

Limited monarchy: the dutch republic and england essay



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In the seventeenth century, while most countries in Europe were still under absolute monarchy, local institutions have contested and limited the absolute power supposedly wielded by the monarchs. These local institutions, represented by the States General in the Netherlands and the Parliament in England, successfully defied and even controlled the establishment of monarchy in their respective countries.

The States General in the Netherlands, composed of local province representatives, opposed the plans of the house of Orange to establish a centralized government and declare themselves as hereditary monarchs. Instead, the States General supported the republican form of government which brought about the Golden Age of the Dutch Republic in terms of economic prosperity and commercial trade supremacy. Although the Dutch experienced continuous decline in trade and economy afterwards, the republic was never again in danger of being replaced after the death of William III of the house of Orange in 1702. In England, the end of the Tudor dynasty in 1603 ushered new tax and religious policies from Stuart rulers James I and Charles I.

These policies alienated the Parliament and later led to a civil war won by Oliver Cromwell in 1648. Cromwell later dissolved the Parliament due to disputes and established military rule over England. Cromwell's death in 1658, however, restored the Stuart monarchy through Charles II. The attempts of Charles II, and later his heir James II, to further their Catholic interests caused more disagreements with the Parliament. A group of noblemen urged Dutch executive William of Orange to invade England in order to prevent an apparent Catholic hereditary monarchy.

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After the successful “Glorious Revolution”, the Parliament offered the throne to William and his wife Mary in 1689 along with the provisions of the Bill of Rights. The Bill of Rights affirmed the right of the Parliament to participate in the affairs of the state and established the rule of law which laid the groundwork for a constitutional monarchy. The Flourishing of European Culture

The religious and political conflicts of the seventeenth century did not hinder European culture to flourish in terms of art and literature. In Italy, art underwent stages influenced by the Mannerism movement and the Baroque movement.

Mannerism reflected an atmosphere filled with anxiety and suffering by using elongated figures and exaggerated poses to defy the harmony and balance of the Renaissance era. Baroque harmonized the classic Renaissance art and revival of religion through vigorous poses and dramatic presentation of details which expressed the intense emotions, as well as the search for power, which dominated the seventeenth century. In France, Late Classicism favored the harmony and the clarity of the Renaissance art over the showy and overly passionate style of Baroque. Late Classicism rejected the high drama but depicted the transition of the French society from chaos to order through portrayals of noble subjects. In the Netherlands, Dutch Realism artists favored the realistic presentation of simple everyday life without embellishments. Aside from the arts, literature also prospered in England, Spain and France.

The Golden Age of English Literature exhibited pride and enthusiasm in English achievements through playwrights like William Shakespeare. Lope de Vega set the trend for playwrights during Spain’s Golden Century, when <https://assignbuster.com/limited-monarchy-the-dutch-republic-and-england-essay/>

theater was one of the most artistic forms of expression. In France, Jean-Baptiste Moliere produced satires and comedies to deride the society and the religion during his time as drama began to emerge in France around the year 1630. Questions: 1.

How did the local institutions in the Dutch Republic and England limit the power of the monarchy? In the Netherlands, the States General opposed the plans of the house of Orange to set up a centralized government with William of Orange and his heirs as hereditary monarchs. Instead, the States General advocated the creation of a Dutch republic composed of representatives. In England, the Parliament limited the power of the king by making the king enact his policies only with the approval of the Parliament. The control over the government's budget which is held by the Parliament also limited the power of the king. Also, the Parliament later advocated the "glorious revolution" that ushered the implementation of the Bill of Rights and the development of the constitutional monarchy in England.

2. How did the Bill of Rights establish constitutional monarchy? The Bill of Rights affirmed that the monarch's power is not absolute but is instead subject to the rule of law or the constitution. It affirmed the power of the Parliament to make laws and levy taxes and made it impossible for the king to control the army without the Parliament's consent. The Bill of Rights limited the power of the monarch and gave more freedom to the people.

3. Differentiate the art movements in Europe during the seventeenth century. Mannerism reflected an atmosphere filled with anxiety and suffering by using elongated figures and exaggerated poses to defy the harmony of

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