

2008 AP[®] EUROPEAN HISTORY FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

EUROPEAN HISTORY SECTION II

Part B

(Suggested planning and writing time—35 minutes)

Percent of Section II score—27 1/2

Directions: You are to answer ONE question from the three questions below. Make your selection carefully, choosing the question that you are best prepared to answer thoroughly in the time permitted. You should spend 5 minutes organizing or outlining your answer. Write your answer to the question on the lined pages of the Section II free-response booklet, making sure to indicate the question you are answering by writing the appropriate question number at the top of each page.

Write an essay that:

- Has a relevant thesis.
- Addresses all parts of the question.
- Supports thesis with specific evidence.
- Is well organized.

2. Analyze the methods and degrees of success of Russian political and social reform from the period of Peter the Great (1689–1725) through Catherine the Great (1762–1796).
3. Describe and analyze the changes that led to Europe's rapid population growth in the eighteenth century.
4. Analyze the economic and social challenges faced by Western Europe in the period from 1945 to 1989.

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Question 2

Analyze the methods and degrees of success of Russian political and social reform from the period of Peter the Great (1689–1725) through Catherine the Great (1762–1796).

9–8 Points

- Thesis is explicit and responds fully to the prompt; thesis may not appear in the opening paragraph.
 - Methods and degrees of success are explicitly defined.
 - Thesis demonstrates or supports an analytical approach by noting the complexity of the methods and/or degrees of success of the reforms.
- Organization is clear and consistently followed, is effective in support of the argument, and may follow a variety of analytical approaches:
 - Chronological (coverage extends beyond the reign of a single monarch).
 - Tasks of the prompt (methods of reform and degrees of success of the reforms).
 - Type of reform (political reform, social reform).
- Essay is relatively balanced; all topics are covered at length.
 - Provides longer discussion of the reforms of one monarch but also includes adequate coverage of the entire era.
 - Other topics/policies (e.g., territorial expansion during the time period) are directly linked to methods and/or the degrees of success of reform.
- Major assertions regarding the methods and degrees of success of political and social reform are supported with multiple pieces of evidence.
 - Specific evidence (policies) is clearly linked to methods and/or degrees of success of political and social reforms.
- May contain errors or off-topic content that do not detract from the argument.

7–6 Points

- Thesis is explicit and responsive to the question.
 - Methods and degrees of success of reform are identified but with language that is less sophisticated and/or more generalized.
- Essay is organized and supports the argument but may on occasion stray off task.
 - May at times describe reforms but contains some analysis.
 - May conflate political and social reforms.
- Essay is relatively balanced; all major topics suggested by the prompt are covered at least briefly.
 - Discusses methods and degrees of success unevenly but must touch upon both.
 - May give greater emphasis to the reforms of one era or monarch but contains some discussion of the reforms beyond the reign of a single ruler.
 - May conflate political and social reforms but discusses at least one reform from each category.
- Major assertions regarding the methods and the degrees of success of the political and social reforms during the period are supported by at least ONE piece of relevant evidence.
- May contain an error or off-topic discussion that detracts from the argument but does not significantly interfere with the tasks of the essay (e.g., the emancipation of the serfs and/or the degrees of success of the reforms).

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Question 2 (continued)

5–4 Points

- Thesis is explicit but not fully responsive to the question.
 - It may not explicitly address all relevant prompts (methods and degrees of success of the reforms, the period from the late seventeenth through the late eighteenth centuries); OR
 - It may respond satisfactorily to one task but not the other (analysis of methods and degrees of success of political and social reforms); OR
 - A substantial part of the thesis lists policies without attempting to address the prompts of the question.
- Essay is organized but may not always address the requirements of the question.
 - May provide an account of events of the period with minimal efforts to link to the concept of reform.
 - Attempt to respond to the tasks is narrative rather than analytical.
 - Analysis may be broadly and superficially stated.
 - May include off-task information or discussion of policies and/or events.
- Essay shows some imbalance; some major topics suggested by the prompt are neglected.
 - May focus on one of the tasks (analysis of methods of reform and degrees of success of reform) and neglect or ignore the other task.
 - May only consider one type of reform (political, social) and neglect the other.
 - May provide evidence and information about the reforms of part of the period only.
 - Linkage between accurate information on policies and the concept of reform is minimal.
- Most major assertions regarding the political and social reforms of the period and the methods and the degree of success of the reforms are supported by at least one piece of relevant evidence.
- May contain a few errors and off-task discussions that detract from the argument.

3–2 Points

- Contains no explicit thesis OR the thesis may be irrelevant OR inaccurate OR largely a paraphrase of the prompts of the thesis.
- Essay is poorly organized and ineffective.
 - Essay may devote much attention to the personal lives of monarchs and contain a significant amount of off-topic material.
 - Essay may simply be a narrative of events.
- Essay shows serious imbalance, since most major topics suggested by the prompt are neglected.
 - May demonstrate little or no knowledge of the chronology.
 - May not provide linkage between policies and the concept of reform.
- Few assertions are supported with relevant evidence.
- May contain several errors that detract from the argument.

1–0 Points

- Essay lacks any discernable attempt at a thesis, OR the thesis fails to address the specific prompts of the question.
- Disorganized response that suggests little or no understanding of the question.
- Ignores most of the major topics suggested by the question.
- Offers little or no relevant supporting evidence.
- May contain numerous errors that detract from the argument.

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Question 2 Historical Background

Material in this section is derived from the following texts:

Cannistraro and Reich, *The Western Perspective* (2nd edition, 2004)

Hunt, *The Making of the West* (2nd edition, 2005)

Kagan, *The Western Heritage* (9th edition, 2007)

Kishlansky, *Civilization in the West* (7th edition, 2008)

McKay, *A History of Western Society* (9th edition, 2008)

Merriman, *Modern Europe from the Renaissance to the Present* (2nd edition, 2004)

Spielvogel, *Western Civilization Since 1300* (6th edition, 2006)

Reforms of Peter the Great (1689–1725): generally placed within the context of the development of absolutism and/or state-building during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

- **Military reforms—“Peter’s greatest reforms were military” (Kishlansky).**
 - The creation of a standing army along western models and trained by foreign officers.
 - The development of a Russian navy originally trained by foreign officers.
 - Great Northern War (1700–1721): victory over Sweden made Russia the leading power in the Baltic and a force in European politics.
 - Lifetime service in the military (sometimes simply described as lifetime service to the state) demanded from nobles and peasants (one text notes the term of service for the peasants was 25 years).
 - The establishment of schools of artillery, engineering, and military medicine.
 - The disbanding of the old military units (*streletsy*).
- **Administrative reforms**
 - The creation of a new capital, the city of St. Petersburg, begun in 1703; usually cited as evidence of Peter’s determination to integrate Russia into the rest of Europe.
 - The employment of foreigners in the Russian bureaucracy, although the emphasis in the textbooks is on the role of foreigners in the training of the Russian military.
 - The establishment of the Table of Ranks (1722), a hierarchy of posts in the military and civil administration, with promotion based on merit (one major textbook describes the reform without identifying it by name).
 - Creation of the Senate, a committee of administrators who governed the country during Peter’s absence and supervised other agencies of government.
 - Creation of government bureaus called colleges to deal with specific aspects of policy.
 - Division of the empire into 50 provinces.
- **Ecclesiastical reform**
 - The abolition of the patriarch, the religious head of the Russian Orthodox Church.
 - The establishment of the Holy Synod to administer the Church as the state desired (Kagan describes the reform as “the most radical transformation of a traditional institution in Peter’s reign”).
 - The Orthodox Church lost its independence; the position of patriarch remained absent after 1700, church property was administered by the state, and priests became state employees.
 - The Orthodox Church was secularized and much of its wealth seized by the state.
 - The state gained control of the clergy while still supporting established religion; bishops pledged not to interfere in state affairs.

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Question 2 Historical Background (continued)

- **Economic and fiscal reforms**
 - The monarchy imposed a “soul” or poll tax on all males (one textbook mentions only the serfs).
 - Higher taxes were imposed on the population (two texts mention a three-fold increase in taxation).
 - The state raised revenues through a variety of indirect taxes and state monopolies; tobacco, rhubarb, and dice are often offered as examples.
 - The state promoted economic growth in order to raise revenue by the adoption of mercantilist policies (texts vary on the degree of specificity). Mining, as well as the effort to export manufactured goods, is noted by some sources.
 - The state introduced the cultivation of new products like the potato.
 - The state began construction of a merchant fleet.
- **Educational reforms**
 - The monarchy established a number of schools designed to supply the regime with trained officers and bureaucrats. The degree of specificity varies from broad statements about military and engineering schools to the School of Navigation and Mathematics (founded in 1701) in Moscow and the Academy of Sciences (established in 1725) in St. Petersburg.
 - Sons of the nobility were sent abroad to study in western universities.
 - A noble was required to receive a five-year education away from home.
 - Translations of western classics were commissioned by the state.
 - First Russian newspaper was issued in 1703.
- **Russian aristocracy**
 - Peter imposed the concept of lifetime and compulsory service to the state.
 - Peter began the process of westernization of the Russian nobility (e.g., the shaving of beards and the imposition of western clothing).
 - Aristocratic women were required to attend social functions; women no longer were required to wear veils in public.
 - A book on proper etiquette was published by the Russian state.
 - A noble was required to receive a five-year education away from home.
- **Russian peasantry—“Peasantry was the most abused in Europe” (Kagan).**
 - Lifetime service was imposed on all Russians by the tsar’s government.
 - Peasantry was drafted for military service.
 - Peasantry was conscripted for the construction of St. Petersburg, costing the deaths of thousands of peasant workers.
- **Opposition/degrees of success—“Absolute rule was never as powerful in practice as it was in theory” (Kishlansky).**
 - After Peter’s reforms, Russia became a European power.
 - Reforms increased the burdens of the lower classes who came to distrust westernization as a result.
 - Opposition to the tsar’s reforms existed within Russian society (the tsar’s heir, some aristocrats, some clergy, peasants, traditionalists).
 - Government remained inefficient and corrupt.
 - Succession was not assured; palace coups plagued Russia after Peter’s death.
 - Some historians see westernization as a “sham” because it only affected the nobility.

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Question 2 Historical Background (continued)

The period 1725–1762 is given minimal treatment in western civilization textbooks; some describe the era as one that was characterized by palace coups and ineffective rulers.

Reforms of Catherine the Great (1762–1796): reforms and policies are generally placed within the context of the Enlightenment and/or enlightened despotism.

- **Military reforms**
 - Textbooks do not associate Catherine with any reforms of the Russian military. They credit her with continuing the policy of territorial expansion, sometimes explicitly noting the link to Peter the Great.
 - Catherine played a vital role in the three partitions of Poland.
 - Territorial expansion in the South (such as the Crimea) came at the expense of the Ottoman Empire.
- **Administrative/legal reforms**
 - Catherine corresponded with philosophes (Voltaire, Denis Diderot). Her *Instructions* to the Legislative Commission borrowed heavily from the writings of philosophes like Charles Montesquieu and Cesare Beccaria. The *Instructions* advocated equality before the law and questioned serfdom, torture, and capital punishment.
 - The Legislative Commission was summoned to codify Russian law and reform the governance of the country. No code of laws or radical reform took place.
 - In 1775, the empress undertook reform of local government. The empire was divided into about 50 provinces, and local administration was left in the hands of the nobility.
- **Ecclesiastical reforms**
 - Catherine secularized all church land and made the clergy servants of the state, a development not mentioned in many western civilization textbooks.
 - The empress ended the persecution of the Old Believers, an Orthodox sect created in the mid-seventeenth century during the Great Schism.
 - After the First Russo–Turkish War (1768–74), Catherine claimed to serve as the protector of Orthodox Christians living in the Ottoman Empire.
- **Economic and fiscal reforms (little mention in the textbooks)**
 - One textbook identifies Catherine’s economic policies as a continuation of Peter’s work. Exports (grain, flax, furs, naval stores) increased, and internal barriers to trade were removed.
 - A second textbook simply states that Catherine and other eighteenth-century monarchs attempted to collect enough tax revenues to support their standing armies.
- **Educational reforms**
 - The empress attempted to provide formal education for women (one text specifies the daughters of the nobility).
 - The government established provincial elementary schools, engineering schools, and a college intended to train teachers for Russia’s new schools.
 - Catherine allowed for the publication of more books during her reign, although the French Revolution resulted in a sudden shift. The regime tightened censorship in its last years.

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Question 2 Historical Background (continued)

- **Nobility**

- In 1785 the empress issued the Charter of the Nobility (1785), acknowledging the rights and privileges of the Russian aristocracy. Nobles were exempted from taxation, granted “considerable” or “complete” control over their peasants, and released from compulsory state service (although some texts indicate that local service was now expected). The nobility received the freedom to travel abroad without the permission of the state, their property rights were now secure, and they could petition the monarchy directly. Finally, they were protected from corporal punishment and if charged with a crime were to be tried by their peers.
- Local administration was left in the hands of the nobility.

- **Peasantry**

- Catherine extended serfdom into new areas such as Ukraine and gave away villages of state peasants to favorites, perhaps as many as 800,000 according to one text.
- The empress placed control of the serfs in the hands of the nobility.
- Resentment of the burdens imposed by the nobility and the state led to the Pugachev Revolt (1773-75). The revolt was the culmination of growing peasant unrest during the 1760s. The uprising was crushed, but the revolt destroyed any plans for improving the life of the peasantry. Catherine became increasingly oppressive afterwards. After 1789, the books of the philosophes were banned, and critics of the social order were exiled to Siberia.

- **Opposition/degree of success**

- Catherine, like other Eastern European monarchs of the time, sought to strengthen the state by the application of reason to her policies. Historians still disagree about the sincerity of her advocacy for reform. Was she sincere or did she hope to shape public opinion in Western Europe?
- The empress believed Russia could only be governed effectively by an autocrat but recognized that Russia could only remain a great power by some reforms of her institutions and society. She was not prepared, however, to risk radical reform.
- A variety of factors are cited as obstacles to reform: the empress’s background, the manner by which she came to power, the need for the continuing support of the nobility, and the size and complexity of the country she governed.
- Like Frederick II and Joseph II, two Eastern European enlightened despots, Catherine was prepared to encourage greater prosperity and happiness if such developments also strengthened the state.
- The empress, although she valued favorable publicity from her contact with the philosophes, remained skeptical of many of their proposals. The empress also reacted negatively to the French Revolution.