

The Han and Roman Empires

History has shown that these two great empires had much in common. Not only were they formed in similar time periods but their declines had many common factors. Below is a table to illustrate these commonalities.

The Rise and Fall of the Han and Roman Empires	
HAN EMPIRE (202 BC – 220AD)	ROMAN EMPIRE (27 BC – 476 AD)
<p><u>Growth:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early rulers Liu Bang and Han Wudi defeated rival power groups and created a large region under their control by treaties and intermarriage • Built Great Wall of China to defend against nomadic invaders such as the Hsiung-nu • Improved relations with the merchants and land holders • Kept taxes low and reasonable 	<p><u>Growth:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Octavian defeated rival powers and brought region under control using conquest and domination of the Senate • Defended against the Germanic tribes (nomadic invaders) • Improved economic growth by redistributing land among the elite • Improved relations with the merchants and land holders • Kept taxes low and reasonable • Granted Roman citizenship to some conquered peoples
<p><u>Organization:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolated China from the west and south • Abolished old kingdoms and created military run provinces • Made Chinese the official language of the Empire • Built extensive roads and infrastructures • Created a qualified civil service using examinations • Made everyone learn and behave according to Confucianism • Created a peasant army loyal to the emperor 	<p><u>Organization:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made the Mediterranean Sea the connection for the Roman Empire • Removed unfit local rulers and created military run provinces • Made Latin the official language of the empire • Build extensive network of roads and infrastructures “All roads lead to Rome” • Appointed government officials that were loyal to the emperor • Created a professional army loyal to the emperor and not the Senate
<p><u>Decline:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal corruption and military coups • Warlords began to rise up again • Roads and buildings began to crumble and were not repaired • Domestic revolts due to high taxes on peasants, merchants and landowners • Unable to defend the northern provinces from nomadic foreign invaders 	<p><u>Decline:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greed, corruption, scandals and military coups • Rising power of local warlords • Roads and buildings fell into disrepair • Domestic revolts due to high taxes on peasants, merchants and landowners • Inability to defend against foreign invaders, Goths, Vandals, barbarians • Christianity split the empire. Divided into Eastern Empire (Byzantine) and Western (Latin) Empire