Cardinal Richelieu & Louis XIII
(r. 1610-1643)

- Bourbon dynasty ruled France until the revolution
- Louis XIII was only 9 when his father Henry IV was assassinated
- The queen mother, Marie de Medici governed France but relied on Richelieu as chief minister
- She formed an alliance with Spain & arranged the marriage of Louis XIII & a Spanish princess, Anne (Louis was gay & didn’t get along with his wife)
- He sought a strong anti-Habsburg policy & wanted to contain Spanish power & influence
- In 1631, Richelieu gave funds to help Sweden's army during the Thirty Years War to stop the Habsburgs from spreading
- Richelieu wanted to make France Europe’s supreme power
- King Louis XIII let Richelieu make most state decisions

- Richelieu increased taxes to increase the crown’s revenues & increased France’s international prestige

- Richelieu made it clear that the king’s law was the only law

- He sought to get rid of opposition to the king & Protestants

- Disobedient nobles who defied edicts were imprisoned & sometimes executed
French Government

Parlements

- Regional French law courts
- Total of 12 with the main one located in Paris (supreme court)
- Registered the king’s edicts
- Were appointed by the king

Estates-General

- Met in 1614 for only 2 months
- Didn’t meet again for 175 years!
- Rough estimation of a representative body
- Voted as an estate or social group (1\textsuperscript{st} = clergy, 2\textsuperscript{nd} = nobility, 3\textsuperscript{rd} = everyone else)
- Had little power & was not like the English parliament
French Absolute Monarchy

• Developed by King Louis XIV in the seventeenth century
• Louis’ predecessors & their ministers had tried to impose direct rule
• Louis made the monarchy the most important & powerful political institution in France, while nobles maintained social standing & had influence
• Nobles understood that the king would support their local authority, so they would support the central royal authority – kings & nobles needed one another
• Louis sold church offices & titles
French Nobility

- Most were lords over estates
- Being “lord” over people was highly regarded – very influential citizen
- Nobles rented land & collected revenues
- Successful families maintained political influence
- Official posts for life were sold by the king
Young Louis XIV & Cardinal Mazarin

- 1643 – Louis XIII dies; his son was only 5
- Queen mother Anne of Austria had Cardinal Mazarin rule France
- Mazarin was an Italian diplomat & viewed as an outsider
- Powerful nobles tried to re-gain influence they’d lost during Louis XIII’s reign
- Mazarin asked the parlements to help him increase taxes (couldn’t get any more loans)
The Fronde - means "sling" (1648-1653)

- Name came from slings used to shoot stones through the windows of government supporters
- Mazarin has defiant parlement members arrested for not increasing taxes
- Was a complicated civil war that included sporadic rebellions
- People sought to preserve local autonomy
- Royal family flees twice
- The French hated Mazarin & he eventually flees
- Prince of Condé assists to crush rebellions in Paris
- Temporary settlement: short-lived tax reforms
- Condé changes sides, opposing high taxes (he’s imprisoned, leading to further opposition)
- More revolts lead to the Parlement of Paris demanding Condé’s release
- Condé flees to Spain & Mazarin returns
- Louis XIV & Mazarin end rebellions & crush peasant resistance
King Louis XIV
(r. 1643-1715)

- Mazarin dies in 1661 & Louis assumes personal control of the government
- Was crowned in 1654
- Had the longest reign in European history (72 years)
- “L’état c’est moi” – “I am the state”; belief in divine right from God to rule
- Was a master of propaganda – portrayed himself as a glorious monarch
- Learned how to govern from Mazarin
- Had unlimited power
- Had 12 illegitimate children
- In the painting he is showing off his calves, holding the sword of state & staff of justice
Marie Thérèse - Louis XIV’s 1st wife

- Married in 1660 but had many mistresses; after her death in 1683, he secretly married Madame de Maintenon (she was older & from the lower class)
- Had 6 legitimate children - only 1 survived infancy
Louis XIV...

- Surrounded himself with talented advisers
- Saw greatness as territorial gain & prestige
- Had a passion for war
- Preferred middle class advisors – owed their position to him
- Powerful councils helped him rule
- Attended mass daily
- Kept an eye on everything & trusted no one
- Chose the sun as his symbol
- His love of gambling, hunting & women often came before matters of state
- Most court gossip concerned his love life
Versailles
Versailles

- Château outside of Paris that becomes the king’s palace & court
- Monumental in scale
- Designed in the Baroque style
- 36,000 men worked on it & took 25 years to build it
- Members of the court spent their days hunting, riding, gambling, attending plays & concerts
- Louis XIV sought to reduce the power of the nobility by bringing them all there
- More than 10,000 nobles, officials & servants lived in or near it
- Biggest project in the history of the French monarchy (almost bankrupted France may’ve cost ½ a billion $ to build)
- Louis believed that his court stood at the center of civilization and other monarchs looked to it as a model (palaces in Madrid, St. Petersburg)
Religious Persecution & the Jansenists

- 1685 – Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes
- Protestant churches were closed & Huguenots were persecuted – many fled
- Louis believed political unity & stability required religious conformity; he worked with the Jesuits to get rid of Jansenism
- Protestants saw Louis as a new Philip II, forcing Catholicism
- Jansenism – movement in the 1630s of opposition among some Catholics to the theology & influence of the Jesuits; had a lot in common with the Huguenots
- Cornelius Jansen, a Flemish theologian & founder of the movement, opposed Jesuit teachings on grace & salvation (didn’t believe in free will)
- After Pope Innocent X declared some Jansenist beliefs heretical, Louis XIV banned them - went underground
Louis XIV’s Military Goals

- Uniforms became standard for every soldier
- He saw the importance of a strong military
- 1660s – France becomes superior in European bureaucracy, armed forces & national unity
- Chief military & foreign policy goal was to secure France’s boundaries
- Also sought to halt Habsburg ambitions
- His pursuit of French interests threatened & terrified neighboring states
Colbert & the French Economy

- Jean-Baptiste Colbert served as Louis XIV’s finance minister, succeeding Fauquet who was arrested & exiled for stealing money
- They often fought – Colbert said they couldn’t afford wars & other projects
- He created the economic base needed to finance Louis’ wars
- Used tariffs to regulate the flow of imports & exports
- Promoted new industries & colonization
- **Taille** – royal tax on land; major source of royal income that Colbert increased
**Merchatilism**

- 17th century economic theory & practice
- Close government control of the economy (opposite of capitalism); used to promote trade
- Selling monopolies to benefit the crown
- Limited amounts of gold & silver in the world: mine it, steal it, create a favorable balance of trade to obtain it (it’s all about the booty!; the more booty you have, the better off you are)
- Need bullion (precious metal usually gold or silver) to fight wars
- French East India Company couldn’t compete with the Dutch & English
- Colbert over controlled France’s economy, leading to the failure of its colonies in the New World
- France transformed into a major commercial power
- Also you sell more than you buy in your colonies
Louis XIV’s Dynastic Wars

- Dynastic interests determined allies
- Became the last French king to fight in battle
- Territorial gain & prestige = greatness to the king
- Conquered Alsace & Lorraine
- Wanted to contain Spain & Austria
- Lost a war to The Netherlands (William of Orange, future king of England, led the provinces of the United Netherlands)
- Lost the War of the Spanish Succession
- Failed to expand into Germany, losing the Nine Years War
- 1692 – made a foolish attempt to invade England
The War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714)

- Nov. 1700 – Charles II of Spain died & had no heir
- Louis XIV & HRE Leopold both had claims to the Spanish throne (Louis through his marriage to Marie-Therese)
- Philip Anjou, Louis’ grandson, became King Philip V of Spain
- Most of Europe feared a French & Spanish union
- Grand Alliance (1701) – England, United Provinces (Netherlands) & the Holy Roman Empire was formed to counter Louis XIV who sent troops to Flanders to remove Dutch soldiers from Spanish territory in the name of the new king of Spain
- King William III managed to form an English-Dutch coalition but died in 1702 during the war
The War of the Spanish Succession…

• France was defeated due to inadequate finances & a poorly equipped army
• **Treaty of Utrecht** (1713) – Philip V was allowed to remain king of Spain but couldn’t later become king of France
• Spain’s throne succession had to be approved by other countries & est. a balance of power in Europe
• Austria/HRE gained S. Netherlands & present-day Belgium; England got Gibraltar, Newfoundland & Nova Scotia
• The Bourbons still rule Spain
• England still controls Gibraltar (monkeys myth)

Signature page from one of the documents of the **Treaty of Utrecht**. It was on display at the **Centraal Museum, Utrecht** as part of the city celebrating the 300th anniversary of the treaty in 2013. **Photo by Mr. Lenihan**
It’s not entirely clear why Utrecht was chosen as the site for the peace congress. It was easy to reach by water & road, had broad streets & squares & had a pro-French reputation which was a gesture towards Louis XIV.
The English photographer Red Saunders made this photo-impression of the signing of the Utrecht peace treaty for the 300th anniversary. There isn't any historic painting or drawing of it. It hangs on Utrecht city hall to commemorate the peace treaty signed in 1713.
In 1704 a British-Dutch fleet captured the rock of Gibraltar on the southern tip of Spain. The Allies then had a bridgehead on the Spanish mainland to pursue the war Against Philip V and they controlled the access point to the Mediterranean. Ever since the Treaty of Utrecht gave Gibraltar to the British, the Spanish have been trying to get it back.
Louis XIV’s Legacy

• 1715 – Died at age 76 & warns the dauphin (heir) not to imitate his love of buildings (Versailles and Les Invalides) & war
• His wars brought lots of death & destruction
• Nation’s resources were reduced
• Took being king seriously & listened to different opinions
• His policies of centralization made it difficult for France to develop institutions of representation & self-government later on
• His reign laid the groundwork for a new French Empire – expanded trade in Asia & colonies in North America
• Absolutism functioned mainly in areas of war, peace, religion & the economy
• Reign provide a model of effective centralized power
• Perfected court life
• Best example of a true absolute monarch
The National Residence of the Invalids was built in Paris from 1671-78 on the orders of Louis XIV as a home and hospital for injured soldiers. Today it includes museums, monuments and the tomb of Napoleon.
Versailles Royal Chapel

http://www.chapelle.chateauversailles.fr/