Early Modern Europe: Age of Absolutism

Absolutism

- Principles
  - Ruler had complete power
  - Being the “father”
    - Duty to care for his people
  - Allegiance to the ruler
    - Not to the state
  - Origin: restore law and order after Religious Wars
  - Thomas Hobbes
    - Monarch had complete power
    - People gave up all of their power
    - People had no power to revolt
  - Jean Bodin
    - Divine Right
  - Bishop Bousset
    - Ruler’s authority comes from God alone
      - Not a contract
    - Tutor of Louis XIV

- Characteristics
  - Great Power
  - Sometimes abusive
  - Many Wars
  - Radical Decisions
  - Centralized Power
  - Weakened opposition
  - Large Standing Armies
  - Religious Unity = Strength
  - Stronger Bureaucracy

Absolutist Monarchs

France

- Louis XIV
  - Very long reign
    - 1643-1715
  - Made France strongest in Europe
  - Political principle
    - L’etat est moi
  - Social Reforms
    - Weakened nobles
    - Built up bourgeoisie
    - Built Chateau de Versailles
      - Social Control
    - Established France as Cultural Center
    - Repealed Edict of Nantes
- Economic Reforms
  - Mercantilism
    - Built up infrastructure
  - Improved tax system
    - Still did not tax nobles
  - Helped French businesses
    - Subsidies
    - Tariffs on foreign businesses

- Military Reforms
  - Outlawed private armies
  - Very large standing army
    - First “modern” army
  - Many Wars
    - Wars of Devolution – French loss
    - Dutch War – Tie
    - War of the League of Augsburg – Tie
    - War of Spanish Succession – French Loss

**Austria**

- Hapsburg empire divided after Charles V
  - HRE splits off
- Sole purpose is to protect Europe from Turks
- Very weak
  - Divided
    - Religiously
    - Ethnically
    - Socially
      - Nobles had most power
  - Loss of allies
    - HRE gone
    - Spain part of Bourbons
- Small Army
- Pragmatic Sanction
  - Maria Theresa leader
    - Charles VI’s daughter
  - Other Europeans “promise” to recognize rule and not invade

**Prussia**

- Hohenzollerns
  - Ruling Family
- Location
  - Northeastern Germany
- Military State
  - Military Drove Economy
- Social Classes
- Junkers
- Middle Class
  - Growing
- Serfs
  - Sinking deeper and deeper

- Religion
  - Protestant
  - Tolerant
    - Invited artists to Prussia

- Frederick William II
  - Very Militaristic
  - Collected Large Soldiers
  - Always Wore a uniform
  - Built of Military

- Frederick the Great
  - Used fathers army
  - Expanded Prussia

- Ivan the Terrible
  - r. 1547-1584
  - Good Period and Bad Period
    - Good
      - Married to Anastasia Romonova
      - Empire Grows Steadily
      - Fully Removes Mongols from Russian Lands
        - Allows for building of Russian Empire
      - Given title “Grozny” out of respect
    - Bad
      - Paranoid
      - Blames Boyars for wife’s death
      - Oprichnina
      - Sacks Novgorod
      - Kills Son

- Peter the Great
  - r. 1682-1725
  - Awesome Childhood
    - Personal “Army”
    - Western Advisors
  - Brought Russia into modern era
    - Kicking and screaming
    - Literally cut traditional beards off Boyars
    - Organized professional army
      - Built up navy
- Grand Embassy
  - Travels to Europe
  - Tried his hand at everything
- Window on the West
  - Desire to get a warm water seaport
  - Led to war vs Swedes
    - Great Northern War