

The Myth of Absolutism

Concepts and People to Consider

- French Absolutism
 - French Leaders - Henry IV, Louis XIII, Louis XIV, XV and XVI
 - Post Revolution leaders - Louis XVIII, Charles X
- English Constitutionalism
 - English Leaders - Tudors: Henry VII, VIII, Mary I, Eliz I
 - English Leaders - Stuarts: James I, Charles I, Charles II, James II
 - English Leaders - Hanoverians: George I, II, III, IV, plus more
- Old Regime/Ancien Regime = pre-Revolution France (aka France prior to 1789)
- The whole Parliament/Parlement/Estates General/Cortes business
- Whig/Liberalism and Tory/Conservatism and “isms” in general (nationalism, etc. etc.)

In Small Groups:

- Today I'd like you to read either by yourself or in a group of UP TO 4 People
- In addition to the reading, there are some questions I'd like you to do while you read
- You might not finish the reading and that is OKAY. I'm interested more in quality understanding than rushing through something to pretend you "did it" .
- Your written work should contain all the names from your group members on your paper
- It will be collected at the end of class (but the reading and questions are online if you'd like to complete the reading)

The Questions

1. How did historians in the 19th century view the "Absolutism" of the 16th to 18th centuries and how has this view evolved?
2. In what ways, if any, did royal prerogatives differ between Constitutional England and Absolutist France? Explain the differences and/or the perception of differences.
3. What role did both factions within the government and "power brokers" play in both Absolutist France and Constitutional England?
4. Discuss the process for creating laws (legislating) in France and England. How did absolutism differ from despotism in this respect? How did absolutism differ from "Enlightened Despotism" in terms of legislating?
5. Explain the author's arguments about how representative bodies may have actually extended royal authority in absolutist states. What role did traditional and perceived "rights" play?
6. Answer his question: How was the myth of absolutism created? Explain his quote that "*absolutism did not end in 1789. It began.*"