

China and rome were both powerful and long lasting empires essay example

[History](#), [Empires](#)



Empire is a group of territories and ethnic groups which are united under one ruler monarch or emperor. There are many bright examples of this form of rule: Akkadian Empire of Sargon the Great, Median, Achaemenid, Maurya, Chinese, Roman, Russian, Soviet Union and many others. They all have interesting history and culture, but Roman and Chinese caught my attention the most.

Both Chinese and Roman empire were powerful, with huge army and of great territorial extension, but because of different reasons such as political, economic, military these empires split.

Roman empire appeared on the world arena in 3rd century BC, it was still governed as a republic but it started to annex different provinces. The first emperor of a new born Empire was Augustus, he refused the fact of being monarch, insisted that he has saved the Republic, however he backed up his final decision by military force. Augustus provided the durable ideological principles for the next 3 centuries of the empire known as the Principate. During that period the prosperity in culture, economic, religion have furthered, but any uprisings such as Gaul or Britain were put down without mercy. After Augustus four new emperors came. From that moment the battle for throne began.

What were the reasons for the Roman Empire decline? What problems did it face? The Roman Empire was of a great territorial extension, one of the largest. It controlled parts of Europe, Africa, Asia. Also, because of multicultural society it was hard to unite all the different nations. In addition the Senate became corrupt, therefore - political instability appeared.

Provinces were ruled by the governors, which were appointed for 1 year,

they reported directly back to the Senate, as a result - huge bribes were given for favors of wide assortment. After the death of Constantine the empire was divided into 2 parts: Eastern and Western.

Another problem that the Empire faced was the Army. The majority of army comprised of Barbarians, which were significantly less effective than Romans that served in the army in the previous centuries. As a result battles against enemies were much more difficult, losses were huge. Rome didn't recruit any soldiers either. Many of the citizens that were supposed to serve in the army secretly sent their slaves to serve instead of them. It did not help to strengthen the army as well. The morale was low, troops didn't want to fight at all. The population of Rome also suffered from Malaria, it killed up to 20% of it's population in 150 years.

Another influential problem was economic: Many Emperors debased the currency, bright example of this is when Emperor Claudius was ruling - only 1 % of actual silver composed a coin. As a result to such manipulations - inflation appeared. Furthermore, high taxes were placed on population, which caused dissatisfaction and distress among people.

It finally split in 395 AD, shortly after the death of Theodosius. The empire was split between his 2 sons: Arcadius took the Eastern half and Honorius the Western part. But the deciding factor is that this pressure was too much for Rome to handle. Many foreign leaders wanted to capture it: Alaric, king of Visigoths captured Rome in 410 AD, they burned city and looted the treasury. Later, Rome faced danger again - Attila the hun, decides to seize it in 452 AD - destroyed many cities in Italy. 3 years afterwards Rome is looted by Geiseric, King of the Vandals.

Overall, the Roman Empire lasted for centuries. “ There are adherents to single factors, but more people think a combination of such factors as Christianity, decadence, lead, monetary trouble, and military problems caused the Fall of Rome” (N. S. Gill 2010). All of that resulted in Empire’s decline. Due to all the facts that influenced the collapse of the Roman empire there is one famous saying by Voltaire: “ The Holy Roman Empire is neither holy, nor Roman, nor Empire”. It underlines the tough situation at the “ sunset “ of the Roman Empire.

As for the Chinese Empire it appeared in 221 BCE, when the King of Qing finished conquering the different kingdoms, he proclaimed himself as the First Emperor. From Qin Dynasty there were 557 emperors, their power varied between different dynasties but the Emperor’s seat was always hereditary. The Empire successfully existed for thousands of years but it faced problems that resulted in Empire’s collapse only in the end of Qing dynasty.

What are the factors that influenced dissolution? There are many reasons for that. The most important ones are humiliation by foreigners. Local people felt that newcomers from West were superior. Many of them started to look at their neighbor Japan, which was one of the Economic powers in the world. They did this by learning from the West. Among these young people was Sun Yat-Sen, young revolutionist, he formed his group that was dedicated to democracy, they wanted to stop humiliation of foreigners. They stood for elimination of poverty as well, it was attractive and many people started to listen to his ideas and follow him.

However, Qing Dynasty decided to bring new reforms to calm the population.

In 1909 new reforms of army, education, political system started to work. The trouble was that they appeared to give democracy, but in fact it was not. Even the cabinet of ministers which was created shortly after the reforms, consisted of 13 members, 9 of them - were directly appointed by the Emperor, they were aristocrats. They ended up with giving some freedoms to the people, which population used as a tool to express their dissatisfaction with Qing rule. They also agreed to create a constitution, but promised to finish it within the time frame of nine years. It frustrated the common people even more.

Finally, it all ended in 1912, with the collapse of Empire. " The fall and collapse of the Qing dynasty was caused by external and internal changes within and outside the dynasty, peasant revolts, the rise of Sun Yat-Sen and overall western influence" (Sara Algeo, 2012). In my opinion the most influencing reasons for split were the humiliation of foreigners and the idea of democracy and freedoms, which were promised to the population. As a result a civil war broke out and Qing dynasty was overthrown.

In the end both Chinese and Roman empires have faced same problems and committed same mistakes: They did not take into consideration opinion of regular people, not aristocratic one. Both had huge territory and it is competitive to put down all the uprisings and control the lands peacefully. Influence from other countries affected both Empires negatively. In Roman empire - foreigners wanted to capture and loot the treasury of Rome, as for the Chinese - Western foreigners wanted to get good trade treaties. All western countries had interest to cooperate with China. As a result they literally humiliated Chinese people and it helped for the further revolution.

Ultimately, both empires were doomed for decline, because of the one simple reason: The society is able to tolerate the oppression and monarchical rule of emperor, until one certain moment: when certain freedoms are granted - people start to understand and analyze the whole situation, which will result in uprisings and revolutions.

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