

Varieties of the Modern Secular State

Introduction

- **Search for New Authorities (again)**
- **The two types of the Modern State**
 - **Absolute Monarchy as in France**
 - **Blending modern notion of omniscipotent, efficient, bureaucratic state with older concept of “Divine Right”**
 - **Constitutionalism in England**
 - **Blending older feudal traditions and newer ideas of human rights growing out of stress on individualism**

Varieties of the Modern Secular State

Introduction

- Monarchs gain power and become symbols of new states.
- Most thought of themselves as ruling by divine right.
- Only in England was there significant opposition to royal authority.

Varieties of the Modern Secular State

I. Absolute Monarchy in France

- Cardinal Richelieu (in power 1624-1642) prepared the way for Louis XIV.
- Acted for “reason of state”, rather than ethical or moral principles.
- Ruler needed absolute authority to carry out domestic and foreign policy.
- Domestic policy: reduce all power except that of king.

Varieties of the Modern Secular State

I. Absolute Monarchy in France

- **Foreign policy: make France dominant power in Europe by reducing power of Hapsburg rulers of Austria and Spain.**
- **Domestically, Richelieu attacked power of Huguenots or French Protestants.**
- **They were a state within the state**
- **Controlling La Rochelle and carrying on own foreign policy.**

Varieties of the Modern Secular State

I. Absolute Monarchy in France

- Also wanted to reduce power of nobility.
- His strategy: make nobility give up territorial powers by legislation, bribery, and outright force. Convert them to ceremonial functions.
- Legislation:
 - forbade dueling
 - Reduced power of provincial governors
 - Demolished fortifications.
 - Abolishing or reducing powers of feudal officers of king.

Varieties of the Modern Secular State

I. Absolute Monarchy in France

- When nobility rebelled, he further reduced their powers.
- Bribed them to become court hangers-on.
- Meanwhile in countryside, intendants took over governing duties.
- Richelieu made a fact of “L’etat c’est moi” even before Louis XIV said it.
- When Richelieu died, Cardinal Mazarin (in power 1642-1661) continued his policies.

Varieties of the Modern Secular State

I. Absolute Monarchy in France

- When Mazarin died in 1661, Louis XIV took over
- When Louis took over he carried absolute authority to new level.
- Louis' ideas found fullest expression in Jacques-Benigne, Bishop Bossuet (1627-1704).
- Politics as Drawn from Very Words of Scripture (1679). Absolute Monarchy is God's will.

Varieties of the Modern Secular State

Questions

- **1. Isn't the logic inescapable: if God appoints and anoints you, you are only responsible to Him? Your subjects? They didn't appoint you.**
- **2. Don't you like the line about exercising your power with humility?**
- **3. Do you think Louis XIV meant it?**

Varieties of the Modern Secular State

I. Absolute Monarchy in France

- Reading from Politics.
- Louis tried to impose his will on all aspects of life.
- He styled himself Sun-King.
- He created for himself the perfect setting: Versailles Palace. (Some views from links in the lecture.)
- Louis turned to lower or middle class officials.

Varieties of the Modern Secular State

I. Absolute Monarchy in France

- Louis' chief finance minister-Jean Baptiste Colbert (1619-1683).
- Implemented policy of mercantilism, an economic theory that sought to increase power of state by granting monopolies, maintaining favorable trade balance, bullionism.
- Absolutism under Louis XIV was one model of modern state.

Varieties of the Modern Secular State

II. Constitutionalism in England

- **This model did not look promising in 17th century.**
Why look at it?
 - **Story of victory of constitutionalism not simple.**
 - **England in early 17th century seemed to be heading toward absolute monarchy.**
 - **But England possessed strong representative assembly-Parliament.**
-

Varieties of the Modern Secular State

II. Constitutionalism in England

- **What was Parliament? Older feudal theory of giving advice, approving extraordinary taxes, hearing cases and disputes. Newer urban classes joined to approve extraordinary taxation. Formed in two houses-Lords and Commons.**
- **Early Stuarts, James I (1603-1625) and Charles I (1625-1649) faced opposition from Parliament and Puritans.**

Varieties of the Modern Secular State

II. Constitutionalism in England

- **James and Parliament squared off on foreign policy and finance.**
- **Added Parliament of 1614.**
- **Clashed with Parliament over foreign policy. Alliance with Spain angered many in Parliament.**
- **James' view: the king alone makes foreign policy.**
- **Charles I's accession did not improve matters. Tried and failed to collect taxes without parliamentary approval. New Parliament forced**

Varieties of the Modern Secular State

II. Constitutionalism in England

- **him to accept Petition of Right (1628) which outlawed arbitrary imprisonment.**
 - **From 1629-1640 Charles tried to rule without Parliament. Rebellion of Scots in 1639 required new Parliament to raise taxes. Failing to get funding, Charles tried to dissolve it and arrest its leaders. This began Civil War.**
 - **Civil War ended with Charles' execution (1649).**
-

Varieties of the Modern Secular State

II. Constitutionalism in England

- **Commonwealth era (1649-1660) Oliver Cromwell ruled as Lord Protector most of that period.**
- **Charles II (1660-1685).**
 - **He was restored to a different monarchy.**
 - **Royal prerogatives curtailed**
 - **Restoration reaffirmed value of constitutionalism**
 - **England did not want absolute monarchy, military rule, or Puritanism.**
- **Charles' and James II's reign (1685-1688) showed that monarchy needed to be limited further.**

Varieties of the Modern Secular State

II. Constitutionalism in England

- **Glorious Revolution of 1688 permanently limited royal power and secured supremacy of Parliament.**
- **Declaration of Right (1688) and Bill of Rights (1689) recognized and confirmed rights of people.**
- **New monarchy established on basis of contract between King and People.**
- **One question remained. Could constitutionalism be effective? The answer was “Yes”. It succeeded in opposing and frustrating Louis XIV’s plans for France-dominated Europe.**

Varieties of the Modern Secular State

Question

- **Constitutional government survived because the king was too weak, and his major subjects too strong, for the king to succeed at absolutism. Agree?**