

Absolute Monarchs and Europe

1500 - 1800

European Absolutism

- **Main Idea**

- *During a time of religious and economic instability, European monarchs ruled with a strong hand.*

- **Why It Matters Now**

- *When faced with crises, many heads of government take on additional economic or political powers.*

European Absolutism

Absolutism in Europe

Absolute Monarch – a king or queen who holds all of the power within their states' boundaries, controlling every aspect of society

- Absolute monarchs believed in divine right, the idea that God created the monarchy and that the monarch acted as God's representative on Earth.
- An absolute monarch regulated everything from religious worship to social gatherings.
 - Build large armies
 - Increase taxes

The Reign of Louis XIV

Louis XIV Comes to Power

- In 1643, with the death of his father, Louis XIV became King of France at the age of four. During his youth, nobles violently resisted efforts to limit their power, including threatening the life of the king.
- Louis assumed total control at age 22, determined to consolidate his power over the state.



The Reign of Louis XIV

Louis XIV Comes to Power

- He reduced the power of the nobility by excluding them from his councils.
- He ended religious freedom, driving many Protestants out of France, but gaining loyalty from Catholics.
- He removed himself from the commoners, building the Palace at Versailles away from Paris.



The Reign of Louis XIV

The Sun King's Grand Style

- Louis spent over \$2 billion dollars building the Palace at Versailles. Thousands of workers ran the palace.
- Nobles lived on the palace grounds, looking to court favor with Louis. Nobles spent vast sums trying to match Louis' fashion expectations.



The Reign of Louis XIV

Louis Fights Disastrous Wars

- In his later years, Louis involved France in several different wars. His success declined while his debts rose. At the time of his death, the people of France cheered; they had had enough of the Sun King.



Absolute Rulers of Russia

- **Main Idea**

- *Peter the Great made many changes in Russia to try to make it more like western Europe.*

- **Why It Matters Now**

- *Many Russians today debate whether to model themselves on the West or to focus on traditional Russian culture.*

Absolute Rulers of Russia

Peter the Great Comes to Power

- When Peter came to power, Russia was a feudal land of boyars (nobles) and serfs.
- Russia was isolated geographically from Europe. Russians were Eastern Orthodox Christians and viewed Europeans as heretics.
- Upon becoming czar, Peter embarked on a long tour of Western Europe to learn about customs and manufacturing techniques.



Absolute Rulers of Russia

Peter Rules Absolutely

- Upon his return, Peter began to reform Russia and increase his power as absolute ruler.
- He took control of the Russian Orthodox Church, appointing a group under his control as its head.



Absolute Rulers of Russia

Peter Rules Absolutely

- He reduced the power of the boyars, promoting lower-ranking families to positions of authority.
- He modernized and increased the size of the Russian army.
- He raised the status of women and ordered all nobles to wear Western fashions.
- He advanced education, opening schools of navigation, the arts, and sciences.
- He built the port city of St. Petersburg to increase travel and trade with the West.



Parliament Limits the English Monarchy

- **Main Idea**

- *Absolute rulers in England were overthrown, and Parliament gained power.*

- **Why It Matters Now**

- *Many of the government reforms of this period contributed to the democratic tradition of the United States.*

Parliament Limits the English Monarchy

Monarchs Defy Parliament

- James I and his son, Charles I, struggled with Parliament over money. When Parliament refused, Charles would dissolve it. In 1628, Parliament agreed to provide money if he signed the Petition of Right.
 - No imprisonment without due cause.
 - No housing of soldiers in private homes.
 - No taxes without Parliament's consent.
 - No martial law in peacetime.
- Charles I signed the petition and then ignored it completely.



Parliament Limits the English Monarchy

English Civil War

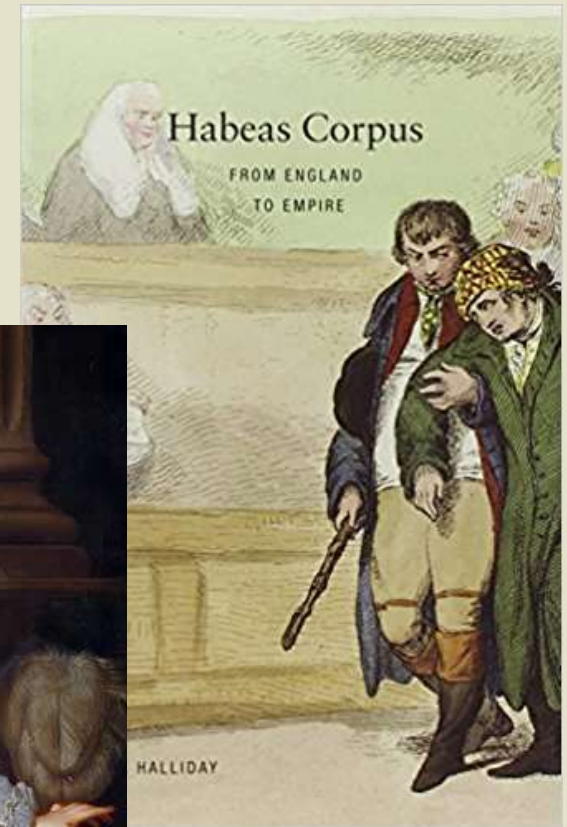
- In 1637, Charles I needed money for war and only Parliament could give it to him. When he called Parliament into session, they passed laws to limit his powers. In 1642, Charles' supporters began battle with his opponent, beginning the English Civil War. Oliver Cromwell led the opposition to victory and in 1649, Charles I was tried and executed.



Parliament Limits the English Monarchy

Restoration and Revolution

- During the reign of Charles II, Parliament passed a law of Habeas Corpus. This is Latin for “to have the body,” and allowed every prisoner to obtain an order that he be brought before a judge to hear charges. The judge would then decide if the prisoner should be tried or set free. This meant prisoners could not be held indefinitely without a trial.



Parliament Limits the English Monarchy

Limits on Monarch's Power

- Under William and Mary, England became a constitutional monarchy. Parliament drafted a Bill of Rights that listed things a ruler could not do.
 - No suspending of Parliament's laws
 - No levying taxes without a grant from Parliament
 - No interfering with freedom of speech
 - No penalty for citizens who file complaints

