

## **Absolutism: The Time of Absolute Monarchs!**

From 500 CE to 1500 CE, European kings and queens had to share their power with nobles and with the Catholic Church. That was about to end. The kings and queens of Europe took steps to make sure they were the people with all the power in their countries. By the 1600s and into the 1700s, the kings and queens of Europe became Absolute Monarchs, which meant they had all the power in their countries.

### **Divine Right of Kings**

One way that Absolute Monarchs controlled their countries was by making people believe that God gave them their power to rule. This was called the Divine Right of Kings. The Divine Right of Kings idea says that God made the role of king, so kings and queens are messengers of God and no one can challenge their power.



Another way that kings took control was by building large armies that could fight wars, but also control the people. The kings made new laws and a large government to make people follow the laws. The kings of Europe also became extremely rich through the colonies and through taxes. They used their riches to make more control. Absolute power means they controlled everything.

### **Luxury and Extravagance**

The absolute monarchs of Europe also used their money to build castles and palaces. They made the nobles stay at the palaces to control them. The best example of this was Louis XIV of France. He built a palace full of gold and marble and paintings in a place called Versailles. The pictures below are of this palace.



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Other kings built palaces like Louis'. One king, Peter the Great of Russia, built an entire city named after him: St. Petersburg. Some historians estimate that nearly 100,000 peasants died building this city. After it was done, Peter made all the nobles move to the city to be near him so he could control them.

### **Kings Battle for Central Europe**

During this time, the nations of Europe were at war constantly. Two leaders were the cause of much of this warfare. Maria Theresa of Austria and Frederick the Great of Prussia fought 2 large wars for control of Central Europe: The War of Austrian Succession and the Seven Years' War. These 2 wars were not just fought between Prussia and Austria, but involved almost every major country of Europe and was fought on other continents. Although the wars were very hard on Europe, Prussia and Austria became very powerful countries as a result.



Prussia and Austria were not the only nations fighting for power. Many other wars and battles were fought between the great absolute monarchs of Europe during this time. This time saw the creation of many of the nations we know today.