

Comparing and contrasting ancient greece and rome

[History](#), [Ancient History](#)



Ancient Greece and Rome 2 Abstract Ancient Greece and Rome are two of the most influential civilizations known in history. This paper will focus on comparing and contrasting both the differences and similarities of both these great civilizations. Some of the major topics that'll be covered throughout this paper will include the following: Forms of government, the roles of women in both civilizations, and military life.

Ancient Greece and Rome 3 Intro Looking back in ancient times, both the Greek and Roman empires were extremely influential to many modern day cultures and societies. Everything from government, to religion, and to ones overall perspectives and philosophy on life in general is still widely respected and studied by many around the world. This is exactly why these two great civilizations were chosen for this particular assignment. While both empires were extremely similar to each other, there are also many important differences between the two as well.

The central focus of this paper will involve identifying just how similar they were in nature, as well as how different they were also. The following important topics were chosen to be evaluated: Forms of government, the roles of women in both civilizations, and military life. Government in both Greece and Rome Ancient Greece and Rome were two of the greatest civilizations known to man, and it wouldn't make any sense to analyze both empires without taking a close look into their governmental structures.

The Greeks incorporated many forms of government throughout its civilization such as monarchies, oligarchies, tyrannies, and eventually converting to a democracy. The Greeks were the first to develop a

government run by the people, although not all citizens were included in its democracy. Only free male adult citizens were allowed to participate while women and slaves were excluded (Ancient Greek Government). In contrast to the Greeks many forms of government, the Romans would adopt the Greeks ideology of democracy but later formed what is known as a republic. This form of

Ancient Greece and Rome 4 government would prove to be extremely effective for the Romans, as they would stick to it throughout the course of their empire. They organized it into three categories: legislative, executive, and judicial branches; each area was to perform a specific purpose. This was monumental on behalf of the Romans because it laid the foundation of running a highly organized form of government, one that many future generations would come to emulate. Another contrast to the Greeks was that every citizen under the Roman government had some sort of rights.

This can be seen through how both civilizations treated women in general (The Roman Empire, 2011). Roles of Women in Greece Although both these great civilizations were so much alike, the roles given to women is one area where there were some differences. The best possible way to describe women in Greece was below that of second-class citizenship. They were treated as servants of their husbands and were given no rights whatsoever. Usually women were married off at a very young age to men much older than them; once married they were considered property of their husbands and didn't hold any authority within their own household.

This power was typically given to the mother of their husband. If that wasn't bad enough, before a woman was married she was under full control of her father, which is sad. Women weren't even allowed to attend public events such as the popular Olympic games. Not only were they considered servants of their husbands, but they were looked upon as having one primary function, and that was to give birth (Kishlansky, Geary, & O' Brien, 2008).

Women in Sparta Ancient Greece and Rome 5

The behavior that women endured was typical in most city-states throughout the entire Greek empire; Sparta was the only exception. Spartan women weren't as restricted as those in other states and enjoyed freedom and responsibilities that many women could only dream of. Although they weren't as free as modern women are today, nor were they awarded all the rights granted to that of Spartan men such as the right to vote, choose their own husbands, or be elected to public office. Even still life was pretty good for them overall. Sparta's law required that all female infants and children be given the same care and food as their brothers" (Schrader, 2011. P. 1). Unlike Greek women, they were allowed to attend public events, become educated, inherit and transfer wealth, control the economic situations of their marriage, and were also able to speak out about certain political issues (Schrader, 2011). Women of Rome In comparing and contrasting the women of Rome to those in Greece, it was important to first point out how Sparta differed from the rest of the empire, simply because it provides a better understanding of the overall picture.

Although Roman women weren't kept under such restrictions as most Greek women, they were still under the control of men in what was a male-dominated society just as Greece. Another striking similarity was that Roman women were under control of their fathers and when they got married, the father would transfer that control over to their husbands. Unlike Greek women who had no rights within their own households, Roman women did to some extent. " Wives did exercise real tough informal authority within the family. Part of that authority came from Ancient Greece and Rome 6 heir role in the moral education of their children and the direction of the household" (Kishlansky, Geary, & O' Brien, 2008, p. 119). Military Life in Ancient Greece In order to maintain and protect the citizens of any great civilization, having a powerful military is nearly a necessity. Even in modern times with the United States being the richest, most powerful country on earth, they've clearly invested a lot of time and money in developing the most powerful military to protect its citizens as well. The Greeks realized just how vital it was to build an advanced military structured around courage and bravery.

This was primarily due to the bold leadership of Alexander the Great, who expanded the Greek empire by the use of military force. " Ancient Greeks invented the use of technology in warfare. The first such invention was the Phalanx which was used against the Persians. The Athenians produced very fast triremes. The Greeks in Sicily developed the first advanced catapults" (Lahanas, 2001, p. 1). A few other important items invented by the Greek army were spears and pikes, swords, and the hoplite shield which was probably the most important of all.

The phalanx was vital because it allowed the Greeks to defeat enemy forces much larger than theirs; the Spartans were credited with developing such an affective military strategy. It involved heavy infantry troops standing together in a compact rectangular formation with weapons such as pikes, spears, sarissas, and other a few other weapons (Sam, 2011). Most of the military's leadership in Greece at the time came from Sparta, a state that "produced one of Ancient Greece and Rome 7 he most iconic armies in ancient history and was renowned for its soldiers' skill, discipline, professionalism and bravery" (Sam, 2011, p. 1). Military Life in Ancient Rome "The Romans very fast acquired the Greek military technology and developed the most organized military system the world has ever seen" (Lahanas, 2001, p. 1). Obviously with the Romans implementing and eventually surpassing the military technology of the Greeks means that they were extremely similar in nature. The phalanx was one of the military strategies the Romans quickly adopted from the Greeks early on within their military.

However, as time went on the Romans would eventually shy away from this strategy because it wasn't as affective for them as it was for the Greeks. The early Roman Army also adopted their attire from the Greeks as well, looking extremely similar in appearance. The weapons used by the Romans were identical in nature also: items such as a "helmet, hoplite, round shield, greaves, and breast plate, all of bronze, and carrying a spear and sword" (The Roman Army, 2008, p. 1). With all the similarities, one difference came about when the Romans abandoned the phalanx as mentioned earlier.

In doing so, they developed a more effective fighting strategy known as the legion. The legion allowed the Romans to be more versatile on the battlefield. It involved being organized into three groups: “ the hastati in front, the principes in the second row, and the rorarii and accensi in the rear” (The Roman Army, 2008, p. 1). Each of these groups served a specific function during the course of a battle, and the strategy proved to be so effective that the Romans would keep it this way Ancient Greece and Rome 8 throughout their existence—only making a few minor changes as time progressed.

So after analyzing both the Greek and Roman army, one can conclude that they are extremely similar other than the fact that the legions allowed the Romans to become more advanced and develop a more powerful military than the Greeks. Conclusion Both the Greek and Roman empires laid the foundation for government, military values, and even religious views that many nations adopted within their own modern societies. The monumental influences of ancient Greece and Rome on today’s society are particularly why they were chosen to be analyzed.

Although they were nearly identical in nature, the minor differences between the two are what made them both unique. The Greeks were the originators and the Romans adopted much of the Greekscultureand perfected it. This is precisely why both civilizations are widely studied, respected, and emulated by many great nations worldwide. Ancient Greece and Rome 9 References Kishlansky, M. , Geary, P. , & Brien, O. P. (2008). Civilization in the West. New York: Pearson Education. Lahanas, M. (2001). Ancient Greek Military

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