

Chapter IV. The Establishment of West-European Leadership (160-197) (pic: 198-209)

The Peace of Westphalia marked the fading of the Italian Renaissance, the subsiding of religious wars, the ruin of the Holy Roman Empire, and the decay of Spain. The way was paved for the rise of the Dutch, English, and French for the next 200 years. Draw a circle 500 miles in radius out from Paris and you will create the zone which was to dominate Europe and much of the world. And France was first to rise.

- 17. The Grand Monarque and the Balance of Power** **(pp. 161-163)**
1. Louis XIV Bourbon (1638-1715): Louis became king in 1643 but fully ruled after 1661. Under the “Sun King,” French language, thought, literature, architecture, clothing, food, and etiquette set the standards for Europe.
 2. Spain was ruled by an imbecile king, Charles II, whose succession was on all minds. Louis, married to Charles’ sister, aimed to secure the inheritance: the Spanish Netherlands [Belgium], Franche-Comté and Spain’s possessions in America. Louis intrigued by secret alliances with republicans in Holland and royalists in England to achieve his goal: the union of France and Spain into the “Grand Monarchy.”
 3. Balance of Power: Nations seek equilibrium by coalitions against great powers; statesmen seek to preserve independence of action and enhance their importance; they operate on a purely pragmatic basis. Small states, like Holland or Sweden, are able to wield disproportionate power in helping create balances of power.

- 18. The Dutch Republic** **(pp. 163-169)**
1. The Dutch created a bourgeois society that was wealthy, flourishing, civilized--and astonishingly creative: Hugo Grotius, one of the creators of international law; Baruch de Spinoza, first modern philosopher; Leeuwenhoek (microscope), Huygens (physics and math), giants of science; Vermeer, Rembrandt in the fine arts.
 2. Why greatness? The Dutch were characterized by a spirit of toleration that welcomed the dispossessed of that era--Jews and unpopular Protestants. Perhaps more important was the great Dutch fleet of 1600, sailing to the Spice Islands and Japan under the Dutch East India Company; establishing colonies such as Manhattan and the Cape of Good Hope; and forming the Dutch West Indies Company which set up posts in Brazil, Curaçao, Guinea. Third, the Bank of Amsterdam, backed by the Dutch government, made Holland the financial center of world: allowing deposit of “mixed money” and issuing notes for florins--soon the main international currency, and innovative use of checks and guaranteed deposits.
 3. Dutch Government: Each province had a stadholder, but most provinces usually elected the Prince of Orange in emergencies. Normally the burghers ran the government, keeping Holland decentralized. William III of Orange (1650-1702) was a grave, reserved, Dutch Calvinist who lived plainly, hated flattery; he married Mary, Protestant daughter of James II Stuart.
 4. Foreign Affairs: The Dutch fought three indecisive wars with England during the reign of Cromwell; their only importance was to bring New York to England. Wars with France were much more serious, and the Dutch successfully used balance of power politics to stop Louis XIV’s aggression in 1667, 1672, and 1689.

19. Britain: The Puritan Revolution **(pp.169-**

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England after 1588 withdrew from continental matters and was the one great European power absent from the Treaty of Westphalia. Why? England was involved in a religious/civil war, fought between the Puritans and the Anglicans, between the forces of Parliament and those of the king. Wars in England were relatively mild, but at the same time fierce and savage conflicts were occurring in Ireland.

1. England in the 17th Century had about 4-5 million English-speaking peoples. In addition, groups had emigrated to the West Indies, North Ireland and the 13 American colonies. (Total American pop in 1700: 500,000). English culture included Shakespeare, Milton and Francis Bacon. The English economy was enterprising and affluent, inferior to Holland in shipping, but with a larger, more productive homeland. The British East India Company was formed (1600) to compete with the Dutch.
2. Parliament and the Stuart Kings
 - a. James I Stuart: had a major conflict with Parliament, because of: his belief in royal absolutism; his support of the Anglican hierarchy under Archbishop Laud who sought religious conformity at a time when Parliament was heavily Puritan; his Scotch origins; his pedantic ways (“wisest fool in Christendom”); and his constant need for money, due to his wars with Spain, his spending habits, and the general problems of living on a fixed income in an inflationary time.

b. Parliament was nationally unified, with no provincial units as on the continent. The House of Lords was dominated by great noble landowners; the House of Commons had the gentry plus reps of merchants and towns. But Parliament was generally unified in social interest and wealth.

c. Crisis: Charles I Stuart decided to rule without Parliament in 1629, and might have succeeded without major errors: his reforms in Ireland antagonized English landlords; his support of High Anglicans antagonized Puritans; and his idea of “ship money” (a new tax for the navy to be paid by all Englishmen) angered virtually all. Parliament was unwilling to pay for the navy unless it had a say in the manner in which the navy was used--foreign policy.

d. The crisis reached a head in 1637 when the Scots rebelled against the establishment of the Anglican Church in Scotland. To fight the Scots, Charles needed an army and recalled Parliament. Parliament proved hostile and was dissolved, but a second Parliament was equally rebellious and began a revolution against the king under John Hampden, John Pym, Oliver Cromwell--land-owning gentry and Puritans who were supported by merchant class. They formed the Long Parliament, led by “root and branch” men--the first radicals --who sought to impeach and execute royal advisers, abolish bishops and end the Anglican hierarchy, and ultimately declared Presbyterianism the legal religion. The result was open war between the Royalists “Cavaliers,” with followers from north and west and “Roundheads,” of Parliament mostly from the south and east.

3. Cromwell

a. Cromwell created “the Ironsides,” based on extreme Calvinism for morale, discipline, will to fight. Supported by the masses, the army became more radically democratic than Parliament. Cromwell defeated the king, then executed him to prevent counter-revolution--over opposition in the remnants of Parliament. Colonel Pride drove out members opposed to execution--first such move called a purge.

b. Cromwell now declared England a Commonwealth (Republic). He crushed the Scots, who had rebelled in reaction to Charles’ execution, and took revenge on the Irish, settling English landlords with Catholic peasants as tenants: “the native religion and clergy were driven underground, a foreign and detested church was established, and a new and foreign landed aristocracy, originally recruited in large measure from military adventurers, was settled upon the country....” Cromwell also challenged the Dutch naval supremacy and in a brief war with Spain was able to seize Jamaica.

c. Cromwell could never win over the conservatives, and his own supporters soon divided over radical issues, with the Levellers, who appealed for universal manhood suffrage, equality of representation in Parliament, and a written constitution; Quakers, who opposed violence and upset social conventions; Diggers, who repudiated the idea of private property; and Fifth Monarchy Men, millenialists who believed in the nearness of the “second coming.”

d. Cromwell finally abolished Parliament (1653) and ruled as Lord Protector, placing England under Puritan military rule characterized by “blue laws” of puritanical ideas. He died in 1658 and was briefly succeeded by his son.

e. Royalty was restored with Charles II in 1660; England was left with the memory of nightmare of standing armies and rule by religious fanatics. Democratic ideas were rejected as “levelling” (except in America where some Puritan leaders took refuge) and political consciousness of the lower classes basically ceased for the next two centuries.

20. Britain: the Triumph of Parliament

(pp. 176-181)

1. The Restoration of the Stuarts (1660-1688): Charles II and James II

a. Charles was careful not to provoke Parliament and Parliament took a number of far-reaching steps: creation of modern land tenure, abolishing certain feudal payments to king--in exchange for which they agreed to support the state (king) by taxing themselves--and share in the governing of England. Local landowners also ran local affairs as “justices of the peace”: squirearchy. Dissenters, i.e. Puritans, were severely restricted--disenfranchised.

b. In general, the tendency in Europe was for Protestants to return to Catholicism; however, the English people and Parliament were anti-Catholic. Charles II, however, admired Louis XIV and made a secret treaty involving English help against the Dutch in exchange for cash. Angered, Parliament passed Test Act: all office-holders had to take communion in the Church of England, Catholics could not serve in army or navy. Parliament also sought to prevent James Stuart from becoming King since he was a strong Catholic. This struggle led to the terms “Whigs” and Tories:” Tories were lesser aristocracy, gentry loyal to Church and King and suspicious of the “moneyed interest” of London. Whigs were upper aristocracy, strong rivals of the king, backed by the middle class and merchants of London.

2. The Glorious Revolution of 1688:

a. James II became king in 1685, and antagonized all by ignoring the Test Act and appointing Catholics to lucrative positions--a threat to monopoly of power by Anglicans; he also believed in his power to make/unmake laws. The crisis reached a head when his new wife produced a son, James, who was baptized a Catholic. Parliament offered the throne to Mary, Protestant daughter of James and wife of William of Orange--who was thoroughly Protestant and opposed to Louis XIV. Offered the crown, William “invaded” England; James fled, to be defeated in 1690 at the Battle

of the Boyne in Ireland, an event still celebrated by the Orangemen of North Ireland. James II fled to the court of Louis XIV; France continued to support the Stuarts as legitimate rulers--a major item in a century of war. Results:

- (1) Bill of Rights (1689): No law could be suspended by the king; no taxes or army without Parliament's consent; no subject could be arrested or detained without legal process
 - (2) Act of Settlement (1701): No Catholic could be King of England
 - (3) Toleration Act (1689): Religious freedom for Dissenters
 - (4) Act of Union (1707): Created the United Kingdom of Great Britain; Scots kept their legal system and religion
- (5) Ireland: fearing Irish "counter-revolution," to the burden of an alien church and absentee landlords was added the penal code: their clergy were banished, they could not be attorneys, teachers, or constables; their political rights were ended, they could not buy land or lease it long-term nor inherit it; Ireland's international trade, even by Protestants, was stopped--except for agricultural goods--to allow payment of rents
- 6) Bank of England: to pay for his new war with France, William borrowed from private lenders who were granted the right to operate a bank--the Bank of England

- b. Was the Glorious Revolution truly “glorious?”
- (1) It did, at least in part, vindicate the principles of parliamentary government, the rule of law, and the right of rebellion against tyranny--as promoted by such writers as John Locke
 - (2) But: “it was a class movement, promoted and maintained by the landed aristocracy. The Parliament which boldly asserted itself against the king was at the same time closing itself to large segments of the people.” England was a true aristocracy, but “the rule of the ‘gentlemen of England’ was within its limits a regime of political liberty.”

21. The France of Louis XIV, 1643-1715: The Triumph of Absolutism (pp.182-190)

1. French Civilization in the Seventeenth Century
 - a. Population stabilized at about 19 million in 1700: triple England, double Spain
 - b. Sizable middle class: fewer merchants, more lawyers and bureaucrats than England
 - c. Nation self-sufficient and embarking on world trade; it had the largest navy
 - d. Dominant culture
 - (1) paintings of Poussin, Lorrain; most nations copied French architecture
 - (2) bourgeois writers producing plays for an aristocratic audience Corneille and Racine wrote austere tragedies, Moliere ridiculed doctors, the nouveaux riches, and aristocrats in bitingly satirical comedies
 - (3) mathematics/philosophy: Descartes and Pascal
2. The Development of Absolutism
 - a. Government: France was “a bundle of territories held together by allegiance to a king.” It had a national Estates General (parliament) which never met, and local parliaments (supreme courts) which nobles used to restrict royal power. There were 300 local regional legal systems called “customs.” Neither taxes nor coinage nor weights and measures were uniform.
 - b. The Fronde: In 1648 a rebellion of nobles backed by the parliaments broke out against the power of Cardinal Mazarin, regent for the young Louis XIV--at the same time France was at war with Spain. The nobles sought to weaken the king and increase their own power. The frondeurs lost all hope of victory by allying with the Spanish-France’s long-term enemy.
 - c. Louis XIV--a brief analysis: He had the ability to learn from experts, though he had received a poor education. He was able to see and stick to definite lines of policy and was extremely methodical and industrious in his daily habits. “He was extremely fond of himself and his position of kingship, with an insatiable appetite for admiration and flattery; he loved magnificent display and elaborate etiquette, though to some extent he simply adopted them as instruments of policy rather than as a personal whim.”
 - d. Louis’ view of the state: Feudal lords had maintained manorial courts and had led private armies; Louis believed that he, as sovereign ruler, had a monopoly over lawmaking processes and armed forces--thus, *L’etat c’est moi*, “I am the state.” Bishop Bossuet agreed, stating that all power comes from God, and kings were the representatives of God on earth. Royal power was absolute, but not arbitrary, because it was reasonable and just, like the will of God. Thus the “divine right of kings.” [Of course Louis and other kings were dependent on advisers and bureaucrats; they often had to compromise with vested interests, and they could be thwarted by the sheer weight of local custom or meet resistance from a wide range of lawyers, churchmen, nobles, officeholders, etc.] [cf. Yeltsin’s difficulty with the old communist elite.]
 - e. Louis’ government and administration:
 - (1) Army: ended the independence of colonels who recruited, trained, equipped, supplied and fed their own regiments--and served their own interests. Louis “made war an activity of state,” producing greater peace and order in France while strengthening the French army. Centralized, systematized; increased size; first organized war ministry.
 - (2) Palace of Versailles: monument to worldly splendor, the marvel of Europe. Louis surrounded himself with the highest aristocrats, and turned them into tame “lap dogs” eager to do him the smallest favor during the daily routine--lever, diner, and couche.
 - (3) Advisers: Louis chose recently ennobled or middle class men with no separate political influence of their own. He ran France through Councils of State, using “intendants” to represent these councils through the country. “Each intendant...embodied all aspects of the royal government, supervising...taxes and recruiting soldiers, keeping an eye on the nobility...stamping out bandits, smugglers, and wolves, policing the marketplaces, relieving famine, watching the local law courts...a firm and uniform administration...was superimposed upon...the old France.”
 - f. Economic and Financial Policies: Colbert

(1) Tax problems: Direct taxes (taille, or land tax) passed through many officials; indirect taxes were collected by tax farmers who took a big cut; nobles were all exempt from taxes; most bourgeois bought special tax exemptions; the poor were taxed heavily, but government deficits grew. To raise money, the currency was devalued (reduced gold content); patents of nobility were sold to bourgeois; government offices and military commissions were sold openly.

(2) Colbert, greatest of mercantilists, was of bourgeois origin, and thus distrusted by nobles, but he managed great reforms: He created a great free trade area (or tariff union) called the “Five Great Farms. He promulgated the Commercial Code, national laws affecting merchants that replaced numerous local laws. He gave subsidies and tax exemptions to key industries, including tapestry manufactories. He supported the founding of colonies in North America (Canada and Louisiana). He built up the French navy and helped found the French East India Company. He encouraged the export of manufactured products and prohibited the export of food. Finally, he greatly advanced commercial capitalism through large-scale government purchases.

g. Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685)

Louis acted to centralize religion as all other aspects of society; he supported the idea of an independent Catholic Church (Gallican); he repressed Jansenism, a left-wing Catholic off-shoot; he began the systematic conversion of Huguenots, with missionaries and dragoons; and he revoked the Edict of Nantes, hurting the commercial, industrial classes

h. Evaluation of Louis XIV’s Reign

Louis gave considerable advantages to middle and lower classes. Colbert’s economic regulations and the continuation of the guilds slowed the development of innovation and private enterprise, but economically France had been strengthened. Peasants could be heavily taxed, but they were freer than the serfs further east. While Louis’ repression of Protestants drove many able Huguenots to Holland and Germany, the persecution was generally popular with most Frenchmen.

He ended a century of civil war and advanced the cause of civil equality. And, in spite of competing jurisdictions, special privilege, and bureaucratic ineptitude, “France was nevertheless the best organized of the large monarchies on the Continent. Yet the people of France ultimately turned against him, and the reason was the strain of his incessant wars.

22. The Wars of Louis XIV: The Peace of Utrecht, 1713

(pp. 190-197)

1. Before 1700

a. When Louis took control in 1661, France still faced Spain on three sides--but Spain was so weak that now it was a temptation to expansion. The dream was of frontiers on the Rhine and the Alps.

The first goal failed when Louis was blocked in both the War of Devolution of 1667 and the “Dutch War” of 1672, both time halted by alliances put together by the Dutch. However, the peace treaty gave France the Franche-Comte, long a Habsburg thorn in France’s side. Louis next took the “free city” of Strasbourg and occupied Alsace and Lorraine, taking advantage of ambiguous provisions of Treaty of Westphalia, Germany’s inability to present a united front, and judicious subsidies paid to key German rulers, including the Elector of Brandenburg. Further, Louis distracted Leopold I, HRE, by inciting and financing a Hungarian rebellion, and at least tacitly encouraging a Turkish attack on the Empire, leading to a siege of Vienna in 1683.

b. Leopold, with Polish assistance, was able to drive the Turks away and bring the Hungarians back into line. He then organized the Catholic nations against France. Meanwhile, the Protestants, upset over the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, joined under William III of Orange against Louis. In 1686, all of Louis’ opponents combined in the League of Augsburg. War broke out in 1688, just as William III took the throne of England from James II Stuart, who had been Louis’ ally. The French armies won on the continent, but its navy could not defeat the combined Dutch/English fleet. An uneasy peace was made in 1697, based on the principle of status quo ante bellum.

2. The War of the Spanish Succession (1702-1713)

a. “Watershed war,” setting new standards for the next century plus, because:

- (1) Less destructive war: professional, disciplined armies
- (2) Religion of little importance--fought for commerce and sea power
- (3) English involved primarily as financial backer for Continental politics
- (4) First “world war” involving the overseas possessions/interests of Europe

b. Cause: Charles II, imbecilic, had been moribund for years; at his death, the inheritance fell to two sisters, one married to Leopold Habsburg, the other to Louis Bourbon. Balance of power principles called for a division of the spoils, but Charles’ will called for the inheritance to be kept intact, going to Louis XIV’s grandson. William of Orange

was unwilling to accept the will, and created the Grand Alliance: England, Holland, the Holy Roman Empire, Brandenburg, Portugal, and Savoy

c. Issues: What did each participant hope to gain?

- (1) France: to hold two crowns, gain Belgium, get French traders into Spanish America
- (2) Spain: to maintain Spanish possessions
- (3) Austria: to keep Spain Habsburg and gain influence in Italy
- (4) Holland: to preserve its independence and security
- (5) England: to preserve 1688 and advance their commercial position (America, Med)

d. Peace of Utrecht, 1713:

- (1) Philip V Bourbon would be the new ruler of Spain, but with the two thrones separate. The French revived the Spanish monarchy and French trade with the New World aided France
- (2) France suffered severely in the war, and the monarchy lost ground to both aristocrats and parliamentary opposition. French expansionist dreams were checked, but France retained Alsace and the Franche-Comte
- (3) England gained Gibraltar and Minorca in the Mediterranean and Newfoundland and Nova Scotia in Canada--plus recognition of its control of the Hudson Bay Territory. It also received the asiento, the lucrative privilege of providing Spanish America with African slaves along with one shipload of goods to Panama (a provision which became the basis of wholesale English smuggling into Spanish America).
- (4) Austria gained the Italian Habsburg holdings (Milan, Naples, Sicily) plus [Belgium]
- (5) The Duke of Savoy got Sardinia, and the Elector of Brandenburg got Guelderland; both men were recognized as kings, and Brandenburg became known as Prussia. The seeds of the nations of Italy and Germany had germinated successfully.
- (6) Holland got the "Dutch Barrier," a string of forts in Belgium
- (7) The Treaty of Utrecht, signed by the same powers as the Peace of Westphalia (plus England), confirmed the system of international relations. France and Great Britain were left as the two strongest powers and the principle carriers and exporters of European civilization.