

Name _____ Global Studies
Date _____ Block # _____

Notes on the Fall of Rome

Politically

1. The dictatorship was often corrupt and inefficient.
2. Internal power struggles.
3. The empire was so large it could be efficiently governed from one central city.
4. Rivalry for succession to the throne often lead to destructive civil wars.
5. Government becomes too strict.
6. People stop supporting the government.
7. Divided empire becomes weak.

Economically

1. Small farmers left their lands to work on large estates.
2. Heavy taxes on the people destroyed their ambition to work hard.
3. Widespread use of slaves caused great unemployment among the plebeians.
4. Middle class disappears.

Socially

1. People were mainly interested in luxuries and survival. The Roman ideals of patriotism, service and morality almost vanished.
2. Sharp division between classes. The upper class was wealthy and well educated. The lower class was poor and ignorant.
3. Cities declined as people left to live on large estates.
4. Population declines because of disease and war.

Militarily

1. Warlike spirit was weakened by the Christian teachings of peace and love.
2. The armies considered themselves masters of the state, not servants. The army often choose the emperor and determined government policy.
3. Roman army lacks training and discipline.
4. Romans forced to hire foreign soldiers to defend borders.

Externally

1. German barbarians, warlike people, invaded the Roman Empire for its fertile land, its wealth, and advanced civilization.
2. The Huns, savage invaders from central Asia, attacked the Germans and drove them deeper into the empire.
3. Attila the Hun, the "Scourge of God" lead the Huns to ravage the Empire.

over

4. Barbarians began to form kingdoms within the empire: The Visigoths in Spain, The Ostrogoths in Italy, The Vandals in North Africa, the Franks in Gaul, and the Angles and Saxons in Great Britain.

5. The Germans overthrew the last emperor of Rome in 476 AD.

The Western Roman Empire is dead!! The eastern section of the empire lives on and is called the Byzantine Empire. The Byzantine Empire will last until 1453 AD.