The Grand Political Experiment:
Formal Constitutional Limitations on the Power of the Ruler

I. King-in-Council: Prevailing Form of Government in Early Modern Europe

    A. Absolutism Model: Insufficient to Explain Available Evidence
        1. Monarch in conflict with nobility
        2. Monarch forms alliance with bourgeoisie, bureaucracy, and/or military
        3. Absolutism—a transitional form between feudal decentralization and centralized democratic nation-state

    B. Ruling Class Model: Characteristics
        1. Absence of Constitutional Limitations on Monarch
        2. Ruling Class Grants Power to Monarch in Exchange for Monarch's Authority
        3. Patronage Networks

II. Development of Monarchies with Strong Constitutional Restraints

    A. England: Catholic Monarch vs. Protestant Parliament
        1. War of the Roses (1455–1485)
        2. Henry VIII (1509–1547)
        3. Elizabeth I (1558–1603)
             a. Elizabethan Compromise
             b. Mary Stuart
             c. Edward De Vere (Earl of Oxford) and the Shakespeare question
        4. James I (1603–1625)
             a. Claim of Divine-Right Monarchy
             b. "even by God himself they are called gods."
        5. Civil War (1642–1645)
             a. Charles I (1625–1649)
             b. Oliver Cromwell (1649–1658)—Lord Protector
        6. "Glorious Revolution" (1688)
             a. James II (1685–1688)
             b. William and Mary

    B. Poland: Experiment in Limited Monarchy

        1. *szlachta*: landed gentry (aristocracy)
        2. *pacta coventa*: elected monarch bound by constitution
        3. *sejm*: national assembly
        4. *liberum veto*: principle of unanimity in *sejm*
        5. *rokosz*: legal armed rebellion
        6. Warsaw Confederation (1572)—tolerance for Jews, Protestants, Orthodox, and Muslims

III. Republics (no king or queen)

        1. Netherlands—United Provinces
        2. Switzerland
        3. Italian city-states
        4. United States

IV. Monarchies Without Strong Constitutional Restraints

    A. France: Catholic Persecution of Huguenots
        1. Henry IV of Navarre (1589–1610): "Paris is worth a Mass."
        2. Edict of Nantes (1598)
        3. *Fronde* (1648–1652)
        4. Louis XIV (1643–1715)
        5. Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (October 18, 1685)

    B. Sweden: Military and Administrative Innovation
        1. Gustavus Adolphus (1611–1632) – *Accession Charter of 1611*
        2. Christina (1632–1654)

    C. Prussia: An Army in Search of a State

    D. Holy Roman Empire, Austria, and the Habsburg Family
        1. Charles V (1519–1556)
        2. Peace of Augsburg (1555)—*cuius regio, eius religio*
        3. Defenestration of Prague (1618) and the Thirty Years War (1618–1648)

    E. Russia: Synthesis of Outside Influences
        1. Mongols: Ivan IV (1533–1584)
        2. Byzantine religion: Aleksei (1645–1676)
        3. Swedish administration: Peter I (1682–1725)
        4. Prussian militarism: Peter III (1762)
        5. French culture: Elizabeth (1741–1761) and Catherine II (1762–1796)

V. Theories of State Organization: Natural Law and the Social Contract

    A. Absolute Sovereignty
        1. Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679)
        2. Jacques Bossuet (1627–1704)
        3. Feofan Prokopovich (1681–1736)

    B. Contract Can Be Broken
        1. John Locke (1632–1704)
        2. David Hume (1711–1776)
        2. Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778)