

ORIGINS OF ABSOLUTE RULE IN FRANCE

Catherine d'Medici

- Roman Catholic Queen of France
- Governed France behind the scenes until 1589 while her three sons, weak by all accounts, ruled as kings of France
- Ordered the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre

August 24, 1572

- It was a wedding day, held on a Catholic holy day, St. Bartholomew's Day
- Margaret, sister of King Henry III, was marrying Henry of Navarre
- Henry of Navarre was a Protestant, a Huguenot as they are called in France
- The marriage was to help ease the tension between French Catholics and Huguenots

A wedding goes terribly awry

- Queen Catherine d'Medici, mother of the King Henry III, disapproved of the marriage
- She also despised Huguenots
- Catherine ordered the SLAUGHTER of all Huguenot wedding guests
- She did not stop there: she ordered the execution of all Huguenots in Paris

RESULTS

St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? CIVIL WAR, ANYONE?

- A CIVIL WAR ERUPTS AFTER HENRY OF NAVARRE CONVERTS BACK TO PROTESTANTISM
- THREE MEN NAMED HENRY VIE FOR THE THRONE (that's not a joke!): it is called the War of the Three Henry's
- HENRY III IS KILLED, CATHOLIC HENRY OF GUISE IS ALSO KILLED
- PROTESTANT HENRY OF NAVARRE IS THE ONLY MAN LEFT STANDING
- HENRY OF NAVARRE NOW BECOMES KING HENRY IV, a Protestant

Reign of Henry IV

(r. 1589-1610)

- Issues:
- Can he win the support of French Catholics?
- Can he calm the religious tensions in France?
- Can he restore order?
- YES HE CAN!!!!

Catholics Are Impressed

- Three years after becoming king, Henry realizes he will be more effective if he once again becomes a Catholic
- Henry IV hold an elaborate public ceremony in which the Pope himself converts Henry IV to Catholicism
- Catholics rejoice but Huguenots know they have nothing to fear because a Protestant all his life, Henry will never persecute them

The Edict of Nantes, 1598

- This single document helped Henry IV achieve all three of the goals previously outlined
- It was a document granting freedom of religion to Huguenots
- It is the first act of toleration in Europe

Legacy of Henry IV

- He ruled as an effective Absolute Monarch
- He was widely respected at home and in Europe
- His death shocked everyone: he was stabbed by a crazed Catholic who was angry over his tolerance of Huguenots
- He left big shoes to fill for his son and heir to the throne, Louis XIII

Louis XIII 1610-1643

- 9 years old when he gained power
- Developmentally what were you like in 3rd grade?
- Appointed a Catholic Cardinal to be his chief minister

Cardinal Richelieu

- Virtual ruler of France
- Iron will and cunning mind
- Had two main goals:
 - Increase power of the King
 - Make France the strongest state in Europe

Richelieu's 3 Threats

- 1. End the independence of Huguenot cities
- 2. Reduce the power of the French Nobility
- 3. Destroy the Holy Roman Empire

Protestant Cities

- They are built with High walls surrounding the city...why?
- Sept. 11
- How do you think Catholics feel about these fortified cities with high walls?
- Suspicious, plotting, planning?
- Walls increased religious tensions

Richelieu's Actions

1. Huguenots must take down their walls and disarm:

- How does this make the protestants feel?
 - Venerable, insecure, uncomfortable.
 - CONSEQUENCE: Protestants begin to leave France and with that take their wealth with them
- Richelieu's Actions

2. Remove the power of the French nobility:

- Takes away arms/weapons
- Fill in moats, NO draw bridges, No walls or gates, NO guards
- Consequence: Nobles begin to withhold "aides" to the King

Richelieu's Actions

- 3. Destroy the Holy Roman Empire
- 30 years war pitted Protestants vs. Catholics
- Richelieu actually supported Protestants why?

- Consequences: War costs \$\$\$ / Why are my Catholic \$\$ going to support a Protestant cause

Louis XIV “The Sun King”

- Son of Louis XIII
- Absolute center of French government
- Became King at the age of 5
- Real Power rested in the hands of Cardinal Jules Mazarin

Cardinal Mazarin

- Brokered peace deal to end the 30 Years War (Treaty of Westphalia)
- Made France the strongest nation in Europe
- Harsh policies led to the 5 year “Fronde” revolt by nobles

Louis XIV 1643-1715

- Mazarin dies when Louis is 23
- Only 5 feet 5 inches tall, but appeared larger than life
- Strong dislikes & likes (Cities, Delays)
- Liked to eat: 500 cooks, waiters, and other servants worked to satisfy his tastes

Louis XIV

- Pomp and ceremony glorified Louis and the State “I am the state” –
- Most powerful monarch of the French line of Kings

Versailles

- Located 11 miles outside of Paris
- Constructed from 1668-1710
- 36,000 workers leveled hills, drained marshes, and built from scaffolding
- No walls or moats, just splendid gardens
- Small city: 1,000 nobles, 9,000 servants, 226 rooms and 1 King

Importance of Versailles

- Center of French government
- Provided visual display of Louis XIV absolute power
- Once proud and rebellious nobles were transfixed on the mystique of royalty
- Excited the admiration and envy of other nations

Jean Baptiste Colbert

- France made many economic gains during Louis’ reign due to Colbert
- Minister of Finance
- Mercantilism:the system of political economy that sought to enrich the country by restraining imports and encouraging exports

Mercantilism

- Acquire Gold & Silver
- Expand Manufacturing
- Encourage Commerce to build a balance in trade
- Own Colonies

Colbert's Strategies

- High Tariffs on imported goods
- Subsidies or grants of money and tax benefits to French businesses
- Obtained skilled workers from other countries
- Encouraged building of roads & canals
- Long hours and low wages for workers
- Added 100 warships to the French Navy

Colbert's Achievements

- By 1683 France was the industrial leader of Europe
- Huguenots had leading roles in the French economy

Louis revokes the Edict of Nantes

- In 1683 after Colbert's death Louis revokes the Edict of Nantes which forces 200,000 protestants to leave France
- The decision greatly impacts the French economy
- Louis also continues to build the Palace at Versailles which was estimated to cost up to 6 out of every 10 francs for every frenchmen

War Debt

- Louis spends large amounts of money on war and colonialism
- Other nations banded together to keep the balance of power in Europe
- War of Spanish Succession ended with Louis making many concessions that strengthened Great Britain, Austria, and Prussia

Louis XIV Death

- Louis was saddened by the suffering his wars had caused
- Developed gangrene and died in 1715
- “My child...do not imitate me in the taste that I have had for building or for war. Try, on the contrary, to be at peace with your neighbors...Try to comfort your people, which unhappily I have not done.”
- Louis XIV to the future Louis XV on his death bed