

Russian Monarchs Czars (meaning Caesar)



Background History of Russia

- Russia was liberated from Mongol rule in 1462 by Ivan III of Moscow
- Russian was ruled by a succession of rulers from 1505 until 1553 when Ivan IV or Ivan the Terrible took the throne at age 3
- Ivan the Terrible lived up to his name, killing his eldest son and heir to the throne, and his youngest weak son succeeded him to the throne and died without an heir



Background History of Russia

- The period following this was known as the Time of Troubles when boyars (Russian nobles) struggled for power
- In 1613 representatives from Russian cities met to choose a new czar or Russian king
- Their choice was Michael Romanov, a grandnephew of Ivan the Terrible's wife Anastasia
- Michael Romanov began the Romanov dynasty which ruled Russia from 1613 – 1917, 300 years



Peter I or Peter the Great

- Russia was a backward land of boyars and serfs
- Serfs were little more than slaves that came with the land
- Russian had been isolated from the Renaissance and Age of Exploration
- Russians practiced an Eastern Orthodox branch of Christianity
- Peter became the sole ruler of Russia in 1696 and visited Western Europe a year later to learn more about the West



Peter's Reforms

- He increased his powers as an absolute ruler
- Brought the Russian church under state control, meaning himself
- Reduced the power of the great landowners
- Modernized the army by imposing heavy taxes to pay for the army



Peter Westernizes Russia



- Introduced potatoes, that became a major staple of Russian diet
- Started the first newspaper
- Raised the status of women
- Ordered nobles to give up traditional clothes and beards for Western fashion
- Advanced education by opening schools
- Fought Sweden to gain a port on the Baltic coast where he built St Petersburg
- By the time Peter died in 1725, he succeeded in dragging Russia into Western Europe

Catherine the Great 1762 – 1796

- From Peter's death in 1725 until 1762, Russia was headed by relatives of Peters
- Peter III was married to Catherine at the age of 15
- Catherine was from a German royal family
- Peter was assassinated, perhaps with Catherine's knowledge
- Catherine was declared Empress Catherine II and became ruler of Russia



Catherine's Accomplishments



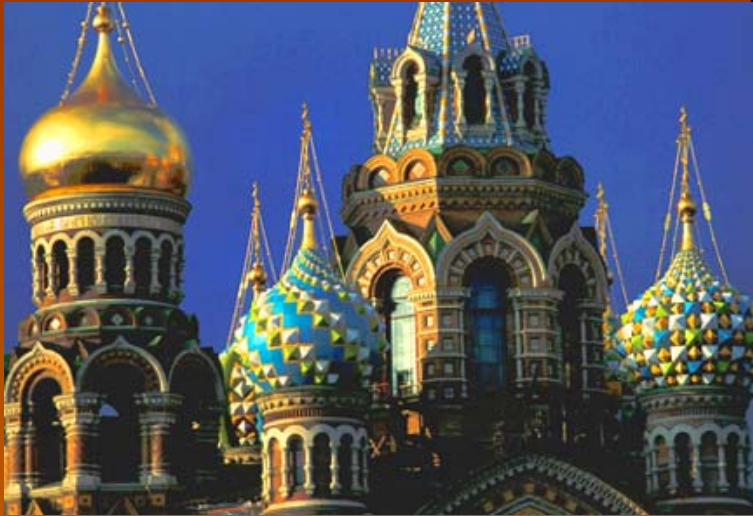
- In spite of being German she was well liked by the Russian people
- She has been described as an enlightened despotic ruler
- Brought many reforms to Russia
- Continued with Peter's Westernization
- She did little to reform the serfdom problem in Russia

Catherine's Accomplishments



- She opened a warm water port on the Black Sea, Odessa
- Her greatest accomplishments were in large land acquisitions during her reign
- She brought in educated Europeans to stay attuned to the West and the Enlightenment

Peter and Catherine's Accomplishments



- Were both absolute rulers of Russia
- Greatly expanded the borders of Russia and its influence on Western European affairs
- Brought Russia into line with other Western European nations
- Made education a high priority in Westernizing Russia