Age of Absolutism – Austria, Prussia, and Russia

Austria
- Holy Roman Empire
  o “Neither Holy, nor Roman, nor an Empire”
    ▪ Voltaire
  o Germanic States
  o Decentralized elected emperor
    ▪ Hapsburgs
  o North – Protestant
  o South – Catholic
- Collapse of HRE
  o Peace of Westphalia
    ▪ Destroys remaining political and religious unity
    ▪ Survived in piece until 1806
- Austrian Empire
  o Divided
    ▪ Austria (Germanic)
    ▪ Hungary (Magyar)
    ▪ Bohemia (Czech)
  o Austria
    ▪ Personal empire of Hapsburgs
      ■ Ruled directly
- Austrian Expansion
  o War with the Turks
    ▪ John Sobieski
      ■ Polish
      ■ Saved Vienna
    ▪ Expanded territory to southeast
  o War of Spanish Succession
    ▪ Gained territories in Europe
      ■ Netherlands
      ■ Milan
      ■ Naples
- Characteristics
  o Capital is Vienna
  o Polygenous
    ▪ Ethnicities
    ▪ Languages
  o Strong Nobility
    ▪ Serfdom persists
    ▪ Very few overseas colonies
      ■ Attempted Nicobar Islands and Tianjin
        ■ Neither successful
      ■ Few cities
      ■ Small middle class
  o No National Assembly
- Weaknesses
  o Small army
  o Not Unified
  o Nobility
    ▪ Prevented much change
  o Ethnicities
    ▪ Hostility from Bohemia and Hungary
  o Loss of Spanish Empire
    ▪ War of Spanish Succession
      • Spanish possessions fall under Bourbon authority
- Pragmatic Sanction
  o 1713
  o Made following death of Charles VI
    ▪ Maria Theresa ONLY heir to Austrian Throne
    ▪ Forced other empires to accept
      • Caveat – They are not allowed to invade

**Prussia**

- Background
  o Territory
    ▪ Located in north Germany
    ▪ No true borders
      • Very disjointed
  o Existed as elector state since 1529
  o 1618
    ▪ Electorate of Brandenburg (German) and Duchy of Prussia (Polish Germanic)
      • Brandenburg freed up after 30 years War
      • Prussia freed up after Second Northern War
- Hohenzollern
  o Hereditary
  o Absolutists
  o Highly centralized
    ▪ Very bureaucratic
- Army
  o Very Strong
  o Grew up around army
- Economy
  o Centered on growing army
    ▪ Demand drove economy
  o Poor agriculturally
- Social Groups
  o Junkers
    ▪ Aristocracy
    ▪ Land lords
    ▪ Did not want to lose power
    ▪ Supported Hohenzollerns as long as no taxes
      • Complete power over peasants
  o Middle Class
    ▪ Growing
  o Peasants
    ▪ Sinking deeper into serfdom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nobility of Europe</th>
<th>Austria</th>
<th>England</th>
<th>France</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No taxes, Loyalty to army, full power</td>
<td>Paid taxes, some political power</td>
<td>No taxes, no power</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Religion
  o Protestant
  o Tolerant
    ▪ Especially with scholars and artists
- Kings of Prussia
  o Frederick William the Great Elector
    ▪ One of the electors of HRE
    ▪ Created Prussian State
      ▪ Made powerful by building up army
  o King Frederick I
    ▪ Continued to build up state
      ▪ Otherwise did not really do much
  o King Frederick William
    ▪ Lived modestly
      ▪ Did not spend much
    ▪ Built up military
      ▪ Always wore military uniform
      ▪ Potsdam Giants
      ▪ Set up draft and reserve guard
    ▪ Cruel to son
  o Frederick William II
    ▪ Frederick the Great
      ▪ Enlightenment Monarch

Russia
- Background
  o Very late to modernize
    ▪ Horribly Medieval
    ▪ Under control of Golden Horde
    ▪ Ivan the Terrible
      ▪ r. 1547-1584
      ▪ First “Tsar” of Russia
    ▪ Mikhail Romanov
      ▪ r. 1613-1645
      ▪ Established Romanov Dynasty
    ▪ Existed until 20th century
- Peter The Great
  o Social Reforms
    ▪ 1st book of etiquette
    ▪ Mandatory education for sons of landowners
    ▪ Sent Russians abroad to study
    ▪ Simplified alphabet
    ▪ Edited the 1st Russian newspaper
    ▪ Reformed Calendar
    ▪ Decreed Westernization
      ▪ No Beards
      ▪ Women dressed western
      ▪ Courts speak French
- Military Reforms
  - Professional army
  - Reduced powers of Boyars in army
  - Uniforms
  - Reorganized ranks
  - **Built navy**

- Economic Reforms
  - Mercantilist
    - Increased exports
    - Trading fleet
    - Encouraged mining, metallurgy, textiles
  - **Recruited experts from Europe**
  - Increased taxes
  - Depends on peasant labor
    - Serfs suffer
  - Moved capital
    - St. Petersburg
      - Built by serfs
      - Warm water seaport
    - “Window to the west”

- Administrative Reforms
  - Autocratic
    - Established bureaucracy
  - No Individual rights
  - Duma and Council of Boyars disbanded
  - Establish Senate
    - Controlled by Peter
  - State service required of all landowners/boyars

- Religious Reforms
  - Got rid of old believers
  - Appointed the Procurator of the Holy Synod
    - Head of Church
      - Selected by Tsar
    - Could be gotten rid of at any time
    - Peter indirectly in head of Church

- Foreign Policy
  - At war all but 2 years
  - **Grand Embassy**
    - Peter trying to gain support for war vs Ottomans
    - Brandenburg, Netherlands, England, Austria
  - Expanded borders
    - To the south against Ottomans
    - **Great Northern War**
      - Versus Sweden
        - Charles XII
      - Battle of Poltava
        - Defeat of Swedes
          - Marked start of decline
        - Peter gains access to Baltic