

PRELIM IN LATE ANTIQUITY Spring 2009

Answer in detail TWO of the following three questions.

1. Ever since the fifth century CE historians, scholars, and theologians have debated the reasons for the decline and fall of the western part of the Roman Empire. Discuss what you think are some of the primary reasons for the fall of the western empire in the context of the related question of why the eastern part of the empire *survived*. What were the most significant problems that confronted the east and the west in the fifth century? Why did some problems affect the west in ways different from the east? What differences were there in the abilities of the west and east to deal with problems? What policies did eastern emperors use, up through the reign of Heraclius, to ensure the survival of the east? Were these policies always conducive to the survival of the west? In general, in the context of eastern survival, what factors do you think were the primary causes of the fall of the west? And what factors may have affected east and west approximately equally, and as a result perhaps were *not* primary reasons for the fall of the west?

2. The Roman Empire saw the gradual rise in importance of one of the most important institutions of the Middle Ages: the Christian Church. As the church gained influence from the time of its initial establishment up through the sixth century, it experienced many kinds of relationships with the Romano-Byzantine government. Describe in detail the interactions of the imperial government with the Christian church between the reigns of the emperors Diocletian and Justinian. What influenced the ways in which the government interacted with the church? In what ways were these interactions manifested in the way that the church functioned? What were some of the significant consequences, then and later, of the nature of the particular kinds of interactions that the state had with the church during this period?

3. Throughout the history of the Roman Empire, the Romans were concerned in one way or another with the barbarians, and their relations with them. How would you define the term "barbarians," from the point of view of the Romans on the one hand and modern scholarship on the other? Is it proper in any way to discuss "the barbarians" in a collective sense? Discuss the different ways in which the Romans perceived and interacted with the "barbarians" from the first through the sixth centuries CE. Was there any difference in how the Romans responded to eastern "barbarians" as opposed to western ones? How do you think that the barbarians perceived the Romans? Was there ever any resolution of any differences in these perceptions? What were some of the effects on barbarians of their interactions with the Romans, and what effect did interactions with barbarians have on the Romans? In what ways, if any, do you think that modern perceptions of the barbarians of Late Antiquity may be inaccurate? Be sure to use specific examples throughout your discussion, and along the way you will want to pick particular barbarian peoples to use as paradigms.

READ QUESTION CAREFULLY BEFORE YOU WRITE!!!!
DON'T ASSUME YOU KNOW WHAT THE QUESTION IS ASKING BEFORE YOU
READ IT: BE SURE YOU RESPOND TO WHAT IS ASKED!!!!!!!!
ORGANIZE YOUR ARGUMENTS INTO A UNIFIED WHOLE!!!!
SUPPORT EVERY STATEMENT WITH SPECIFIC EVIDENCE!!!!