Several countries in Europe come under the control of absolute monarchs, and Parliament challenges the monarch's authority in Great Britain.
Section 1: Spain’s Empire and European Absolutism

During a time of religious and economic instability, Philip II rules Spain with a strong hand.

The combined territories of the Spanish and Austrian Habsburgs during the reign of Philip II. Charles V had divided his estates to make it easier for them to be governed.
Absolutism in Europe

The Theory of Absolutism
- Rulers want to be absolute monarchs—rulers with complete power
- Believe in divine right—idea that monarchs represent God on earth

Growing Power of Europe’s Monarchs
- Decline of feudalism, rise of cities help monarchs gain power
- Decline in Church authority also increases power

Crises Lead to Absolutism
- The 17th century is period of great upheaval
- Monarchs impose order by increasing their own power
ABSOLUTISM TIMELINE
1550-1800

1603 Stuart monarchy begins
1649-1660 Cromwell and Commonwealth
1660 Stuart King returns to England
1698 English Bill of Rights Limited Monarchy in England

1689-1796 Peter the Great and Catherine the Great

1717-1780 Maria Theresa in Austria
1740 Frederick of Prussia challenges Austria

Phillip II
Spain
1556-1598
A Powerful Spanish Empire

A New Spanish Ruler
• In 1556, Philip II begins ruling Spain and its possessions

Philip II’s Empire
• Philip seizes Portugal in 1580
• Gold and silver from the Americas make Spain extremely wealthy

Defender of Catholicism
• Philip defends Catholicism against Muslims, Protestants
• Spanish fleet helps defeat Ottomans at Lepanto in 1571
• Spanish Armada defeated by British in 1588
Golden Age of Spanish Art and Literature

El Greco and Velázquez
• El Greco uses unusual style to convey religious themes
• Works of Velázquez show Spanish court life

Don Quixote
• In 1605, *Don Quixote* by Miguel de Cervantes is published
• Novel marks birth of modern European novel
The Spanish Empire Weakens

Inflation and Taxes
• Inflation weakens Spain’s economy
• Taxes on lower class prevents development of middle class

Making Spain’s Enemies Rich
• Spaniards buy goods abroad, making Spain’s enemies rich
• Philip declares bankruptcy three times due to weak economy

The Dutch Revolt
• 1579: Protestants in Netherlands win independence from Spain
The Independent Dutch Prosper

A Different Society
- The Netherlands is a republic and practices religious toleration

Dutch Art
- In 1600s, Netherlands becomes center of European art
- Rembrandt and Vermeer are famous Dutch painters

Dutch Trading Empire
- Dutch merchants engage in world trade
- Dutch have world’s largest trading fleet
- Dutch replace Italians as Europe’s bankers
Section 2: The Reign of Louis XIV

After a century of war and riots, France was ruled by Louis XIV, the most powerful monarch of his time.
Religious Wars and Power Struggles

Henry of Navarre
- 1589: Henry ascends to French throne, and adopts Catholicism
- Issues Edict of Nantes—a declaration of religious toleration

Louis XIII and Cardinal Richelieu
- Cardinal Richelieu—Louis XIII’s minister who rules France
  - Increases power of the Bourbons by limiting Huguenots’ freedom
  - Also weakens power of the nobility
Writers Turn Toward Skepticism

A New Attitude
• **Skepticism**— the idea that nothing can be known for certain

Montaigne and Descartes
• Montaigne explores ideas about life’s meaning in essays
• Descartes uses observation and reason to create new philosophy
Louis XIV Comes to Power

A New French Ruler
- **Louis XIV**—the most powerful ruler in French history (r. 1643-1715)

**Louis, the Boy King**
- Hatred of Mazarin—young Louis’s minister—leads to riots

[Images of Louis XIV and Jules Raymond Mazarin]
Louis XIV Comes to Power

Louis Weakens the Nobles’ Authority
• 1661: Louis takes control
• Appoints *intendants* (government agents) to collect taxes

Economic Growth
• Finance minister *Jean Baptiste Colbert* helps economy grow
• 1685: Louis cancels Edict of Nantes; Huguenots flee France
The Sun King’s Grand Style

A Life of Luxury
• Louis lives very well, with every meal a feast

Louis Controls the Nobility
• Louis keeps nobles at palace to increase his power over them
• Builds magnificent palace at Versailles

Patronage of the Arts
• Versailles is a center of arts during reign of Louis XIV
• Purpose of the arts is to glorify Louis
Louis Fights Disastrous Wars

Attempts to Expand France’s Boundaries
- Louis fights wars in 1660s, 1670s to expand France
- 1680s: Many countries unite against him in League of Augsburg
- France is weakened by poor harvests, warfare, high taxes

War of the Spanish Succession
- War of the Spanish Succession begins in 1701
- Attempts to prevent union of the French and Spanish thrones
- Ends in 1714; France and Spain lose some possessions

Louis’s Death and Legacy
- Louis dies, leaving mixed legacy; his rule makes France a major military and cultural power in Europe
- His wars, palace, however, leave France with heavy debts
Section 3: Central European Monarchs Clash

After a period of turmoil, absolute monarchs rule Austria and the Germanic state of Prussia.
The Thirty Years’ War

Rising Tension
• Tension rises between Lutherans, Catholics in central Europe

Bohemian Protestants Revolt
• 1618: Protestants revolt against Catholic Hapsburg rulers
• Result is Thirty Years’ War—conflict over land, power, religion

Hapsburg Triumphs
• From 1618 to 1630, Hapsburg armies (Austria and Spain) have many victories; Troops plunder many German villages

Hapsburg Defeats
• In 1630, tide turns in favor of Protestants (thanks to French and Swedish help)
The Thirty Years’ War

Peace of Westphalia
- War ruins German economy, greatly decreases population
- Peace of Westphalia (1648) ends war
- Treaty weakens Hapsburgs, strengthens France
- Treaty introduces idea of negotiating terms of peace

Beginning of Modern States
- Treaty recognizes Europe as group of independent states
States Form in Central Europe

Economic Contrasts with the West
• Economy in central Europe still based on serfs, agriculture

Several Weak Empires
• Landowning nobles in central Europe block growth of kings’ power
• Ottoman and Holy Roman empires are also weak

Austria Grows Stronger
• Hapsburgs in Austria take more lands, rule large empire

Maria Theresa Inherits the Austrian Throne
• Maria Theresa becomes empress of Austria, faces years of war
Prussia Challenges Austria

The Rise of Prussia
- Hohenzollern rulers of Prussia build Europe’s best army
- Call themselves kings and become absolute monarchs
- Nobles resist royal power, but king buys loyalty

Frederick the Great
- Frederick the Great becomes king of Prussia
- Enforces father’s military policies but softens some of his laws
Prussia Challenges Austria

War of the Austrian Succession
• In 1740, Frederick starts war against Austria to gain Silesia
• Maria Theresa resists Prussian power but loses Silesia in treaty
• As result of war, Prussia becomes a major power in Europe

The Seven Years’ War
• Austria allies with France against Britain and Prussia
• In 1756, Frederick attacks Saxony, launching Seven Years’ War
• France loses colonies in North America; Britain gains India
Section 4: Absolute Rulers of Russia

Peter the Great makes many changes in Russia to try to make it more like Western Europe.
The First Czar

Ivan the Terrible
• In 1533, Ivan the Terrible becomes king of Russia
• Struggles for power with boyars—landowning nobles
• Seizes power and is crowned czar, meaning “caesar”

Rule by Terror
• In 1560, Ivan turns against boyars, kills them, seizes lands

Rise of the Romanovs
• Ivan’s heir is weak, leading to period of turmoil
• In 1613, Michael Romanov becomes czar
Peter the Great Comes to Power

The Rise of Peter
- **Peter the Great** becomes czar in 1696, begins to reform Russia

Russia Contrasts with Europe
- Land of boyars and serfs
- Cut off geographically from Europe
- Culturally isolated, little contact with western Europe
- Religious differences widen gap

Peter Visits the West
- 1697: Peter visits western Europe to learn European ways
Peter Rules Absolutely

Peter’s Goal
• Goal of westernization (using western Europe as model for change)

Peter’s Reforms
• Brings Orthodox Church under state control
• Reduces power of great landowners
• Modernizes army by having European officers train soldiers

Construction of St. Peterburg
Peter Rules Absolutely

Westernizing Russia
- Introduces potatoes
- Starts Russia’s first newspaper
- Raises women’s status
- Adopts Western fashion
- Advances education

Establishing St. Petersburg
- Peter wants a seaport that will make travel to West easier
- Fights Sweden to win port on Baltic Sea
- 1703: Begins building new capital called St. Petersburg
- Building city takes many years; many serfs die in process
- By the time of Peter’s death, Russia is a power to be reckoned with in Europe
Section 5: Parliament Limits the English Monarchy
Absolute rulers in England are overthrown, and Parliament gains power.
Monarchs Defy Parliament

James’s Problems
• James I of Scotland becomes king of England in 1603
• Struggles with Parliament over money, Church reform

Charles I Fights Parliament
• James’s son, Charles I, becomes king in 1625
• Also fights with Parliament over money
• Parliament forces him to sign Petition of Right in 1628
• Petition limits Charles’s power, but he ignores it
English Civil War

War Topples a King
• In 1641, Parliament passes laws to limit king’s power
• Result is English Civil War (1642–1649) between Puritans, king
• In 1644, Oliver Cromwell becomes general on Puritan side
• After Puritans win, Charles faces trial and execution in 1649

Cromwell’s Rule
• In 1649, Cromwell abolishes monarchy, House of Lords
• Becomes military dictator
• Suppresses rebellion in Ireland

Puritan Morality
• Puritans abolish activities they find sinful
Restoration and Revolution

Cromwell’s End
• 1658: Cromwell dies, government collapses
• 1659: Parliament asks son of Charles I to rule

Charles II Reigns
• Restoration—return of monarchy under Charles II
• Habeas corpus—law requiring king to charge prisoner with crime

James II and the Glorious Revolution
• 1685: Charles’s Catholic brother James becomes king
• 1688: Glorious Revolution—bloodless overthrow of James II
Limits on Monarch’s Power

A New Type of Monarchy
• Protestants William and Mary become rulers of England
• Agree to constitutional monarchy—legal limits on royal power

Bill of Rights
• In 1689, Parliament drafts Bill of Rights
• Sets limits on royal power

Cabinet System Develops
• In 1700s, cabinet, a group of government ministers, develops
• Ministers link majority party in Parliament with monarch