

Part III
DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION

This question is based on the accompanying documents. The question is designed to test your ability to work with historical documents. Some of these documents have been edited for the purposes of this question. As you analyze the documents, take into account the source of each document and any point of view that may be presented in the document. Keep in mind that the language used in a document may reflect the historical context of the time in which it was written.

Historical Context:

At the start of the first millennium CE, the Roman Empire rose to dominate large areas of the Mediterranean world, growing into a feared and admired empire. While Rome reached its height in wealth, territory and status, it also experienced problems that led to its fall. With the Roman Empire officially collapsing in 476 CE, historians have sought reasons to explain how a once great empire fell.

Task: Using the information from the documents and your knowledge of global history, answer the questions that follow each document in Part A. Your answers to the questions will help you write Part B in which you:

Identify *two* political, economic, and/or social factors that led to the fall of the Roman Empire and for each:

- *describe* how the factor affected Roman society
- *explain* how the factor contributed the empire's decline

In developing your answers to Part III, be sure to keep these general definitions in mind:

(a) **describe** means "give an account in words of (someone or something), including all the relevant characteristic"

(b) **explain** means "to make plain or understandable; to give reasons for or causes of; to show the logical development or relationships of"

Part A
Short-Answer Questions

Directions: Analyze the documents and answer the short-answer questions that follow each document in the space provided.

Document 1

... By the middle of the second century Italy [within the Roman Empire] was in a state of decline. By the time of Diocletian, at the opening of the fourth century, decay was apparent throughout the empire. Commerce [business] had largely disappeared owing to the lack of customers, to piracy on the seas, and to insecurity of the roads on land.

Generally speaking, purchasing power [the ability to buy things] at that time was confined to the public officials, to the army officers, and to the great landowners. Trade in the everyday objects of daily use had all but disappeared, but trade in luxuries prospered.

[T]he old traders [were] replaced by the traveling eastern merchant [...] Foreign trade was sharply curtailed.

Source: Louis C. West, "The Economic Collapse of the Roman Empire," *The Classical Journal*, November 1932 from the NYS Global History and Geography Regents Exam, June, 2015.

1a According to Louis C. West, what were **two** economic problems the Roman Empire faced during its period of decline? [2]

Changes of Leadership during Third Century Rome

Emperor	Reign	Cause of Death
Maximinus	235-38 CE	Assassination
Gordian I & II (co-rulers)	238	Suicide; Killed in Battle
Balbinus & Pupienus	238	Assassination
Gordian III	238-44	Possible Assassination
Philip the Arab	244-49	Killed in Battle
Decius	249-51	Killed in Battle
Hostilian	251	Possible Plague
Gallus	251-53	Assassination
Aemilianus	253	Assassination
Valerian & Gallienus	253-60	Assassination

Emperor	Reign	Cause of Death
Claudius Gothicus	268-70	Plague
Quintillus	270	Assassination or Suicide
Aurelian	270-75	Assassination
Tacticus	275-76	Possible Assassination
Florianus	276	Assassination
Probus	276-82	Assassination
Carus	282-83	Assassination
Numerian	283-84	Possible Assassination
Carinus	283-85	Killed in Battle

Source: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/roru/hd_roru.htm, <http://www.livius.org/articles/misc/list-of-roman-emperors/list-of-roman-emperors-3/>

2a According to the chart, what were the **two** most common reasons for changes of leadership during the third century? [2]

History of Rome from Constantine to Valens, by Ammianus Marcellinus (380 CE)

The Huns were a nomadic people from Central Asia who invaded the Roman Empire from 370-451 CE. Ammianus Marcellinus was a Roman historian who wrote about the Hun invasion.

The Huns exceed any definition of savagery. They have compact, sturdy limbs and thick necks...Although they have the shape [...] of human beings, they are so wild in their way of life that they have no need of fire or pleasant tasting foods, but eat the roots of uncultivated plants and half-raw flesh of all sorts of animals [...] Huns are never sheltered by buildings, but . . . roam freely in the mountains and woods, learning from their earliest childhood to endure freezing cold, hunger, and thirst. . . Fired with an overwhelming desire for seizing the property of others, these swift-moving, and ungovernable people make their destructive way amid the pillage and slaughter of those who live around them.

Source: https://books.google.com/books?id=-UQGeilVkJgC&pg=PA23&lpg=PA23&dq=The+Hun%27s+exceed+any+definition+of+savagery.&source=bl&ots=21NmEs-ZOD&sig=O5N2s50cPFAFvom4d_XOXD8ueo&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CCcQ6AEWAwoVChMI- uTmMHivAIVgxweCh3KrQfJ#v=onepage&q=The%20Hun's%20exceed%20any%20definition%20of%20savagery.&f=false

Roman villa in Gaul sacked by the hordes of Attila the Hun



Source: Roman villa in Gaul sacked by the hordes of Attila the Hun. Illustration from a book: Georges Rochegrosse, sa vie, son oeuvre [par J. Valmy-Baysse] Nombreuses reproductions ([1910]) [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/99/Huns by Rochegrosse.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/99/Huns_by_Rochegrosse.jpg)

3a According to Marcellinus, who were the Huns? [1]

b According to Marcellinus, what impact did the Huns have on those who lived around them? [1]

Priscus at the Court of Attila [King of the Huns], by Priscus (449 CE)

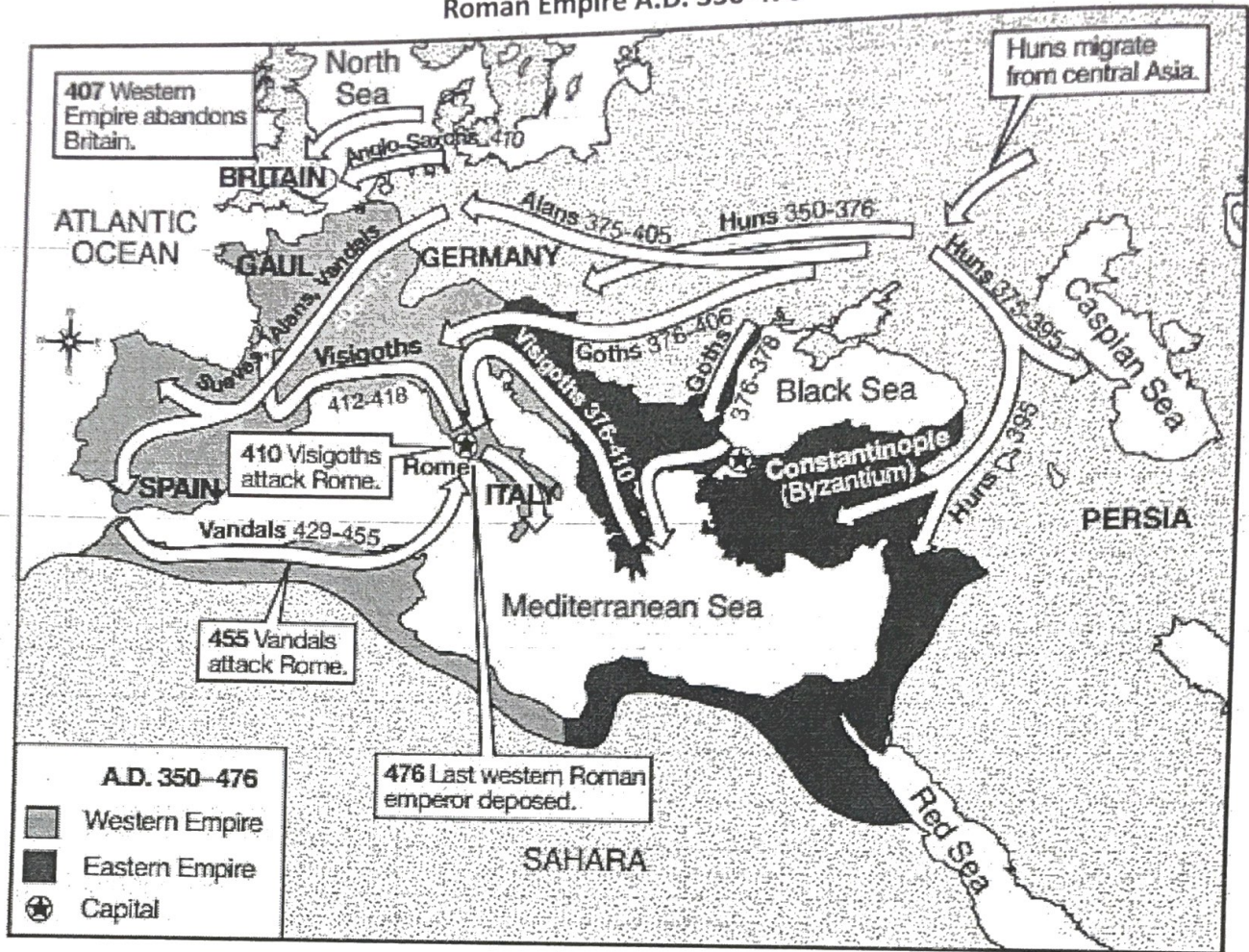
The Greek writer Priscus visited the Huns and spoke with a Greek merchant who was captured by the Huns. Below is a description of the conversation.

He [The Greek merchant] considered his new life [...] better than his old life among the Romans, and the reasons he gave were as follows: ...the condition of the subjects [in Rome] in time of peace is far more grievous than the evils of war, for the the taxes [are] very severe, and unprincipled men inflict injuries on others, because the laws are practically not valid against all classes. A transgressor who belongs to the wealthy classes is not punished for his injustice, while a poor man, who does not understand business, undergoes the legal penalty [...] The climax of the misery is to have to pay in order to obtain justice. For no one will give a court to the injured man unless he pay a sum of money to the judge and the judge's clerks."

Source: <http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/source/priscus1.asp>

4a According to Priscus' account, what are **three** reasons why the Greek merchant disliked the Roman Empire? [3]

Roman Empire A.D. 350-476



Source: *The Nystrom Atlas of World History*, Herff Jones Education Division (adapted) from the NYS Global History and Geography Regents Exam, June, 2015.

5a Based on the information shown on this map, state **one** problem that helped bring about the decline of the Roman Empire. [1]

A Roman soldier being dismissed or discharged, etching by William Hogart (1725)



Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:A_Roman_soldier_being_dismissed_or_discharged_Wellcome_L0034355

Document 6b

Concerning Military Matters, by Vegetius (c. 450 CE)

Concerning Military Matters was written by Latin writer Publius Flavius Vegetius Renuatus about Roman warfare and military principles as a presentation of methods and practices in use during the height of Rome's power.

... [N]egligence and sloth [...] introduced a total relaxation of discipline [and] the soldiers began to think their armor too heavy, as they seldom put it on [...] In consequence of this, our troops in their engagements with the Goths were often overwhelmed with their showers of arrows [...] Troops, defenseless and exposed to all the weapons of the enemy, are more disposed to fly than fight. What can be expected from a foot-archer without [armor], who cannot hold at once his bow and shield; or from the ensigns whose bodies are naked, and who cannot at the same time carry a shield and the colors? [...] But it seems these very men, who cannot support the weight of the ancient armor, think nothing of exposing themselves without defense to wounds and death, or, which is worse, to the shame of being made prisoners, or of betraying their country by flight; and thus to avoid an inconsiderable share of exercise and fatigue, suffer themselves ignominiously to be cut in pieces.

Source: <http://www.digitalattic.org/home/war/vegetius/index.php#b100>

6a According to Vegetius, what is **one** military problem experienced by the Roman empire? [1]

The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, by Edward Gibbons (1789)

Early in Pax Romana, a new religion called Christianity arose in the Roman empire. At first, Christianity was not accepted. Christians were persecuted and killed. "However, throughout the 380s and 390s CE, Christianity became a major religion in the Roman Empire. In 313, emperors Constantine and Licinius created the Edict of Milan and this law ended persecution of Christians and encouraged tolerance of Christianity. In 380, Emperor Theodosius I issued the Edict of Thessalonica, declaring Nicene Christianity as the state church of the Roman Empire.

Christianity had some influence on the decline and fall of the Roman empire. The clergy successfully preached the doctrines of patience and pusillanimity [cowardliness]; the active virtues of society were discouraged; and the last remains of the military spirit were buried in the cloister [where nuns live]; a large portion of public and private wealth was consecrated to the [...] the church, and even the state, were distracted by religious factions, whose conflicts were sometimes bloody [...]; the attention of the emperors was diverted from camps to synods [assembly of church officials].

Source: <http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/source/gibbon-fall.html>

7a According to Gibbons, what impact did Christianity have on the Roman Empire? [1]