

# Early western civilization essay examples

[Parts of the World](#), [European Union](#)



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## **Part A Rome: Option 2**

The nature of the Roman influence can be drawn or inferred from The Agricola Quotation in several ways. The quotation is a depiction of the cultural practices of the Roman people encompassing their food, clothing and economics etcetera. As part of the quotation note “. hence, too, a liking sprang up for our style of dress, and the toga became fashionable.” The influence that the roman culture has had on the other cultures in the world is evident. Grecinger contends that the Roman Empire historically has had cultural influence over the Mediterranean region which has come to be adopted in different parts of the world as well. These have particularly been associated with fashion trends where romans have been copied for their style of attire and dressing for both men and women. Over the years dressing in various cultures with various similarities have come to be adopted in various parts of the world the genesis of which can be traced back to the roman culture. Similar sentiments are shared by Loyd, who also observes that Rome played a very central role in setting the cultural trends in the world although he attributes some credit to Greece as an equal

contributor to the development of culture as Rome.

The Agricola quote also continues to mention that Rome rewarded allies and punished foes such that development followed those who towed the line with the Roman Empire while those who did not perish. A section of this quote is “to rest and repose through the charms of luxury a population scattered and barbarous and, therefore, inclined to war” The influence that the Roman Empire had on the Mediterranean region resulted in the development of those regions that aligned with the Romans while those that did not were crushed in war. The Macedonian War, for instance, is termed as one that served to unite Greece with Rome helping in the establishment of education exchanges such as in language, arts and other ideas (Lloyd). Hence, however much Rome influenced other cultures it also grew and developed from gaining several cultural attributes from other flourishing cultures such as was the Greek empire. Nonetheless, the influence that the Roman culture has had on other cultures is unmistakable since its cultures serve to be dominant in terms of influence of many common cultures to this day (Grecinger).

The influence of the Roman culture on the Mediterranean region and ultimately into the culture of the world took all forms of dominance on various aspects of life economic, social, political and religious aspects. This ultimately resulted in the development of the Roman language as it became popular in the Mediterranean so much that it began to be adopted by different factions in the region (Grecinger). The Agricola quote in part states “provided a liberal education for the industry of the Gauls that they who lately disdained the tongue of Rome now coveted its eloquence” Essentially, the Roman Empire's dominance also encompassed ensuring that the Roman

language evolved and grew in the region being adopted by different people and hence furthering its influence over the Mediterranean region as well as other regions of the world in general.

## **Part B: Western civilization: Option 2**

The question as to how the Roman Empire both continues and transforms the values of the Greeks can be answered in one simple way. The Roman culture comprises of a multitude of adaptations from the cultures that it dominates over. Moreover, the Roman culture constitutes its own projections that are in turn adopted by various cultures in which Rome transmits its culture. According to Garland, an exploration of the Greco-Roman culture is such that the two cultures have several intertwined cultural aspects that in some way unifies their ideologies and ways of life. The Greco-Roman culture is one that shares commonalities in mythology, statecraft, language, philosophy, fine arts, architecture, and science etcetera. In this regard, Rome ensured continuity of the Greek culture by acknowledging the contributions that the Greek culture makes in its own cultural development. This is in line with the principle of culture that states that culture is not owned by an individual but rather enriched and transmitted through contributions of others.

In a sense, both the Greek and the Roman cultures influenced the other ensuring continuity of each while at the same time transforming the same culture to fit their own. This integration of the Greek culture into the Roman culture further ensured continuity of the Greek culture through the transformation of the Roman culture. Hence this dependence on the two cultures ensured continuity and development of the Greek culture within the

Roman culture (Garland). The dependence of the two cultures and their contributions can be drawn from their commonalities in their handling of issues. For instance, the place of women in the society on the part of both the Greek and the Romans was such that women positions were regarded as inferior to men. For this reason women in both societies were not awarded leadership roles as this was the preserve of the men in both cultures. The male dominance over the female gender is one example of how the Roman culture served to perpetuate and continue the Greek culture while integrating some of Greek cultural attributes in the Roman culture (Papazov).

The continuity of the Greek culture through the Roman culture also encompassed other spheres of life such as political structures. Again several similarities can be drawn between the Roman culture and the Greek culture in terms of the political rankings of their politicians as well as their systems of governance (Garland). Similarly, the educational structures employed by the Greeks were adopted by the Romans where the Romans ceased the opportunity to ensure that it spreads the Roman language to regions where it conquered. In this regard, the Roman culture played a central role in the continuity of the Greek culture through borrowing some elements of the culture and transforming these to fit the context of the Roman traditions (Papazov). Other areas where the romans triumphed in ensuring that they influenced cultures were in the mode of dressing and setting of fashion trends. In this regard, the Romans borrowed tips from each culture that they conquered regarding the fashion trends. Hence, in the end the cultures borrowed lived on through various adaptations into the Roman traditions in

terms of fashion development (Grecinger).

Therefore, the Roman culture ensured continuity of the Greek culture and its transformation into the Roman culture through various ways. These means aimed at integration and adaptation of other cultures specifically the Greek culture into the Roman culture. As a result, various aspects of the Greek culture would live on and passed on to generations through the Roman culture (Papazov).

### **Part 3: Extra Credit: Option 1**

Augustine's confessions reflect the standard of values held by Western Civilization in several ways. For instance " For they, with a heaven-taught affection, willingly gave me what they abounded with from Thee. For this my good from them, was good for them" This influence that the confessions have on the culture of the West can be largely linked to the development of the catholic faith in the Western world. The catholic faith although not practiced by all westerners in totality continues to have significant impacts on the social, political and economic aspects of western society (Torre). For instance, although not all westerners profess the catholic faith catholic holidays such as Christmas and Easter have been incorporated as national holidays among Western cultures. Further, the Gregorian calendar that is based on the life of Jesus of Nazareth is widely used among Western countries and in most other regions in the world other than predominantly Islamic regions.

Hence, Augustine's confessions are eminent in the standards of values that Western cultures practice to this day due to the influence that the catholic faith has had on the cultures and traditions of the westerns. Through

Augustine's confessions such as " oh! That I might repose on Thee! Oh! That thou wouldest enter into my heart, and inebriate it, in Thy pity teach me that I may forget my ills and embrace Thee, my sole good" The Western world was able to end the practice of human sacrifice and slavery where each man is regarded as equal to the other. This equality is irrespective of various discriminatory elements that have scoured Western cultures for centuries such as skin color, race, age gender and country of origin etcetera (Torre). Catholic teachings emphasize on the complementary relationship between man and woman as equal but different partners who require the help of one another in equal measure. Hence, the teachings of Augustine in his confessions advocate equality between men and women where each is a unique contributor to the sustainability and success of the other. Therefore, through Augustine's confessions the western civilization has been able to overcome the vices of exclusivity in society championing rights of all mankind whether male or female in different societies (Blainey 214 - 215). This has since become part and parcel of Western cultural dynamics where various movement championing equal rights for both male and female individuals in the community have taken center stage. Essentially, Augustine's confessions inform the fabric on which cultural norms values and beliefs of western cultures are entrenched. The entrenchment is especially evident in the legislation developed in western countries that guard against discrimination (Torre).

The influence of Augustine's confessions on the Christian faith has also led to the development of various values that are practiced by the western cultures today. For instance advocacy to the ending of polygamy and incest, abortion,

birth control and marital infidelity are issues that Augustine addresses in his confessions. Today, the catholic faith and other Christian factions have also championed support for Augustine's confessions in regard to the issues presented. In the end, the teachings by Augustine have served to contribute into the social structures of the western cultures. Today western cultures have developed laws that protect marriage as an institution of two individuals and also developed laws against vices such as incest, abortion rape and so on. These social aspects serve as the fabric of society upon which the Western communities have built and entrusted their values and belief systems (Torre).

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