

Introduction the
invention of
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Introduction

Cut off from the rest of the globe, with practically no knowledge of their neighborhoods, the goals of most individuals are to spread out their territories ultimately forming an empire and then eventually, overcoming the world. Traditionally, man has always tried to exert influence on fellow men and ever since in the early days the world was ruled through empires and kingdoms which had kings, queens, and emperors. These kingdoms had great contribution to the present system of ruling as they provided the foundation of how countries or subjects are governed.

Among the positive contributions that the early empires made are associated with civilization and other great discoveries. For example, the Roman Empire is associated with the engineering and the invention of cement while the Greeks are associated with democracy, civilization, philosophy, and mathematics.

Discuss the Problem of Empire in the Ancient World

The main problems that faced the earliest empires were how governance[1], avoiding invasions by other stronger and emerging kingdoms. These problems existed due to the fact that rival empires were growing and expanding and risks of traitors within the kingdom were high as well as attacks from rival empires. To rule successfully, the emperors had to cultivate loyalty from their subjects to ensure his citizens could guard and protect the empire. This called for the emperors to employ different strategies on how to ensure that their subjects maintained loyalty at the same time remaining united for the sake of recognition and the power of the

empire. Opposition and internal revolts within the empire was another problem that the early empires faced this made some of the rulers become to harsh to their subjects in order to ensure loyalty was observed.

How Did the First Empires Come About?

The first empires are said to have come as a result of civilization, democracy and rule of law.

The strong and the influential people in the society became the rulers by associating with people who believed in their views thus creating a following. They ruled these empires through political and social organizations. Another factor that led to the emergence of the early empires was the invention of gunpowder. Kingdoms attacked and captured rival and empires at will making them part of their own. For example the Ottoman Empire emerged in 1350 as a result of use of gun powder and by the early 1500 through the use of artillery, the ottomans had expanded even to Iraq. Trade was another factor that led to the emergence of the early empires. It is worthy noting that some of the early empires were established within trade routes. Trade centers were established and with time these trade centers became empires.

What were the strengths and weaknesses of the universal empires of Assyria and Persia?

Assyrian Empire

Strengths

The major strength of the Assyrian empire has always been attributed to its effective and organized army. They are widely regarded as the first organized and well trained armies in the world history. The army used

superior weapons and was also well disciplined. They also had the capability of using different kinds of military tactics which led to the emergence of the empire army as one of the strongest at that time.

Weaknesses

One of the major weaknesses that led to the collapse of the empire was the failure by the kingdom to solve the Babylonian problem by ending the continuing conflicts. These conflicts weakened the kingdom to the extent that Babylonians who had been seen as a weak empire were able to conquer Egypt out of the Assyrians hands. Another factor that could have led to the weakness of the Assyrians was the fact that their rulers were cruel and harsh to their own subjects and this contributed to growing discontentment among the Assyrians.

Persian Empire

Strengths

While the Assyrians were known to be cruel and harsh, the Persians were known to institute a rule that was relatively less incriminating and demanding. Thus, their success in ruling the western Asia and ruling them for a period of two centuries was not only due to their outstanding military qualities and man power resources but also due to how they ruled their subjects. The requirement that all the Persians serve in the army under a form of universal conscription made the Persian army such strong by providing the required manpower in case of war with the other empires.

The Persian Empire was also the largest by geographical content but despite this the empire was centralized and thus chances of divisions were very low.

The king was a very important person in keeping the empire together and despite some of the revolts which were experienced, the empire was never threatened. The rivalry between the rulers under the king also ensured the kingdom succeeded as it was difficult for any conspiracy development against the central authority among them.

Weaknesses

The stagnation of the Persian army in making technology advancement led to its fall to the Greco-Macedonian army. The death of Alexandria was another source of the empire kingdom.

Since after his death the army commanders began dividing the kingdom and thus reliance on manpower could not be relied on during the wars

How did the Greeks Fail at Empire yet Succeed at Civilization?

The failure of the Greeks at the empire level was mainly due to the conflict among its groups. These groups never cooperated even during the times of conflict and this was a major weakness to the empire. For example the conflict between the Spartans and the Athens was one of the signs that the Greek empire was on the verge of collapsing.

When the Spartans conquered the Athens and started placing their rules on them it resulted in revolts against the Spartans dominance by both the Athens and the Thebes. These conflicts led to the weakening of the kingdom and for example by the end of the conflict between the Spartans and the Athens, there was no group that was strong enough to unite the other members of the empire. Driven by traditional separatism and the desire for own independence, uniting the Greek states was quite a problem. The

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enmity which existed could not allow the states to help one another and thus rather than uniting in the verge of a disaster some remained neutral while others hoped for the punishment and destruction of rival groups within the empire leading to the failure of the kingdom[2]. However, the cultures of Greeks evolved to create the most glorious civilization of the ancient world. The kingdom led in art, philosophy, political culture and science.

The phase commonly known as the archaic period saw the advancements in political supposition and the beginning of egalitarianism as well as art and culture. After the fall of Mycenaean civilization, the Greeks formed small tribes of which some were agricultural and others were nomadic. In their bid to succeed and outdo the other groups, these agricultural and nomadic groups developed technologies which increased their productivity and thus the advancements in civilization. These ethnic groups made one of the supreme Greece (political) accomplishments.

The Greek tribes came together and developed strong city states with each state establishing its own culture and political structure and thus while it was hard for them to adopt the culture or the political structure of the other state, they succeeded highly at civilization

How Did The Roman Empire Arise Out Of A Crisis, Create More Crises, And Yet Survive Several Crises?

The crisis

The kingdom slipped into anarchy after the assassination of Commodus whose death brought about civil war within the empire. As if that was not enough, his successor was also murdered and the office put on auction by

the body guard leading to various people buying the office but none succeeding at ruling the empire and this led to succession battles. The rulers who followed tried to increase the emperor's authority and preserve the unity within the empire and this resulted to an army monarch where state intervention was carried out with ruthless severity.

The people charged with law enforcement became selfish and those who opposed the system were physically harassed bringing about widened uprisings within the realm. The cities which were now centers of civil and military administration became parasitic in a way and their contribution to the economy was just the consumption of farm produce. The end users were, nearly without exemption, either armed forces barracks or local majestic (civil) servants. The state was required to drive the economy but no one was willing or cared about the situation.

Thus, as the state broke down so did the Roman economy come to a stop and collapsed. The slaves who used to flood the kingdom were nowhere to be seen and thus the availability of the cheap labor was no longer a guarantee. By the start of the 3rd century, depopulation and disturbance caused by attacks, epidemics, and general turn downs in fertility had resulted in a demographic disintegration. This exposed how the kingdom was ineffective and profligate through its (Latifundia) system. The previous access to labor at no cost had hampered technological advancements in the agriculture sector and with the nonappearance of slaves, the deficiency in manpower led to curtailed productivity in the empire. The currency devaluation along with increased supply of the valuable metals brought

about (rapid) inflation also increasing the cost of basic commodities within the empire.

As the political and military organization of the kingdom collapsed, people localized and the empire became of less importance to its citizens.

The Revival of the Empire

The revival of the empire was brought about when the stability was restored; the army was reorganized by building huge reserves for their support, their source of food and income was guaranteed. After the demise of Severus Alexander, the ruler powers were fundamentally cut due to the suspicions and fears that if too much power was given to the emperors the kingdom could ride back to anarchy as earlier experienced. The roman citizens did not see the royal leaders as gods as they had been seen before and too much power was yielded to the citizens rather than on the rulers. This new emerging empire at the beginning of the 4th century was not similar to that of the past. Particularly in the western side of the empire, what previously could have been described as the Roman civilization underwent huge changes the empire was now characterized by strong presence of army in every place.

While in the past the army was concentrated along the borders with the cities and interior having none of their presence, they were now felt everywhere. After Diocletian, the old cities were made more secure by surrounding them with huge walls often from the old debris of the old houses and other structures which had been demolished. Coloni and Serfs took the slaves position in a bid to arrest manpower shortage. Though they (serfs and

coloni) had freedom, they two groups were supposed to remain in these estates as they were tied by to pay rents and taxes.

What caused the ultimate failure of the western portion of the Roman Empire, and what were its consequences?

Imperial expansion increased the power of military commanders and to them; they viewed this as an opportunity to seize political power from the civil authorities. In return, this resulted in the rulers accumulating enormous wealth brought about through corruption. Aristocracy was also diverted from civic duties and social duties towards pursuit of wealth and sensual gratification. Growth of slavery propelled by the large number of war captives served in the enlarging farm and estates.

The rich grabbed the land which belonged to the poor peasants and this brought about resentment within the kingdom and it made the peasants become mercenaries since they has nothing to do. There was also the widening gap between the rich and the poor, the empire neglect of its military and civic duties provided opportunities for ambitious army generals to enlist for support from fellow soldiers and the discontented masses and this was translated to a cycle of factionalism and civic strife which led to military dictatorships. At its last stage the western empire found had become impoverished, depopulated, and stripped off its territories by the encompassing barbarians whose military skills and dynamism were superior to Romans artillery. We can summarize that the fall of the Roman Empire took a few centuries due to the slow disappearance of liberty and the decline of private and public confidence on the kingdom. The civil wars that brought the kingdom down were as a result of the lost confidence. " At the same

time, the disappearance of liberty further accelerated the decline of virtue itself. Without the risks, responsibilities, and challenges of freedom, public and private virtue gradually withered, facilitating the Empire's general decline"[3]. The empires centralization policy and the uniformity impositions which were later followed by elimination of mediating structures between the civilians and the authority also brought the kingdom to a further decline.

The growing appetite of the government for revenues also led to the decline of the kingdom. The various taxes which existed and included levies on land and personal income were another major factor due to the simple fact that the hardest affected were the ordinary and most productive citizens.

Eventually, the taxes became so high that in most parts of the empire the farmers abandoned their lands and refused to till them so as to avoid the ever increasing taxes, as the taxes increased so was the bureaucracy level.

This led to low populations as most of the empire citizens avoided giving birth leading even to the emperor allowing the gothic to stay permanently in the kingdom due to the dwindling population. Christianity also led to the decline of the Roman Empire[4]. The Christian teachings contrasted against the Roman society pillars. Since the reason of fighting anymore was not there, they already had a defined end; the question was just when the end would come.

Conclusion

From the above study, we can conclude that the end of the early empires was brought about by many factors depending with the situations. For example, the Roman Empire collapsed as a result of bad govern-ship while

others collapsed due to internal conflicts whereas the Persian Empire started
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weakening after the death of Alexandria. Some say history can repeat itself and thus it is advisable to learn from these empires how they rose and collapsed.

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