

# The reality of greek wars conflict history essay



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The life of ancient Greek society was quite different from the life of the modern society. Nevertheless, the ancient Greek culture had a significant impact on the development of western culture and civilization. At the same time, ancient Greek cultural ideals were often quite different from reality. On the other hand, it is impossible to deny that ancient Greek respected their cultural ideals and attempted to follow them even during wars (Best, 74). In this regard, it is worth mentioning the fact that ancient Greek cultural ideals often come into clashes with the severe reality, when ancient Greek had to use methods and tools, which did not match their cultural ideals, to reach positive ends in wars but, on the other hand, ancient Greek attempted to follow their fundamental cultural ideals during wars, especially when they have no choice but to manifest their bravery, heroism and patriotism.

First of all, it is important to place emphasis on the fact that ancient Greek culture was, to a certain extent, diverse because there was no homogeneous nation state. Instead, ancient Greece was comprised of city-states, which had their own cultural peculiarities (Adcock, 32). Nevertheless, it is still possible to trace common ideals which could be found throughout the territories inhabited or colonized by ancient Greek. In this regard, it is possible to single out such cultural ideals as the respect to bravery, courage and heroism. Ancient Greeks respected heroes and viewed them as super-human beings above whom were only gods. In addition, ancient Greek respected freedom and independence above all. They viewed their lifestyle superior compared to other countries and they viewed the independence and power of the Greek civilization as one of the major priorities in the

development of ancient Greece. In addition, they respected honesty and nobility.

However, such cultural ideals could not always be implemented by ancient Greek, especially in the course of their wars. In this regard, it is possible to refer to the experience of ancient Greek in the Trojan War. At first glance, ancient Greek attempted to follow their cultural ideals. They united their efforts to defeat Troy for the power of ancient Greece. They wanted to defeat the main opponent of Greece that offended its representatives. At the beginning and in the course of the war, they used honest methods of the struggle. However, in the end of the war, they used deception and treachery to win the Trojan War. They deceived Trojans pretending they leaved Troy and moved back to Greece. Instead, they used the present to Trojans to penetrate into the city and to open the gates to let the Greek army in Troy. In such a way, they won the war using deception and treachery that contradicted to traditional cultural ideals of ancient Greek, who preferred to win the war in the open struggle.

However, many military operations and wars were the manifestation of heroism and bravery of ancient Greek warriors respectively to their cultural ideals (Sekunda, 113). In this regard, it is possible to refer to the Thermopylae battle, when ancient Greek warriors confronted the huge army of enemies, whose military superiority was obvious. In fact, the Thermopylae battle is a symbol of heroism of ancient Greek warriors (Connolly, 195). Three hundred Spartans kept struggling and stopping enemies as long as they could and as long as they stayed alive. At this point, it is worth mentioning the fact that it was Spartans, who stayed to die in the battle <https://assignbuster.com/the-reality-of-greek-wars-conflict-history-essay/>

because it was the major ideal of a true Spartan warrior, which though was not common to representatives of other ancient Greek city-states.

Another manifestation of the bravery and heroism of ancient Greek was the Persian war. At the same time, the Persian War was also the struggle of Greek people for independence, which meet the traditional Greek strife for independence and liberty. Therefore, the Persian War matched another ideal of ancient Greek culture (Hanson, 115). In fact, the liberty and independence of ancient Greece were fundamental values shared by all city-states (Hodkinson, 172). In such a way, the persistent struggle of ancient Greek against Persian invaders was the implementation of their cultural ideals in wars conducted by ancient Greek.

On the other hand, the Peloponnesian War was the struggle between two Greek leading powers – Sparta and Athens. In fact, the Peloponnesian War can be viewed as the civil war between two major powers in ancient Greece (Cartledge, 137). The struggle of Sparta and Athens involved their allies and resulted in the bloodthirsty civil war that contradicted to the fundamental ideals of the ancient Greek culture because the civil war led to the slaughtering of Greek people by each other. In such a way, participants of the civil war neglected the principle of liberty and independence of each city-state and put under a threat the future and independence of ancient Greece and Hellenistic world at large (Fisher, 92). In such a way, the Peloponnesian War can hardly be viewed as the manifestation of ancient Greek cultural ideals. Instead, this war marked the violation and abuse of basic cultural ideals of ancient Greece.

Thus, taking into account all above mentioned, it is important to place emphasis on the fact that ancient Greeks did not always follow their cultural ideals. To put it more precisely, the fundamental cultural ideals of the ancient Greek society were principles of honor, bravery, courage, and heroism. Ancient Greek viewed independence as one of the fundamental values of Hellenistic world. Nevertheless, in the course of wars they often used treacherous methods and deception to reach their ends and to win wars, as was the case of the Trojan War. On the other hand, frequently, ancient Greek followed their cultural ideals and fought in the war to death for their motherland, its freedom and its people.