

THE NATURE OF FRENCH POWER -----> ABSOLUTISM

1. CULTURAL: replaced Renaissance Italy as the leading center of art, architecture, literature, engineering, etc. "Overawe the world with French grandeur"

holistic approach to power: prestige, influence in all things, the focus was on harmony, stability, order

- 2/3 PERSONALITY / HISTORY: Louis himself, as well as the people, had a genuine fear of disorder going back to the days before Henry IV: order = rationality

- a. religious civil wars
- b. Richelieu- and the development of Absolutism
- c. Louis learns lessons about the Fronde
- d. personality- organized, methodical, industrious

4. CONCEPT OF SOVEREIGNTY:

sovereignty = independence = monopoly of power
consolidation of power = "L'etat c'est moi"

- a. use of force
- b. administration of justice
- c. cultural life of nation
- d. economic policies

5. CONCEPT OF ABSOLUTISM: DIVINE RIGHT OF KINGS

God as just and reasonable -----> power of the king
Bishop Bossuet- all power comes from God

6. ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF GOV.

centralized and hierarchical bureaucracy all for the purpose of:

- a. peace and order within France
- b. French power within Europe

key aspect: military reforms, Versailles, intendants

7. SPECIFIC POLICIES:

- a. Colbert and Mercantilism
- b. commercial code, free trade zones, gov. subsidies
- c. revoked Edict of Nantes 1685 : "1 King, 1 Law, 1 Faith"

French Power, Yet... 1789 and the French Revolution

Basic considerations:

- 1. strength = weakness**
- 2. deep, deep seeds of French Revolution**
- 3. general concepts of any revolution (see previous notes)**

Situation in France: Louis XIV (1643 – 1715)

- 1. great wealth and great poverty**
- 2. contemporary cultural achievements, yet grand tradition**
- 3. fear of disorder -> rational solutions, but define "rational"**
- 4. promotion of law and order internally, yet promotion of anarchy externally**
- 5. national agenda, yet local prerogatives**
- 6. tax system (absolute monarchy not so "absolute")**
- 7. role of nobles, yet inconsistent and not clearly defined**
- 8. religious unity, yet many leave France**
- 9. Wars of Louis XIV (1667 – 1715)**

Expression of French power or... Representative of French vulnerability?

Basic IDs for Wars of Louis XIV:

- 1. Treaty of Nimwegen 1678**
- 2. League of Augsburg and subsequent war 1688**
- 3. War of Spanish Succession 1702 – 1713**
- 4. The Rhine River / Franche-Comte' / Alsace – Lorraine / Pyrenees**
- 5. Grand Alliance 1701**
- 6. Peace of Utrecht 1713**
- 7. Charles II (Spain and England)**
- 8. William III**
- 9. Louis' grandson -> Philip V**
- 10. BOP**

The Wars of Louis XIV (1638 – 1715)

Previously, France used BOP to prevent Spanish / Hapsburg domination...

Now, BOP will be used to prevent French / Bourbon domination

By 1660, Hapsburg lands no longer a threat, now a temptation

1667: French army to Spanish Netherlands / blocked by Dutch, England, Sweden

1672: War against the Dutch (Charles II of England) blocked by Hapsburgs, Brandenburg, Denmark results in Treaty of Nimwegen 1678

1679: France occupies Alsace – Lorraine

1688: France v. League of Augsburg which included HRE, Spain, Sweden, Bavaria, Saxony, Palatinate, the Dutch, and England

**1702-13 War of Spanish Succession after Charles The Imbecile finally died
“The Pyrenees exist no longer”**

Louis v. The Grand Alliance

- 1713: The Peace of Utrecht confirms the nation-state system established at Westphalia (1648)**
- a. Spanish empire split between Spain, Austria, Britain, Savoy**
 - b. Spain keeps its North American colonies**
 - c. Louis' grandson becomes Philip V of Spain**
 - d. French and Spanish thrones can never be unified**
 - e. France also loses:**
 - No conquest of Belgium**
 - England gets Newfoundland, Nova Scotia**
 - Recog. Of British control of Hudson Bay**

England now emerges as the #1 power: Leads to the United Kingdom (United Kingdom Act 1707)

Problem: BOP maintains relative stability, but the re-drawn lines on the map do not consider nationalities, cultural realities, or the wishes of the people.

Treaty of Nimwagen 1678

result of 2 advances into Spanish Netherlands

blocked by the Alliance

France loses in Holland but did get Franche-Comte

League of Augsburg - War of the League of Augs. 1688

based on French aggression into HRE (Alsace, Lorraine)

Louis has to raise taxes on nobles to pay for war

War of Spanish Succession 1702-13

who gets Spain? King of France or HRE / BOP at stake

Not as destructive as 30 yrs. war- why not?

Louis agrees to Charles II will (pyrenees no longer exist)

BOP screwed up 1665-1700

Grand Alliance 1701

England, Holland, Austria, Brandenburg, Portugal, Savoy

yet, each nation fighting for its own sovereign interests

Peace of Utrecht 1713

confirms state system stab. at Westphalia

Spanish empire partitioned by Brit, Austria, Savoy, Sard.

Spain keeps colonies in Americas

Louis' grandson becomes king of Spain (Philip V)

French and Spanish thrones NEVER united

William III

King of England dies 1702

his agenda predominates = no French domination

big winner was England

Balance of Power

territory exchanged in the interests of BOP WITHOUT

regard for the nationalities, cultural realities, or wishes of
the people