Roman V. Greek Civilization Essay, Research Paper

Roman vs. Greek Civilization

Although both Roman and Greek civilizations shared similarities in the areas of art and literature, their differences were many and prominent. Their contrasting aspects rest mainly upon political systems and engineering progress, but there are also several small discrepancies that distinguish between these two societies. This essay will examine these differences and explain why, ultimately, Rome was the more advanced civilization of the two.

Greece, originally ruled by an oligarchy (”rule of the few”), operated under the premise that those selected to rule were selected based not upon birth but instead upon wealth. Eventually, however, Greek government became democratic. Rome, on the other hand, was a republic that elected its officials, and common citizens were not allowed as many opportunities as Athenians to participate in matters of the state. While Greece had branches of government to represent citizens, Rome implemented branches of government to represent different components of society. For example, Rome had authorities to supervise public works projects, administer justice, supervise recreational activities and conduct a census (text). Rome, who, like Greece, was a polytheistic society, also appointed a priest for life who was in charge of the entire state’s religion.

Another difference in these civilizations is in the architecture of each region. The architecture of the Romans was also more advanced than that of the Greeks; they used concrete and placed emphasis on arches, vaulted ceilings, and domes while Greece emphasized balance and symmetry. Greek temples aimed at impressing by designing intricate, aesthetically pleasing outer views, while Roman architecture’s goal was to impress by enclose a vast amount of space.

Thirdly, the Romans were far more advanced than Greece in terms of engineering progress. In both the areas of civil and hydraulic engineering, Rome towered above Greece. They constructed a network of durable, paved highways and city streets; in fact, most everything had concrete walls and pavement. They developed a water supply and storage system as well as a waste disposal scheme, using aqueducts when local water supplies ran low. Furthermore, they implemented food preparation, storage, and distribution centers in addition to their dependable water supply system.

Rome’s technological advances, as described above, place it above any civilization of its time. Based on these examples, Roman civilization was by far more highly developed than Greek civilization.