



DC English IV

World/British Literature

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Absolutism

Absolutism is a monarchy-based government in which the rulers

of a specified region maintain power through heredity bloodlines:

- Ancient Mesopotamia, the various rulers of Assyria, Babylonia, and Sumer
- Ancient Egypt, the numerous dynasties of Pharaohs
- Modern times, the Pope in Vatican City of Rome is considered an elected absolute monarch

The head of state is not restricted by forms of written laws or governing bodies.

One individual, through advisors, controls an entire population of a given region.

- King/Queen set the cultural rules which everyone obeys
- Centralized power; other lesser-nobles have no control in system
- National interests sacrificed for ruler's personal interests; numerous wars
- Every aspect of society is controlled by one person

Absolutism

Religion is used as a means of validating the political system.

- As evidence of their superiority, links are established between the royal line to a **specific immortal (divine rights of kings)**; the king/queen is a living god
- Royalty answers to the wishes of gods, not to the wishes of the commoners
- The king/queen therefore holds the responsibility to erect temples, shrines, and churches to show their devotion
- The monarch acts as a physical symbol of his territory, a living metaphor, the nation personified
- As a result, the individual nation is totally dependent on a living figure
- If a kingdom fails, the gods have lost favor for the ruling power

Absolutism

Historically, this cultural notion lasted until the late Eighteenth Century

rare instances of rebellion and progressive transformation occurred

- *Magna Carta, 1215*
- in Europe monarchs held firm control specifically during 1500s to late 1700s
- The Age of Monarchs in 1648-1789
- *Century of Philosophy*
17th century philosophy is generally regarded as seeing the start of modern philosophy, and the shaking off of the medieval approach, especially scholasticism. It succeeded the Renaissance and preceded the Age of Enlightenment. It is often considered to be part of early modern philosophy.
- *The Age of Enlightenment, 1715-1789*
The Age of Enlightenment was an intellectual and philosophical movement that dominated the world of ideas in Europe during the 17th and 18th centuries.
- *Declaration of Independence, 1776*
- *French Revolution, 1789*

Constitutional Monarchy

On the other hand, a **Constitutional Monarch** is a form of government where the ruler promotes their assigned authority following a prescribed constitution.

- Ultimate power lies with a parliamentary system, elected by citizens
- Although still following a hereditary bloodline, the monarchs in this case are merely figureheads, representations of the nation's people and culture
- Modern examples are [England's Elizabeth II](#), Jordan's King Abdullah II
- In England, Queen Victoria was the last monarch to actually use her limited authority towards controlling outcomes of Parliament's legal system; consequences of the politics behind World War I further nullified any restructuring of a monarchy in the contemporary world

Divine Rights of Kings → **Rights of the Individual**