

2018 AP[®] EUROPEAN HISTORY FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

EUROPEAN HISTORY

SECTION II

Total Time—1 hour and 40 minutes

Question 1 (Document-Based Question)

Suggested reading and writing time: 1 hour

It is suggested that you spend 15 minutes reading the documents and 45 minutes writing your response.

Note: You may begin writing your response before the reading period is over.

Directions: Question 1 is based on the accompanying documents. The documents have been edited for the purpose of this exercise.

In your response you should do the following.

- Respond to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis or claim that establishes a line of reasoning.
- Describe a broader historical context relevant to the prompt.
- Support an argument in response to the prompt using at least six documents.
- Use at least one additional piece of specific historical evidence (beyond that found in the documents) relevant to an argument about the prompt.
- For at least three documents, explain how or why the document's point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience is relevant to an argument.
- Use evidence to corroborate, qualify, or modify an argument that addresses the prompt.

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1. Evaluate whether the Thirty Years' War was fought primarily for religious or primarily for political reasons.

Document 1

Source: Holy Roman Emperor Matthias, open letter to his Protestant subjects in Bohemia, 1618

It has been alleged that the free exercise of religion will be abolished. We want to make it clear to you through this open letter that we have no intention of rescinding the agreement between the religions, still less want anyone else to do this, despite what others in Bohemia may have said. Moreover, we have always intended, and still intend, to preserve all the Bohemian privileges, liberties, and treaties. Anyone who claims otherwise slanders us before God and the world. Rest assured, dear obedient, loyal, and true Bohemian subjects, and do not give credence to such falsehoods. We would like nothing more than to return in person to our royal throne and residence amongst our loyal and obedient subjects and inhabitants and clear up these misunderstandings with God's help. However, we cannot come to our Bohemian territories at the moment, partly through poor health, but also pressure of other important affairs. Capable and prominent individuals will be appointed to clear up this misunderstanding. Since no enemy threatens us as ruler of Bohemia, there are no constitutional grounds to raise soldiers to defend the country, and thus no grounds for anyone, whoever, they might be, to use the territorial privileges, letters of majesty, ordinances, freedoms, or laws to justify arming.

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Document 2

Source: Selections from the constitution of the Bohemian Federation, a coalition of nobles and city governments, 1619

Since the Almighty has also given his grace and blessing as this Confederation is solely in defense of religion, the territories have agreed that each and every one of their coreligionists should follow a Christian life according to the Calvinist teaching and faith, avoid and prevent sin, vice, public trouble, hypocrisy, in whatever form, and follow strictly the admonishments from the pulpit and the authorities. . . .

All churches in these united territories currently in Calvinist hands are to remain so in perpetuity. . . .

The free exercise of Calvinist religion is extended to every man and woman in all united territories and towns regardless as to whether they belong to the king or queen, permitting the construction of churches, schools, and cemeteries, and the appointment of Calvinist pastors and schoolteachers. Everyone shall be allowed to follow the old ceremonies of their Christian conscience in their own church. However, to ensure better unity and to prevent all kinds of difficulties and bitterness, there are to be no insults or personal attacks from the pulpit upon pain of removal from office. . . .

Should, contrary to hope, a king attempt anything contravening the religious concessions, unions, and this constitution, and thereby force the territories to take defensive measures, then all of these united kingdoms and provinces are released from their duty and cannot be subsequently held to account for any insults to the royal sovereignty and majesty.

Document 3

Source: Bernhard Baumann, Jesuit official in Heidelberg, report to Elector Maximilian of Bavaria on efforts to re-Catholicize previously Protestant areas after the Catholic victory in that region, 1628

Four hundred in the town and 1,200 outside it have been freed from heresy; on feast days we get around 700 communicants in the Church of the Holy Spirit. We alone look after parish duties, visit the sick and converts daily, conduct catechism inside the town and outside, and deliver two sermons on Sundays. These crowds are gathered with great difficulty; since only six months ago the richer townspeople were so obstinate, that two or three hundred declared they would emigrate if they were forced to convert. Then entire districts (they had arranged this in advance) declared they would keep the faith of their ancestors, because we could not steal this like other possessions. Since the orders arrived from Munich [to intensify Catholic conversions] they have used unbelievable deceptions to try to circumvent these. Furthermore, they complain to the Holy Roman Emperor, but the secular government, to its undying credit, knew how to stop this.

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Document 4

Source: Letter from Gustavus Adolphus, king of Sweden, to the Protestant elector of Brandenburg, 1630

I have come into this land for no other purpose than to free it from the thieves and robbers who have so plagued it, and, first and foremost, to help his Excellency [the elector] out of his difficulties. Does his Excellency then not know that the [Holy Roman] emperor and his followers do not mean to rest till the Protestant religion is wholly rooted out of the empire, and that his Excellency has nothing else to expect than being forced either to deny his religion or to leave his country? Does he think by prayers and pleas and such like means to obtain something different? . . . I seek not my own advantage in this war, nor any gain save the security of my kingdom; I can look for nothing but expense, hard work, trouble, and danger to life and limb.

I tell you plainly that I will know nor hear nothing of “neutrality”; his Excellency must be either friend or foe. When I reach his frontier he must declare himself either hot or cold. The fight is between God and the devil. If his Excellency is on God’s side, let him stand by me; if he holds rather with the devil, then he must fight with me; there is no third course, that is certain.

Document 5

Source: Confidential account of a meeting between Axel Oxenstierna, Swedish high chancellor, and Sweden’s ally Brandenburg after the death of Gustavus Adolphus, 1633

Concerning the late Gustavus Adolphus’ intentions:

They were, in general, to disrupt the plans of the enemy, whose intentions with regards to the Baltic Sea are sufficiently well-known. His Majesty therefore intended to ensure the safety of his kingdom and the Baltic region, and liberate the oppressed lands [of Germany]; and thereafter to proceed according as events might develop: it was no part of his original intention to march as far into Germany as he did. He saw and clearly understood where that would lead, but the enemy and the circumstances compelled this. His majesty was there in person wherever the greatest danger was.