

# Ancient greece and the reformation

[Art & Culture](#), [Renaissance](#)



Response Paper 1: Topic 1 Ancient Greece began when they started to emerge from the Dark Ages. The Reformation era of Europe began when Martin Luther published the 95 Thesis in the 16th century. From the early Greeks to the Reformation era of Europe, the difference of distance and millennia conveyed a significant distinction in the practice of religion. Indicative are how religion, politics, and society were entwined and how that led to conflicts; next, the physical practice of ceremonies; and lastly, how believers celebrate or view their religious idols. The Reformation era of Europe raised countless conflicts than that of ancient Greece. Many Protestants and Christians alike at that time thought they were doing good to their faith by harming or killing the conflicting side. The greatest example being the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre in August 1572 when Henry, duke of Guise, led troops to assassinate Huguenot leader Coligny. This day, thousands of French Protestant civilians who were gathered in Paris for the celebration of the marriage of Marguerite of Valois (daughter of Henry II and Catherine de Medici) to Protestant king Henry IV of France, were barbarically murdered by " members of the king's guard, and other bands of soldiers, [...]members of the civic militia, [who were initially ] stationed about the streets to help keep order, [...and] but other citizens joined in as well" (Diefendorf; 20-21, 38). Deaths didn't just only occur at this time during the reformation, numerous religious wars and conflicts broke out between Protestants and Catholics. 1562 in Paris, the most " inflammatory episodes of religious violence, " occurred between Protestants assembled for worship in the saubourg of Saint- Marcel, conflicted with Catholics in the nearby church of Saint- Medard. Claude de Saintes, a Catholic priest, described how a

woman was “ dragged by the hair and beaten black- and- blue [...]” but Protestants from Saint- Medard defended themselves, both sides’ storys conflicting with each other that to this day, the truth to this incident is not final (Diefendorf, 65-68). Peace between Religions just wasn’t possible during the Reformation era, however on the contrary during ancient Greece. The Greeks had the same polytheistic religion, basic culture, and Greco language despite there being several hundred poleis; wars weren’t because of religious intentions, therefore, religious conflicts were not an issue, it instead brought much of the population together. “ In the ancient world, religion was inseparable from everyday life [...]” (Perrottet, 73). The Olympics which was held every four years in Olympia in southern Greece is a vivid image of how ancient Greeks displayed their religious practices and ceremonies. As Catholics have their mass and lent, animal sacrifice was the central pagan practice. “ The Sacred Slaughter, “ the Greeks’ most important national ceremony occurred on day three of the Olympic Games, when a hundred white oxen were sacrificed at the Great Alter of Zeus to “ show the unity of gods, men, and animals” (Perrottet, 124). Animal sacrifices were performed every time the favor of the gods was requested, although only the rich could afford this. Ceremonies weren’t the only way ancient Greeks practice their polytheistic religion, there were dozens of alters in Olympia. Before the Olympic Games, contestants of the Olympics would go to the Temple of Zeus to pray for their victory. Another example would be “ the famous Milo of Croton came [to the stadium] dressed as Hercules with a lion’s skin and club” (Perrottet, 87), or the Chariot racers would pray to Helios for them to be faster. These Greek Gods are more than God but idols to them. In Catholic

or Christianity, their worshippers would look towards their Father or Pope, priest, or Pope for Catholics for guidance; ancient Greeks would go the temple of a specific God that they think would meet their needs. A single lady would go to the temple of Aphrodite, Greek god for love, if she wishes to find a husband. A general would go to the temple of Ares, Greek god for war, if he wishes to pray for his victory (Greek Religion, 169). Catholics would pay indulgences if he or she committed a sin or wishes to eat meat during lent (Diefendorf, 45). Catholics and Christians alike prayed to Jesus and Saints for their wishes. Religious idols are the first image people image when asked to think of a particular religion. The location and time difference between ancient Greek and the Reformation era of Europe is a large difference in history. The conflicts of the Reformation, ceremonies during the Olympic games, and the difference in idols between the religions are the most significant in the practice of religion between these two place and time. When time and location changes, the way people practice and incorporate religion in their daily lives also differs.