

Document 2 - DBQ

Source: Voltaire, *Letters Concerning the English Nation*, 1726.

Note: Voltaire was born Francois-Marie Arouet in Paris in 1694. He adopted his pen name and became a prolific writer, eventually composing poems, novels, essays, plays, and over 20,000 personal letters. He remains among the leading historical supporters of tolerance. Voltaire died in 1778 at the age of 83, eleven years before the French Revolution.

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Take a view of the Royal Exchange [trading center] in London ... where the representatives of all nations meet for the benefit of mankind. There the Jew, the Mahometan [Muslim], and the Christian transact together as tho' they all professed the same religion.... There the Presbyterian confides in the Anabaptist [Baptist], and the Churchman [Anglican] depends on the Quaker's word....

If one religion only were allowed in England, the government would very possibly become arbitrary [unrestrained]; if there were but two, the people would cut one another's throats; but as there are such a multitude, they all live happy and in peace.

Document Analysis

- in your notes (Primary Source, Unit 3, Doc 2)

1. What happens at the Royal Exchange in London?
2. Why, according to Voltaire, is it good that England allows a "multitude" of religions?
3. What is Voltaire's main idea about religion in society?
4. What does Voltaire's main idea about religion have in common with John Locke's main idea about government?