

Absolute Monarchs in Europe**Section 3**

Central European Monarchs Clash

Terms and Names

Thirty Years' War Conflict over religion, territory, and power among European ruling families

Maria Theresa Empress of Austria whose main enemy was Prussia

Frederick the Great Leader of Prussia who sought to increase his territory

Seven Years' War Conflict from 1756 to 1763 in which the forces of Britain and Prussia battled those of Austria, France, Russia, and other countries

Before You Read

In the last section, you read how absolute power grew in France.

In this section, you will learn about absolutism in Austria and Prussia.

As You Read

Use a chart to compare Maria Theresa with Frederick the Great.

THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR

(Pages 603–604)

What caused the Thirty Years' War?

Germany had suffered from religious wars that ended in 1555. Rulers of each German state agreed that they would decide whether their lands would be Catholic or Protestant. Relations between sides became tense over the next decades. Then in 1618, a new war broke out and lasted for 30 terrible years. It was called the **Thirty Years' War**.

During the first half of the war, Catholic forces led by Ferdinand, the Holy Roman Emperor, won. However, Germany suffered because he allowed his large army to loot towns. Then the Protestant king of Sweden, Gustavus Adolphus, won several battles against him.

In the last years of the war, France helped the Protestants. Although France was a Catholic nation, Richelieu feared the

growing power of the Hapsburg family, which was headed by Frederick.

The Thirty Years' War ended in 1648 with the Peace of Westphalia. It had been a disaster for Germany. About 4 million people had died, and the economy was in ruins. It took Germany two centuries to recover.

The peace treaty weakened the power of Austria and Spain. But it made France stronger. The French gained German territory. The treaty also made German princes independent of the Holy Roman Emperor. It ended religious wars in Europe. Lastly, the treaty introduced a new way of negotiating peace—a method still used today. All states involved in the fighting meet to settle the problems of a war and decide the terms of peace.

Section 3, *continued*

1. What were three results of the Thirty Years' War?

STATES FORM IN CENTRAL EUROPE (Page 605)

Who ruled Austria?

The formation of strong states took place slowly in central Europe. The economies there were less developed than in western Europe. Most people were still peasants. This region had not built an economy based on cities and commercialism. Nobles enjoyed great influence. This helped them keep the serfs on the land and prevent the rise of strong rulers. Still, two important states arose.

The Hapsburg family ruled Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia. Their empire linked many different peoples—Czechs, Hungarians, Italians, Croatians, and Germans. **Maria Theresa**, the daughter of Charles VI, was empress of Austria in the mid-1700s. She managed to increase her power and reduce that of the nobles. She was opposed by the kings of Prussia, a new powerful state in northern Germany.

2. Who were the Hapsburgs?

PRUSSIA CHALLENGES AUSTRIA (Pages 606–607)

What was Prussia?

Like Austria, Prussia rose to power in the late 1600s. Like the Hapsburgs of Austria, Prussia's ruling family, the Hohenzollerns, also had ambitions.

Prussia was a strong state that gave much power to its large, well-trained army. In 1740, **Frederick the Great** of Prussia invaded one of Maria Theresa's lands. Austria fought hard to keep the territory, but lost. Still, in fighting the War of the Austrian Succession, Maria Theresa managed to keep the rest of her empire intact.

The two sides fought again, beginning in 1756. In the **Seven Years' War**, Austria abandoned Britain, its old ally, for France and Russia. Prussia joined with Britain. The Prussians and British won. In that victory, Britain gained economic domination of India.

3. What effect did fighting between Austria and Prussia have on Britain?

Section 3, *continued*

As you read about the absolute monarchs that ruled in Central Europe, fill out the chart by writing notes in the appropriate spaces.

The Thirty Years' War	
1. Note two causes of the war.	
2. Note four consequences of the war and the Peace of Westphalia.	

Central Europe	
3. Note two differences between the economies of western and central Europe.	
4. Note two reasons why central European empires were weak.	

Prussia and Austria	
5. Note three steps the Hapsburgs took to become more powerful.	
6. Note three steps the Hohenzollerns took to build up their state.	