

TIMED DOCUMENT ANALYSIS FORM

NAME: _____ PERIOD: _____ DATE: _____

Directions: Using the document provided, attempt to analyze it with no more than one sentence. You will have no more than five minutes per document. Write your answers below.

Procopius, Byzantine court historian under Justinian, from *History of the Wars*, On the Nika Revolt in Constantinople, 532 CE

At this time the officers of the city administration in Byzantium were leading away to death some of the rioters. But the members of the two [racing] factions conspiring together and declaring a truce with each other, seized the prisoners and then straightway entered the prison and released all those who were in confinement there. . . . Fire was applied to the city as if it had fallen under the hand of an enemy. . . . The emperor and his consort, with a few members of the senate shut themselves up in the palace and remained quietly there. Now the watch-word which the populace passed to one another was Nika [i.e., "Conquer"]. .

The emperor and his court were deliberating as to whether it would be better for them if they remained or if they took to flight in the ships. And many opinions were expressed favoring either course. And the Empress Theodora also spoke to the following effect: "My opinion then is that the present time, above all others, is inopportune for flight, even though it bring safety. . . . For one who has been an emperor it is unendurable to be a fugitive. May I never be separated from this purple, and may I not live that day on which those who meet me shall not address me as mistress. If, now, it is your wish to save yourself, O Emperor, there is no difficulty. For we have much money, and there is the sea, here the boats. However consider whether it will not come about after you have been saved that you would gladly exchange that safety for death. For as for myself, I approve a certain ancient saying that royalty is a good burial-shroud." When the queen had spoken thus, all were filled with boldness, and, turning their thoughts towards resistance, they began to consider how they might be able to defend themselves if any hostile force should come against them. . . . All the hopes of the emperor were centred upon Belisarius and Mundus, of whom the former, Belisarius, had recently returned from the Persian war bringing with him a following which was both powerful and imposing, and in particular he had a great number of spearmen and guards who had received their training in battles and the perils of warfare. . . .

Procopius, Byzantine court historian under Justinian, from *History of the Gothic Wars*, describing The Roman (Byzantine) Silk Industry, c. 550

About the same time there came from India certain monks; and when they had satisfied Justinian Augustus that the Romans no longer should buy silk from the Persians, they promised the emperor in an interview that they would provide the materials for making silk so that never should the Romans seek business of this kind from their enemy the Persians, or from any other people whatsoever. They said that they were formerly in Serinda, which they call the region frequented by the people of the Indies, and there they learned perfectly the art of making silk. Moreover, to the emperor who plied them with many questions as to whether he might have the secret, the monks replied that certain worms were manufacturers of silk, nature itself forcing them to keep always at work; the worms could certainly not be brought here alive, but they could be grown easily and without difficulty; the eggs of single hatchings are innumerable; as soon as they are laid men cover them with dung and keep them warm for as long as it is necessary so that they produce insects. When they had announced these tidings, led on by liberal promises of the emperor to prove the fact, they returned to India. When they had brought the eggs to Byzantium, the method having been learned, as I have said, they changed them by metamorphosis into worms which feed on the leaves of mulberry. Thus began the art of making silk from that time on in the Roman Empire..

Procopius, Byzantine court historian under Justinian, from *History of the Wars*, On Racing Factions, early 6th century CE

The population in every city has for a long been divided into two groups, the Greens and the Blues; but only recently, for the sake of these names and the places which they occupy while watching the games, have they come to spend their money, to abandon their bodies to the cruelest tortures, and to consider it a not unworthy thing to die a most disgraceful death. The members [of each faction] fight with their opponents not knowing for what reason they risk their lives, but realizing full well that even when they vanquish their opponents in brawls, they will be carted off to prison and that, after they have suffered the most extreme tortures, they will be killed. Therefore, there arises in them an endless and unreasoning hatred against their fellow men, respecting neither marriage nor kinship nor bonds of friendship, even if those who support different colors might be brothers or some other kind of relatives. Neither human nor divine affairs matter to them compared to winning these [street] fights. When some impious act is committed by one of them against God, or when the laws and the state are injured by their comrades or opponents, or perhaps when they lack the necessities of life, or their country is suffering dire need, they ignore all this as long as events turn out well for their own "faction." For this is what they call the bands of rioters. Even women participate in this abomination, not only accompanying the men but, if the occasion arises, even opposing them, although they do not go to the public spectacles nor are they motivated by any other reason. Thus I, for my part, consider [their actions] nothing else than a sickness of the soul. And this is how things are among the people of every city.

Ibn Battuta, Moroccan Muslim jurist, traveler, and geographer, from *Travels in Asia and Africa* 1325-1354, describing the city of Constantinople

The city is enormous in size, and in two parts separated by a great river [the Golden Horn], in which there is a rising and ebbing tide. In former times there was a stone bridge over it, but it fell into ruins and the crossing is now made in boats. The part of the city on the eastern bank of the river is called Istanbul, and contains the residence of the Emperor, the nobles and the rest of the population. Its bazaars and streets are spacious and paved with flagstones; each bazaar has gates which are closed upon it at night, and the majority of the artisans and sellers in them are women. The city lies at the foot of a hill which projects about nine miles into the sea, its breadth being the same or greater. On the top of the hill there is a small citadel and the Emperor's palace. Round this hill runs the city-wall, which is very strong and cannot be taken by assault from the sea front. Within its circuit there are about thirteen inhabited villages. The principal church is in the midst of this part of the city.

The second part, on the western bank of the river, is called Galata, and is reserved to the Frankish Christians who dwell there. They are of different kinds, including Genoese, Venetians, Romans [other Italians?] and people of France; they are subject to the authority of the king of Constantinople, who sets over them one of their own number of whom they approve, and him they call the Comes [count]. They are bound to pay a tax every year to the king of Constantinople, but often they revolt against him and he makes war on them until the Pope makes peace between them. They are all men of commerce and their harbour is one of the largest in the world; I saw there about a hundred galleys and other large ships, and the small ships were too many to be counted. The bazaars in this part of the town are good but filthy, and a small and very dirty river runs through them. Their churches too are filthy and mean.