



## Unit 3 Chapter 17 Seminar The Rise of Prussia

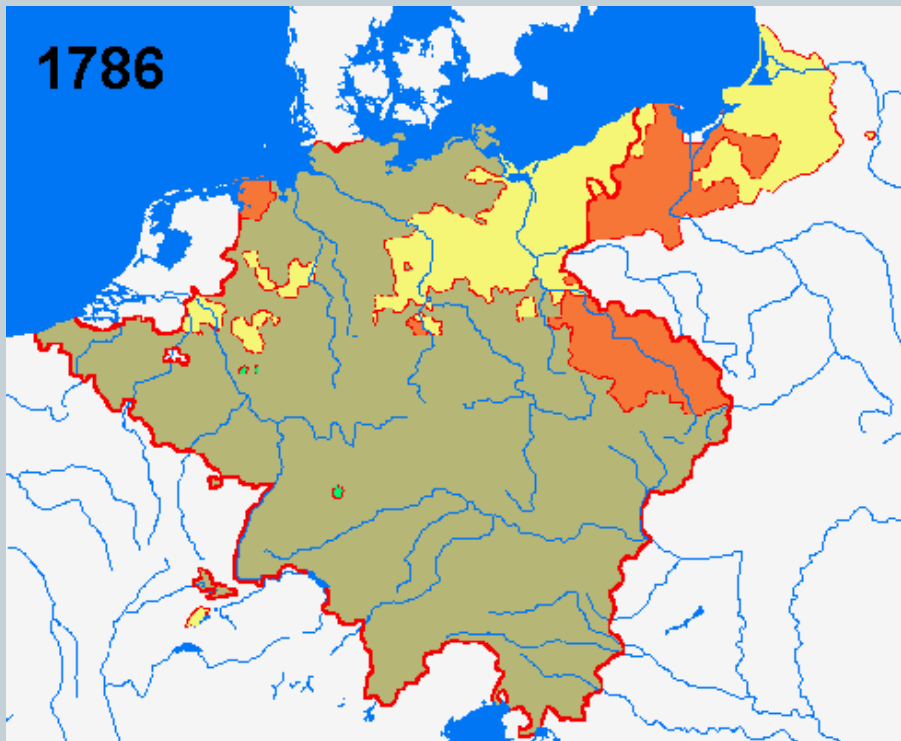
**LATHAN MCGHEE, PERIOD 5**



# 1991 Prompt



- Analyze the military, political, and social factors that account for the rise of Prussia between 1440 and 1786.



- Prussia
- Territorial Gained
- Territory Lost
- Other German States

## Thesis



Various political, military, and social factors led to the rise of Prussia. Wars such as the Thirty Years War and those of King Louis XIV weakened German lands. Additionally, German provinces were separated and weak. However, strong leaders would come in to unite some lands. As for military factors, wars and the invasion of the Tartars lead to a need of an army in these states. Finally, depopulation due to wars and a ruling nobility ruling peasants were social factors of their rise. These factors all together account for the rise of Prussia.

## Political Factors

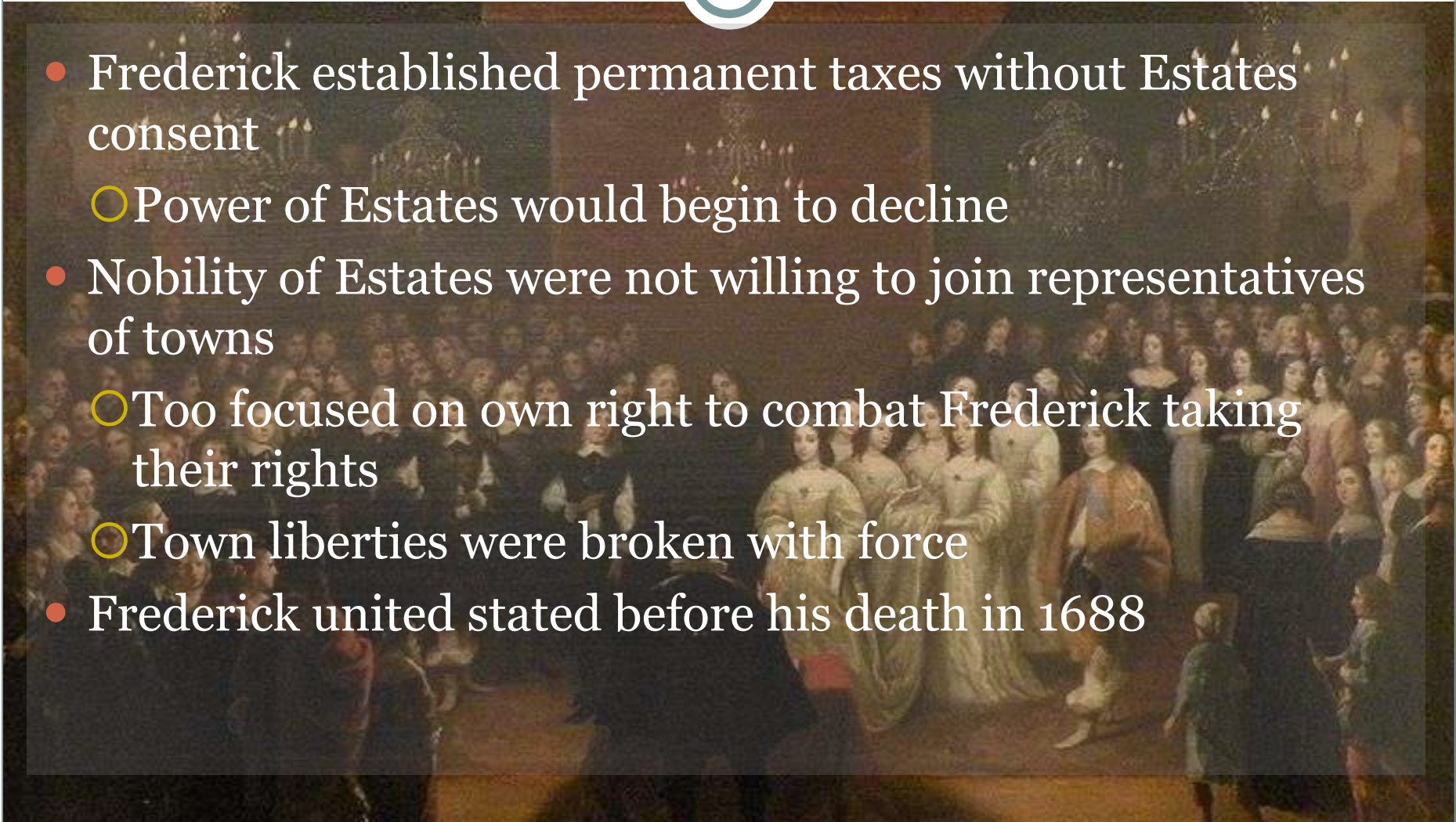


- German princes had lost power after 1400
- Elector of Brandenburg had no power
- Prussia was originally conquered in 1400's
  - by 1600 the peasants were heavily controlled by nobles
- 1618 – Hohenzollern family (rulers of Prussia through other branches) dies out
  - Power is reverted to the elector
- Estates (representative assemblies) are weakened by war
- Frederick William (r.1640-1688) “Great Elector”
  - Determined to unite 3 provinces of Brandenburg, Prussia, and other holdings in Germany

## Political Factors - 2



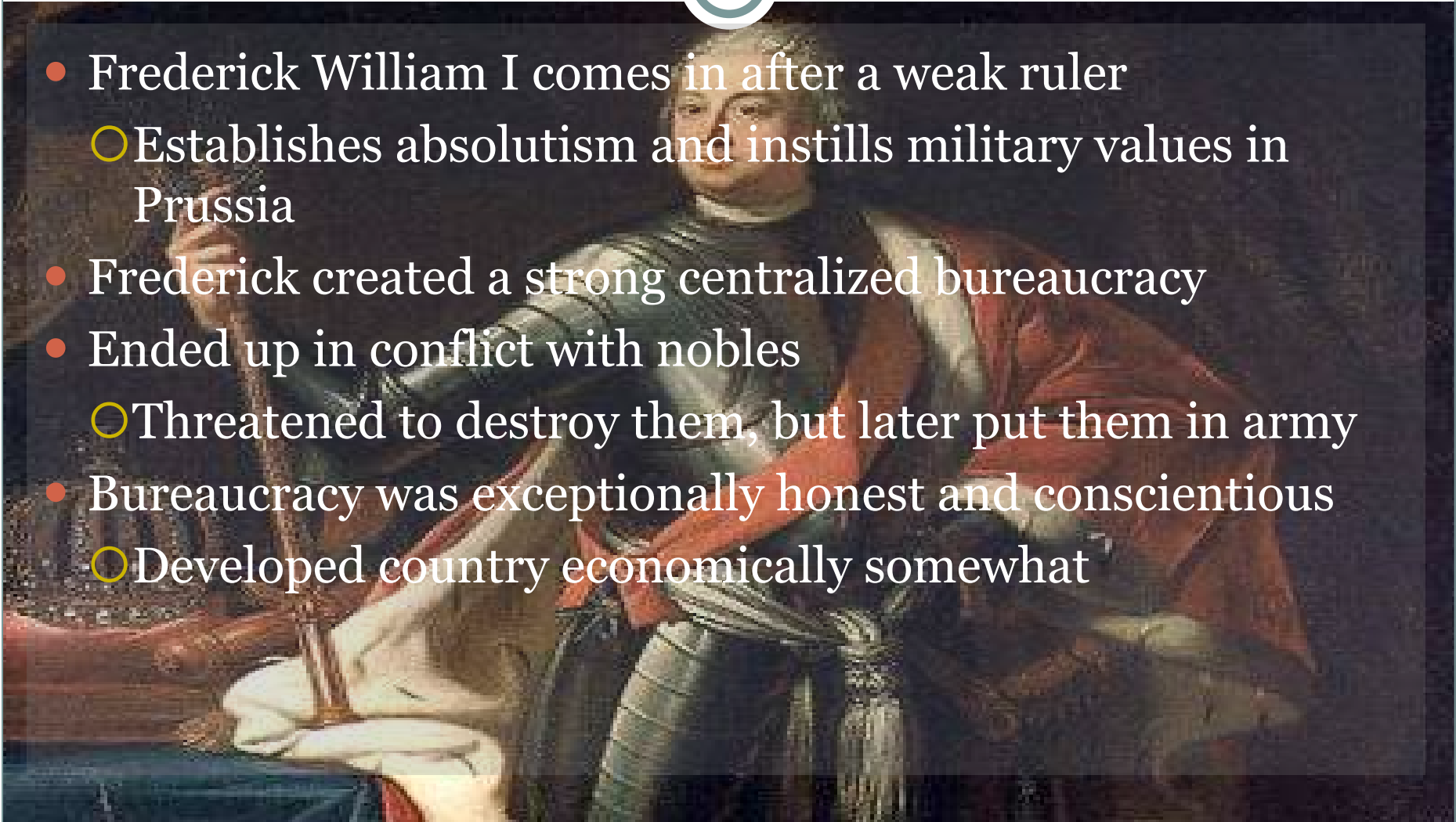
- Frederick established permanent taxes without Estates consent
  - Power of Estates would begin to decline
- Nobility of Estates were not willing to join representatives of towns
  - Too focused on own right to combat Frederick taking their rights
  - Town liberties were broken with force
- Frederick united stated before his death in 1688



## Political Factors - 3



- Frederick William I comes in after a weak ruler
  - Establishes absolutism and instills military values in Prussia
- Frederick created a strong centralized bureaucracy
- Ended up in conflict with nobles
  - Threatened to destroy them, but later put them in army
- Bureaucracy was exceptionally honest and conscientious
  - Developed country economically somewhat



# Military Factors



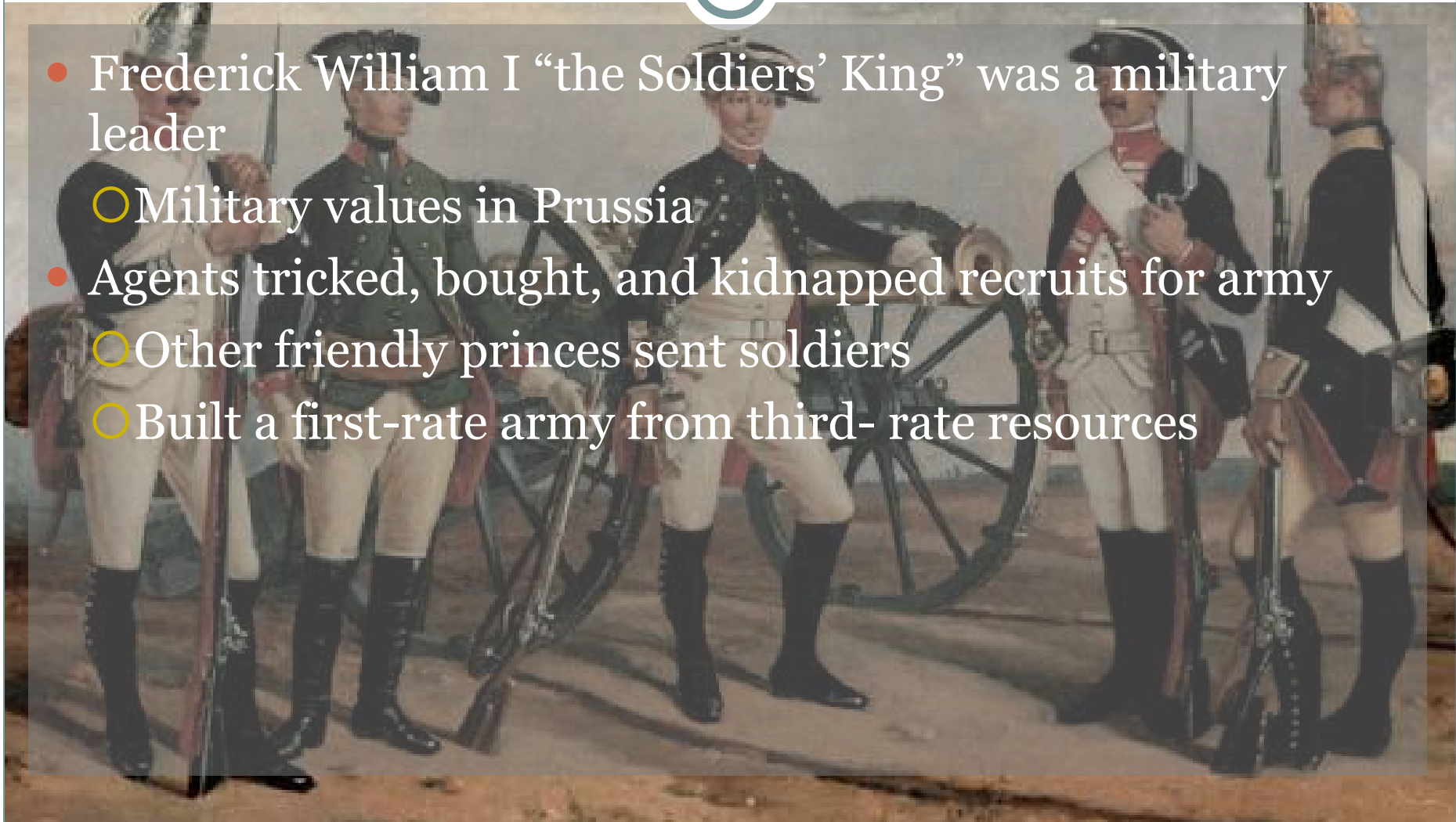
- Wars destroyed land and depopulated
  - Thirty Years War
  - Wars between Sweden and Poland
  - Wars of Louis XIV
- Invasion by Tartars of Crimea
  - More dead/enslaved
- Wars weakened Estates power and strengthened demand for money and soldiers
- Frederick William established permanent taxes to pay for an army, grew army tenfold (30,000 big peacetime army)



## Military Factors 2



- Frederick William I “the Soldiers’ King” was a military leader
  - Military values in Prussia
- Agents tricked, bought, and kidnapped recruits for army
  - Other friendly princes sent soldiers
  - Built a first-rate army from third- rate resources

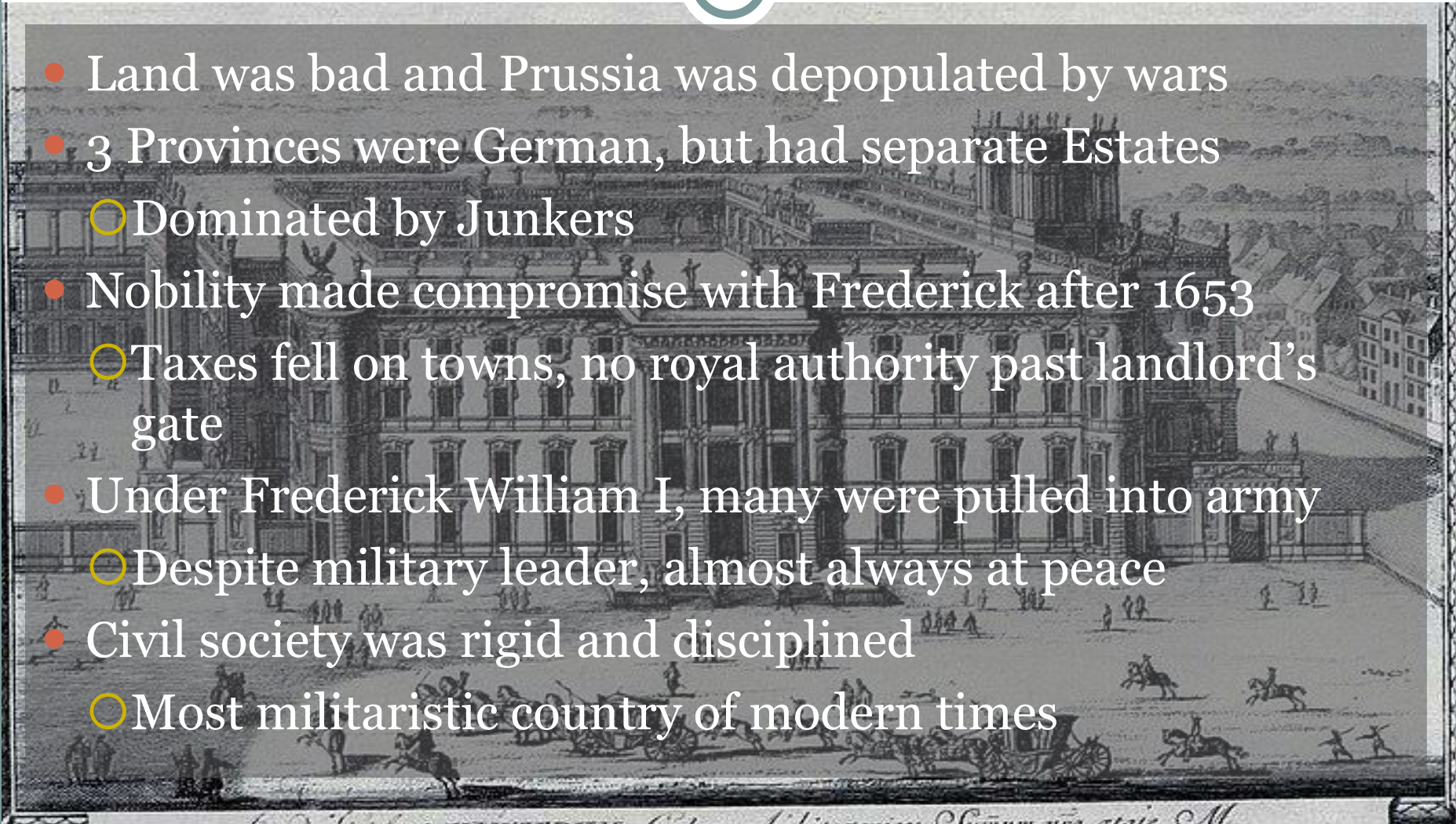




## Social Factors



- Land was bad and Prussia was depopulated by wars
- 3 Provinces were German, but had separate Estates
  - Dominated by Junkers
- Nobility made compromise with Frederick after 1653
  - Taxes fell on towns, no royal authority past landlord's gate
- Under Frederick William I, many were pulled into army
  - Despite military leader, almost always at peace
- Civil society was rigid and disciplined
  - Most militaristic country of modern times



# Conclusion



Overall, a combination of many different factors led to the rise of Prussia. Depopulation and destruction of the land allowed strong rulers to come in to unite the states and control the nobility. These wars also created a demand for an army in these states, which these leaders were able to create. Finally, the depopulation from wars and the fact the provinces were led by separate Estates further contributed to the leader's power grab and the rise of Prussia.