

The impact of the third century crisis



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The assassination of Alexander Severus and his mother at the hands of his own armies marked the beginning of a fifty year crisis. This crisis would be plagued with 20 to 25 Roman Army generals laying claim to the crown and the land, sometimes they would claim all of the land and sometimes they would claim only a portion of it. Several things also contributed to the crisis, such as invasion, civil war, plague, and economic depression.

The Assassination of Severus Alexander Severus served as Emperor of Rome from 222 A. D. to 235 A. D. Alexander ruled during a peaceful and prosperous time until the rise of the Sasanids, although Alexander was able to control them with time. There were great losses when his troops retreated in Armenia. The Roman troops' behavior began to show a definite lack of discipline and mutiny was taking place among other troops. When the Germans had breached the Rhine in several places, Alexander was called to Germany to bring order to the chaos. He mustered together his forces bringing legions of men from the eastern provinces.

Alexander decided to approach the Germans and offer them money, which would buy the Romans time. The Roman soldiers saw this as a sign of weakness and they felt he should have been on the battle field destroying the Germans for their insolence. This among other things turned the soldiers against the Emperor and on March 18, 235 the soldiers assassinated him. This was the beginning of The Third Century. Economic Repercussions The Romans had set up a good system used for getting products from place to place.

By sea they had their merchant ships delivering olive oil from Provence, hides from England, dried fruit from Syria, metals from Europe to each of their ports, making distribution easy. All of Rome could easily get anything they needed. With the start of the civil wars it became dangerous to haul these goods from place to place, causing the economy to falter. The economy wasn't helped by the young emperors who gave an ascension bonus to each of their men after winning the crown for them.

The only answer the young emperors could come up with is to cut the silver coins and put brass in the middle. This devalued all money and trade in Rome. Roman money was never to gain its value back after this devastating change in their monetary system. **Generals Want to be Emperor** After Alexander's death most of the leaders of the troops began to jockey to be named Emperor. Rome went through 20 - 25 emperors in only fifty years. While they were spending their time working the political train in Rome, the borders of Rome were not being protected.

This left the outlying towns susceptible to attacks and looting and the taking of land. By the year 258 Rome had split into three separate states, the Gallic Empire, the Palmyrene Empire, and the Italian-centered Roman Empire, each had its own emperor. At the Battle of Naissus the Roman warriors captured a serious victory which would turn the tide on the crisis. With some tough, energetic emperors in charge they easily defeated their enemies and gained back the land they had lost. By the year 274 the three pieces of the empire had come together again.

But it was never the same again, the empire survived another 100 years before their military prowess would be in question. Conclusion The Roman Empire was the premier city - state management system that the world was to experience. It also shows how quickly circumstances can turn around. With the murder of Alexander, I believe chaos was turned loose on the society, Rome couldn't keep an Emperor in office long enough to send out the announcements.

As far as the economy goes, once you start splitting the basis of your monetary system your economy is going to crash. At the hands of his own troops, initiating a fifty-year period in which 20-25 claimants to the title of Emperor, mostly prominent Roman Army generals, assumed imperial power over all or part of the Empire. By 258-260, the Empire split into three competing states: the Gallic Empire, including the Roman provinces of Gaul, Britannia and Hispania; the Palmyrene Empire, including the eastern provinces of Syria Palaestina and Aegyptus; and the Italian-centered and independent Roman Empire, proper, between them. The Crisis ended with the ascension and reforms of Diocletian.