Emergence of Russia and Peter the Great

Today’s Objective

- To understand the emergence of Russia and the absolute monarchy of Peter the Great
• Following the death of Russia’s Czar Ivan the Terrible in 1584, an era of anarchy and civil war - the Time of Troubles,…
…led to the election in 1613 of a new Russian dynasty in the hope of restoring order: Romanov.
→ Elected by Russia’s old nobility - the boyars - the Romanovs remained largely under their control
In 1689, when Peter Romanov seized power as Czar Peter I,…

Russia was a backward and repressive feudal empire, populated mostly by serfs. → Desperate to modernize and westernize Russia,…

…in 1697, Peter traveled to Western Europe to study western technology and customs.

- Upon returning home after 18 months abroad, Peter defined four goals for his reign.
• Tame the power of the boyars and the Moscow streltsy (guards):
  → Immediately upon his return from abroad, Peter personally cut off the long beards and long sleeves of the court boyars.

→ In 1722, Peter introduced a **Table of Ranks** - equating a person’s social position and privileges… …with his rank in the bureaucracy or the army, rather than with his position in the nobility.

  - Intended to make the social standing of individual boyars a function of their willingness to serve the state.
• Gain secular control over the Russian Orthodox Church:
  → To eliminate the influence of the Old Believers - those who opposed modernization,…
  …Peter abolished the position of patriarch in the Russian Church, replacing him with a secular synod

• Reorganize internal administration in the gov’t:
  → Peter established a modern bureaucracy of “colleges,” or bureaus, to administer matters of gov’t
• Develop the economy:
  → Many of Peter’s economic reforms were designed to encourage a more Western orientation for Russia:
    - Adoption of the western calendar.
    - Publishing of Russia’s first newspaper.
    - Improved social status for women in Russian society.
  → Many more of Peter’s reforms were closely associated with Russia’s military needs.
    - Retraining of the Russian army using western tactics.
    - Establishment of an iron industry.
    - Introduction of the potato into Russia’s diet.
    - Secure a year-round warm-water port.
    - Build and maintain a Russian navy.
  → Peter’s greatest economic failure was his inability to convince his boyars to abolish Russia’s feudal system of serfdom.
In order to secure a year-round warm water port, that would allow Russia to both trade with the West and project naval power,…

...Peter would lead Russia into wars against two foreign states:
   → the Ottoman Empire: the Black Sea
   → Sweden: the Baltic Sea
Peter’s **Great Northern War** (1700-1721) against King Charles XII of Sweden,…

…secured Russian access to the Baltic Sea through the **Peace of Nystad**.
- Access to the Baltic allowed Peter to build a navy, affording Russia the ability to compete as a European great power.
- On the Gulf of Finland, Peter “the Great” would build his new capital city: **St. Petersburg**.

* Built to imitate European capitals of the West, St. Petersburg symbolized Russia’s new Western orientation.
Guided Reading Question

How did the policies of Peter the Great compare to those of Louis XIV?

Target Questions

• How did the boyars resolve the Time of Troubles?
• Describe Russia before the reign of Peter Romanov
  • How did Peter control the boyars & streltsy?
  • What rule did “colleges” play in Peter’s Russia?
• How did Peter gain secular control over the Russian Orthodox Church?
  • What was Peter’s plan to develop the economy?
• Explain the significance of the Great Northern War