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| “My lords, the present occasion is too serious to allow me to follow the convention that a woman should not speak in a man’s council.  Those whose interests are threatened by extreme danger should think only of the wisest course of action, not of conventions.  In my opinion, flight is not the right course, even if it should bring us to safety.  It is impossible for a person, having been born into this world, not to die; but for one who has reigned it is intolerable to be a fugitive.  May I never be deprived of this purple robe, and may I never see the day when those who meet me do not call me empress.  If you wish to save yourself, my lord, there is no difficulty.  We are rich; over there is the sea, and yonder are the ships.  Yet reflect for a moment whether, when you have once escaped to a place of security, you would not gladly exchange such safety for death.  As for me, I agree with the adage that the royal purple is the noblest shroud.”  **Empress Theodora of Byzantium 532 C.E.** |

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1. These words were spoken during the Nika Riots of 532. What were the Nika Riots?
2. Why can this speech be referred to as a turning point in the history of the Byzantine Empire?
3. What is Theodora’s advice to the lords (including her husband, Justinian)?

Map of Byzantine Empire

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| http://byzantium.seashell.net.nz/images/pageimages/map565_base.gif |

1. Which bodies of water were important to trade during the Byzantine Empire?
2. According to the map, what is the geographic significance of the location of Constantinople?
3. Based on the map, which ancient empire did the Byzantine Empire seem to replace?

Roman Decline?

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| “Cities are destroyed, he mused, fortifications razed, fields devastated. Some men are led away captive, others are mutilated, others slain before our eyes. The pride of Rome was reduced to memories of a vanished glory.”  *Homiliarum in Ezeechielem***, Pope Gregory I circa 600C.E.** |

1. According to Pope Gregory, what happened to Rome?
2. Make an argument that Rome didn’t actually “fall”.
3. Identify one common factor between these three documents