The Growth of European Nation-States in the 1500s and 1600s

KEY TERMS/PEOPLE
- Prince Henry the Navigator
- Diaz
- da Gama
- Cabral
- Christopher Columbus
- Cortés
- Pizarro
- Suleiman the Magnificent
- Ivan the Terrible
- Peter the Great
- Hohenzollern
- Frederick William
- Absolutism
- Francis I
- Concordat of Bologna
- Henry II
- Edict of Toleration
- Catherine de Medici
- Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day
- Henry IV
- Edict of Nantes
- Duke of Sully
- Cardinal Richelieu
- Louis XIV
- Mazarin
- Wars of Frondes
- divine right theory of rule
- Jean Baptiste Colbert
- Henry VII
- War of the Roses
- Henry VIII
- Mary Tudor
- Elizabeth I
- The Thirty-Nine Articles
- Sir Francis Drake
- The Stuart Kings
- The Stuart Restoration
- Tories
- Whigs
- The Glorious Revolution
- John Locke

OVERVIEW

Centralization of governments led to the rise of powerful nation-states and concomitant European exploration of the globe and regional wars on the continent. Spain, following the Portuguese lead, explored the Atlantic and soon surpassed its Iberian neighbor in colonies, wealth, and military power. Gold and silver from the New World helped shift the balance of power from the Mediterranean basin to the
Atlantic coast of Europe. The wealth from mines in the Spanish colonies created a financial and commercial center in the Netherlands, brought about rampant inflation in Europe, and eventually led to the decline of Spain as a major power.

Feudalism died gradually. The Hundred Years’ War (1337—1453), which devastated France and exhausted its nobility, indirectly led to a strong monarchy. Peace encouraged commerce, which gave rise to a taxable middle class that could support a national army independent of the nobility. From the middle of the 15th century to the second decade of the 16th, the monarchs of France centralized the state, recruited bourgeois administrators into government, and strengthened the army. Through most of the 16th century, the foreign adventures of two strong kings and the upheaval caused by the Reformation weakened the monarchy. Under the intelligent guidance of Cardinal Richelieu (1585—1642), prime minister to Louis XIII (1601—1643), the central government brought peace, prosperity, and stability to the realm during the first half of the 17th century. The Golden Age of France was during the reign of the Sun King, Louis XIV (1643—1715), whose absolutist monarchy dominated all classes in Europe's wealthiest and most populous country, upset the balance of power on the continent, and claimed the “divine right” of rule.

The strong government that developed in France contrasted with the constitutional system that evolved in England. The powers of the English kings had been checked by the nobility as far back as the 13th century, with the Magna Carta. The Tudors took the English throne in the 15th century as a compromise among the claimants who battled over it in the War of the Roses. Having only a tenuous hereditary right to the monarchy, they were forced to work through Parliament, which gradually represented a greater and greater portion of English society and therefore avoided the class distinctions that divided France. The Reformation had its effects on English government: The independence of the Anglican Church from the papacy strengthened the monarchy and Parliament; the Puritan Revolution established the supremacy of Parliament over the king and nurtured the tradition of constitutionalism.

A strong tradition of absolutism developed in Eastern Europe especially in the rising states of Russia, Prussia, and Austria. Social reform was sporadic and largely ineffectual and serfdom was widespread in the region. The baroque style of architecture was favored by the absolute monarchs of these states as a manifestation of their power and glory.

**EXPLORATION AND COLONIZATION: 1400s TO 1600s**

The Portuguese, from the middle to the end of the 15th century, supported by their able leader, *Prince Henry the Navigator* (1394—1460), explored the South Atlantic. Expeditions led by *Díaz, da Gama* (ca. 1469—1524), and *Cabral* (1467—1520) explored the coast of Africa and eventually established trading posts in India.

Spurred by missionary zeal, personal gain, and national pride, and aided by the development of the magnetic compass, the astrolabe, and more seaworthy craft, explorers from several states on the Atlantic set out on their journeys of discovery.

*Christopher Columbus* (1451—1506), seeking a direct route to Asia for the Spanish crown, discovered the Western Hemisphere, and despite opening the “New World,” laid the foundations for Europeans’ oppression and exploitation of native peoples. *Ferdinand Magellan* (1480—1521) circumnavigated the globe for Spain, and *Cortés*
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(1485–1547) and Pizarro (1475–1541), respectively, conquered the great American empires of the Aztecs and Incas. Gold and silver flowed from the New World mines into the coffers of the Spanish monarchs and to the merchants and manufacturers of the Netherlands. These explorers opened up trade routes for new products on three continents that would bring large profits to Europeans for centuries to come. This exchange of valuable goods and resources from each continent was known as the Columbian Exchange. This trade brought European manufactured goods and alcohol to Africa and the Americas and products such as lumber, fur, gold, sugar, potatoes, and corn to Europe.

Chafing under the oppressive rule of the Spanish Catholic King Philip II (1527–1598), the prosperous Low Countries whose leaders were Calvinist, revolted against the Spanish from 1556–1587. The bitter and bloody conflict led to the division of the Low Countries into the Spanish Netherlands in the south (which eventually became Belgium) and the United Provinces of the Netherlands in the north (eventually Holland). The defeat in 1588 of the attempt of Philip II's armada to invade England, an ally of the Netherlands, marked the beginning of the decline of Spain's hegemony in Western Europe.

The Thirty Years' War (1618–1648) began as a religious conflict, evolved into a national struggle for dominance of Central Europe, and led to the destruction of vast areas in Germany and the decline of the regional hegemony of the Holy Roman Empire. The Austrian Hapsburgs confronted the powerful Muslim Ottoman Turks in an attempt to expand their control of Eastern Europe. The 1683 attack on Austria by the forces of Suleiman the Magnificent was beaten back, and the Austrians eventually gained control of Bohemia, Hungary, and Transylvania.

Russia and Western Europe experienced radically different paths of development until the 18th century. For centuries, the princes of Moscow had been retainers of the Mongol conquerors, and the czars were able to use their influence with the Mongols to consolidate their power over the Russian people and to establish the hereditary role of czar. Ivan the Terrible (1530–1584) was an autocratic, expansionist who limited the power of the nobles (boyars), expanded the realm, and solidified the role of czar. A Time of Troubles ensued after his death, marked by civil war and the lack of an heir. The Romanov dynasty was established by the nobles in 1613, and the family ruled with an iron hand, reinstating serfdom and gaining virtual control over the Russian Orthodox Christian Church.

Peter the Great (1672–1725) expanded the power of the state and of the czars by establishing a powerful standing army, a civil service, and an educational system to train technicians in the skills developed by western science and technology. He imposed economic burdens, western ideas, and social restrictions on the peasants to further his power, erected the planned city of St. Petersburg on the Baltic, and built magnificent, ornate baroque palaces, churches, and public buildings to glorify his reign. Russia became one of the major powers of Europe during this period.

Brandenburg, an electorate of the Holy Roman Empire, was able to gain a degree of independence as a result of the weakening of the Hapsburg rule during the Thirty Years' War. The Hohenzollern, Frederick William (1688–1740), solidified autocratic rule over Brandenburg, Prussia, and the Rhine territories with a strong army and an efficient bureaucracy, and with a policy of weakening the nobles (Junkers) and sup-
pressing the peasants. The Junkers served as elite officers in the army and absolutist rule was established in Prussia.

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF ABSOLUTISM IN FRANCE**

*Francis I* (1515–1547), a Valois rival of Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, battled unsuccessfully to weaken the Hapsburgs as Europe's most powerful family but managed to consolidate absolutism in France by instituting the taille (a direct tax on land and property). With the *Concordat of Bologna*, he granted the Pope the right to collect *annates* (the first year's revenue from Church offices) in return for the power to nominate high officials in the French church, effectively nationalizing the church in France and increasing the power of the monarchy.

Opposed to any reform of the Church that might weaken his influence over it, he and his successor, *Henry II* (1547–1559), actively persecuted the Huguenots (French Calvinists). Continued persecution under *Francis II* and *Charles IX* provoked civil war, which was halted by an *edict of toleration* issued by *Catherine de Medici*, mother of, and regent for, *Charles IX*.

The *Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day* renewed the brutal civil war when Catholic mobs slaughtered Huguenot leaders who had gathered in Paris to celebrate a royal wedding. Although the Huguenots were never more than 10 percent of the French population, they wielded great influence since they came from the nobility and the bourgeoisie.

Persecution, civil war, and dynastic rivalry left *Henry of Navarre*, a Huguenot, as the only legitimate claimant to the French throne, and he ascended, after an expedient conversion to Catholicism, as *Henry IV* (1589–1610). He issued the *Edict of Nantes*, a remarkable expression of religious tolerance that guaranteed civil and religious freedom to the Huguenot minority. His finance minister, the *Duke of Sully*, reformed the tax collection system to make it more equitable and efficient, improved transportation, stimulated trade and industry, and fostered prosperity. All of this led to an increase in the prestige and power of the monarchy.

After the death of Henry IV, the government suffered from corruption and mismanagement during the regency of *Louis XIII*. In 1624, Louis appointed *Cardinal Richelieu* as prime minister (1624–1642). It was not uncommon in this religious era for churchmen to serve as advisors to the monarchs of Europe. Richelieu centralized the government further by encouraging the commerce and industry that increased the tax base, by strengthening the military, and by instituting the *intendant system*, in which bourgeois officials, answerable only to the king, supervised the provinces and diminished the power of the nobility. Richelieu's domestic policies strengthened absolutism in France and prepared the way for its supreme embodiment in the *Sun King, Louis XIV*.

*Louis XIV* (1643–1715) was four when he ascended the throne of France. His mother was his regent, and she chose *Italian Cardinal Mazarin* (1602–1661) as prime minister. Like Richelieu, Mazarin was a capable administrator, and he protected Louis's claim to the throne during the tumultuous *Wars of the Fronde*, which reached their height from 1650 to 1652. The *Frondeurs* were nobles who sought to limit the powers of the monarch and to decentralize the government in order to extend their own influence. With the support of the bourgeoisie and the peasants,
who had little to gain in a return to the feudal order, Mazarin was able to subdue the Frondeurs and their ally, Spain.

When Mazarin died in 1661, Louis declared himself as his own prime minister. *L’Etat, c’est moi* ("I am the state") became the credo of this most absolutist monarch during the age of absolutism. Bishop Jacques Bossuet (1607–1704) provided the philosophical justification for the *divine right theory of rule* by claiming that Louis—like any absolutist monarch—was placed on the throne by God, and therefore owed his authority to no person or group.

According to feudal tradition, French society was divided into three *Estates*, made up of the various classes. The *First Estate* was the clergy; the *Second Estate*, the nobility; these comprised respectively 1 percent and 3 to 4 percent of the population. The *Third Estate* included the great bulk of the population: the bourgeois or middle classes, the artisans and *urban workers*, and the *peasants*. Since France was, as were all European nations at this time, predominantly *agrarian*, 90 percent of its population lived on farms in the countryside. Louis XIV reigned over the Golden Age of French culture and influence: With a population of 17 million (about 20 percent of Europe’s total), France was the strongest nation on the continent.

Its industry and agriculture surpassed that of any other European country. Jean Baptiste Colbert (1619–1683), “The Father of French Mercantilism,” revitalized trade as Louis’s finance minister by abolishing internal tariffs and creating a free trade zone in most of France. He stimulated industry by subsidizing vital manufacturing and by building up the military. He hoped to make France self-sufficient by building a large fleet that would rival that of the English and Dutch and enable the French to acquire an overseas empire. Since even France could not afford both a powerful army and navy, Louis opted for the army; the end result was the global supremacy of the British.

France developed Europe’s first modern army. Artillery—usually supplied by civilian private contractors—was made a part of the army. The government—instead of officers—recruited, trained, equipped, and garrisoned troops. A chain of command was established, and the army was increased from 100,000 to 400,000, the largest in Europe.

War was an instrument of Louis’s foreign policy. For two thirds of his reign, France was at war.

*The War of the Devolution* (1667–1668): France’s unsuccessful attempt to seize the Spanish Netherlands (Belgium) as part of a feudal claim.


*Seizure of Luxembourg and attempt to annex Alsace-Lorraine* (1681–1697): Although France retained Luxembourg, most of Louis’s ambitions were frustrated by The League of Augsburg, an alliance of Holland, Spain, the Holy Roman Emperor, and England.

*The War of the Spanish Succession* (1702–1714): Louis threatened to upset the Balance of Power (the theory that no single state should be predominant on the continent) in Europe by laying claim to the Spanish throne for his grandson. The
Grand Alliance, which included the major states of western Europe, fought to prevent this union of the French and Spanish thrones.

The Treaty of Utrecht (1713–1714): Restored the balance of power by allowing Philip V, Louis's grandson, to remain on the Spanish throne so long as France and Spain were never ruled by the same monarch. It also awarded to the victors various European and overseas possessions of the Spanish Empire.

France enjoyed a Golden Age of culture and cultural influence during Louis XIV's reign:

French became the "universal tongue," spoken by diplomats and in the royal courts of all Europe.

Louis patronized artists and especially writers such as Corneille, Racine (1639–1699), Molière (1622–1673), de Sévigné, de Saint-Simon (1607–1693), La Fontaine, De La Rochefoucauld (1621–1695).

French literature and style—in dress, furniture, architecture—became standards by which all Europeans measured their sophistication.

Although his reign solidified central government and marked the high point of absolutism in France, his many wars exhausted the treasury. This left the bourgeoisie and the peasantry with an enormous tax burden since the clergy and nobility were exempted from most taxes. His personal extravagances aggravated the situation: The Royal Palace at Versailles cost over $100 million to build, and added to that was the money spent on his elaborate entertainments for the "captive nobility" at court. (He defanged the nobles by making participation in court life a social requirement.) He suppressed religious dissent, outlawing Jansenism, a form of Catholic Calvinism, revoking the Edict of Nantes, which had guaranteed toleration for the Huguenots, and making Catholicism mandatory.

The central government that developed in France from the era of the religious wars to Louis's reign was efficient: The power of the nobles was weakened; tax collection was systematized; royal edicts were enforced; the bourgeoisie was given a role in administration. The economic system was successful: Agriculture and trade were stimulated. The seeds for revolution were sown in the national debt that had to be paid off by the Third Estate, which bore many responsibilities and enjoyed few privileges.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONSTITUTIONALISM IN ENGLAND

Henry VII (1457–1509), the first of the Tudor monarchs, established a strong central government even though many regarded the family as usurpers invited to the throne as an expedient compromise to end the War of the Roses. By regulating trade and internal commerce through monopolies, charters, and licenses, Henry raised revenues from the prosperous middle class. This money enabled him to finance a standing army and keep the nobility in check. The Court of the Star Chamber administered central justice and further subdued rebellious nobles. Since the Tudors were beholden to Parliament for inviting them to the throne, Henry and his successors, including his son Henry VIII (1509–1547), consulted Parliament on significant issues.
Unlike his father, who was levelheaded and tightfisted, Henry VIII was an impetuous, extravagant, passionate man whose temper, ambitions, and appetites were legendary. The need to maintain legitimacy by having a male heir led Henry VIII to make those decisions, with Parliament's support, that led to the English Reformation. (See page 64.)

Edward VI (1547—1553) assumed the throne upon the death of his father, Henry VIII, and, since he was only ten and of fragile health, the government was run by a regent, the Duke of Somerset. A devout Calvinist, Somerset imposed his religion on the people, and, as a result, was ousted in 1550. Under another regent, the basic tenets of the Anglican Reformation were restated, and the Anglican Book of Common Prayer was made the basis for all church services.

Mary Tudor (1553—1558), who was Henry VIII's daughter by his first wife, the Catholic Catherine of Aragon, became queen when Edward died at the age of sixteen. Unpopular, not only because she was Roman Catholic but because she was married to Philip II of Spain, she had to suppress a rebellion against her rule and her marriage alliance with Spain. Bloody Mary earned her name when she burned hundreds of Protestants at the stake for dissenting against her attempt to reinstitute Catholicism in England. When she died, she was succeeded by her half sister, Elizabeth, Henry's daughter by his second wife, Anne Boleyn.

Elizabeth I (1558—1603), last and greatest of the Tudor monarchs, reigned when the population of England and Wales was between 3 and 4 million, while that of France was over 16 million and that of Spain nearly 9 million. Enriched by its conquests and colonies in the New World, Spain was the predominant power of Europe; its geographic destiny determined by its island nature, England was at the fringe of the religious upheaval and political change on the continent. Its church was independent from Rome but closer to Latin theology than any other Protestant sect. Its government balanced power between the monarchy and Parliament. Its wealth came from rich arable land and an energetic populace that excelled in commerce and trade. Its social system was unique: a gentry, lesser nobles whose original wealth came from ownership of land, expanded by entering the world of commerce and by intermarrying with the middle class. There were no glaring distinctions between the upper and middle classes as there were on the continent, and the interests of nobles, gentry, and bourgeoisie were represented in Parliament.

Since the Tudors had been invited to the throne of England to settle the rival claims of the Houses of York and Lancaster during the War of the Roses, Elizabeth, her charismatic father, and her capable grandfather had lived under the shadow of "dynastic pretender." The child of Anne Boleyn, whose marriage to Henry was scandalous if not outright illegal, The Virgin Queen (a euphemism for her never marrying, considering her notorious love affairs) had to prove her mettle in the face of the prejudices against her line, her parentage, and her gender. Her natural intelligence had been honed by substantial education; her powerful personality had been toughened by living as a family "outcast" at her father's, her half brother's, and her half sister's court. Adored by her people and feared by her enemies—at home and abroad—she reigned for nearly a half-century as one of Europe's greatest monarchs and one of the world's greatest women.
THE ELIZABETHAN AGE

Religion

Upon assuming the throne, Elizabeth repealed Mary's pro-Catholic legislation and reinstated the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity that established the English Reformation during her father's reign.

The Thirty-Nine Articles (1563) followed Protestant doctrine and was vague enough to accommodate most of the English except the Puritans (English Calvinists). They believed that the liturgy (prescribed ritual) and the hierarchy (the order of rank within the organization) needed "purification" from Catholic influence. Militant Puritans challenged royal authority, and while they were suppressed for the time, they grew stronger during the reigns of Elizabeth's successors and would influence the development of constitutionalism.

Diplomacy

When the Netherlands, a Hapsburg possession that had adopted Protestantism, revolted against Spanish rule, Elizabeth entered into an alliance with the Dutch in 1577 for fear that Holland would provide a base from which Spain could invade England. Both England and Holland sent privateers (pirates commissioned by the state) to prey on the treasure ships from the Spanish colonies in the new world. Outraged, Philip II, Spanish king and Holy Roman Emperor, conspired with English Catholics to overthrow Elizabeth and put her cousin, the Catholic Mary Stuart, queen of the Scots, on the throne. In 1587, Elizabeth ordered the execution of Mary for treason, and Philip declared war on England. The La Felicima Armada, or "great and most fortunate fleet," of 132 heavily armed warships loaded with troops, was defeated in 1588 by the superior naval tactics of the smaller, more maneuverable English fleet led by Sir Francis Drake (1540—1596). The superior navigational skills and military tactics of the English sailors were critical to their success as severe storms also sank many Spanish ships. The failure of the Spanish Armada marks the beginning of the fall of Spanish naval dominance and the rise of British naval dominance.

Culture

This was the Golden Age of English literature—the era of Shakespeare, Spenser, Donne, Marlowe, Francis Bacon—when a brilliant national literature was developed that instilled pride in the uniqueness of English culture.

THE STUART KINGS AND PARLIAMENT (1603—1688)

James I (1566—1625), king of Scotland and son of Mary Queen of Scots, took the throne upon Elizabeth's death since she had no direct heirs. A believer in the divine right of kings, he failed to understand the importance of Parliament in governing England. A conference at Hampton Court, 1604, failed to reconcile the Puritans, who opposed Anglican hierarchy, with the church of England. The Gunpowder Plot, 1605, was uncovered before disgruntled Catholics, led by Guy Fawkes and objecting to James's enforcement of laws that required participation in Anglican services,
could blow up the king and Parliament. The years 1610 to 1611 saw the session of Parliament enmeshed in the issue of Parliament’s role in financing government.

The “Addled” Parliament met in 1614 and was so-called by James because it spent its entire session arguing that taxes could be levied only with its consent and that rule was by king and Parliament in conjunction. Dissolving Parliament, James tried to rule without it until England’s involvement in the Thirty Years’ War necessitated his reconvening it. After a rancorous session in which Parliament criticized James’s foreign policy, in 1621 Parliament passed the Great Protestation, claiming free speech and authority in conducting governmental affairs. James dissolved the body and arrested its leaders.

Charles I (1600–1649) was, like his father, devoted to the divine right theory and woefully inept at dealing with Parliament. Embroiled in wars on the continent, he called for Parliament to vote funds, which it refused to do until he signed the Petition of Right in 1628: Parliament alone can levy taxes; martial law cannot be declared in peacetime; soldiers may not be quartered in private homes; imprisonment requires a specific charge. The Bishops’ War of 1639–1640, after Archbishop Laud persecuted Puritans and tried to force Anglican worship upon the Presbyterian Scots, led Charles to reconvene Parliament in order to pay indemnities upon defeat of his forces.

The Long Parliament (1640–1660) demanded, in return for paying for Charles’s defeat, that he impeach his top advisors; allow Parliament to meet every three years without his summons, and promise not to dissolve Parliament without its consent. When Charles attempted, in early 1642, to arrest opposition members, Parliament seized control of the army. Charles gathered his forces, and the English Civil War (1642–1649) began.

THE COURSE OF THE WAR

The middle class, the merchants, the major cities, and a small segment of the nobility supported Parliament and were called Roundheads. The Anglican clergy, the majority of the nobility, and the peasants backed the king and were referred to as Royalists or Cavaliers.

1643

The Roundheads allied with Presbyterian Scotland, promising to impose Presbyterianism on England in exchange for military assistance. Charles called on Irish Catholics for help.

1644

Oliver Cromwell (1599–1658), a Puritan leader of Parliament, led his New Model Army of Puritans against the Cavaliers at Marston Moor and defeated them decisively.

1645

Charles surrendered to the Scots.
1647
The Scots turned Charles over to Parliament, which was led by Cromwell's Independents, who favored religious toleration. The Scots turned about and allied with Charles, who promised that he would impose Presbyterianism on the English.

1648
Cromwell defeated the Scots at the Battle of Preston and helped purge the Presbyterians from Parliament, thereby creating the Rump Parliament, which voted to behead Charles for treason.

1649
With the death of Charles, England became a republic, the Commonwealth, and Cromwell and his army wielded the power. In suppressing Irish supporters of the crown, the Puritans committed terrible atrocities and imposed injustices that would acerbate the "Irish Question" for centuries.

1653–1660
Cromwell was designated Lord Protector by a puppet Parliament and ruled with the support of Parliament until his death in 1658. His son Richard, a far less capable ruler, was deposed in 1660, and Charles II (1630–1685) was proclaimed king.

THE STUART RESTORATION (1660–1688)
The Cavalier Parliament (1660–1679) marked the development of the Tory and Whig parties. The Tories, made up of the nobles, the gentry, and the Anglicans, were conservatives who supported the monarchy over Parliament and who wanted Anglicanism to be the state religion. The Whigs, mainly middle class and Puritan, favored Parliament and religious toleration. Since the Tories prevailed in the Cavalier Parliament, Anglicanism was restored by a series of laws that forbade dissenters to worship publicly, required government officials and military personnel to practice Anglicanism, and discriminated against other sects.

The Whig Parliament, elected in 1679, was suspicious of Charles II's absolutist and pro-Catholic tendencies, and enacted the Habeas Corpus Act, which limited royal power by

- Enabling judges to demand that prisoners be in court
- Requiring just cause for continued imprisonment
- Providing for speedy trials
- Forbidding double jeopardy (being charged for a crime that one had already been acquitted of)
The Glorious Revolution

James II (r. 1685–1688) was unpopular the moment he took the throne. A devout Roman Catholic, he appointed Catholic ministers to important posts and gave the appearance of trying to impose Catholicism upon the English. In 1688, important nobles invited William of Orange, a Hollander, and the wife of James’s oldest child, Mary, to take the English throne. When William and Mary arrived in England, James fled to exile in France, and the new monarchs accepted from Parliament, as a condition of their reign, the Declaration of Rights (enacted into law as the Bill of Rights in 1689). The Habeas Corpus Act, the Petition of Right, and the Bill of Right are all part of the English Constitution.

The Declaration of Rights

1. Only Parliament can impose taxes.
2. Laws can be made only with the consent of Parliament.
3. A standing army can be maintained only through the consent of Parliament.
4. The people have the right of petition.
5. Parliament has the right of free speech.
6. The people have the right to bear arms.
7. People have the right to due process, trial by peers, and reasonable bail.
8. Parliament is to be freely elected and dissolved only by its own consent.

The Glorious Revolution was actually the culmination of an evolutionary process over centuries which, through historical accident, outright conflict, and painstaking design, increased the power of Parliament over the monarchy. In the centuries that followed, monarchs in England came to reign while Parliament came to rule. Although Parliament, at the time of the Glorious Revolution, served the interests of the wellborn or the wealthy, it came to represent “the people” as government came to be viewed as existing and functioning according to John Locke’s Enlightenment concept of “consent of the governed.” The English and those who inherited their political traditions would guarantee individual rights and would create modern democracy.

Sample Essay Question

The sample thematic essay question and the practice essays presented in this chapter are types found in the Advanced Placement Examination in European History, and they require knowledge of causes, effects, personalities, ideas, and events.

Sample Question

"Evaluate the reign of "The Sun King."
Comments on the Sample Question

Follow the “Simple Procedures” for writing an essay. (See page 33.)

First, What does the question want to know? “Judge the worth of” and discuss the “pluses and minuses” of the reign of the personification of absolutism in Europe, Louis XIV.

Second, What do you know about it? He was called the Sun King because he was at the center of the political life of the state (L'état, c'est moi), and France was the dominant power in Europe during his nearly three quarters of a century reign.

Third, How would you put it into words? The abuses of political power in the 20th century may bias your evaluation of Louis, but realize that the Golden Age of French culture was during his reign. The diffusion of language, literature, and furniture styles may not be worth the ravages of military expansionism, but don’t underestimate the accomplishments of one of the world’s most powerful men over the course of one of the world’s longest reigns.

Sample Answer

“I am the state,” said Louis in 1661 when Cardinal Mazarin, his chief minister during his minority, died. Louis became more than his own prime minister; he was the embodiment of absolutism, the form of government in which a monarch ruled by Divine Right and was answerable only to God. His reign is one of the longest in history—72 years from the age of 5 in 1643 to his death at 77 in 1715. It is marked by great accomplishments and dismal failures. Any evaluation of his reign will have to consider that both his accomplishments and his failures outlived him.

His greatest accomplishments were to extend the royal authority that had been established by his predecessors and to help establish France as culturally dominant in Europe.

Cardinals Richelieu and Mazarin had left a centralized government for Louis to inherit. The intendant system, royal agents set up by Richelieu and strengthened by Mazarin to govern the provinces, collected royal taxes and enforced royal decrees. In this way, the king was able to blunt the power of ambitious nobles who threatened central authority. The nobility, powerful and restless over the centuries, was defanged not only by the intendants but by Louis’s elaborate system of court ritual and favor granting. To be at the center of the high society or to gain the king’s favor, the nobles had to play the roles of fawning courtiers, spending their days as virtual prisoners of court ceremony and their energies in petty intrigues. It was considered a profound honor to be able to help dress the Sun King upon his rising.

If Louis was a man of limited intellect, he was a genius at consolidating personal power. He knew how to neutralize potential enemies and how to pick talented underlings. His finance minister, Jean Baptiste Colbert (the father of French mercantilism), fostered prosperity through mercantilist policies by subsidizing industry, improving transportation, encouraging trade, and supporting overseas exploration and colonization. It was during Louis’s reign that Canada and Louisiana became French colonies, that France became economically self-sufficient.

France’s commercial successes enriched the royal treasury and enabled Louis to indulge in the two vices that would lead to his decline: extravagance and war.
His extravagant patronage of French writers and artists helped create the Golden Age of French culture. French became the universal language of Europe, spoken not only by diplomats but in virtually all the courts. French style was the measure of good taste in clothes, furniture, manners. His extravagant egotism led him to build Versailles Palace for over $100 million in 1682. It remains as one of the world’s most magnificent edifices, more than the personal residence of the greatest absolutist in European history, but also a symbol of the power and majesty of France in his day.

France was Europe’s most populous nation in Louis’s day, with about 17 million inhabitants, and its richest, with fertile farmlands, productive industries, vital cities, and towns. This allowed Louis to indulge in war. Under Luvois, his war minister, he created the first modern standing army. It was well trained and equipped, massive for the times—400,000 men—and supported by integral units of artillery. He used it to carry out his basic foreign policy of expanding French influence and of extending France to its “natural boundaries” along the Rhine River. This brought France in conflict with most of the major powers in Europe and involved the nation in four separate wars fought from 1667 to 1714. French troops were called “The Nuns” during this period.

When Louis died in 1714, the treasury was drained, commerce was diminished, French political influence in Europe in decline. His personal extravagances and his penchant for costly wars would lead to disaster for his successors. They may have had the pretense of absolutism, but they hadn’t the resources. Louis XIV’s reign was a mix of glittering achievements and dismal decline. He put on a great show and left the unpaid bills to his successors and his nation.

EVALUATE THE SAMPLE ANSWER

1. Did it have a good introduction?
2. Did it reflect an understanding of terms and the intent of the question?
3. Did it overstate one position, fudge a decision, or make an attempt to balance the pluses and minuses while decisively drawing a conclusion?
4. Did it demonstrate a command of the facts? Were they relevant, accurate, interesting?
5. Was the essay long enough, well-written, easily understood?
6. Did it make its case?
7. What would you have added?
8. Did it have a conclusion that summed up effectively?

RATER’S COMMENTS ON THE SAMPLE ANSWER

7—Well qualified

This is a well-balanced attempt to evaluate the reign of one of the world’s greatest kings. It displays an understanding of the broad issues of centralized authority and the abuses of power. It lays out its intentions in a crisp introduction, sums them up in its conclusion. It is well written and clear in making its case.

Weaknesses: It makes no reference to the decline of Louis’s reign due to the narcissistic twists of his substantial egotism. The descriptions of this process by Saint-Simon complete the development of this degeneracy first described by Louis in his
memoirs. The death of Colbert, Louis's most gifted and trusted advisor, marks the start of the decline.

The essay also fails to consider very serious "minuses" of the reign: Louis's religious intolerance (he revoked the Edict of Nantes and made Catholicism mandatory); his deliberate failure to convene the Estates General, the only body representative of the three Estates, and therefore to offer no outlet against royal absolutism; the complexity of the wars of Louis XIV; and the humiliation of the Treaty of Utrecht, which redrew the boundaries of France to where they had been before Louis's decades of war and that diminished France's continental and international clout.

**Practice Essay Questions**

These questions are samples of the various types of thematic essays on the Advanced Placement Examination in European History. (See pages 20—21 for a detailed explanation of each type.)

**QUESTION 1**

*Contrast and compare* the development of the nation-state in France and in England from the early 16th to the end of the 17th centuries.

**COMMENTS ON QUESTION 1**

This is a very general question on a very complex development. The *contrast* is glaring in that during this period the French developed *absolutism* to its pinnacle and the England continued the evolution of *constitutionalism*. "Who did what, when, and how" is a convenient formula for tracing the separate developments. Be careful not to get lost in detail. The large scope of the question requires a big-picture perspective.

The comparison of the development of these two very different styles of government is more difficult. "To compare" is to measure for similarities and differences. Were there similarities? Did the monarchs of these two diverse nations have similar traits of personality, similar methods for consolidating power? Were there similar obstacles to overcome, such as the vested interests of the nobility or the need for revenue? Despite the differences between absolutism and constitutionalism, were there common goals—consolidation, centralization of authority, and modernization?

**QUESTION 2**

*Analyze* the development of absolutism in France.

**COMMENTS ON QUESTION 2**

Here you must "examine in detail" as well as "determine relationships." You should take the long view by starting with the end of the Hundred Years War, glancing at
the roles of the early Valois monarchs in centralizing authority, considering the religious wars of the 16th century and the role of Henry IV in restoring national order and royal esteem, examining the profound accomplishments of Richelieu (one of Hollywood's favorite villains), then touring the reign of Louis XIV.

**QUESTION 3**

*To what extent and in what ways did the Puritan Revolution contribute to the supremacy of Parliament in 1689?*

**COMMENTS ON QUESTION 3**

This is a difficult question because it requires that you demonstrate how and how much a complex set of events contributed to a complex development. An effective approach would be to divide the bigger issue into smaller questions: What was the Puritan Revolution? How did it increase the power of Parliament? How did the Restoration affect Parliament's role? How was the monarchy weakened by the Puritan Revolution? How and why did the Glorious Revolution occur?

**QUESTION 4**

*"The Tudors brought England into the modern world." Assess the validity of this statement.*

**COMMENTS ON QUESTION 4**

To "determine the truth or value" of this assertion, you must clarify what is meant by "the modern world," examine the Tudor reign—specifically Henry VII, Henry VIII, and Elizabeth I—and demonstrate whether or not the Tudors accomplished a transformation. Be careful about dismissing Henry VIII because of "bad press." Despite his glaring personal failings—abused wives and gluttony outstanding among them—he strengthened the monarchy and initiated the English Reformation. Elizabeth may be famous for standing up to the superpower of her day—Spain—but the Golden Age of English culture was also during her reign.

**QUESTION 5**

*Explain how the Glorious Revolution of 1688 established constitutional government in England.*

**COMMENTS ON QUESTION 5**

While this requires specific knowledge of events, laws, and effects, your answer should make clear how the abdication of James II, the invitation to the throne for William and Mary, and the conditions set for this by Parliament laid the founda-
tion for a modern democratic state. How was Parliament’s power solidified? How did the Bill of Rights establish a rule of law? How did the supremacy of Parliament and these basic rights limit the monarchy?

QUESTION 6

Describe the process of exploration, discovery, and colonization in the 1400s and 1500s among the European states bordering the Atlantic.

COMMENTS ON QUESTION 6

The best approach to this question would involve a chronological account beginning with the Portuguese and Spanish, contrasting their routes of exploration and their modes of colonization, and then outlining the roles of the other Western European states involved in the issue. The question is broad in scope, but needs specific factual references to illustrate the main points.

QUESTION 7

Contrast and compare the development of absolutism in 17th century Prussia and Russia.

COMMENTS ON QUESTION 7

Contrast (show differences), compare (show similarities) in the development of centralized monarchy under the Hohenzollerns of Prussia and the Romanovs of Russia. Compare methods; contrast unique historical backgrounds of the two nations.

QUESTION 8

Explain how Spain became Europe’s richest and most powerful nation-state during the 16th century and then fell into an equally dramatic decline during the 17th century.

COMMENTS ON QUESTION 8

Spain’s ascendency is attributable to the same broad factors as is its decline: a crusading zeal to explore, conquer, and colonize; a religious mission to suppress heresy and convert the nonbeliever; the acquisition of gold and silver in lieu of a vibrant commercial and manufacturing economy.
Practice Multiple-Choice Questions

(These represent the different types of questions that appear on the exam.)

1. The end of the Hundred Years' War encouraged the growth of centralized government in France for all of the following reasons EXCEPT
   (A) the nobility had been weakened by the war
   (B) the monarchy had led the fight against the English
   (C) the revival of commerce increased the taxable revenues of the bourgeoisie
   (D) nobles were recruited to serve as government administrators
   (E) the king was able to keep a strong standing army

2. Francis I further consolidated centralized power by levying the taille, a tax on
   (A) all land and property
   (B) on peasant crops
   (C) on the Gallic Church's income
   (D) on the landholdings of the nobility
   (E) on imports

3. When Henry IV remarked, "Paris is well worth a Mass," he was referring to
   (A) his prayers for the fall of the city during his siege of it
   (B) his expected visit during the Easter season
   (C) his conversion to Catholicism to gain popular favor
   (D) his conversion to Calvinism to gain support of the Huguenots
   (E) his visit with the Pope to gain absolution

4. The Edict of Nantes, issued by Henry IV in 1598, was one of the most significant acts of his reign because of all the following reasons EXCEPT
   (A) it was one of the first governmental guarantees of religious freedom in Europe
   (B) it granted Huguenots civil and political equality with Catholics
   (C) it continued the bitter civil war between Catholic and Protestant
   (D) it brought peace to France
   (E) it granted Huguenots political control of many towns in France

5. Probably the most important step Cardinal Richelieu took to strengthen centralized government and an absolutist monarchy in France was
   (A) to involve France in the Thirty Years' War
   (B) to institute the intendant system to oversee the provinces
   (C) to levy taxes on the clergy and nobility
   (D) to suppress the musketeers
   (E) to ban private duels within the realm
6. When Louis XIV said "L'état, c'est moi," he was referring to

(A) his role as an enlightened despot with the peoples' best interests in mind
(B) his assumption of the role of his own prime minister upon the death of Mazarin
(C) his title as French Sovereign
(D) his resistance to the Frondeurs
(E) his belief in the divine right of kings

7. The above image of Peter I cutting off the beard of an old believer lampoons a beard tax that was meant to accomplish which of the following?

(A) Bring western European culture to the Russian nobility
(B) Collect funds to build St. Petersburg and support the army
(C) Encourage the purchase of more scarves
(D) Exert dominance over the nobility
(E) Make the Russian people more sanitary
8. Why, if during the reign of Louis French was the “universal language” and French styles were the measure of good taste, was the French army called the Huns of the 17th century?

(A) It relied primarily on cavalry tactics.
(B) It recruited troops from the Russian steppes.
(C) Large, modern, and aggressive, it upset the continent’s balance of power.
(D) Its top commanders—Turenne, Vauban, and Conde—had trained under Attila.
(E) It was the first European army to include integral artillery.

9. During the 16th and 17th centuries, while France developed absolutism, the English monarchy was checked by

(A) a strong peasantry
(B) a few powerful and independent noble families
(C) a Bill of Rights guaranteeing individual freedoms
(D) the Anglican Church
(E) a strong Parliament

10. That England developed a constitutional government can be explained by all of the following EXCEPT

(A) the English kings rejected the divine right theory
(B) the Tudor monarchs, lacking a legitimate claim to the throne, had to cooperate with Parliament
(C) the English gentry blurred the sharp class distinctions between the nobility and middle classes that existed elsewhere in Europe
(D) revolution strengthened the role of Parliament
(E) a tradition of individual rights served as a basis for constitutionalism

11. That the Anglican Church broke from Rome before altering Roman Catholic dogma indicates that

(A) Henry started the English Reformation because he couldn’t get a divorce sanctioned by the Pope
(B) Henry’s lust for Anne Boleyn motivated him to reject his devout Catholicism
(C) because Henry was eager to have a male heir, he urged Parliament to pass the Act of Supremacy
(D) Thomas Cranmer issued the divorce that precipitated the Reformation in return for his appointment as Archbishop of Canterbury
(E) many factors, including resentment of papal abuses, contributed to the English Reformation
12. All of the following were significant accomplishments of the English during the reign of Elizabeth I EXCEPT

(A) the Thirty-Nine Articles completed the English Reformation
(B) her foreign policy encouraged the independence of the Netherlands, a commercial and colonial rival of Spain
(C) she weakened the power of Spain, bastion of Catholic orthodoxy
(D) she satisfied the Puritans who had criticized the Anglican liturgy as too close to Catholicism
(E) she encouraged nationalism and the development of a unique culture

13. Probably the most significant long-term result of the Puritan Revolution (1643–1660) was

(A) the restoration of the Stuarts to the throne
(B) the issuance of the Petition of Right
(C) the increased authority of Parliament
(D) the vindication of the divine right of the monarchy
(E) the recognition of Calvinism as England's official religion

14. Which of the following was NOT a provision of the Declaration of Rights, 1689?

(A) Only Parliament can levy taxes.
(B) The king may maintain a standing army without the consent of Parliament.
(C) All laws must be made with the consent of Parliament.
(D) The right of trial by jury is guaranteed.
(E) Due process of law is guaranteed.

15. William and Mary's ascension to the English throne in 1689

(A) restricted the right of Parliament to raise taxes
(B) nullified the Declaration of Rights
(C) was founded on the divine-right theory
(D) indicated the supremacy of Parliament
(E) restored the Tudor dynasty
16. The free flow of plants and animals as well as trade goods, between Europe and the Americas is referred to by historians as
(A) transcontinental adoption
(B) food migration
(C) international assimilation
(D) Columbian interaction
(E) Columbian exchange

17. Which was a result of the Thirty Years' War?
(A) Germany replaced Austria as the predominant power in Central Europe.
(B) The Hapsburg reign ended Austria.
(C) Germany was economically devastated and its population decimated.
(D) The French lost all influence over German affairs.
(E) Sweden was victorious in all phases of the conflict.

18. Serfdom was consolidated during the 1500s and 1600s in which of the following countries?
(A) England and France
(B) Russia and France
(C) Prussia and the Netherlands
(D) Austria and Spain
(E) Russia and Prussia