ABSOLUTE RULERS
EUROPE: 1500-1600’S
HELPFUL TO UNDERSTANDING OUR PRESENT WORLD
ABSOLUTISM: DEFINITION

- POLITICAL BELIEF THAT A MONARCH (i.e. KING/QUEEN) SHOULD:
  - HOLD ALL OF THE POWER IN A COUNTRY (BE UNLIMITED)
  - CONTROL ALL PARTS OF SOCIETY AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE
DIVINE RIGHT: DEFINITION

- POLITICAL BELIEF TIED IN WITH ABSOLUTISM:
  - GOD CREATED MONARCHS
  - MONARCHS ARE GOD’S “SPOKESPERSON” ON EARTH
  - MONARCHS ANSWER ONLY TO GOD, NOT THEIR SUBJECTS
• MOST COUNTRIES GET ABSOLUTE RULERS BY 1500-1600’S
• WESTERN EUROPEAN ABSOLUTISM (ENGLAND, FRANCE, & SPAIN)
• EASTERN EUROPEAN ABSOLUTISM (AUSTRIA, PRUSSIA, RUSSIA)
• BIG DIFFERENCES BTWN THESE REGIONS (AFFECTS WORLD TODAY!)

GEOGRAPHY: AFFECTS ABSOLUTISM
• **DYNASTY**: SERIES OF RULERS FROM A SINGLE FAMILY ("HOUSE OF ...")

• **ENGLAND**: **TUDOR** ~120 YRS
• **FRANCE/SPAIN**: **BOURBON** 200 YRS
• **AUSTRIA/SPAIN**: **HAPSBURG** 500+ YRS
• **PRUSSIA**: **HOHENZOLLERN** 500+ YRS
• **RUSSIA**: **ROMANOV** 300 YRS

**EUROPEAN DYNASTIES**: CENTURIES OF RULE HELP ESTABLISH ABSOLUTISM
ROAD BLOCKS TO ABSOLUTISM

ABSOLUTE RULERS FACE CHALLENGES TO THEIR POWER:

- **NOBILITY**
- **RELIGION**
- **LEGISLATURES**
- **MONEY**
- **AGE OF RULERS**

ROAD BLOCKS TO ABSOLUTISM
• **NOBILITY**: THEY’RE ALL RELATED!
• NOBLES CONSIDER THEMSELVES = TO MONARCHS
• BELIEVE THEY ALSO COULD BE KING/QUEEN

**ARISTOCRACY**: THEN & NOW
• RELIGION: CATHOLICS & PROTESTANTS FIGHT EACH OTHER
• SO . . . RULERS USUALLY WANT THEIR COUNTRY JUST 1 RELIGION

30 YEARS WAR, ST. BARTHOLOMEW’S MASSACRE
• **LEGISLATURES:**
  - MAKE LAWS AND
  - HAND OUT MONEY

• WANT A BIT OF
  - POWER IN
  - RETURN FROM
  - KING

• WANT TO **LIMIT,**
  - NOT DESTROY,
  - KING’S POWER

**ENG. PARLIAMENT & FRENCH ESTATES-GENERAL**
ROAD BLOCKS TO ABSOLUTISM

- **MONEY:**
  - Nobility not taxed
  - Church not taxed
  - So money has to come from peasants and middle class

- Taxing too much or too often causes problems:
  - Revolts
  - Legislative “paybacks”
• MANY MONARCHS START RULING AT YOUNG AGE
• LITTLE EXPERIENCE; JUDGMENT LACKING
• NEED ADULTS TO HELP THEM RULE: USUALLY NOBLES!

IVAN (TERRIBLE) 3; LOUIS XIV 4; PETER THE GREAT 10; FREDERICK (THE GREAT ELECTOR) 20; PHILIP II 27; MARIA THERESA 28; FREDERICK THE GREAT 28
• PHILIP II INHERITS AND RULES:
• SPAIN, NETHERLANDS, NAPLES, SICILY, AND ALL OF SPANISH AMERICAS!

ABSOLUTISM: SPAIN
GOLD & SILVER FROM AMERICAS MAKE SPAIN RICH
BUT . . .
FEW FARMERS, SO BUY FOREIGN FOOD
FEW FACTORIES, SO BUY FOREIGN GOODS
FEW BANKS, SO USE FOREIGN ONES
="s INFLATION! HURTS SPANISH ECONOMY

ABSOLUTISM: SPAIN
• GOLD & SILVER
  BUY HUGE ARMY
  AND NAVY
• DUTCH REVOLT;
  NORTH WINS
  FREEDOM
• SPANISH ARMADA
  AGAINST ENGLAND
  1588 (THEY LOSE)
• SPAIN DECLINES
  IN 1600’S

ABSOLUTISM: SPAIN
FRANCE: ABSOLUTISM

- **BACKGROUND:**
- FRENCH PROTESTANTS & CATHOLICS FIGHT 8 WARS 1562-1598
- 1572 ST. BARTHOLOMEEW’S DAY MASSACRE: 1,000’S HUGUENOTS KILLED

- FRENCH PROTESTANTS KNOWN AS HUGUENOTS
• HENRY OF NAVARRE (STARTS BOURBON LINE)
• EDICT OF NANTES 1598: OK’S FR. PROTESTANTS (& HENRY TURNS CATHOLIC)
• HENRY STABILIZES FRANCE

• LOVED BY FRENCH: ONLY STATUE NOT PULLED DOWN DURING FR. REV.

FRANCE: ABSOLUTISM
- WEAK LOUIS XIII BECOMES KING
- HELPED BY CARDINAL RICHELIEU (#1 MINISTER)
- INCREASES KING’S POWER BY ATTACKING NOBLES

FRANCE: ABSOLUTISM
• LOUIS XIV TAKES OVER 1643-1715
• CARDINAL MAZARIN HELPS HIM TO BECOME MOST POWERFUL RULER IN FR. HISTORY
• HAS ANTI-NOBLE POLICIES
TWO EVENTS SHAPE LOUIS XIV’S EARLY LIFE:

- **30 YEARS WAR**
  1618-1648

- **FRENCH CIVIL WAR** 1648-53

- LOUIS DISTRUSTS NOBLES AFTER THIS

THE FRONDE
means “SLINGSHOT”
(weapon of choice at 1st in Paris)

FRANCE: ABSOLUTISM
• BUILDS VERSAILLES—MAKES NOBLES LIVE THERE TO CONTROL THEM
• PALACE SHOWS ABSOLUTE POWER TO FOREIGNERS
• OTHER RULERS COPY HIS LIFESTYLE

FRANCE: LOUIS XIV’S POLICIES
“I AM THE STATE”
LIVED SUCH A POWERFUL, SHOWY LIFE KNOWN AS: **THE SUN KING**
EXACT DAILY ROUTINE, PATRON OF THE ARTS, FINE FOOD, CLOTHES, WIGS, HUNTS.

LOUIS XIV
• SENDS ROYAL OFFICERS OUT TO COLLECT TAXES, RUN LAW COURTS (INSTEAD OF NOBLES)

• MERCANTILISM: COLONIES & LUXURY MANUFACTURING MAKE FRANCE SELF-SUFFICIENT ($)

• FRENCH FUR TRADE

FRANCE: LOUIS XIV’S POLICIES
WAR, WAR, WAR
LOUIS BUILDS UP- & USES- BIGGEST ARMY IN EUROPE
WEAKENS FRANCE A LOT
CAUSES SUFFERING, FAMINE, INFLATION

WAR OF SPANISH SUCCESSION: 6+ COUNTRIES ATTACK FRANCE
STOPS FRANCE & SPAIN UNITING

FRANCE: LOUIS XIV’S POLICIES
30 YEARS WAR 1618-1648

4 STAGES (NOT FULL 30 YEARS)

FOUGHT OVER RELIGION: DEFENESTRATION OF PRAGUE

CHANGES HISTORY OF EUROPE

HISTORY HINT: IF YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT A WAR WAS FOUGHT OVER, EXAMINE THE PEACE TREATY

HISTORY HINT: POLITICAL CHANGES ALWAYS BRING ON OTHER CHANGES: STAY TUNED FOR SCIENTIFIC REVOLUTION & ENLIGHTENMENT!

EASTERN ABSOLUTISM (BRIEFLY)
• DEVASTATES GERMANY,
• HURTS H.R.E
• HELPS SETTLE RELIGIOUS ISSUES (LAST RELIGIOUS WAR IN EUROPE)
• STARTS MODERN STATE SYSTEM & AND WAY WE DO PEACE TALKS

OUTCOMES OF 30 YEARS WAR: TREATY OF WESTPHALIA 1648
• **BASICALLY THIS IS GERMANY** broken into 300 SEPARATE “PARTS”

• **HAS HAPSBURG EMPEROR RULING W/ PRESTIGE BUT LITTLE POWER**

• Hard to rule such big, diverse area.
WESTERN ABSOLUTISM VS EASTERN ABSOLUTISM

- Serfs in Western Europe became free at end of Middle Ages ("Town air makes a man free")
- Made $$$$$
- Chose own jobs
- Marry who they wanted

- Eastern serfs were tied to the land (sold along with it)
- Couldn’t escape to towns (too few)
- Worked for little reward
- Treated very poorly
- Forced into lifelong jobs (soldiers, mines, farming, factories)
• IVAN THE TERRIBLE RULED AT AGE 3
• MISTREATED BY NOBLES
• GOOD RULER AT 1st, BECAME “TERRIBLE” AFTER HIS WIFE DIED (BLAMED NOBLES)

• LAID DOWN BASE FOR ABSOLUTISM
  ◦ SECRET POLICE
  ◦ SEIZED LANDS
• KILLED OLDEST SON, LEAVING RUSSIA IN “TIME OF TROUBLES”
• SOLVED WITH A ROMANOV RULER

RUSSIAN ABSOLUTISM
• **PETER THE GREAT**
  RULES 1682-1725
• 6 FEET, 7 INCHES
• UNBELIEVABLY STRONG
• WILD TEMPER/SENSE OF HUMOR
• INTELLIGENT, CURIOUS, STRONG-WILLED

RUSSIAN ABSOLUTISM
1600’S RUSSIA LIKE GERMANY IN 1100-1200’S
PETER WANTS TO CHANGE THIS
VISITS WEST, BRINGS BACK TECHNOLOGY AND EXPERTS

WESTERNIZATION:
BRINGING WESTERN:
  ◦ SOCIAL
  ◦ POLITICAL
  ◦ ECONOMIC
  ◦ SCIENTIFIC
IDEAS & GOODS INTO ONE’S COUNTRY WHILE KEEPING COUNTRY’S OWN CULTURE IN PLACE

WHAT PETER DOES FOR RUSSIA
• “WINDOW ON THE WEST”: BUILDS ST. PETERSBURG
• FORCES NOBLES TO LIVE THERE & LEAVE TO GO TO SCHOOL IN WEST
• PUTS ORTHODOX CHURCH UNDER GOV’T CONTROL

WHAT PETER DOES FOR RUSSIA
• WAR, WAR, WAR
• BUILDS, & USES, HUGE ARMY
• EXPANDS RUSSIA TO BOTH SEAS

WHAT PETER DOES FOR RUSSIA
• **BACKGROUND:**
  - ENG. KINGS COULDN’T TAX LIKE IN OTHER COUNTRIES
  - HAD TO ASK PARLIAMENT FOR MONEY WHICH GOT SOME POWER IN RETURN

• ELIZABETH I (“VIRGIN QUEEN”) DIES (NO HEIR)
• JAMES I (KING OF SCOTLAND & CATHOLIC) TAKES OVER PROTESTANT ENGLAND
• STARTS **STUART RULE:** 100+ YEARS

**ABSOLUTISM ENGLAND: A DIFFERENT STORY**
JAME’S SON CHARLES I WANTS ENG. CATHOLIC

CIVIL WAR starts!

PURITANS (think Pilgrims) vs CATHOLICS

KING CAPTURED, TRIED, & BEHEADED

ENGLISH CIVIL WAR: 1642-1649
(FRENCH CIVIL WAR 1648-53)
EXECUTION SENDS A MESSAGE TO FUTURE RULERS

O. CROMWELL: STARTS SUPER STRICT, UNPOPULAR MILITARY RULE

ENGLISH GET TIRED OF:
- NO DRINKING
- DARK CLOTHES
- NO DANCING
- NO THEATER
- NO SPORTING EVENTS

CROMWELL DIES

ENGLISH INVITE KING BACK TO RULE

RESULTS OF ENG. CIVIL WAR
- So he can take the place of Cromwell, Charles II forced to give:
  - **Habeas Corpus**
    - No jail w/o charges
    - Must have trials (not thrown in jail w/o a key)
- Charles’ Catholic brother James II takes over
- Parliament worried about Catholic James II, invite his Protestant relative from Holland to rule

**Restoration & Glorious Rev.**
• ONE OF THE ONLY BLOODLESS REVOLUTIONS IN WORLD HISTORY
• NEW MONARCHS FORCED TO SIGN ENGLAND'S BILL OF RIGHTS IN ORDER TO RULE

• ENG. BECOMES A CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY
• NO TAXATION W/O REPRESENTATION
• FREEDOM OF SPEECH
• RIGHT TO PETITION
• NO CRUEL/UNUSUAL PUNISHMENT
• RIGHT TO BEAR ARMS
• NO STANDING ARMY

GLORIOUS REVOLUTION!
| CHANGES IN ENGLAND PASSED ON TO AMERICA, CHANGING WORLD HISTORY | GERMAN, AUSTRIAN, & PRUSSIAN ABSOLUTISM LEADS TO WWI |
| LEADS TO FRENCH REVOLUTION CHANGING WORLD HISTORY | EASTERN ABSOLUTISM LEADS TO RUSSIAN ISOLATION AND POST-WWII COLD WAR |

**EFFECTS OF ABSOLUTISM**