

Imperial rome vs. han essay

Business, Decision Making



Han China and Imperial Rome had similar techniques with their political control over their vast land empires that Period 2 brought.

Whereas they both had social hierarchies and similar roles in expansion, their organization of bureaucracy differed greatly. In order to maintain political control both Han China and Imperial Rome practiced social hierarchy. Han China's social hierarchy consisted of a sort of religious hierarchy. Their hierarchy was ruled by a god-like emperor, an educated upper-class, and finally commoners all the while filial piety, a respectfulness of your elder's type belief, is an underlying theme. This hierarchy is maintained by the religion of Confucianism, which supported the idea that no one should try to be anything other than the class he was born into but to never stop trying to be the best he can be in his class. When Rome came into Imperialism they also adopted a social hierarchy based off of a dictatorship. In this hierarchy an emperor ruled above all, followed by a class of corrupt senators and landed aristocracy, and are supported by the work of the plebeians and finally the slaves. This worked thanks to a strong, powerful military that was more loyal to the dictator than to the people of Rome.

In both Han China and Imperial Rome the emperor's claim their right to rule as a divine right, handed down to them from the gods. They believed they were chosen and sent to rule the people from the gods themselves; whether they believed they were the sons of gods, Romans, or that they were a directly chosen family by the gods, Han. In the end though both were overthrown by another powerful, god-chosen enemy. Han China and Imperial Rome both extended their vast land empires further than any of their predecessors using a different type of government. Han China expanded

their nation further and held it for a good time before, ‘losing the Mandate of Heaven.’ They expanded but used a centralized government keeping everything in unity and harmony under the flow of Confucianism. The centralized government helped keep everyone in the idea that they were a part of China and not just a conquest by them. Imperial Rome also tried to use this technique, and for a short time it worked.

They kept a centralized government for some time, until unfortunately their empire was just too vast to keep centralized and it ultimately fell apart due to many not feeling like Roman citizens and rioting with the help of invading Germanic tribes. They both tried very dearly to keep their empires functioning like a single nation instead of the fragmented nations they were and it eventually led to their downfall. This centralized type of government was used also by the Maurya/Gupta Indians, which did not work in the slightest due to an already fragmented government and constant invasions. Although even with all of these similarities Han China and Imperial Rome, they were not the same empire and were bound to have differences. One of these differences was how their government handled laws and rule breakers. In Han China, underneath the emperor on the social hierarchy were the Shi, or trained bureaucrats. These men were sons of the upper-class and were highly educated. They became part of the trained bureaucracy.

These were an elite group of counselors to the emperor and were tasked with keeping peace. They did this without the help of any written laws, besides the Confucian analects. They were a trained and unified bureaucracy that extensively tested and had memorized what to do and what decisions to

make in all situations. This was to ensure there would be no misinterpretation of the law and so that every decision made by the bureaucracy to be an upheld and uniform one. Unlike the Han however Imperial Rome relied on written laws and untrained bureaucrats almost as much as it relied on slavery. The corrupt Roman senate would come up with laws and then the bureaucrats of Rome would interpret what the laws meant and how and in which cases they applied, this led to a very unorganized and non-uniform decision making from this class and created some chaos throughout Rome.

So as you can see, although Han China and Imperial Rome share similarities in both social hierarchy and their roles of expansion, they differed in the way they upheld their laws and trained their bureaucrats. They may have been similar but they were two completely different empires.