
A Compare and Contrast Essay on Roman and Greek Culture

Many civilizations have influenced the world, both Roman and Greek existence have influenced American and European civilization to a greater extent than any other culture of the ancient land. When we conceive about the two societies sometimes we may conceive of two groups of people lumped together who dominated the ancient universe. Nevertheless, this is not the case, the Roman and Greek cultures were contrasting in so many ways. We all know of the famous king Alexander the Great. Alexander made a Greek empire in 336 B.C, over 13 years he succeeded in claiming much of the Medes and Persian territory. He utilized the new neighborhoods to grow his kingdom, as he attempted to acquire yet more solid ground for his prosperous realm. In the remote future, his monarchy extended from Greece in the West to India in the East. When he perished on June 11, 323 B.C. at the age of thirty-two his land was split among his four generals. The kingdom carved up into quarters. These fourths included the land Egypt, Syria, Asia Minor (in the present day we know it as Turkey), and Greece. The division hardly affected Greece culture, though, as it went on to dominate the globe. The Roman Empire began in a little farming community in Italy, it later ruled North Africa, the whole of Europe, and the Middle East. This empire developed a civilization that dominated/became the most powerful in the whole world. The Romans copied many of the Greek and Etruscan elements. For example, chariot racing was seized by the Etruscan civilization in which it developed.

The Greek race was very dichromatic and never really had a single, instead, they chose a group of (specifically) men that ruled them. In contrast, Roman culture was semi-democratic. They were governed by a senate, but this senate (unlike the Greeks) was composed of only high status and very rich men. Their single emperor controls all political power. Both civilizations were really highly skilled builders. Throughout hundreds and hundreds of years, even today tourists can admire in awe the ruins Rome and Athens. Sightseers flock in great interest to visit the unearthed towns of the primordial world like Ephesus. Ephesus is located in Turkey but it is a Greek ruin. Remnants of old Paphos in Cyprus are also a major draw. Interestingly, the construction that the two cultures used to create these interests are very different. According to the TV series Monk, the Greeks were much more realistic. It is regularly argued that the Greeks yes built amazing structures that survived only as long as the Roman structures, but that they demanded a peculiar interest in their temples and towers. It was recorded that though they were very practical they took joy in ingraining a pleasing form along with beauty. On the other hand, the Romans were more engineers than creators. They were more focused on creating the best roads ever created and inventing a solid water supply that ran throughout their cities, and

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structurally good columns and forums. Some other key difference between the two civilizations was the Romans honored their civic heroes more than they worshiped the gods and goddesses. Literature, arts flourish in both cultures, but in a very contrasting way. Both cultures loved poetry and most subjects in their writing were things about wars, heroes, and the many different gods.

A specific difference between this literature contest between the two cultures was that the Romans wrote of all glory on the spot, for example, like Virgil's "The Aeneid" which was about the founding of Rome was written by the living heroic. Whereas the Greeks heroism was built over time. Stories were passed down from one generation to the next, perhaps with time some details were forgotten, but we will never know. A good example of this is Homer's "Iliad" which was about the fiery Trojan War. Funny enough the cooking habits of the two cultures were for the most part extremely similar. They both ate relatively healthy meals that comprised of the meat they hunted and the fruits they produced and harvested. They sipped excellent wines as they sat and held long discussions, both political and personal. Both cultures also loved theater, but the Greeks illustrated more on the misfortune that befalls heroes. The Romans, however, had a different perspective on how their drama was performed. They liked to showcase vulgar comedy that was so intense that the script could be written from these modern days. The Roman form of government was slightly more brutal than the Greek form government. Romans held events where people were murdered, this was seen as some sort of entertainment in the Roman culture. The culture would watch slaves, Christians, or condemned people get hunted down and killed for a show by men called gladiators. The showcase was presented in a Colosseum and the people could sit and be merry as they watched the people's fate be sealed in blood bathed floor of the Colosseum. These gladiators would also sometimes fight starving beasts and wild creatures. The Greeks were not a fan of this barbaric game. The Greek form of government was led by military power. Two royal families gave up two kings.

The Greek assembly elected the executive. Men over the age of sixty initiated new laws than the assembly disapproved or approved the laws. The Roman Empire had a very different form of government, there are included two forms, and this way ran the Empire for more than thousands of years. The republic and the empire were both successful, the republic lasted from 510-27 BCE and the empire ran from 27 BCE-476 CE. The empire was made up of five major parts, the senate, the emperor, the provincial administration, the magistrate, and the people in the Roman provinces. Although these culture's views on theater, barbaric games, and forms of government were very different they still have some similarities. Both loved and worshiped recreation. To them this was one of the most important things in life, they hardly believed in melancholy. Another similarity is they both enjoyed chariot racing, the Romans had the biggest arena called the Circus Maximus in the Mediterranean whose craftsmanship can still be gazed upon to this day. Now the social life of both these cultures was diverse beyond belief. The Greeks celebrated and honored their gods when they threw festivals, where the Romans held gala that celebrated their Emperor.

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The Romans and Greeks helped shape the world today, their craftsmanship and forms of government help provide ideas for our founding father. Both cultures were prosperous, their whole goal was to create a system that would best support their citizens. Festivals, world dominance, theater, in many aspects, both cultures were very contrasting, but they had the same goal and cause. They wanted to protect their loved ones, they wanted to grow their homes and create the best opportunity possible for survival. Some similarities and many conflicts, these differences overwhelm the similarities, but this is acceptable because they were two dissimilar civilizations.

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