

The Age of Absolutism

Study Guide

Questions:

1. Summarize the views of the various political theorists of the 16^c and 17^c regarding absolutism.
2. How was divine-right monarchy, recognized by these theorists, different from pure arbitrary despotic power (arbitrary monarchy)?
3. How did Henry IV lay the groundwork for strong monarchical authority in France?
4. What was the basic erroneous premise of mercantilism? Identify key mercantilist principles.
5. Cardinal Richelieu's two goals, as Louis XIII's chief minister, was to strengthen the power of the king/central government and to make France the dominant power in Europe. How did he attempt to achieve these goals [detail his domestic policies--you will detail his foreign policies in the next assignment]?
6. Why did the *Fronde* occur in France between 1648 and 1653? What were the immediate and long-term results of this uprising for the future of the French monarchy?
7. What were the three ways in which Louis XIV attempted to rule the provinces?
8. Why did Louis XIV build his palace complex at Versailles? What was life like there for the French nobility?
9. How did Colbert's policies as Louis XIV's finance minister illustrate the objectives of mercantilism?
10. What were the strengths and weaknesses of Colbert's economic policies?
11. What were the limits of royal absolutism in France?

Questions:

1. What were Louis XIV's foreign policy goals? What was Europe's response to his vision of France's role on the continent?
2. Identify the causes and results of the War of the Spanish Succession.
3. What were the provisions of the Treaties of Utrecht?
4. Why did Louis XIV revoke the Edict of Nantes in 1685? What were the repercussions of such a move?
5. What was Jansenism? How did Louis XIV deal with the Jansenists in France?
6. When he died, in what shape did Louis XIV leave France?
7. How did Louis XV rule France?
8. What structural problems were evident in France at the end of Louis XV's

reign?

Questions:

1. How was Leopold I's new Palace at Schönbrunn and the court life that existed there different from Versailles?
2. Where did Prince Eugène aggressively acquire new Habsburg territories in Europe? What role did the military play in his efforts?
3. What is meant by the phrase: *Let others wage war. You, happy Austria, marry [to prosper.]*?
4. Who were the *junkers*? What role did they play in Prussian society and in the government?
5. How did Frederick III, the Great Elector, become Frederick I, King of Prussia?
6. What political lessons in modern nation-state-building were learned by the rulers of Prussia and Austria, but not by a country like Poland?
7. How was Prussia under Frederick William I different from that of his predecessors?
8. What were Frederick II's view on governing?
9. How did Frederick II use security as a justification for absolutism?
10. What territories were controlled by the Habsburg Empire by the early 18c?
11. Why were the Pragmatic Sanctions ineffective? How did Maria Theresa survive the attacks on her throne which led to the War of the Austrian Succession?
12. Give examples that illustrate the ways in which Maria Theresa governed the Austrian Empire like any other absolute monarch of the 18^c.

Questions:

1. How did Ivan I and Ivan III begin to consolidate their power and the predominant place of the city of Moscow in late feudal Russian history?
2. What form of Christianity prevailed in Russia? Why was Moscow called "The Third Rome"?
3. What were the accomplishments of Ivan IV of Russia? Why did he receive the nickname, "The Terrible"?
4. How was Russia organized politically and economically in the 17^c?
5. What did Peter the Great learn from the European countries he visited on his "Grand Tour" of Europe in the late 17^c?
6. How were the Russian peasants treated by the Tsar's government?
7. How did Peter the Great modernize his military? his government? Russian society? the Russian Orthodox Church?

8. Where did Peter the Great push to expand Russian territories? Why did he choose those directions?
9. What were the major achievements of Peter the Great's reign?

Questions:

1. How and why were the United Provinces a unique republic in Europe?
2. How did the United Provinces gain their independence?
3. What were the accomplishments and failures of Jan De Witt? What was his fate?
4. Why was William III not able to establish absolutism in the United Provinces? How did the Estates General of Holland curtail his political and military ambitions?
5. How was the aristocracy of the United Provinces different from the usual European pattern?
6. How did the arts, especially painting, reflect 17c Dutch life? What were some of the major themes that were stressed by Dutch artists of the period?
7. Why was the first half of the 17^c sometimes called "The Dutch Half-Century?"
8. Why did tulips generate a speculation bubble in the 17^c?
9. Why did the Dutch Republic decline at the end of the 17^c?
10. How did Gustavus Adolphus transform Sweden into the most powerful state in the Baltic area?
11. Identify the causes for political upheaval in Sweden in the 1650s.
12. How did the reigns of Charles XI and Charles XII eventually lead to a non-absolutist government in Sweden?

Questions:

1. How were the English gentry unique among the landed classes of Europe? Why were they such a powerful political force in England?
2. Why was James I so unpopular with his British subjects? What alienated him from Parliament?
3. How was British common law different from Roman law?
4. What was Parliament's view of its political and constitutional role within the British government structure?
5. How did Charles I continue his father's political and fiscal policies? Where did he go even further than his father?
6. Why was the Petition of Rights a significant document in the constitutional evolution of England? What was Charles I's response to it?
7. How did Charles I anger most economic/political groups in England? What were their chief complaints about his regime?
8. Why was the Scottish rebellion, begun in 1639, a turning point in Charles I's reign?
9. What parts of English society initially supported the Roundheads during the English Civil War? the Cavaliers? Why?
10. What type of split occurred in the parliamentary forces by 1646? How did Oliver Cromwell respond to this division?
11. Describe the government of England under the Commonwealth and the

- Protectorate. What is meant by the "regime of the major generals"?
12. How did the 1652 Act of Settlement serve England's hold on Ireland?
 13. What were the results of the Puritan Revolution?

Questions:

1. Why did the Parliament restore the monarchy under Charles II in 1660?
2. What deal did Charles II make with Louis XIV of France?
3. Over what issues did Parliament and Charles II collide?
4. Why was James II forced to flee England in 1688? What did he do that so angered the British people?
5. Why was the change in power from James II to William and Mary called the "Glorious Revolution" in British history?
6. Identify the major political/constitutional principles highlighted in the English Bill of Rights. Why was it considered a milestone in British history?
7. Identify the political interests in England represented by the Whigs and the Tories.
8. How was the Hanoverian dynasty established in England?
9. How 'democratic' was Britain under the Hanoverian Georges?
10. What were some of the characteristics of British political life at the end of the 18^c? Who had the political as well as the social power in 18^c England?
11. Why do some historians feel that the modern British cabinet system had its origins here in the late 18^c?

Questions:

1. Create a CHART which compares and contrasts the political philosophies of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke.
2. Why was Hobbes viewed as the apologist for divine-right monarchy?
3. How did Locke's writings convert the English Revolution of 1688 into an event of universal meaning? How did his emphasis on property rights support or detract from his defense of the individual against the state?
4. List some of the "reasons of state" as practiced in 18^c European diplomacy.
5. How did diplomacy become a serious profession in the 18^c?
6. What were the causes of the Seven Years' War? What were the new political and diplomatic realignments that took place before the war?
7. What were the results of the Seven Years' War on the continent for Prussia? Austria?