

Example:
Fall of Rome

Rome's Fall from Glory (Creative Title)

Your Name

Paper Date Due

Mrs. Ingles

CP World History Period ? Cohort ?

Rome's Fall from Glory

Thesis: The fall of the Roman Empire was limitedly impacted by economic weakness in the empire had a due to higher taxes and inflation. Yet, to a great extent the fall was caused by the political weakness that was created by having two capitals as well as the corruption among the leaders. The greatest factor in the fall of Rome was the weakening of the army because it ultimately led to the end of the empire; one way the army was weakened was by hiring mercenaries soldiers who did not feel invested in Rome instead of the government employing actual Roman citizens.

I. Limited impact of economic weakness

A. Trade disrupted

- i. The economy was weakened by Germanic tribe disrupting trade at the borders as well as pirates attacking Roman merchant ships in the Mediterranean Sea (Beck 173).

B. Tax increases inflation

- i. The economy was impacted by factors such as “high inflation, burdensome demands of imperial taxation, loss of land or wealth to foreign attackers, and civil war among Roman forces themselves. Those who could afford it escaped urban troubles by relocating to villas in the countryside” (Lovano).
- ii. This resulted the economies of the urban areas losing support of the wealthy which led to their demise.

- iii. Due to the financial despair of the empire, the Roman government raised taxes on the people causing more unrest (Beck 173).
- iv. “The state demanded too much from its people in taxes. Even worse, it seemed that those taxes went to nothing more than an overgrown class of imperial administrators and the Roman military” (Lovano).

II. Great factor political weakness

A. Two capitals

- i. After the development of two capitals of the Roman Empire, it began apparent that this was causing struggles in the government. Having two seats of government was dangerous as it “impaired the strength, and fomented the vices of a double reign” (Gibbons 408-409).
- ii. “The eastern emperors, who cared little for the fate of their western counterparts, actually supported barbarian actions in the west in order to reduce the threat to their own region” (“Rome, A History of”).

B. Poor leadership

- i. In 235 C.E. a “50-year period of instability during which more than 20 different emperors reigned. Most rose quickly, ruled briefly, and died violently. Rome nearly collapsed during this period” (“Rome, A History of”).
- ii. During the last 25 years of the empire “a rapid succession of weak emperors, puppets of the barbarians, ruled the west” (“Rome, A History of”).

III. Greatest extent due to army weakness

A. Mercenary soldiers hired instead of Roman citizens

- i. The Roman soldiers were “less disciplined and loyal” so the government began to recruit “mercenaries, foreign soldiers who fought for money. These soldiers felt less loyalty to Rome, which led to even greater military issues (Beck 173).
- ii. “Roman emperors had made a habit of recruiting Germanic warriors as mercenaries in the frontier garrisons. Germanic tribesmen would often fight for Rome for a price, but they could not necessarily be counted on in battle against related tribesmen” (Lovano).

B. No armor

- i. The Roman legions had important armor that included breastplates and helmets. A Roman court official and military expert, Vegetius wrote that around the year 400 CE, many began to abandon wearing them since “the customary armor began to seem heavy since soldiers rarely wore it” (Vegetius 58).
- ii. They began fighting the Germanic tribes without proper protection which led to massive military losses as well as many men who abandoned their posts in the military.

C. “Roman military... had not only lost its edge against foreign invaders but had also developed a habit of turning against itself in civil strife” (Lovano).

D. “The Roman Empire suffered from a number of critical military weaknesses and pressures. Roman troops stationed along the Rhine and Danube frontiers proved

incapable of defending those borders against repeated raids by Germanic tribes”
(Lovano).

- E. “Odoacer, a leader of the Ostrgoths, forced the emperor Romulus Augustulus to give up the throne in A.D. 476, and the Roman Empire in the west ceased to exist” (“Rome, A History of”).

Works Cited Page

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