

# Absolute Monarchs in Europe, 1500–1800

## Previewing Main Ideas

**POWER AND AUTHORITY** As feudalism declined, stronger national kingdoms in Spain, France, Austria, Prussia, and Russia emerged under the control of absolute rulers.

**Geography** *Study the map. What large empire was surrounded by many of these national kingdoms?*

**ECONOMICS** Absolute rulers wanted to control their countries' economies so that they could free themselves from limitations imposed by the nobility. In France, Louis XIV's unrestrained spending left his country with huge debts.

**Geography** *What other evidence of unrestrained spending by an absolute ruler does the time line suggest?*

**REVOLUTION** In Great Britain, Parliament and the British people challenged the monarch's authority. The overthrow of the king led to important political changes.

**Geography** *Study the map and the time line. Which British Stuart lands were most affected by the event occurring in 1649?*

### INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY

#### eEdition

- Interactive Maps
- Interactive Visuals
- Interactive Primary Sources



#### INTERNET RESOURCES

- Go to [classzone.com](http://classzone.com) for:
- Research Links
  - Internet Activities
  - Primary Sources
  - Chapter Quiz
  - Maps
  - Test Practice
  - Current Events

EUROPE

WORLD

1500

1521

Cortés conquers Aztec Empire.

1533

Pizarro conquers Incan Empire. ▶

1588

British defeat Philip II's Spanish Armada.

1600

1603

Tokugawa shoguns rule Japan.





# Europe, 1650

	Austrian Hapsburg lands
	British Stuart lands
	French Bourbon lands
	Prussian lands
	Russian lands
	Spanish Hapsburg lands
	Boundary of Holy Roman Empire



**1643**

Louis XIV begins to rule France.

**1649**

Puritans under Oliver Cromwell (at right) execute English king.



**1696**

Peter the Great becomes sole czar of Russia.

**1756**

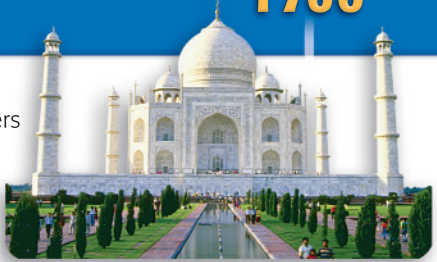
Prussian king Frederick the Great begins Seven Years' War against Austria.

**1700**

**1800**

**1631**

Shah Jahan orders construction of Taj Mahal.



**1776**

American colonists declare their independence from England.

## *What are the benefits and drawbacks of having an absolute ruler?*

You live under the most powerful monarch in 17th-century Europe, Louis XIV of France, shown below. As Louis's subject, you feel proud and well protected because the French army is the strongest in Europe. But Louis's desire to gain lands for France and battle enemies has resulted in costly wars. And he expects you and his other subjects to pay for them.

INTERACTIVE



- 1 Louis XIV uses his clothing to demonstrate his power and status, as his portrait shows. The gold flower on his robe is the symbol of French kings.
- 2 Louis's love of finery is apparent not only in his clothing but also in the ornate setting for this painting. As absolute ruler, Louis imposes taxes to pay for the construction of a magnificent new palace and to finance wars.
- 3 The government of Louis XIV enforces laws and provides security. His sword, scepter, and crown symbolize the power he wields. Yet the French people have no say in what laws are passed or how they are enforced.

### EXAMINING *the* ISSUES

- What might people gain from having a ruler whose power is total, or absolute?
- What factors might weaken the power of an absolute monarch?

As a class, discuss these questions. You may want to refer to earlier rulers, such as those of the Roman, Ottoman, and Carolingian empires. As you read about absolute monarchs in Europe, notice what strengthened and weakened their power.