

NAME:

DATE:

CLASS:

DBQ FOCUS: Byzantine Empire Under Justinian



Document-Based Question Format

Directions: The following question is based on the accompanying Documents (The documents have been edited for the purpose of this exercise.) This question is designed to test your ability to work with and understand historical documents.

Write a response that:

- Has a relevant **thesis** and **supports that thesis with evidence** from the documents.
- Cites evidence from included source perspectives.
- Analyzes the documents by grouping them in as many appropriate ways as possible. Does not simply summarize the documents individually.
- Takes into account both the sources of the documents and the author's points of view.

Historical Context: *The Byzantine Empire was the predominantly Greek-speaking continuation of the Roman Empire during Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages. Its capital city was Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul), originally known as Byzantium. Initially the eastern half of the Roman Empire (often called the Eastern Roman Empire in this context), it survived the 5th century fragmentation and collapse of the Western Roman Empire and continued to thrive, existing for an additional thousand years until it fell to the Ottoman Turks in 1453. During most of its existence, the empire was the most powerful economic, cultural, and military force in Europe. When Justinian became emperor in 527 CE, he was determined to revive the ancient Roman Empire, to build a new Rome. He established Constantinople as the capital of the Byzantine or Eastern Roman Empire and preserved Roman heritage for more than a thousand years.*

Question

Did Justinian revive the Roman Empire or create a new Byzantine Empire?

Document 1

Source: This description of Justinian is from *Buildings* by Procopius, Justinian's official court historian.

Justinian created countless cities which did not exist before. And finding that the belief in God was... straying into errors... he brought it about that it stood on the firm foundation of a single faith. Moreover, finding laws obscure because they had become far more numerous than they should be, and in obvious confusion because they disagreed with each other. He preserved them [in the Legal Code of Emperor Justinian, A.D. 529]... by controlling their discrepancies with the greatest firmness.

Student Analysis

According to Procopius, what are three contributions of Justinian?

Document 2

Source: Justinian was described by Procopius in a different book, the *Secret History*, which was published after his death.

Justinian was... crafty, hypocritical, secretive by temperament, two-faced: a clever fellow with marvelous ability to conceal his real opinion... lying all the time...

Student Analysis

What characteristics does Procopius stress in the *Secret History*?

Document 3

Source: Justinian ruled like earlier Roman emperors. This is a description of him by a Byzantine official.

The Emperor is equal to all men in the nature of his body, but in the authority of his rank he is similar to God, who rules all.

Student Analysis

How is Justinian's power explained?

Document 4

Source: This excerpt, also written by Procopius, describes the Hagia Sophia upon its completion in 537 CE.

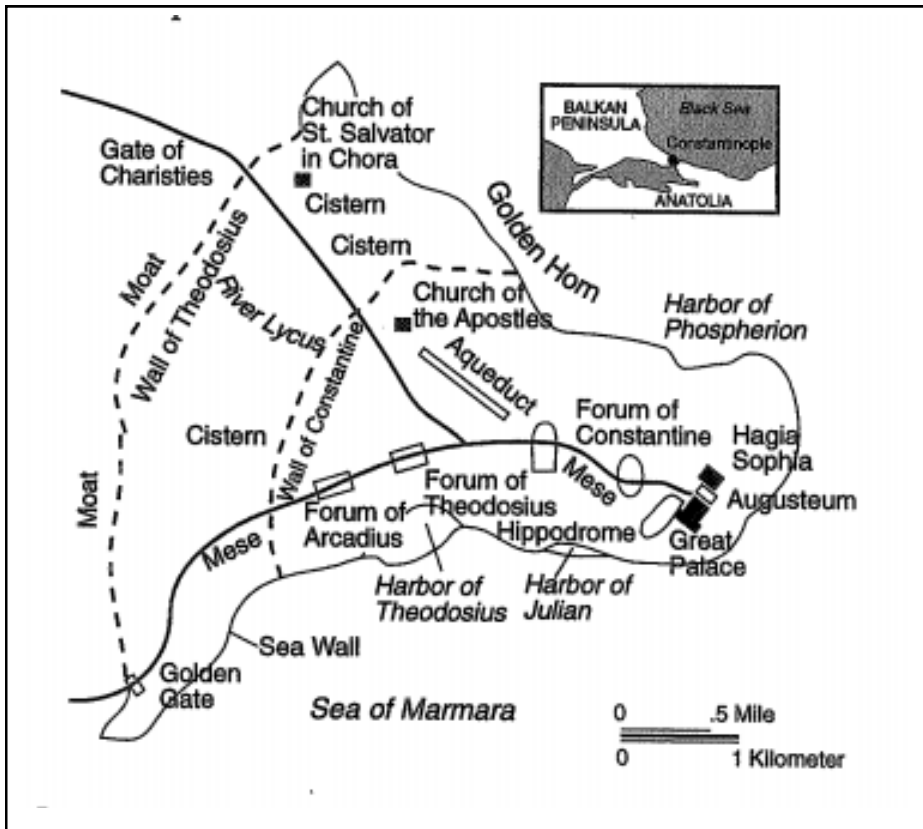
In height it rises to the very heavens... A spherical-shaped dome... makes it exceedingly beautiful: from the lightness of the building it does not appear to rest upon a solid foundation, but to... be suspended from heaven by the fabled golden chain... The entire ceiling is covered with pure gold, which adds glory to the beauty, through the rays of light reflected upon the gold from the marble surpass it in beauty... And whenever anyone enters this church to pray, he understands at once that it is not by any human strength or skill, but by the influence of God, that this work has been perfected. And so his mind is lifted up toward God... Moreover, it is impossible to describe the treasure of gold and silver plate and gems, which the Emperor Justinian has presented to it...

Student Analysis

What impact does the church have on a visitor?

Document 5

Source: Justinian was a great builder. This is evident from the fortification and buildings he constructed in Constantinople, shown on the map below.



Student Analysis

Describe the building projects that made Constantinople the center of power. In addition, discuss Constantinople's strategic location for trade and defense.

Document 6

Source: The Byzantine Empire in 527 at the time of Justinian's ascension and the reconquests of his rule.



Student Analysis

Describe Justinian's reconquests from 527—565 CE.

Document 7

Source: The Justinian Code, Book 1: of Persons. Section VIII: Slaves. 529 to 565

In A.D. 528 the Emperor Justinian began a review of the old Roman laws. The emperor chose ten men to review 1,600 books full of Roman Law and create a simpler legal code. These men were able to create the Justinian Code with just over 4,000 laws.

VIII. Slaves

1. Slaves are in the power of masters, a power derived from the law of nations: for among all nations it may be remarked that masters have the power of life and death over their slaves, and that everything acquired by the slave is acquired for the master.

How do you think slaves were treated?

Document 8

Source: The Justinian Code, Book 2: of Things. Section I: Division of Things. 529 to 565 CE.

I. Division of Things

28. If the wheat of Titius is mixed with yours, when this takes place by mutual consent, the mixed heap belongs to you in common because each body, that is, each grain, which before was the property of one or other of you, has by your mutual consent been made your common property; but, if the intermixture were accidental, or made by Titius without your consent, the mixed wheat does not then belong to you both in common; because the grains still remain distinct, and retain their proper substance. ...if either of you keep the whole quantity of mixed wheat, the other has a real action [claim or suit] for the amount of wheat belonging to him, but it is in the province of the judge to estimate the quality of the wheat belonging to each.

Student Analysis

Review Law Number 28. Under this law, what happens if someone takes your property without your permission? How do you think this law helped the government maintain order?

Document 9

Source: Excerpts from the Justinian Code

The following are the precepts of the Law: to live honestly, not to injure another, and to give to each one that which belongs to him.

There are two branches of this study, namely, public and private. Public Law is that which concerns the administration of the Roman government; Private law relates to the interest of individuals....It is composed of precepts of Natural Law, of those of the Law of Nations, and of those of the Civil Law.

Natural Law is that which nature has taught to all animals, for this law is not peculiar to the human race, but applies to all creatures which originate in the air, or the earth, and in the sea....

The Civil Law and the Law of Nations are divided as follows. All peoples that are governed by laws and customs make use of the law which is partly peculiar to themselves and partly pertaining to all men; for what each people has established for itself is peculiar to that State, and is styled the Civil Law; being, as it were, the especial law of that individual commonwealth. But the law which natural reason has established among all mankind and which is equally observed among all peoples, is called the Law of Nations, as being that which all nations make use of. The Roman people also employ a law which is in part peculiar them, and in part common to all men....Our Law, which We make use of, is either written or unwritten, just as among the Greeks written and unwritten laws exist. The written law consists of the Statues,...the Decrees of the Senate, the Decisions of the Emperors, the Orders of the Magistrates and the Answers of Jurisconsults....

Student Analysis

Why do you think it was important for the Roman and Byzantine empires to have extensive legal codes?

**Generic Core-Scoring Guide for AP World History
Document-Based Question**

Basic Core: Competence	Points	Historical Thinking Skills Assessed
1. Has acceptable thesis.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Argumentation ➤ Depending on the topic of the question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Causation • Comparison • Patterns of Continuity and Change Over Time
2. Addresses all of the documents and demonstrates understanding of all or all but one.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use of Historical Evidence
3. Supports thesis with appropriate evidence from all or all but one document. [Supports thesis with appropriate evidence from all but two documents.]	2 (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Argumentation ➤ Depending on the topic of the question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Causation • Comparison • Patterns of Continuity and Change Over Time
4. Analyzes point of view in at least two documents.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use of Historical Evidence
5. Analyzes documents by grouping them in two or three ways, depending on the question.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Argumentation ➤ Use of Historical Evidence ➤ Depending on the topic of the question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Causation • Comparison • Patterns of Continuity and Change Over Time
6. Identifies and explains the need for one type of appropriate additional document or source.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Argumentation ➤ Use of Historical Evidence
Subtotal	7	Essay as a whole: Synthesis
Expanded Core: Excellence	Points	Historical Thinking Skills Assessed
Expands beyond basic core of 1–7 points. A student must earn 7 points in the basic core area before earning points in the expanded core area. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Has a clear, analytical, and comprehensive thesis. ➤ Shows careful and insightful analysis of the documents. ➤ Uses documents persuasively as evidence. ➤ Analyzes point of view in most or all documents. ➤ Analyzes the documents in additional ways — groupings, comparisons, syntheses. ➤ Brings in relevant “outside” historical content. ➤ Explains why additional types of document(s) or sources are needed. 	0–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Same skills as noted in basic core ➤ Other historical thinking skills may be demonstrated depending on the question and the documents
Subtotal	2	
TOTAL	9	

TOTAL POINTS BASIC CORE	
TOTAL POINTS EXPANDED CORE	
TOTAL POINTS EARNED	
FINAL GRADE	

RUBRIC	PERCENT	POINTS
9	100	50
8	95	48
7	90	45
6	85	43
5	80	40
4	75	38
3	70	35
2	65	33
1	60	30
0	0	0

Comments: