Eastern Absolutism

Serfdom

- In the west peasants gained rights as a labor shortage swept eastern Europe workers became a necessity
- In eastern Europe during the seventeenth century the rights of the peasants were taken away
  - The movement of peasants was restricted
  - Peasants lost their land and were forced into more obligations for their lords.
  - Between 1500 and 1650 conditions worsened and serfs could be killed for nothing

Serfdom

- Political factors also accounted for the new serfdom
  - Weaker kings were forced to give more freedom to landlords
  - Landlords sold directly to foreign capitalists and abolished the need for a middle class

- Conditions for serfs became worse
  - In Austria the robot - 3 days of unpaid labor a week became the norm.
  - Many serfs worked everyday except Sunday

Eastern Absolutism

- War and the threat of war aided the absolute monarchies
  - Would-be absolutists gained power in 3 areas
    - imposed and collected permanent taxes without consent
    - maintained permanent armies
    - conducted relations with other states as they pleased

Austria

Habsburg (Hapsburg) (1282-1914 - Austria)

- Charles V, emperor 1519 - 1556
- Ferdinand I, emperor 1556 – 1564
- (Edited)
- Ferdinand III, emperor 1637 - 1657
- (Edited)
- Charles VI, emperor 1711 - 1740
- Francis I Stephen, emperor 1745 – 1765
  - Maria Theresa of Austria,
    - Habsburg heiress and wife of emperor Francis I Stephen, reigned as Archduchess of Austria and Queen of Hungary and Bohemia 1740 - 1780
- Joseph II, emperor 1765 - 1790

Austria

- The Habsburgs were exhausted after the Thirty Years’ War
- Still remained emperors of the Holy Roman Empire
- Ferdinand III centralized the government of the German-speaking provinces
  - Wars with the Turks

- The Habsburgs then turned to fight the Ottomans
  - 1633 Turks try to take back Hungary – failed.
  - 20 year truce broken when Louis encourages Turks to try again.
    - Besieged Vienna in 1683 but failed
– Peace of Karlowitz (1699) Turks yielded most of Hungary to Habsburgs
  Growth of Power 1648 – 1740

• Back in control of a large empire.
  – Most Germanic, but many ethnic groups represented
  – Aristocracy of landowners who felt closer to each other than to laborers despite ethnic
differences.
  – Local Diets protected local interests and retained some local power
    • Pay your taxes, no question asked.

• The Habsburg state had 3 parts:
  – Austria, Kingdom of Bohemia, Kingdom of Hungarys
    • Estates of rebel landlords seized and given to those loyal from 30 yrs war.
    • In pouring of Catholic missionaries
    • Hungry – very nationalistic (Magyar aristocracy) remains a separate nation.
      1713 Pragmatic Sanction

• Charles VI, Pragmatic Sanction, Habsburg possessions would never be divided even if it
  meant a female heir
  – Got all to sign agreeing to recognize only the Habsburg line, even if female
  – When he dies in 1740, Frederick II seizes Silesia & Bohemia leaves
    Prussia
    Hohenzollern
    (1415 – 1918 - Prussia & Germany)

• Electors of Brandenburg
  – Friedrich Wilhelm I "The Great Elector" (1640-1688)
  – Friedrich III (1688-1701), later King Friedrich I

• Kings
  – Friedrich I of Prussia (1701-1713), formerly Friedrich III
  – Friedrich Wilhelm I (1713-1740)
  – Friedrich II of Prussia "Frederick the Great" (1740-1786)
    Prussia

• In the Thirty Years’ War Prussia was destroyed by invading armies

• The power of the Estates (the Junkers) was weakened and elector Frederick William (Great
  Elector) assumed absolute control

• There are 2 reasons he was successful
  – The wars between Sweden and Poland and the wars of Louis XIV seemed to create a sense
    of permanent crisis
  – The Junkers were unwilling to join the commoners against the crown

• By 1688 Prussia was one state

• Frederick William I “the soldier king” truly established Prussian absolutism
  – Created a strong centralized bureaucracy
  – Parliamentary government vanished as Frederick William enlisted the Junkers to help him
  – He gets governmental power, they get free hand governing peasants – serfdom spread.
    Prussian Military

• Frederick William I always wore a uniform
– He created the best army in the world and but didn’t use it, opted for diplomatic maneuvers.
– Prussia was 12th in population, 4th largest army
– Nobles make better Commanders – (used to ruling) so they were leaders in military.
  • Junkers absorbed in military service, emphasis on duty, obedience, service & sacrifice.
– “Sparta of the north”
• Left his son (Frederick II) a great war chest and large army (Will conquer Silesia with it)
  Prussia

• Army unifying element of state.
• Gave society military values
• To pay for standing armies soldiers doubled as tax collectors and policemen
• Agrarian Society, so welcomed immigrants (needed for technical skills for military)
• Each regiment assigned a certain region for recruits.
  Russia
  Romanov (1613 – 1917)
• Ivan III (The Great) (1462 – 1505)
• Ivan IV (Ivan the Terrible) (1533–1584), first to be crowned Tsar
• Feodor I (1584–1598),
• Time of Troubles (16-17th c)
• Michael I (1596 – 1645) (1st Romanov)
  (Edited)
• Peter the Great (1682 – 1724)
  (Edited)
• Catherine the Great (1762-1796)
  Geography of Russia
• 1/6th earth's land surface.
• Understand difference between "Russia" and "Soviet Union" or "USSR"
  Russian Culture
• Slavic language
• Russian Orthodox Church
  Byzantine Background
  Society
• Tsar/Czar (= Caesar or Emperor)
• Government is an autocracy
• Most people are peasants. Most peasants were serfs until 1861.
  Mongols
• The Mongols ruled the eastern slavs for more than 200 years
  – Mongol rule was absolute and violent, uprisings were brutally suppressed
  – The Mongol Khan was supreme ruler
  – Mongols used local princes to collect taxes and as servants
  – Through cooperation, Moscow became the most loyal city (best weasels)
Moscow

• The prince of Moscow was the tsar and he was an absolute ruler
• Moscovite authority was based on:
  – Ivan III stopped acknowledging the khan as a supreme ruler
• After the fall of Constantinople (1453) the tsars saw themselves as heirs to the Caesars and Orthodox Christianity
• All the other kings of Europe were heretics
• 1505 the tsar of Moscow became ruler of all Russia
  Break from Mongols
• The tsar claimed a God-given right to rule
• Ivan III confiscated 80% of Novgorod. Kept half and gave the rest to his nobles, causing a rise in service nobility
  Ivan IV – The terrible
• Claimed all nobles had to serve the tsar in order to hold office
• Absolute control
• Early Rule – some reforms
• Later rule more harsh
  – Secret Police
  – Purge & exile nobles which depopulated much of Russia
  – Peasants fled west to hide from Ivan and formed groups called Cossacks
  – Killed Heir (sort of an accident)
  The Time of Troubles
• Ivan IV dies
  – New Heir - Feodor mentally deficient
    • Brother Boris Godunov real ruler
  – Death of Dmitrii (youngest son of Ivan) at 8 (Knife to the neck)
• When Fedor dies, Godunov has Zemsky Sobor (council of nobles) crown him Czar on Fedor’s death.
• Led to period of civil war called ToT
  • 3 “False Dmitrii”
    • Ends when Zemsky Sobor choose Michael Romanov as next Czar in 1596
  Romanov Dynasty
• In 1613 Michael Romanov was elected the new tsar
• The tsar relaxed obligations of nobility, but increased pressure on the peasants

Social Change
• Patriarch Nikon introduced religious reforms intended to make the church more like the Greek Orthodox Church
• The aristocracy agreed but the peasants refused to accept the changes
• The masses felt alienated from their church
• 1649 serfdom became official
  Peter the Great
• Peter was fascinated by geography and spent 18 months touring Europe
• He force the nobles to accept western ways including shaving and allowing women to attend social functions
• He built a new capital called St. Petersburg (1703) the “window to the West”
• Forced China to accept Russia’ claim for Siberia
• Merit based nobility for civil service
• Placed Church under his control & appointed leaders.

Peter & The Military

• Modernized military
• The best part of the army was the cavalry comprised of the boyars and nobility
• Peter wanted to improve the army but it only served part-time
• Every nobleman had to join the army or civil service for life
• Created a standing army of 200,000 men, recruitment was for life

Russia

• Russia won the Great Northern War (1700-21) with Sweden
• Russia annexed Latvia and Estonia
• Westerners and western ideas flowed to Russia
• The gap between the educated and the peasants widened
• New ideas of statehood took hold and Russia became closer to Europe than Asia

• 1762 Catherine seized the throne from her weak husband Peter III
  – Enlightened monarch (?)
• Allowed nobles to treat serfs as they pleased
• Defeated the Ottomans and expanded Russia’s southern border to the Black Sea
• Divided Poland with Austria and Prussia. Poland ceased to exist until 1919
• Catherine was the last of great absolute monarchs
• She died in 1796 when Europe was challenging the idea of the monarchy

The Winter Palace

Poland

• Poland is a good example of what could happen if the nobles became too powerful.
• Poland was a large state in Eastern Europe
• The “Noble Republic” – the nobles elected the kings
• Any noble could veto any law in the parliament.
  Results?
• The complete collapse of central government
• The enserfment of the peasant population for the profit of the nobles.
• The eventual disappearance of Poland from map of Europe.
• A result of no constitutionalism and no absolutism