

Important Rulers in European History

England

Monarchs:

- Tudors
 - Henry VII (r. 1489-1509)
 - New Monarch
 - Important Policies:
 - Reduced influence of the nobility through the Star Chamber
 - No more private armies for nobles
 - Built up financial resources of England
 - Unified weights and measures
 - Created justices of the peace that collected taxes, dispensed justice, and maintained order
 - Henry VIII (r. 1509-1547)
 - Founder of Anglican Church
 - Started the English Reformation when he broke away from the Church to divorce his wife (Catherine) and have a male heir to the throne
 - Act of Supremacy (1534)
 - His break from the Catholic Church also increased the power of the English monarchy through the confiscation of Catholic land and monasteries
 - Anglican Church under Henry VIII kept a lot of Catholic doctrines and ideas
 - Edward VI (r. 1547-1553)
 - Edward VI was too young to rule, so a regency was put into place.
 - Protestant nobles heavily influenced his reign and attempted to move the Anglican Church to a more Protestant belief system.
 - Mary I (r. 1553-1558)
 - Nicknamed “Bloody Mary”
 - Mary attempted to return England back to Catholicism and persecuted Protestants in the process. She ultimately failed to return England to Catholicism.
 - Elizabeth I (r. 1558-1603)
 - Elizabeth instituted a policy known as the Elizabethan Settlement
 - This was a compromise between Catholics and Puritans in England
 - Elizabeth oversaw privateer attacks on Spanish shipping overseas, sponsoring a group called the “Sea Dogs”
 - Her reign saw the increase in drama and the arts with figures such as William Shakespeare
 - She oversaw the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588

- Stuarts
 - James I (r. 1603-1625)
 - James wanted to be an absolute monarch, but was restricted in his power by the Parliament. This led to various disputes between the monarchy and Parliament over things such as taxation.
 - Hampton Court Conference (1604)
 - Puritans met with James I at Hampton Court to attempt to reach a compromise. James I refused. Some Puritans left England for North America.
 - Charles I
 - Charles also wanted to be an absolute monarch, but was restricted in his power by the Parliament. Charles and the Parliament got into multiple disputes over taxation. Charles I dissolved Parliament multiple times.
 - Parliament attempted to limit the King's power with the Petition of Right (1628), but Charles I simply ignored the Parliament.
 - Charles I eventually declared war on Parliament and its supporters, leading to the English Civil War (1642-1649).
 - Oliver Cromwell
 - Interregnum Period (1649-1660)
 - Oliver Cromwell ruled over a Puritan Republic, officially called The Protectorate.
 - Puritan ideals and morals were enforced, such as no drinking.
 - Cromwell ruled more as a dictator.
 - Cromwell grew increasingly unpopular and the English people chose to restore the Stuarts to the throne.
 - Charles II (r. 1660-1685)
 - Known as the "Merry Monarch"
 - Restoration of the Stuarts.
 - Charles II was faced with increasing restrictions from the Parliament.
 - James II (r. 1685-1688)
 - Like the other Stuarts, James II often got into multiple disputes with the English Parliament.
 - After the birth of a Catholic son, Parliament invited William III of Orange and his wife, Mary, to take over the throne. This bloodless transfer of power was known as the Glorious Revolution (1688).
 - William III (r. 1689-1702) and Mary II (r. 1689-1694)
 - These two monarchs took over after the Glorious Revolution (1688).
 - They ruled as joint monarchs until Mary's death in 1694.
 - William III and Mary II were forced to agree to the English Bill of Rights (1689).
 - This provided a wide variety of rights and acted like a social contract for the monarchy (John Locke idea).

- Hanover
 - George I (r. 1714-1727)
 - George I is important since he was the first monarch to have a prime minister: Robert Walpole.
 - Victoria (r. 1837-1901)
 - The period of her rule is known as the Victorian Era in British history. A variety of things happened during this time that made Britain one of the most powerful empires in Europe/the World:
 - The First Industrial Revolution was ongoing
 - The British government helped to showcase industrialization with things like the Crystal Palace (1851).
 - This was built to have an exhibition of industrial production.
 - This was sponsored by her husband: Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.
 - The Second Industrial Revolution occurred
 - Britain expanded overseas during the Age of Imperialism
 - Britain's navy and army was built up to be one of the strongest in Europe
 - Modern political parties began to form during her reign (this was not because of her, but happened while she ruled)
 - She also had a lot of children and grandchildren that became important rulers of various European countries.
- Windsor
 - George V (r. 1910-1936)
 - King during WWI
 - George VI (r. 1936-1952)
 - King during WWII
 - He was a very inspirational figure for the British people during the war.
 - Started to oversee the process of decolonization.
 - Elizabeth II (r. 1952-present)
 - Current monarch

Prime Ministers:

- Robert Walpole (r. 1721-1742)
 - First Prime Minister
- Sir Robert Peel (r. 1834-1835, 1841-1846)
 - Peel oversaw the repeal of the Corn Laws
- Benjamin Disraeli (r. 1868, 1874-1880)
 - Helped transform the Tories into the Conservative Party
 - Helped push the Reform Act of 1867 through the Parliament before he was Prime Minister. This helped to expand British suffrage (for men).

- William Gladstone (r. 1868-1874, 1880-1885, 1886, 1892-1894)
 - Helped transform the Whigs into the Liberal Party
 - He passed multiple reform bills and acts through the Parliament.
 - He attempted to secure home rule for the Irish.
- David Lloyd George (r. 1916-1922)
 - He is important since he was the British representative at the Paris Peace Conference/Treaty of Versailles
- Neville Chamberlain (r. 1937-1940)
 - “Peace in our time”
 - Chamberlain was heavily involved in the Munich Conference and falsely believed he had negotiated a long term peace with Hitler.
- Sir Winston Churchill (r. 1940-1945, 1951-1955)
 - Should be obvious...
- Margaret Thatcher (r. 1979-1990)
 - “The Iron Lady”
 - Her policies are often compared to U.S. President Ronald Reagan.
 - She was a hard-liner in terms of Cold War policies against the Soviet Union.
 - Thatcher attempted to implement a version of “trickle-down” economics in Britain and tried to cut back on the “welfare state”.
 - She also took a very harsh position toward the Irish.

France

- Valois Monarchy
 - Louis XI (r. 1461-1483)
 - Example of a New Monarch for France
 - “The Spider King”
 - Helped to strengthen the power of the monarchy and expand French territory.
 - He established a more modern administration/bureaucracy that set the stage for later monarchs.
 - He weakened the power of the nobles in the country.
 - Catherine de Medici
 - Catherine ruled as a regent of France from 1559-1574 since her sons were too young to rule on their own.
 - She is most famous for overseeing the St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre (1572).
 - She helped influence the policies of Henry III (r. 1574-1589)

- Bourbon Monarchy
 - Henry IV (r. 1589-1610)
 - Laid the foundations for absolutism.
 - He strengthened government institutions in France.
 - Weakened the older nobility (Nobility of the Sword) in favor of the new nobility (Nobility of the Robe).
 - His finance minister, the Duke of Sully, helped to move France to mercantilism and strengthened the taxation system of France.
 - He was perhaps most important for the Edict of Nantes (1598), which granted limited toleration for Huguenots.
 - Louis XIII (r. 1610-1643)
 - Louis XIII was well known for his chief minister: Cardinal Richelieu
 - They created the intendant system in France to control the country, have more effective taxation, and control the nobility
 - Richelieu also began to weaken the Huguenots, which were viewed as a state within a state.
 - Richelieu also had a policy of trying to weaken the Habsburgs, which drew France into the Thirty Years War (1618-1648).
 - Louis XIV (r. 1643-1715)
 - “Sun King”
 - Perhaps the most important absolute monarch
 - “One law, one king, one faith”
 - Remember, he enacted various policies:
 - He used the Palace of Versailles to show off his reign.
 - He used the intendant system to control the country.
 - He revoked the Edict of Nantes with the Edict of Fontainebleau.
 - He built up a large military, which he used to try to expand France.
 - He established the corvee obligation.
 - His finance minister, Jean-Baptiste Colbert, further moved France to mercantilism (the key economic policy of absolute monarchs) and created new taxes, such as the taille and gabelle.
 - Louis XV (r. 1715-1774)
 - Louis XV was faced with increasing debt within France and attempted to raise taxes. The Parlement of Paris attempted to restrict the king’s power to do this, and Louis XV abolished it.
 - Louis XVI (r. 1774-1792)
 - Louis XVI faced a financial crisis upon his succession to the throne.
 - Through a combination of incompetency and indecision, Louis XVI was eventually forced to convene the Estates General in 1789. This helped to lead to the French Revolution.
- Constitutional Monarchy (1789-1792)
- First French Republic (1792-1795)
- Directory (1795-1799)
- Consulate (1799-1804)

- First French Empire (1804-1815)
 - Napoleon (r. 1799-1814, 1815)
 - You should know a few of Napoleon's key policies:
 - Careers open to talent
 - Concordat of 1801 with the Catholic Church
 - Napoleonic Code
 - Implementation of a police state
 - Creation of a Central Bank
 - Revised education system
 - Obviously, Napoleon conquered multiple areas and created a large empire.
- Bourbon Restoration (1814, 1815-1830)
 - Louis XVIII (r. 1814-1815, 1815-1824)
 - Attempted to pursue a more moderate course.
 - Charter of 1814
 - Established a constitutional monarchy with specific guarantees:
 - Civil liberties
 - Freedom of religion
 - Napoleonic Code
 - Charles X (r. 1824-1830)
 - Extreme conservative
 - Wanted to return France to an absolute monarchy
 - Tried to reduce voting rights and general rights of the people
 - His policies led to a new revolution in 1830
- July Monarchy (1830-1848)
 - Louis Philippe (r. 1830-1848)
 - "The Middle Class King"
 - Another constitutional monarchy was established
 - Civil liberties were once again guaranteed
 - Louis Philippe's policies mostly favored the middle class, which led to widespread disappointment, anger, and opposition.
 - This led to another revolution in 1848.
- Second Republic (1848-1852) and Second Empire (1852-1871)
 - Louis Napoleon (r. 1848-1852 as President of the Republic, r. 1852-1871 as emperor of France)
 - As emperor of France, Louis Napoleon had a variety of successful domestic policies:
 - He helped improve the economy and moved the country toward free trade.
 - He assisted the lower class and workers.
 - He appointed Baron Georges von Haussman to redevelop Paris, which led to a variety of modern improvements that are still in place today.
 - French investors financed the construction of the Suez Canal.

- His foreign policies were disastrous for the country though, which led to French humiliation in the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871)
- Third Republic (1871-1940)
 - Georges Clemenceau (Prime Minister of France from 1917-1920)
 - He was important since he represented France at the Paris Peace Conference/Treaty of Versailles. The French delegation demanded harsh punishments on Germany due to WWI.
- Vichy France and Occupied France (1940-1944)
- Fourth Republic (1944-1958)
- Fifth Republic (1958-present)
 - Charles de Gaulle (r. 1958-1969)
 - de Gaulle created the Fifth Republic.
 - He oversaw French withdraw from Algeria.
 - Under his rule, France grew distant from the United States, which was viewed as having too much influence in Europe.
 - Francois Mitterrand (r. 1981-1995)
 - He was most important for pioneer European integration/moves toward the European Union.

Holy Roman Empire

- Charles V (r. 1519-1556)
 - Ruler during the Reformation. He was unable to put down Martin Luther and the rise of the Lutherans. He was forced to go along with the Peace of Augsburg (1555).
 - Charles V also started the Habsburg-Valois Wars and the Habsburg-Ottoman Wars.
 - He was able to halt the Ottoman advance into Europe at Vienna in 1529.
 - He abdicated in 1556, splitting the Habsburgs into the Austrian Habsburgs and Spanish Habsburgs.

Prussia/Germany

- Prussia
 - Frederick William the Great Elector (r. 1640-1688)
 - He established Prussia as a great power.
 - He began to increase the army of Prussia, laying the foundations for future rulers.
 - He was limited in power by the strong nobility of Prussia, the Junkers
 - Frederick William I (r. 1713-1740)
 - “The Soldiers’ King
 - Key example of an absolute monarch for Prussia
 - He heavily increased the military of Prussia to the point where Prussia was referred to as the “Sparta of the North”
 - He was the one that created the Potsdam Giants
 - He also established one of the most efficient bureaucracies in Europe
 - Began to move toward a civil servant system

- Frederick the Great (r. 1740-1786)
 - Key example of an enlightened despot for Prussia
 - Heavily influenced by the Enlightenment
 - He had multiple enlightened reforms:
 - “First servant of the state” idea
 - Religious freedom for Christian groups
 - Promoted education
 - Codified laws
 - Freed serfs on crown owned land
 - Created civil servant exams
 - Reduced censorship and abolished capital punishment
- Frederick William IV (r. 1840-1861)
 - He rejected a constitution and the title of “emperor of the Germans” that was presented to him by the Frankfurt Parliament in 1848.
 - He attempted to unify the northern German states under Prussian control, but was forced to abandon the effort when Austria objected.
- German Empire (1871-1918)
 - Kaiser Wilhelm I (r. 1860-1871 as king of Prussia, r. 1871-1888 as emperor of Germany)
 - Oversaw the unification of Germany.
 - He appointed Otto von Bismarck as his chancellor.
 - Otto von Bismarck (r. 1871-1890 as chancellor of Germany)
 - Otto von Bismarck was the key force in unification of Germany, practicing the policies of real-politic to achieve unification.
 - Bismarck embarked on a series of wars to achieve unification, primarily the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 and the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871.
 - As chancellor, Bismarck often shifted alliances with political groups in Germany to maintain power and advance his agenda.
 - He implemented the Kulturkampf, a cultural war against Catholicism in Germany that eventually was abandoned and backfired.
 - Bismarck also attempted to weaken the influence of socialists in the country. This actually led Bismarck to implement the first welfare state in Europe to take away support from socialists.
 - Bismarck also embarked on a series of entangling alliances in Europe that grew extremely complicated and led to his dismissal by Kaiser Wilhelm II.
 - Kaiser Wilhelm II (r. 1888-1918)
 - He was important since he was the rule of Germany during WWI. Some blamed him for starting the war (this is up for debate).
- Weimar Republic (1919-1933)
 - Paul von Hindenburg (r. 1925-1934 as president of the Weimar Republic)
 - Hindenburg is important since he appointed Adolf Hitler as chancellor in 1933

- Fascist Control (1933-1945)
 - Adolf Hitler (r. 1933-1945)
 - This should be obvious...
- West Germany (1949-1991)
 - Willy Brandt (r. 1969-1974)
 - Implemented a policy known as Ostpolitik
 - This was an attempt at reconciliation between West and East Germany, and improving relations in general with Eastern Europe. This is sometimes viewed as an extension of the idea of détente, which was most notably practiced by U.S. President Richard Nixon.
 - Helmut Kohl (r. 1982-1990, r. 1990-1998 for a united Germany)
 - He oversaw the reunification of Germany in 1990.
 - He was also important for the integration of Europe/helping form the European Union.
 - He supported the hardline position that U.S. President Reagan and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher had toward the Soviet Union.
- Germany (1991-present)
 - Angela Merkel (r. 2005-present)
 - Current chancellor of Germany. She is a good example of the increased number of women in power in Europe.

Austria

- Leopold I (r. 1658-1705)
 - The example of an absolute monarch for Austria.
 - He tried to copy Louis XIV.
 - He helped to expand Austrian territory.
- Charles VI (r. 1711-1740)
 - He was important since he helped secure more territory for Austria after the Treaty of Utrecht (1713).
 - Austria received the Spanish Netherlands (renamed the Austrian Netherlands), Lombardy in Northern Italy, and got to keep Naples and Sardinia in southern Italy.
 - He issued the Pragmatic Sanction (1713)
 - This was done to ensure his daughter, Maria Theresa, would be recognized upon his death. This also ensure Habsburg lands would be maintained under Maria Theresa.
- Maria Theresa (r. 1740-1780)
 - She saved the Austrian Empire during the War of Austrian Succession (1740-1748). Although Austria lost Silesia to Prussia, the rest of Austrian territory was maintained.
 - She helped to centralized control of the Habsburg empire and further weaken the nobles.

- Joseph II (r. 1765-1790)
 - He co-ruled with his mother, Maria Theresa, for the early part of his reign.
 - He was perhaps the greatest of the Enlightened Despots.
 - He was a patron of the arts, known as the “Musical King”
 - He completely abolished serfdom.
 - He granted freedom of religion and civic rights to both Protestants and Jews
 - He reduced the influence of the Catholic Church
 - He allowed freedom of the press
 - He abolished torture and the death penalty
 - Most of his reforms were overturned upon his death
- Klemens von Metternich (foreign minister of Austria from 1809-1848 and chancellor of Austria from 1821-1848)
 - Metternich was the champion of conservatism and the most important figure involved with the Congress of Vienna.
 - Metternich attempted to suppress liberal tendencies and revolts across Europe from 1820-1848.
 - He helped form the concert system for Europe, an effort to use diplomacy and conferences to prevent major wars. The system was also used to put down the will of the people in many locations though.
 - He was so influential on European politics that the period of 1815-1848 was known as the Age of Metternich.
- Franz Joseph I (r. 1848-1916)
 - He put down a revolution in 1848 upon his succession to the throne.
 - He oversaw the formation of Austria-Hungary in 1867. This was known as the dual monarchy.
 - He was the emperor at the start of WWI.

Italy

- Kings (Italy was united in 1861 as a kingdom. It remained a kingdom until 1946.)
 - Victor Emmanuel II (r. 1861-1878)
 - The first king of a united Italy.
 - He was originally the ruler of the Kingdom of Sardinia-Piedmont. While in control of Sardinia-Piedmont, he openly supported a liberal constitution. This constitution became the basis for Italy’s in 1861.
 - He appointed Camillo de Cavour as his prime minister.
 - Victor Emmanuel III (r. 1900-1946)
 - Victor Emmanuel III was the king during both WWI and WWII.
 - He agreed to appoint Mussolini as Prime Minister after Mussolini’s March on Rome (1922). In doing so, he allowed Mussolini to rule as a dictator over Italy. He did not speak out against or try to stop Mussolini at first.
 - Victor Emmanuel III eventually helped lead a coup against Mussolini. He dismissed him as Prime Minister in 1943 and ordered his arrest. Shortly after, Italy signed an armistice with the allied powers.

- Prime Ministers
 - Count Camillo Benso de Cavour (r. 1852-1859, 1860-1861 for Sardinia-Piedmont; 1861 for Italy)
 - The AP Euro exam loves to compare and contrast Cavour and Bismarck.
 - Cavour was one of Europe's most brilliant statesman and was the architect of Italian Unification.
 - As prime minister of Sardinia-Piedmont, Cavour carried out a program of liberal reform. He modeled his governance after the liberal French constitution of 1830.
 - He implemented various reforms (judicial, economic, religious, etc.) to make Sardinia-Piedmont even more liberal.
 - His foreign policy was aimed at uniting Italy. It involved two primary steps:
 - 1. Remove all foreign powers from Italy.
 - 2. Unite the various kingdoms and regions of Italy together under the rule of Victor Emmanuel II.
 - Like Bismarck, Cavour practiced the ideas of real-politic.
 - Cavour ultimately was successful, uniting northern regions of Italy with the conquered southern regions of Italy (the various conservative rulers of southern portions of Italy had been deposed through a series of conquests by the nationalist figure Giuseppe Garibaldi, who agreed to simply give the territory to Cavour and Victor Emmanuel II). Cavour died shortly after unification.
 - Vittorio Orlando (r. 1917-1919)
 - He was important since he represented Italy at the Paris Peace Conference/Treaty of Versailles. His main goal was to ensure that Italy received promised territory. Italy did not receive the territory promised, leading to widespread outrage in Italy.
- Fascist Control (1922-1943)
 - Mussolini (r. 1922-1943)
 - Mussolini founded the Fascist Party in 1919 after his return from WWI. The Fascist Party began to attract some Italians due to widespread anger over the lack of respect Italy was given during the Treaty of Versailles negotiations and a depression that hit Italy in 1919.
 - Mussolini was appointed as Il Duce (the leader) of the Fascist Party and built up a personality cult.
 - Mussolini took power in 1922 after his March on Rome.
 - Mussolini had various policies that were common for fascists at this point in history:
 - He created a paramilitary organization: the Blackshirts. Hitler copied this idea with his Brownshirts.
 - Mussolini consolidated power by purging opposition. He ruled with unchecked power and authority as a dictator.
 - Fascists were put in control over schools.
 - A fascist youth movement was formed.
 - Women were treated as inferior. Fascism is inherently chauvinistic.

- Mussolini built up a personality cult.
- Mussolini built up the Italian military to expand Italy's borders.
- He attempted to implement racial purity laws.
- Mussolini allowed for corporations and large businesses to help control the state.
- Mussolini was able to secure an agreement with the Catholic Church called the Lateran Accord. This recognized Italian control over Rome in exchange for Italian recognition of Vatican City as a sovereign state.
- Mussolini was deposed and arrested by Victor Emmanuel III in 1943. Hitler was able to rescue Mussolini, but Mussolini was eventually captured again and executed on April 28, 1945. His body was taken to the city of Milan, where it was hung upside down at a gas station.

Spain

- Ferdinand (r. 1475-1504) and Isabella (r. 1474-1504)
 - New monarchs of Spain
 - The two united most of Spain under one monarch when they married in 1469.
 - The two did a variety of things to heavily strengthen Spain:
 - They oversaw the completion of the Reconquista (1492). They were able to reconquer all of Spain under Christina rule. All non-Christians were driven out of Spain.
 - They enforced the Spanish Inquisition to maintain the authority of the Catholic Church.
 - They weakened the nobility by supporting the middle class and the growing amount of cities across Spain.
- Habsburgs
 - Charles I (Charles V for the Holy Roman Empire) (r. 1516-1556 for Spain)
 - Refer to the Holy Roman Empire section. You just need to know that he also ruled Spain.
 - Philip II (r. 1556-1598)
 - The absolute monarch for Spain
 - He built a massive new royal palace called the Escorial.
 - He attempted to oversee all aspects of government.
 - Philip's rule was primarily characterized by two things:
 - 1. Economic issues
 - Philip II had economic problems from the start of his rule, as his father, Charles V, left him a debt of around 36 million ducats.
 - Inflation began to occur due to the massive influx of gold and silver from the New World.
 - Philip II's religious wars did not do much to help the situation.

- 2. Catholic wars
 - Philip II was successful in stopping Ottoman expansion in the Mediterranean at the Battle of Lepanto (1571)
 - He was not successful in maintaining control over all of the Spanish Netherlands (the northern portion broke off and became the Dutch Republic).
 - His attempted invasion of England failed after the Spanish Armada was defeated in 1588 by the forces of Elizabeth I.
- Bourbon Rule (r. 1700-1808, 1813-1868, 1874-1931, 1975-present) (you don't need to know the below material, but I have written it out if you are interested)
 - The last Habsburg, Charles II, died in 1700 without an heir to the throne. This led to the War of Spanish Succession (1701-1713). Eventually, the Treaty of Utrecht was agreed to, which placed a Bourbon on the throne of Spain. The Bourbon family could not unite Spain and France however.
 - Napoleon interrupted the Bourbon rule of Spain when he appointed his brother, Joseph, as the king in 1808-1813. The Bourbons were restored in 1813.
 - The Bourbons were removed once again when Spain transitioned to a new family in control (Savoy). Spain briefly experimented with a republic in 1873-1874. Then, the Bourbons were restored again to Spain.
 - A Second Spanish Republic was established in 1931 and lasted until 1939.
 - Francisco Franco took over as a fascist dictator after the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). He ruled from 1936-1975.
 - The Bourbons were restored for a final time in 1975. They are currently a constitutional monarchy with King Felipe VI as the monarch.
- Fascist Control (1936-1975)
 - Francisco Franco (r. 1936-1975)
 - Franco took power during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939).
 - Franco established a fascist regime in Spain.

Russia

- Tsars
 - Ivan IV (Ivan the Terrible)
 - Ivan IV is sometimes viewed as a "new monarch"
 - He was the first to take the title of "tsar"
 - Ivan attempted to reduce the power of the Russian nobility, the boyars.
 - Serfdom was increased under his rule to keep the peasants tied to noble lands.
 - Merchants and artisans were bound to their towns, which halted the growth of a middle class for Russia.
 - He also created a secret police force to help control Russia.
 - He expanded Russian territory as well.
 - He died without a capable heir, leading to the Time of Troubles (1584-1613) in Russia.

- Romanov Family (in power from 1613-1917)
 - Michael (r. 1613-1645)
 - His primary importance was that he was the first of the Romanov family.
 - Peter the Great (r. 1682-1725)
 - The absolute monarch of Russia. He is often compared to Louis XIV.
 - Peter's main focus for Russia was modernization/westernization.
 - He built up a powerful military force for Russia. He used this military force to expand Russian territory, especially after the Great Northern War (1700-1721).
 - He imported substantial numbers of western architects, artisans, and figures to build up the Russian economy.
 - He made Russian culture more western, establishing the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg.
 - The Tsar became absolute.
 - He created new schools and universities.
 - He created the Table of Ranks to try and control the nobility. Nobles were also forced to dress and appear as western.
 - He turned the Orthodox Church into a government department in 1700.
 - He also oversaw the construction of St. Petersburg and a grand palace called the Peterhof.
 - Catherine the Great (r. 1762-1796)
 - The enlightened despot of Russia.
 - She continued Peter's westernization process.
 - She implemented various reforms:
 - Again, she continued to implement western culture in Russia.
 - She also implemented various educational reforms.
 - She allowed limited religious toleration.
 - She strengthened the local government and divided Russia into 50 provinces.
 - Catherine had various shortcomings though:
 - She used harsh actions to put down potential revolts, like the Pugachev rebellion.
 - Only the nobility benefited from her reforms.
 - Serfdom was made even more severe in Russia.
 - Alexander I (r. 1801-1825)
 - Oversaw Russia during the Napoleonic Wars and represented Russia at the Congress of Vienna.
 - Alexander I favored conservative policies, but was not an extreme conservative.
 - He started Russia's involvement in various congresses and concerts to try and maintain the balance of power in Europe.

- Nicholas I (r. 1825-1855)
 - He put down an attempted revolt called the Decembrist Revolt (1825).
 - He became Europe's most reactionary monarch.
 - He developed an official slogan for his rule: Orthodoxy, Autocracy, and Nationalism.
 - During his rule, he did a variety of things:
 - He increased the control that the Orthodox Church had over education.
 - He increased the absolute power of the Tsar.
 - He stressed the uniqueness of Russia and tried to make all areas under Russian control conform to Russian culture.
 - He established a police state.
 - He did nothing about serfdom, leading to various issues for Russia.
 - He got Russia involved in the Crimean War (1853-1856).
- Alexander II (r. 1855-1881)
 - Sometimes referred to as the liberator Tsar.
 - Alexander II implemented various reforms in Russia:
 - He issued the Emancipation Act of 1861
 - Serfdom was completely abolished
 - He established the Mir system to control rural areas and land.
 - He reformed the judicial system.
 - He strengthened Russia's military and began to modernize it.
 - He attempted to stimulate industrialization by sponsoring the construction of railways in Russia.
 - Alexander II's reign also saw the rise of terrorist groups. One of these groups, the People's Will, assassinated Alexander in 1881.
- Alexander III (r. 1881-1894)
 - He became a very reactionary ruler after the assassination of his father.
 - Just like Tsar Nicholas I, he implemented a policy of autocracy, orthodoxy, and russification.
 - He was extremely harsh in his rule:
 - He allowed for no reforms, established a stronger secret police force, censored all forms of opposition, and promoted russification over all Russian territories.
- Nicholas II (r. 1894-1917)
 - He was the last Tsar of Russia.
 - He was not very effective as a Tsar:
 - He got Russia involved in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), which was a military disaster for Russia and sparked a revolution in 1905.

- He was forced to grant various liberal concessions after the Revolution of 1905. Most of these concessions were eventually ignored or did not go far enough for the country.
 - His management of WWI was horrendous. He eventually went to the front, only to spend time in a cabin writing letters back to his wife about how he no longer wished to be Tsar.
 - The February Russian Revolution of 1917 forced Tsar Nicholas II to abdicate.
 - The soviets eventually captured Nicholas II after the October Revolution of 1917. Nicholas II and his family were executed in 1918.
- Despite his ineffectiveness in most areas, Nicholas II did appoint Count Sergei Witte as a minister of finance.
 - Witte oversaw a rapid industrialization of Russia.
- Soviet Union
 - Vladimir Lenin (r. 1917-1924)
 - Lenin was the founder of the Bolshevik Party in Russia.
 - He took Marx's ideas and fit them to Russia's unique situation.
 - He led the October Revolution (1917) and took power as the leader of the Soviet Union in 1922 after the Russian Civil War (1917-1922).
 - Lenin established a secret police force called the Cheka. This would eventually transition into the KGB.
 - Lenin withdrew Russia from WWI, gave land to the peasants, and allowed for more bread for the people.
 - Lenin also established a program called the NEP (New Economic Policy).
 - Realizing that Russia could not immediately implement socialism, Lenin allowed for some capitalist measures to help transition Russia to full-fledged socialism.
 - Joseph Stalin (r. 1924-1953)
 - Stalin solidified power in 1927 after purging opposition. He was able to succeed Lenin despite the opposition of Leon Trotsky.
 - Stalin did a variety of things:
 - He ruled with complete, absolute power. He established a totalitarian dictatorship.
 - He implemented a centralized economic plan called the 5 Year Plans
 - This was done to create a socialist economy.
 - It called for rapid industrialization and collectivization of agriculture.
 - This led to unrealistic quotas being placed on industrial production.
 - It also led to massive starvation and murder of peasants in the countryside.

- The worst of this occurred in the area of current day Ukraine.
 - 10-12 million people starved or were killed.
 - Stalin also implemented propaganda and created a personality cult around himself.
 - Stalin implemented purges:
 - All opposition was either killed or sent off to the gulags.
 - Millions of people were killed.
- Stalin led the Soviet Union to victory in WWII.
- Nikita Khrushchev (r. 1955-1964)
 - Khrushchev oversaw a de-Stalinization campaign in the Soviet Union, sometimes referred to as “the thaw”.
 - Khrushchev began to focus the Soviet Union’s economy on consumer production and a reformed agricultural program. Both failed to address fundamental problems with the Soviet economy.
 - Khrushchev faced revolts against communist rule in areas of Eastern Europe, sending in soviet troops/tanks to crush the Hungarian Uprising of 1956.
 - Khrushchev was aggressive with the Soviet’s foreign policy.
 - The Space Race started during Khrushchev’s rule with the launching of the Sputnik satellite.
 - The Berlin Wall was constructed in 1961.
 - The Cuban Missile Crisis (1962) occurred during Khrushchev’s rule.
- Leonid Brezhnev (r. 1964-1982)
 - Brezhnev’s rule in the Soviet Union was characterized by a few things:
 - Economic issues:
 - The Soviet Union faced stagnation under Brezhnev. The economy increasingly worsened throughout his rule.
 - Re-Stalinization:
 - Brezhnev began to go back on some of the openness of Khrushchev. This was not as extreme as what Stalin did, but there was still a lot of censorship and people that were exiled.
 - The Brezhnev Doctrine
 - After intervening in a reform effort in Czechoslovakia, Brezhnev issued this doctrine.
 - It was the policy that the Soviet Union had the right to interfere in any socialist country whenever it saw the need to.
 - Brezhnev did oversee a reduction in Cold War tensions with Détente.

- Russian Federation (1991-present)
 - Boris Yeltsin (r. 1991-1999)
 - Yeltsin oversaw the transition to a democracy within Russia.
 - He faced various problems and issues though:
 - The transition to a market economy was slow and painful.
 - Massive inflation occurred. Russia came very close to hyperinflation.
 - Russia increasingly relied upon oil production to help its economy and did not diversify the economy.
 - The position of president became more and more powerful throughout Yeltsin's rule.
 - Russia dealt with a variety of ethnic problems, the biggest issue being with the region of Chechnya.
 - Yeltsin grew increasingly ill in the late 1990s, and appointed Vladimir Putin as Prime Minister in 1999. The intent was for Putin to run for office and take over the presidency after Yeltsin.
 - Yeltsin resigned due to his health in 1999. Putin took over to finish the rest of Yeltsin's term and then run for office.
 - Vladimir Putin (as President of Russia: r. 2000-2008, 2012-?, as Prime Minister of Russia: r. 1999, 2008-2012)
 - Putin has created an increasingly authoritarian regime.

Sweden

- Gustavus Adolphus (r. 1611-1632)
 - "Father of Modern Warfare" and "Lion of the North"
 - Pioneered new military techniques:
 - Salvo
 - Cavalry used in mobile fashion
 - Light artillery
 - Involved in the Swedish Phase of the Thirty Years War (1618-1648)