What makes an “empire?”

Throughout history, multiple nations have attempted to unify an empire encompassing enormous territory. In order to establish an empire, several characteristics are supposed to be met for an empire to exist. The recordings of travelers, philosophers and emperors reveals information of what characteristics were expected from an empire at that period of time. Recordings explaining how law enforces order, how social acceptance leads to expansion, how science saves lives.

Han Fei passes on knowledge to future emperors how to rule an empire, such information reveals what characteristics an empire consist of. In the document “The Writings of Master Han Fei” the author, Han Fei, explains how a ruler of an empire has to establish his reign over a united territory. “...make men uphold the public law will see his people secure and his state well-ordered”, which reveals that the ruler has to ensure his men to obey the law which effects the protection of his people, and order will be established within the empire. According to the previously mentioned statement, an empire requires some form of control to establish order over the common people, the lower classes. Depending on how a state or empire is controlled could determine what values that particular culture will adapt, how long an empire will exist, and the quality life of the common people. Another aspect of an empire, Han Fei reveals, is that it requires a form of procedural learning, this forces people to act accordingly or face consequences for illegal actions. Specifically, Han Fei addresses that “Ministers are afraid of censure and punishment but fond of encouragement and reward” then continues “…if the lord of men uses the handles of chastisement and commendation, all ministers will dread his severity and turn to his liberality.” revealing that an empire must consider adapting some sort of reward, punishment system. Depending on the procedural learning system actions of the people under the influence will change accordingly. Since most people desire to receive more and be rewarded, they should seek to act appropriately to receive rewards, and avoid being punished for misdeeds. The procedural learning system could be regarded as a means of structural control within an empire.

Aelius Aristides, an orator from Anatolia during the *pax Romana*, the roman piece in 155 C. E., in the document “The Roman Oration” describes the power and order the Roman empire had at that time. One of the characteristics Aelius Aristides emphasizes the Roman Empire “is much greater in its good order than in its circumference.” explaining that a great empire has to have order within it, and not merely encompassing a wide range of land. In the following quote Aelius continues to acknowledge that siding cities are at peace too in the Roman empire “… nor do some cities side with these and others with those.” adding that peace is essential alongside order. To interpret the emphasis Aelius brings on order and peace, Aristides explains how much correct authoritative rule is significant to an empire’s reign. Order and peace are characteristics of an empire. Another point Aelius Aristides reveals about the Roman Empire is the way it accepts all people regardless of race, ethnicity or religion as its citizens, meaning anyone could become a citizen of Rome as it is revealed in the following quote “And neither does the sea nor a great expanse of intervening land keep one from being a citizen…”. The significance of acceptance of citizenship makes it easy to expand to foreign territories. If people are given the opportunity to join an empire that promises a quality life, majority of people will serve to receive citizenship. The ability to become a citizen can be considered as characteristic of an empire.

In the document “The Rock Edicts” Ashoka the King Piyadasi, the author, reveals several reforms that he believes are essential to ruling an empire. After a bloody victory in battle with the Kalinga state, Ashoka realized the destruction brought by war, this was the turning point for Ashoka to convert to Buddhism. In contrast to previously mentioned methods of governing an empire, Ashoka addresses a lot of peaceful and spiritual methods, such as to avoid killing animals for the sake of eating them, and to spread medicine and healing within the nation “Wherever medical herbs suitable for humans or animals are not available, I have had them imported and grown…” The last quote by Ashoka could have led to a change in how medicine evolved in the empire, it might have also led to discoveries of new medicine, methods of healing, and an increase specialization in the medical field. Therefore, according to Ashoka, medicine is an important part of an empire, because it may increase the life quality of people of the empire. Medicine, science in general, is a very important aspect of an Empire according to Ashoka. Furthermore, In the following quote “…for all of them desire self-control and purity of heart.” Ashoka addresses that all religions should live together and tolerate one another within the same realm, because to some extent religions are after the same thing – peace and spirituality. The tolerance for diversity in religion could have determined the migration of people, the strongly religious people would move into the empire in order to spread or express their religious beliefs. Religious freedom would also lead to an increase in population within the state, because people are constantly looking for social acceptance of their own beliefs. According to Ashoka, for an empire to flourish, religious freedom, or freedom for self-expression, is very important to keep peace and unity within the boundaries within a state.

To conclude, an empire consists of various characteristics ranging from religion and ethnicity to science to social control. For a very long time religion has been a big factor in the lives of humans, therefore, tolerance for differences, according to Aelius Aristides, creates peace within the boundaries of an empire. Ashoka believed that an essential characteristic of an empire is science, specifically medicine, for the wellbeing of anything that lives. Han Fei resides with the idea that a ruler has to establish laws to chastise and punish people according to their behavior.

* Your responses should be double-spaced, in 12-pt. Times New Roman font with standard margins.
* You may also use lectures to support your argument. Please paraphrase. You should use direct quotations from primary sources and cite your sources in Chicago style with footnotes (see [here (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html); examples of a textual and a lecture citation are provided) **Make sure you use footnote citation, not bibliographic citation!** Note that in footnotes, you do **not** need to provide original publication information.

1. Gregory of Tours, “History of the Franks,” in *Ways of the World: A Brief Global History with Sources, Vol. 1 – Through the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Robert W. Strayer, second edition (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2013), 500-501.
2. Christine Fojtik. “Persistence of the Pre-Modern?” Lecture, World History to 1500, Chicago, IL, September 18, 2016.

* You do **not** need to include a cover page.
* Attach your [bibliography assignment](https://sxu.instructure.com/courses/12970/assignments/122624) at the end.
* Include the question you are answering, single spaced, at the top of the first page of each response.
* Please upload your paper to Canvas by 11:59 PM on Thursday, May 3.

**Final Essay Grading Guidelines**

All papers should be…

* 2-3 pages in length;
* 12-point Times New Roman font, with standard margins;
* include textual citations from the documents (at least 3!) using footnotes and Chicago-style footnote format;
* include a bibliography (cited sources + secondary material, as collected in your bibliography assignment);
* include a strong thesis, attention to historical context, and ample evidence to support your conclusions.

An A paper (36-40 points)…. Contains a thesis that is complex, argumentative, and presents a sophisticated and nuanced understanding of historical events. Responds directly and clearly to the question; it considers issues from multiple angles and takes into account alternate arguments. The essay places the topic within the broader context of modern world history and demonstrates change over time. It identifies multiple causes and multiple short- and long-term effects and uses multiple, diverse, and specific examples to bolster central claim in each paragraph. It is written in a clear, concise manner with few or no grammatical errors, clear transitions, strong topic sentences, and logical organization. It uses at least 3 primary sources to support the argument and cites these sources correctly.

A B paper (32-35 points)…. Contains a thesis that is argumentative and responds directly to the question; it considers issues from at least two angles. It places the topic within the broader context of modern world history and demonstrates change over time. Uses at least one specific example to bolster central claim in each paragraph, and is written in a generally clear manner with few grammatical errors. Generally good transitions, topic sentences, and organization. It uses at least 3 primary sources to support the argument and generally cites these sources correctly.

A C paper (28-31 points)…. Contains a thesis may be narrative, respond only indirectly to the question, and/or considers issues from fewer than two angles. It places the topic in short-term historical context and may lack consideration of long-term causes and effects. It may use some specific examples, but does not make a case for why or how these examples support the relevant claims. It is written in a somewhat readable manner with some grammatical errors. May contain weak topic sentences and/or weak transitions. May have organizational problems. It uses at least 3 primary sources to support the argument, though they may be cited incorrectly. *If you do not use footnotes or include a bibliography, you will receive a grade no higher than a C.*

A D paper (24-27 points)…. Contains a thesis that is narrative and does not respond directly or accurately to the question. The topic is given minimal historical context. May use a few specific examples, but does not explain how they relate to the central claim. *If your analysis is unreadable because of significant grammatical or stylistic errors and/or you use fewer than 3 primary sources, you will receive no higher than a D.*

An F paper (23 or fewer points)…. May contain no apparent thesis or attention to historical context. Uses no or very few specific examples. Speaks in generalities. Written in an unreadable manner with serious grammatical errors. Lacks transitions and/or topic sentences. Disorganized. May not use any textual source.

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