

Chapter 5

THE TRANSFORMATION OF EASTERN EUROPE, 1648–1740

5.23 THREE AGING EMPIRES

Study Questions

1. What were the major differences between eastern and western Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries?
2. Why can we characterize the Holy Roman Empire, the Republic of Poland, and the Ottoman Empire in the mid-seventeenth century as old-fashioned political organizations?
3. Describe the changes in the Holy Roman Empire brought about by (a) the Reformation and, (b) the Thirty Years' War.
4. How was Germany ruled after the Peace of Westphalia?
5. What was distinctive about the political life of Poland in the seventeenth century?
6. How would you characterize the nature of Ottoman rule in eastern Europe? What changes were taking place in the seventeenth century within the empire?
7. What were some of the extraterritorial privileges enjoyed by the traders of Marseilles in the Ottoman Empire?

Key Discussion Sentences

1. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the three newer, stronger states of Austria, Prussia, and Russia were pushing aside the three older, large, and decentralized organizations—the Holy Roman Empire, the Republic of Poland, and the empire of the Ottoman Turks.
2. The Holy Roman Empire was described by Voltaire as neither holy, Roman, nor an empire.
3. Of the many ambitious German states after 1648, two states built by the skill and

persistence of their rulers came forward after 1700—Austria and Prussia.

4. In Poland the monopoly of law and force, characteristic of the modern state, failed to develop.
5. The Polish aristocracy were sticklers for their liberties, called the “Polish liberties,” which resembled the German liberties.
6. The Ottoman Empire was a relatively tolerant empire, far more so than the states of Europe.

Identifications

knights of the Empire

diet

liberum veto

elector

Hohenzollerns

Habsburgs

janissaries

szlachta

capitulations

Map Exercises

1. On the outline maps of Europe, indicate (a) in the upper panel the approximate boundaries about 1660 of the Holy Roman Empire, the Republic of Poland, and the Ottoman Empire; (b) in the lower panel the boundaries of the three new states—Austria, Prussia, and Russia—as they had developed by 1795; (c) in both panels the Elbe-Trieste line as described in the text. Source: *A History of the Modern World*, p. 199.
2. Can you locate each of the places mentioned in Section 5.23?

5.24 THE FORMATION OF AN AUSTRIAN MONARCHY

Study Questions

1. What were the major episodes and outcome of the conflict between the Habsburgs and the Turks from 1526 to 1739?
2. Describe the territorial boundaries of the Habsburg empire about 1740. In what sense was the empire international?
3. What was the fate of the old diets under the Habsburg monarchy?
4. How successful were the Habsburgs in their efforts at consolidation and centralization?

What steps did Charles VI take to guarantee the integrity of his territories?





Aging Empires and New States

Key Discussion Sentences

1. The House of Austria, in two or three generations after its humiliation at the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 acquired a new empire of very considerable proportions.
2. Though German influence was strong, the Habsburg empire was international or nonnational.
3. The Austrian monarchy remained a collection of territories held together by a personal union.
4. Charles VI devised a form of insurance—the Pragmatic Sanction—to guarantee an

undivided succession.

Identifications

hereditary provinces
Magyars
Charles VI
Pragmatic Sanction

battle of Zenta
siege of Vienna of 1683
Prince Eugene of Savoy

Peace of Karlowitz
Treaty of Rastadt
Peace of Belgrade

Map Exercises

1. Study the map on p. 209, The Growth of the Austrian Monarchy 1521–1772. What might be considered the nucleus of the empire? What were the boundaries of the empire in 1526? What was added in 1699? in 1713? by the first partition of Poland in 1772?
2. Can you locate each of the places mentioned in Section 5.24?

5.25 THE FORMATION OF PRUSSIA

Study Questions

1. What were the major territorial victories that Sweden enjoyed during the Thirty Years' War?
2. Explain the role of Frederick William and his successors from 1640 to 1740 in the formation of Prussia.
3. Describe the special characteristics of Prussia as it was developing in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. What observations may be made about (a) the army, (b) government and economic life, (c) the social development and class structure of the country?
4. Why did Frederick II's seizure of Silesia come as a surprise? What did he accomplish by this act?

Key Discussion Sentences

1. To connect and unify its disconnected territories became the underlying long-range policy of the Brandenburg house.
2. Frederick William, also known as the Great elector, was the first of the several influential

leaders who shaped modern Prussia.

3. Prussia was unique in that, more than in any other country, the military developed a life of its own, independent of the life of the state.
4. The economic life of Prussia grew up under government sponsorship, rather than by the enterprise of a venturesome business class.
5. The army had a profound effect on the social development and class structure of Prussia.
6. Judged simply as a human accomplishment, Prussia was a remarkable creation, a state made on a shoestring, a triumph of work and duty.

Identifications

Charles XII
canton system
Frederick II
Silesia

Brandenburg-Prussia
Drang nach Osten
Hohenzollerns
the Great Elector

Frederick William I
Frederick I
crown domain
Junkers

Map Exercises

1. Study the map on pp. 214–215, The Growth of Prussia 1415–1918. What general observations may be made about the growth of Prussia since 1415? What territorial changes took place between 1415 and 1688? Of what significance was Frederick II's conquest of Silesia? What general observation may be made about the geographical orientation of Prussia before and after 1815?
2. Can you locate each of the places mentioned in Section 5.25?

5.26 THE TRANSFORMATION OF RUSSIA

Study Questions

1. Describe Russia before Peter the Great's accession to the throne. Why had Russia not shared more fully in European developments? How was this fact reflected in prevailing social conditions?
2. In what ways did changes in Russia between the time of Ivan the Terrible and the accession of Peter the Great resemble developments in other parts of Europe?

3. What was happening to the peasantry in seventeenth-century Russia? Describe peasant reactions to (a) economic changes, (b) religious changes.
4. Discuss the tempo, nature, and results of Peter the Great's internal reforms, with special attention to (a) the church, (b) the army, (c) a new capital, (d) economic policies, (e) administrative reforms.
5. How would you characterize Peter the Great's foreign policy? What territory did he win for Russia?
6. How would you assess the significance of Peter the Great in the history of Russia? What do the portrait of Peter on p. 225 and the illustration on p. 228 tell you about the man and his policies?

Key Discussion Sentences

1. Although Russia in the seventeenth century reflected its long estrangement from Europe, it was European in some of its fundamental social institutions.
2. In what ways did the new Russian empire resemble the new kingdom of Prussia?
3. Without Peter, Russia would have developed its European connections more gradually. Peter, through his tempo and methods, made the process a social revolution.
4. The peasant masses remained apart, egregiously exploited, never sharing in any comparable way in the Europeanized civilization.
5. Peter's whole system of centralized absolutism, while in form resembling that of the West, was in fact significantly different.
6. Peter the Great's foreign policy from the beginning was in part defensive and in part expansionist.

Identifications

Mongol invasions

Ivan the Terrible

Procurator of the Holy Synod

Streltsi

Time of Troubles

Michael Romanov

battle of Poltava

state service

Stephen Razin

Old Believers

gubernii

battle of Narva

St. Petersburg

Alexis

Map Exercises

1. Study the map on pp. 230 in your text, *The Growth of Russia in the West*. What general observations may be made about the westward expansion of Russia since 1462? Compare Muscovy in 1462 with (a) Russia at the beginning of Peter the Great's reign and (b) Russia at the end of Peter the Great's reign.
2. Can you locate each of the places mentioned in Section 5.26?

GENERAL ESSAY QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 5

1. From the mid-seventeenth to the mid-eighteenth century three strong powers emerged and expanded in eastern Europe—Austria, Prussia, and Russia. Discuss the major steps in the evolution of each of these states, giving special consideration to (a) geographic and economic factors, (b) territorial expansion, (c) the role of individual rulers, (d) foreign policy and war. What common features do you see in the history of the three powers during these years?
2. Describe the major steps in the evolution of Russia from about 1100 through the reign of Peter the Great (1682–1725). How did the changes in Russia differ from and how did they resemble developments in western Europe during these years?
3. By the early part of the eighteenth century what major political, economic, and social differences could be seen between Europe west of the Elbe-Trieste line and Europe east of that line?

GENERAL DISCUSSION PASSAGES FOR CHAPTER 5

1. The social border between the eastern and western agrarian zones, running from the mouth of the Elbe River into central Germany and down to Trieste, marks a somewhat imprecise but significant social boundary that would also have an important influence on the political and economic history of modern Europe. (pp. 198–199)
2. The states that insisted with such obstinacy on their liberties from the Holy Roman Empire gave few liberties to their subjects. (p. 198)
3. The history of the world would have been different had the Poland of the seventeenth century held together. (p. 196)

4. In more recent times, disillusioned by nationalism in central and eastern Europe, some historians tended to romanticize unduly the old Habsburg monarchy, noting that it had at least the merit of holding many discordant peoples together. (p. 208)
5. The Swedes in time proved themselves exceptional among European peoples in not harping on their former greatness. They successfully and peaceably made the transition from the role of an important military state to that of a small power. (p. 211)
6. Prussia became famous for its “militarism,” which may be said to exist when military needs and military values permeate all other spheres of life. (p. 211)
7. Prussia was unique in that, more than in any other country, the army developed a life of its own, almost independent of the life of the state. And in later generations the army proved more durable than the state. (p. 215)
8. To what extent Russia became truly European has always been an open question, disputed both by western Europeans and by Russians themselves. (p. 218)
9. Like most revolutionists since his time, Peter was aggressively secular. (p. 229)
10. Russian psychology, always mysterious to later generations in west Europe could perhaps be explained in part by the violent paradoxes set up by rapid Europeanization. (p. 229)