants from enclosures, and the middle class by his efforts to set minimum wages. Only an opportunity to organize was needed for the opponents of the Stuarts to throw the island into turmoil. The opportunity that gave Charles's English opponents their chance came, ironically, from the Stuart's ancestral homeland, Scotland.

The Scottish Crisis

In 1637, Charles ordered the Scots to accept a new prayer book based on Laud's high-church ideas. The Scottish people were far more strongly Presbyterian than the English, and when the bishop of Edinburgh tried to use the new service, an angry woman threw a stool at him. This action touched off a riot and led to a Solemn League and Covenant among Scottish Presbyterians to resist religious innovations. The rebels abolished episcopacy and seized Edinburgh Castle.

The Long Parliament

This uprising drove Charles to call a Parliament in 1640 in the hope of getting money for an army, but once in session, the House of Commons showed little disposition to vote taxes until its grievances had been heard. The landowners and the merchant classes represented by Parliament had resented the king's financial measures and absolute rule for some time. The Puritans in Parliament resented his religious policies and deeply distrusted the influence of the Roman Catholic queen. The Long Parliament (1640-1660) thus acted with widespread support and general unanimity when it convened in November 1640.

The House of Commons tried and executed both Charles's current favorite, the Earl of Stafford and Archbishop Laud. Parliament abolished the Court of Star Chamber, a sort of Mediaeval tax court, and the Court of High Commission that Laud had used to enforce Anglican orthodoxy. The levying of new taxes without consent of Parliament and the extension of ship money now became illegal. Finally, Parliament resolved that no more than three years should elapse between its meetings and that it could not be dissolved without its own consent. Parliament was determined that neither Charles nor any future English king could again govern without consulting it.

Despite its cohesion on these initial actions, Parliament was divided over the precise direction to take on religious reform. Both moderate Puritans (the Presbyterians) and more extreme Puritans (the Independents) wanted the complete abolition of the episcopal system and the Book of Common Prayer. The Presbyterian majority sought to reshape England along far more Calvinist lines, replacing bishops with councils of elders. Independents wanted a much more fully decentralized church with every congregation as its own final authority. There were many conservatives in both houses of Parliament wanted to preserve the English church in its current form. Their numbers fell dramatically after 1642, however, when many of them left the House of Commons to join their King with the outbreak of civil war.

These divisions further intensified in October 1641, when a rebellion erupted in Ireland and Parliament was asked to raise funds for an army to suppress it. The Puritan leader in the House of Commons, John Pym and his followers, loudly reminding the House of Commons of the king's past behavior, argued that Charles could not be trusted with an army and that Parliament should become the commander-in-chief of English armed forces. Parliamentary conservatives, on the other hand, were appalled by such a bold departure from tradition.

Civil War

Charles saw the division within Parliament as a chance to reassert his power. On December 1, 1641, Parliament presented him with the “Grand Remonstrance,” a summary of grievances against the crown. In January 1642 Charles responded. He invaded Parliament with his soldiers. He intended to arrest Pym and the other leaders, but they had been forewarned and managed to escape. The king then withdrew from London and began to raise an army. Shocked by his action, a majority of the House of Commons passed the Militia Ordinance, which gave Parliament authority to raise an army of its own. The die was now cast. For the next four years (1642-1646), civil war engulfed England.

Charles assembled his forces at Nottingham, and the war began in August. It was fought over two main issues:

1. Would an absolute monarchy or a parliamentary government rule England?
2. Would English religion be controlled by the king’s bishops and conform to high Anglican practice or adopt a decentralized, Presbyterian system of church governance?

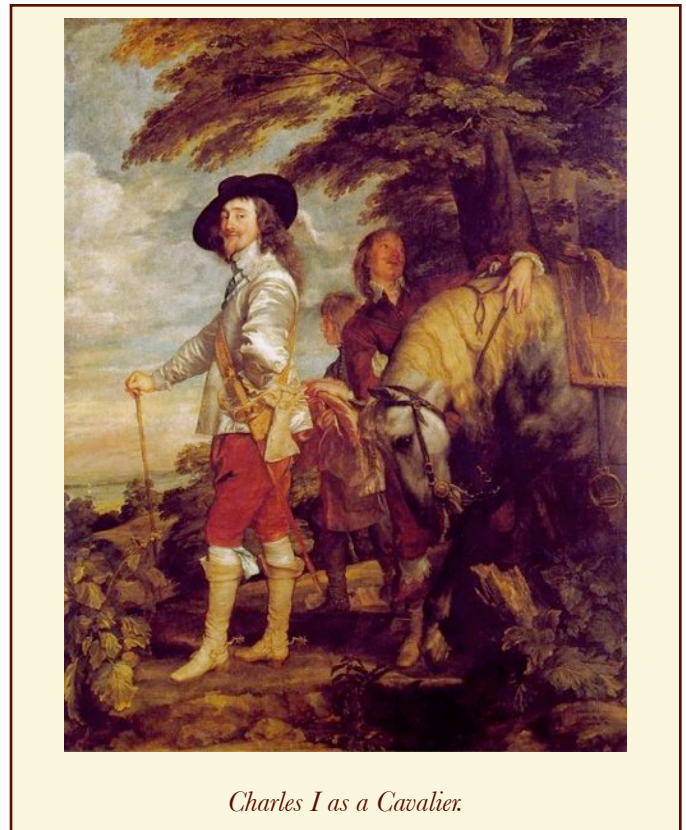
Charles’s supporters, known as Cavaliers, were located in the northwestern half of England. The parliamentary opposition, known as Roundheads because of their close-cropped hair, had its stronghold in the southeastern half of the country. Supporters of both sides included nobility, gentry, and townspeople. The chief factor distinguishing them was religion; the Puritans tended to favor Parliament.

It would be very wrong to assume that the civil war that followed was a class struggle. An analysis of the members of the Commons who sided with the king and those who stood by Parliament shows that the country gentleman, the lawyer, and the merchant could be found nearly as often in one camp as in the other. The division between Englishmen was along personal, constitutional, and religious, not social, lines. Those who had received royal favors, their clients, and their relatives tended to side with the king. Those who felt wronged by the king or who were denied his bounty often joined the opposition. Those who thought that the king had exceeded his prerogatives leaned towards the side of Parliament. Those who believed that Parliament had been guilty of encroaching on the powers of the crown tended to remain loyal to the king. Most of the Puritans and religious radicals were to be found in the Parliamentary camp while the majority of the high church Anglicans stood by the crown. Most Englishmen never really took sides at all, preferring to avoid the hazards of a war in which both sides were partly in the wrong.

At first, the opposing forces were about evenly divided, but the intervention of Scotland on the side of Parliament and the formation of a well-trained army under a Puritan gentleman named Oliver Cromwell(1599-1658) turned the tide against the king. The defeat of the royalist army in the battle of Naseby in 1645 left Charles no recourse but to surrender.

The victors then quarreled. The Presbyterian Puritans and the Scots, wanted a constitutional monarchy with Charles at its head and Presbyterian style Church of England. Many soldiers and Congregationalist Puritans wanted a republic and some Independents favored religious toleration for all Protestants. Hopelessly muddled over religion, Parliament refused to pay the troops.

Charles saw his chance, He tried to play the army against Parliament and the Scots against the English, until all but the staunchest royalists had lost faith in him. Finally, Cromwell, in disgust, put an end to the farce by defeating the Scottish army, purging Parliament of ninety-six Presbyterian members, and seizing, trying, and executing the faithless Charles. The monarchy was terminated and the House of Lords was abolished. The problem was to find an alternative form of government.



Charles I as a Cavalier.

Trial and Execution of Charles I

The King's trial on charges of high treason and "other high crimes" began on 2 January, 1649. Charles refused to enter a plea, claiming that no court had jurisdiction over a monarch. He believed that his own authority to rule had been given to him by God when he was crowned and anointed, and that his subjects had neither the right nor the authority to try him. Over a period of a week, when Charles was asked to plead three times, he refused. It was then normal practice to take a refusal to plead as an admission of guilt, which meant that the prosecution could not call witnesses to its case. Fifty-nine of the Commissioners signed Charles' death warrant, on 29 January 1649. After the ruling, he was led from St. James's Palace, where he was confined, to the Palace of Whitehall, where an execution scaffold had been erected in front of the Banqueting House.

When Charles was beheaded on January 30, 1649, a moan was heard from the assembled crowd. Many went to the scaffold and dipped their handkerchiefs in his blood, thus starting the cult of the Martyr King. Charles the Martyr provided a rallying point for Anglicans who saw Parliament's act as a violation of the English constitution.

Oliver Cromwell and the Puritan Republic

In December 1648, Colonel Thomas Pride physically barred the Presbyterians, who made up a majority of Parliament, from taking their seats. After "Pride's Purge," only a "rump" of fewer than fifty members remained. Though small in numbers, this Independent Rump Parliament did not hesitate to use its power. On January 30, 1649, after a trial by a special court, the Rump Parliament executed Charles as a public criminal and thereafter abolished the monarchy, the House of Lords, and the Anglican Church. What had begun as a civil war had at this point become a revolution.

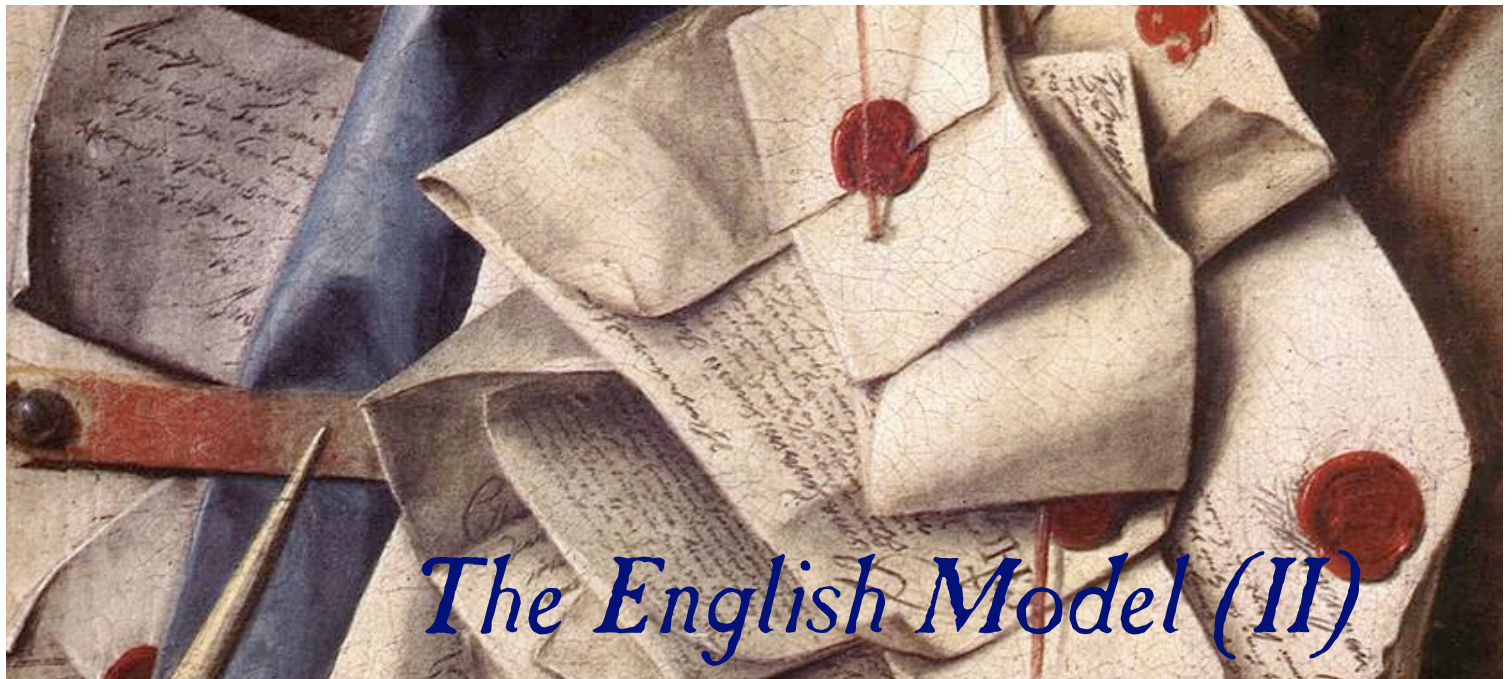
From 1649 to 1660, England became officially a Puritan republic, although for much of that time it was dominated by Cromwell. During this period, Cromwell's army conquered Ireland and Scotland, creating the single political entity of Great Britain. Cromwell, however, was a military man and no politician. He was increasingly frustrated by what seemed to him to be pettiness on the part of Parliament. When in 1653 the House of Commons entertained a motion to disband his expensive army of 50,000, Cromwell ordered his troops to disperse the Rump. As the members of Parliament departed, the general shouted: "It's you that have forced me to do this, for I have sought the Lord night and day that he would slay me rather than put me upon the doing of this work." With the arrogant certainty of one who is convinced that he is doing God's will, Cromwell had now

destroyed both king and Parliament. Cromwell titled himself the Lord Protector of England

God was less helpful in revealing to Cromwell what alternate form of government should be established. His military dictatorship proved no more effective than Charles's rule had been and became just as harsh and hated. Cromwell's great army and foreign adventures inflated his budget to three times that of Charles. Near chaos reigned in many places, and commerce suffered throughout England. Cromwell was more intolerant of Anglicans as Charles had been of Puritans. People deeply resented his Puritan prohibitions of drunkenness, theatergoing, and dancing. Political liberty vanished in the name of religious liberty. At length, he was persuaded that the best way to create good government was to secure a new Parliament composed of righteous men. He appointed the members of his new Parliament on the advice of the Independent preachers. The religious fanaticism of this Parliament is best illustrated by the name of the member that it was named after, Praise-God Barebones. Within five months, this group of extremists had so angered Cromwell by their impractical policies that he turned them out as he had done their predecessors.

By the time of Cromwell's death in 1658, most of the English were ready to end the Puritan religious experiment and republican government and return to their traditional institutions. Negotiations between leaders of the army and the exiled Charles II (r. 1660-1685), son of Charles I, led to the restoration of the Stuart monarchy in 1660.





The English Model (II)

Charles II returned to England amid great rejoicing. A man of considerable charm and political skill, Charles set a refreshing new tone after eleven years of somber Puritanism. His restoration returned England to the status quo of 1642, with a hereditary monarch once again on the throne, no legal requirement that he summon Parliament regularly, and the Anglican Church, with its bishops and prayer book, supreme in religion.

The king favored a policy of religious toleration that was well before its time. He wanted to allow all those outside the Church of England, Catholics as well as Puritans, to worship freely so long as they remained loyal to the throne. This policy angered a Parliament which was primarily made up of ultra-royalist Anglicans who believed very strongly that patriotism and religion could not be separated. Between 1661 and 1665, through a series of laws known as the Clarendon Code, Parliament excluded Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, and Independents from the religious and political life of the nation. These laws imposed penalties for attending non-Anglican worship services, required strict adherence to the Book of Common Prayer, and demanded oaths of allegiance to the Church of England from all persons serving in local government.

Although Parliament supported the monarchy, Charles, following the pattern of his predecessors, required greater revenues than Parliament appropriated. These he obtained in part by increased customs duties. Because England and France were both at war with Holland, he also received aid from France. In 1670 England and France formally allied against the Dutch in the Treaty of Dover.



Charles II (1660-1685)

In a secret portion of this treaty, Charles pledged to announce his conversion to Catholicism as soon as conditions in England permitted. In return for this announcement (which was never made), Louis XIV of France promised to pay a substantial subsidy to England. If diplomacy is the art of telling lies as a matter of state, we can say that Charles was pretty good at it. It is doubtful that he ever intended to convert to Catholicism, but it helped seal the alliance with France.

In an attempt to unite the English people behind the war with Holland, and as a sign of good faith to Louis XIV, Charles issued a Declaration of Indulgence in 1672. This document suspended all laws against Roman Catholics and Protestant nonconformists. But again, the conservative Parliament proved less generous than the king and refused to grant money for the war until Charles rescinded the measure. After he did, Parliament passed the Test Act, which required all officials of the crown, civil and military, to swear an oath against the doctrine of transubstantiation — a requirement that no loyal Roman Catholic could honestly meet.

Parliament had aimed the Test Act largely at the king's brother, James, Duke of York. James was the heir to the throne and a recent, devout convert to Catholicism. In 1678 a notorious liar named Titus Oates swore before a magistrate that Charles's Catholic wife, through her physician, was plotting with Jesuits and Irishmen to kill the king so James could assume the throne. The matter was taken before Parliament, where Oates was believed. In the ensuing hysteria, known as the Popish Plot, several people were tried and executed. Riding the crest of anti-Catholic sentiment and led by the Earl of Shaftesbury (1621-1683), opposition members of Parliament, called Whigs, made an impressive but unsuccessful effort to enact a bill excluding James from succession to the throne.

More suspicious than ever of Parliament, Charles II turned again to increased customs duties and the assistance of Louis XIV for extra income. By these means he was able to rule from 1681 to 1685 without recalling Parliament. In these years, Charles suppressed much of his opposition. He drove the Earl of Shaftesbury into exile, executed several

Whig leaders for treason, and bullied local corporations into electing members of Parliament submissive to the royal will. When Charles died in 1685, he left the new king, James, the prospect of a Parliament filled with royal friends.

James II

James II (r. 1685-1688) did not know how to make the most of a good thing. He alienated Parliament by insisting on the repeal of the Test Act. When Parliament balked, he dissolved it and proceeded openly to appoint known Catholics to high positions in both his court and the army. In 1687 he issued a Declaration of Indulgence, which suspended all religious tests and permitted free worship. In June 1688, James went so far as to imprison seven Anglican bishops

who had refused to publicize his suspension of laws against Catholics. To the English, James' actions smacked of both "popery," and tyranny. James was attacking English liberty and challenging all manner of social privileges and influence. Given that James was not a fool, even if he was certainly a headstrong monarch, it is worth while to take a moment to consider the motives behind his actions. Historians have usually interpreted his actions in the worst possible light, but recently at least a few scholars have offered interpretations of James that are more favorable to him.

- **The Whig Interpretation:** This traditional interpretation sees James as a dangerous would-be tyrant who, under the guise of a policy of enlightened toleration, was actually seeking to subject all English institutions to the power of an absolutist monarchy. Even the most loyal Tories, as supporters of the Stuart monarchy were called, could not abide this

policy. The English feared that James planned to imitate the religious intolerance of Louis XIV and impose Catholicism on the entire nation.

- **Recent Revision:** A more recent interpretation is kinder to James II. According to historian John Miller, "James claimed very consistently that he was against persecution for conscience's sake." Miller, who spent years studying the papers of the Stuart rulers, argues that James, like his brother and predecessor Charles II, exhibited a tolerance for religious diversity that was uncharacteristic of the era. Charles' tolerance of Puritans, Quakers, and even, within limits, Catholics, placed him at odds with the conservative Anglican gentry who had supported the Stuart Restoration in 1660. Although James feared



James II (1685-1688)

Presbyterians primarily because he associated them with republicanism and with the execution of his father, Charles I, he exhibited tolerance for religious sects in general and was more solicitous toward his fellow Roman Catholics than his brother had been. James may have believed that once universal toleration was effected in his realm, most Englishmen would voluntarily choose to convert to Roman Catholicism; thus, he did not feel the need to force his own beliefs on others. If, however, Britons did not convert, he felt that his realm was still better off if its subjects were left unhindered to worship as their consciences dictated.

At any rate, James policies of giving preferments to Catholics and dissenters soon faced united opposition. When his Catholic second wife gave birth to a son and Catholic male heir to the throne on June 20, 1688, opposition turned to action. The English had hoped that James would die without a male heir so the throne would pass to Mary, his Protestant eldest daughter. Mary was the wife of William III of Orange, the Stadtholder of the Netherlands. Within days of the birth of James's son, Whig and Tory members of Parliament formed a coalition and invited William of Orange to come to England to preserve the "traditional liberties" of the nation, that is, the Anglican Church and parliamentary government.

The Glorious Revolution

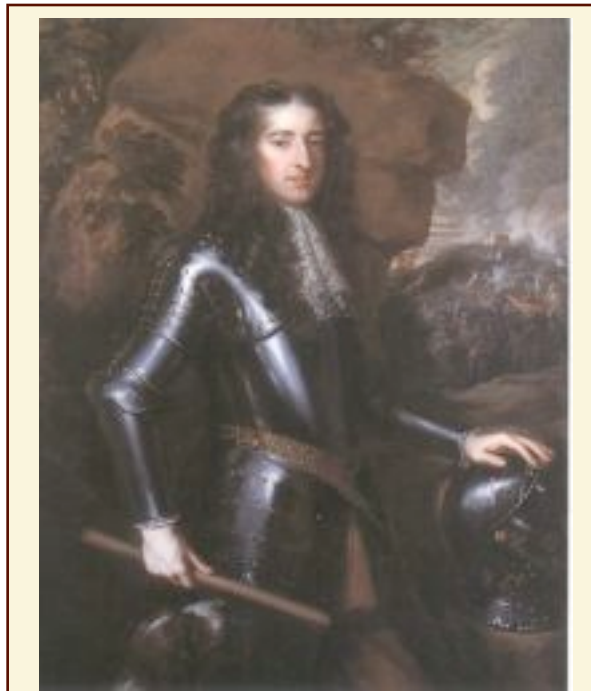
William and Mary landed at Brixham in Southeastern England on November 5th, 1688, accompanied by a Dutch army of some 15,000 men and two portable printing presses. William insisted that the purpose of his visit was to meet with his father in law, James to convince the English king of the error of his ways.

From Brixham to London, William's press worked harder than his army did, printing two weekly papers and a vast array of pamphlets supporting the Prince, and attacking James. Many of these pamphlets were designed, not so much to condemn James, but to illuminate the character and appearance of the Prince of Orange. William, who was asthmatic, frail and weak, and whose appearance could only be described as homely out of a charitable act of kindness, was portrayed by his supporters as healthy, robust and

handsome. Pamphlets and tracts published by William and his allies praised his morality and integrity, his justice and virtue, and paraded his Protestant piety at every opportunity. Though the Prince was irritable, distant, cold and aloof, William's allies depicted him in their many tracts as amiable, sweetly tempered, and even charming. The Prince was declared valorous and brave on the battlefield, and unambitious, courteous, and unassuming in his dealings with others. In short, William's press endowed its patron with the traits of the ideal prince, handsome, friendly and pious, manly in battle, and just and caring toward his subjects.

William triumphed in what amounted to a bloodless "Glorious Revolution." Parliament decided that William should not rule alone, as he had no real claim beyond his right of conquest, to the throne. It was decided that the Prince of Orange and his wife should be co-rulers. William and Mary, in turn, recognized a Bill of Rights that limited the powers of the monarchy and guaranteed the civil liberties of their English subjects. Henceforth, England's monarchs would be subject to law and would rule by the consent of Parliament, which was to be called into session every three years. The Bill of Rights also pointedly prohibited Roman Catholics from occupying the English throne. The Toleration Act of 1689 permitted worship by all Protestants and severely limited the rights of English Catholics. Catholics were forbidden their worship, forbidden to bear arms, banned from holding any office in the realm, and forced to pay special taxes.

The measure closing this century of strife was the Act of Settlement in 1701. This bill provided for the English crown to go to the Protestant House of Hanover in Germany if none of the children of Queen Anne (r. 1702-1714), the second daughter of James II and the last of the Stuart monarchs, was alive at her death. She outlived all of her children, and so in 1714, the elector of Hanover became King George I of England, the third foreign monarch to occupy the English throne in just over a century. George I spoke no English and placed most of the power of the Crown in the hands of his Whig ministers and Parliament.



William of Orange -- William III of England

Over the rule of George I, Parliament gained even more power in British politics and policy making and the powers of the British king grew even weaker with disuse.

The Glorious Revolution and John Locke

The Glorious Revolution of 1688 established a framework of government by and for the governed that seemed to bear out the arguments of John Locke's *Second Treatise of Government* (1690). Locke had written his *Two Treatises on Government* around 1686 in protest against what he considered the tyrannical government of James II, but he did not publish it then. Instead, he handwrote several copies and circulated them among influential English leaders. Some of those leaders were among the group that invited William of Orange to come to England. In his influential work, Locke described the relationship of a king and his people as a bilateral political contract. If the king broke that contract, the people, by whom Locke meant the privileged and powerful, had the right to depose him. Locke had written the essay before the revolution, but it came to be read as a justification for it. Although neither in fact nor in theory a "popular" revolution such as would occur in America and France a hundred years later, the Glorious Revolution did establish in England a permanent check on monarchical power by the classes represented in Parliament. At the same time, in its wake the English government had achieved a secure financial base that would allow it to pursue a century of warfare.



Today we stay on politics -- which means absolutism -- and we are going to talk about the European state system. What that means is that in the time of Louis XIV, France did not become the dominant power in Europe, as much as Louis would have liked it.

Rather there emerged what would become the five great powers of Europe, and these five great powers would remain the great powers of Europe, with a few changes, until the First World War which occurred between 1914 and 1918. We have already covered France and Great Britain in detail, so now we are going to set up the other great powers so that you have an idea of what they were and how they emerged.

The Habsburg Monarchy

The third of the emerging great powers is the Habsburg Monarchy, that state we have mentioned now and again that was based in today's Austria but ruled today's Czech Republic, Slovakia, parts of Italy, Slovenia, and Croatia. I might add that whenever I talk about Austria, I mean the Habsburg monarchy; Austria is a shorter name for the same place and should not be confused with today's Austria.

The Hapsburgs hit some highs and lows since 1500, but you may not have noticed them because they were buried in other events. A high was certainly the reign of Charles V. He was a Habsburg who ruled over much of Europe as you know, fought against the Turks and the French and tried to deal with the Protestant Reformation. A low was the Thirty Years' War, which the Habsburgs were in from the beginning and during which their lands suffered a great deal.

Between 1660 and 1715, the Hapsburg monarchy became one of the five great powers and it did so mostly using the tried and true methods of absolutism. First of all, it fought wars. It fought wars off and on against Louis XIV from 1660 to 1715, sometimes fighting for its very life.



Leopold I was both Habsburg monarch and Holy Roman Emperor in the late 1600s, AND, as this portrait shows, had extraordinarily bad fashion sense!

From 1683 to 1699 it fought its old enemies, the Turks, and in 1683 the Turks actually reached the gates of Vienna. They did not take the city but they certainly scared the Habsburgs half to death.

In fighting those wars, however, the Habsburgs forged a modern army, an army not unlike that of Louis XIV. Like the French army, the Habsburgs ceased relying on independent colonels, instituted discipline in the ranks, established a chain of command, created engineering, supply, and artillery branches -- all of those things that we talked about under Louis XIV and which constitute a military revolution. And this new Habsburg army did well. It held its own against Louis XIV in wars until the last one, that of the *War of the Spanish Succession*, when it actually did a lot better than expected, defeating the French in a number of battles. But those victories over the French were nothing compared to its victories over the Turks. As I mentioned, the Turks reached the gates of Vienna in 1683 and laid siege to the city. The Austrians forged an alliance with other German states and defeated that army before Vienna, after which they chased the Turks out of Austria and then out of Hungary. By the time they were finished in 1699, the Austrians had inflicted defeat after defeat on the Turks and had driven them all the way back to Belgrade in today's Serbia. In Southeastern Europe, the Habsburgs were now the great power, and the Turks would never recover from the disaster that hit them.

Prussia

The fourth great power is one that you may not have heard of, and that is one of the German states called Prussia. The Habsburg monarchy became one of the great European powers to a certain extent because of the skills of the Habsburg family. Prussia became one of the great European powers also because of the skills of its ruling family, in this case the family known as the Hohenzollerns.

Prussia was one of those little German states that we talked about so much during the lectures on the protestant reformation. The Hohenzollerns were the ruling family of Prussia, which, like Austria, is a name used as a convenience for a bunch of lands that made up the possessions of the House of Hohenzollern. The lands belonged to the Holy Roman Empire, or at least most of them did. The family was Lutheran, and in fact became Calvinist later on, although the people of Prussia remained Lutheran because the family did not want to create disruption by telling them that they should become Calvinists.

Prussia's rise to greatness occurred between 1640 and 1740, and it was achieved mainly because of four rulers who followed one another in succession and whose names

were just different enough to drive you crazy. The first of these rulers was Frederick William, who was known as "the Great Elector."

First question then: if he was the Great Elector, what did he elect? All you have to put in your notes is that his most important title was Elector of Brandenburg, which meant that he was one of the seven people who elected the Holy Roman Empire.

Anyway, Frederick William grew up during the Thirty Years War, and that war was just awful for Prussia. Armies marched back and forth through the country, causing enormous death and devastation. The country was pillaged over and over again; Frederick William himself had to be sent away to his relatives in Holland just for safety.

When Frederick William became ruler of Prussia in 1640, he was determined that Prussia would never be so helpless again. And, you can easily guess what his first priority was: raise an army. And he wanted it to be a good army -- again disciplined, well-supplied, trained, capable, the same goals as Louis XIV. He created such an army; it was small but it was good, and of course that meant that he had to create the institutions to support the army, which meant a bureaucracy. That meant taxes and that meant reducing the estates to positions of little power. You can put down that he used the methods of Absolutism to establish his power and to create the armed force he needed to defend his small land.



Frederick William of Brandenburg consolidated Prussia into a great European state from 1640 to 1688.

Frederick I

Frederick William died in 1688 and was succeeded by his son, Frederick, called Frederick I. Now, Frederick is called Frederick I not because he was the first Frederick but because he was the first KING Frederick. Frederick I was interested mostly in the spectacle side of being a ruler. Frederick William may have admired Louis XIV's army and bureaucracy, but Frederick I admired Louis's skill at playing the role of absolute monarch. So, Frederick I promoted culture: he built a magnificent palace, he encouraged the arts, and he wanted his capital, Berlin, to be a center of learning and accomplishment. And he got what he wanted by earning the title of king. But I want you to note down that, despite his interest in culture, he did not neglect the army. The army remained strong and grew a bit larger.

Frederick William I

Frederick died in 1713 and was followed by his son, Frederick William I. You might wonder why he is FW I since there was a Frederick William before; he is the first KING Frederick William.

Anyway, just as Frederick I was not much like his father the Great Elector, Frederick William I was not much like his father either. Frederick I was interested in raising the cultural level of Prussia; Frederick William I cared only for the army. Frederick William poured all of his energy into caring for the army, raising it to a strength of 80,000 well-equipped, well-disciplined men based on a population of only 3 million.

There are lots of stories about Frederick William. He was called the royal drill-sergeant because he liked nothing more than to drill his troops. But he also did not want to see his soldiers mugged up and he certainly did not want to see any get killed. So, he never fought any serious wars, and, when he was obligated as a member of the Holy Roman Empire to provide soldiers for the imperial army, he tried to make certain that they stayed a long way from any action.

Frederick II

Frederick William I died in 1740 and was followed by his son, Frederick II. At the outset it looked like the generational leap-frogging of the Hohenzollern kings was continuing because, just as Frederick William was a rough and tumble character, not at all like his father, Frederick II liked to play the flute and compose music -- and did not get along at all with his father. He even tried to run away from home once. But it turned out that there was not a generational leap-frog. When Frederick II became king of Prussia he immediately took his father's beautiful army to war, and he turned out to be the greatest military genius of the 18th century. And we will talk more about him later.

Russia: Peter the Great

The fifth and last of the great powers that would dominate western civilization for the next two centuries was Russia. Prussia had four kings who contributed to establishing it as a great power; Russia had one, Peter, called Peter the Great, who ruled from 1689 to 1725.

Unlike Prussia, most Europeans did not consider Russia western in 1700. It was looked upon as an exotic, Asiatic state that really did not fit well into Western state relations. It was Christian, but Orthodox Christian, not Catholic or Protestant. It had Asiatic overtones; its nobles kept their women from participating in public life and wore long gowns and very long beards.

Peter the Great's number one goal was to make Russia western. He wanted to make it Western because he firmly believed that it could not survive unless it did so. In fact, this is an issue that exists with Russia until this day: Should it be western, because, if it does become Western, will it be sacrificing its own soul to do so? But, if it does not become Western, can it survive? For Peter the Great, the answer was that it had to become Western or it would perish.



Peter the Great, Emperor of Russia
1682-1725

So, Peter did everything he could to make Russia a western state. He established the capital city at St. Petersburg, which he called his window to the west. He brought in German craftsmen and tradesmen to teach Russians how to be western merchants and manufacturers, he compelled his Russian noblemen to dress like Frenchmen, and, for what was a real shock, he compelled his Russian noblemen not only to have their wives dress as French women but to bring them to court as well. And he did all kinds of other things to make his country western (talk about some of them).

But appearing western does not make a great power. He made Russia one of the five great powers by creating a western-style army and navy and defeating other powers. The one he defeated most thoroughly was the only other state that rivaled him in the North and that was Sweden. In fact, he founded St. Petersburg on land he took from the Swedes. He also defeated the Turks, but he lost to the Turks as well, so that was rather a wash. Anyway, by the time he died in 1725, the other four European powers looked upon Russia as a force to be reckoned with, and it would remain that way really until the 1990s.