DBQ 1: Impact of the Thirty Years’ War

Question: Analyze the factors that contributed to the Thirty Years’ War (1618-1648) and assess the impact of the war on seventeenth-century Europe.

In your response you should do the following:

• **Thesis:** Present a thesis that makes a historically defensible claim and responds to all parts of the question. The thesis must consist of one or more sentences located in one place, in the introduction or conclusion.

• **Argument Development:** Develop and support a cohesive argument that recognizes and accounts for historical complexity by explicitly illustrating relationships among historical evidence such as contradiction, corroboration, and/or qualification.

• **Use of the Documents:** Utilize the content of at least 6 of the documents to support the stated thesis.

• **Sourcing the Documents:** Explain the significance of the author’s point of view, purpose, historical context and/or audience for at least 4 of the documents.

• **Contextualization:** Situate the argument by explaining the broader historical events, developments, or processes immediately relevant to the question.

• **Outside Evidence:** Provide an example or additional piece of specific evidence beyond those found in the documents to support or qualify the argument.

• **Synthesis:** Extend the argument by explaining the connections between the argument and a development in a different historical period, situation, era or geographical area.

**Document 1**

Source: John Rushworth, English historian, description of the opening of the Thirty Years’ War, 1618

Whilst Spain and England were thus closing, the fire brake out in Germany between the states and princes Protestant and the house of Austria [Habsburgs who ruled the Holy Roman Empire, including Austria]. These commotions, involved and drew along the affairs of most Christian princes, especially of the two potent kings now in treaty. The Catholic cause and the lot of the house of Austria engaged the king of Spain, who was the strongest branch of that stock. King James [James I of England] must needs be drawn in, both by common and particular interest: the religion which he professed and the state of his son-in-law [Frederick V], the elector palatine, who became the principal part of those wars and the most unfortunate.

**Document 2**

Source: Cornelis de Wael, painter, depiction of soldiers plundering a German village during the Thirty Years’ War, 1660.

**Document 3**

Source: Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, in a speech to the representatives assembled at Stockholm, 1630.

I call on the all-powerful God to witness, by whose providence we are here assembled, that it is not by my own wish, or from any love of war, that I undertake this campaign. On the contrary, I have been now for several years goaded into it by the imperial party, not only through the reception accorded to our emissary to Lubeck, but also by the action of their general in aiding with his army our enemies, the Poles, to our great detriment. We have been urged, moreover, by our harassed brother-in-law [the elector of Brandenburg] to undertake this war, the chief object of which is to free our oppressed brothers in the faith from the clutches of the pope, which, God helping us, we hope to do.
Document 4
Source: The Treaty of Westphalia, 1648.
That those of the Confession of Augsburg, and particularly the Inhabitants of Oppenheim, shall be put in possession again of their Churches, and Ecclesiastical Estates, as they were in the Year 1624, as also that all others of the said Confession of Augsburg, who shall demand it, shall have the free Exercise of their Religion, as well in public Churches at the appointed Hours, as in private in their own Houses, or in others chosen for this purpose by their Ministers, or by those of their Neighbors, preaching the Word of God.

Document 5
Source: Pope Innocent X, denouncing all articles in the treaties of Westphalia that relate to religious matters, 1648.
Accordingly it is not without deep pain that we have learned that by several articles in the peace concluded at Osnabrück, August 6, 1648 . . . great prejudice has been done to the Catholic religion . . . since by various articles in one of these treaties of peace the ecclesiastical possessions which the heretics formerly seized are abandoned to them and to their successors, and the heretics, called those of the Augsburg Confession, are permitted the free exercise of their heresy in various districts. They are promised places in which they may build temples for their worship and are admitted with the Catholics to public offices and positions.

Document 6
Source: Andreas Gryphius, German lyrical poet, Tears of the Fatherland, c. 1650.
We are now completely – no, more than completely – devastated! Troops of thugs, blaring trumpets, swords soaked in blood, and thundering cannons have consumed all the fruits of sweat and diligence and industry.
Towers burning, churches overturned, city halls cowering in fright, strong men shattered, maidens violated, and wherever we look, fire, plague, and death pierce our heart and soul. Fresh blood runs continually through trench and town; three times in the last six years, our stream’s flow has almost stopped – clogged solid with corpses.
But I can barely talk about what’s more troubling than death, more dismal than plague and arson and famine: that all hope of heaven has been snatched from so many souls.

Document 7
Map: Treaty of Westphalia, 1648