**Reflective Essay**

**THREE REFLECTIVE PARAGRAPHS**

In taking History 304 Ancient Greek History with Col Sheldon, and writing the three term papers on Akrotiri, The Mask of Agamemnon, and Alcibiades. I have learned quite a lot about ancient Greek history, culture, and military history. In writing these three term papers I have taken some time of reflection to look back on what I have learned about these three topics and how they are tied together and connected to one another and how they are important to Greek culture. I realized that no matter how different things in Greece can be, they could always be connected to each other in one way or another and to the modern world.

Akrotiri, the once thriving trade city located on the island of Thera was a Minoan settlement up until the devastating volcanic eruption that completely wiped out the city. Luckily the settlement was preserved by the eruption and we have been able to excavate the remains and learn a whole lot from the findings. I have learned about the way the Minoans lived prior to the eruption that they focused heavily on trade.

With this being a Minoan settlement and not a Greek one, who followed closely after the eruption and began settling near Akrotiri, there is still a lot to learn about Greece from these Minoan ruins. The Greeks adopted a lot of the Minoan culture when developing their own culture; the Greeks also took from the Egyptians and the other surrounding areas when developing their culture. I have learned from this that the Greeks took the best from others and made it their own.

This is something that the Greeks become very good at, taking what is good from others and turning it into something of there very own. Going from what I learned from Akrotiri and seeing how their culture was formed from those that were around them and the ones that came before them, it has developed over time a very distinct Greek culture that Greeks now days are very proud of. This leads into the things that I have learned from my paper on the Mask of Agamemnon, which has a very large role in Greek culture.

In doing this research I have learned that a majority of the Greeks want to believe in the idea that Troy and the battle between Troy and Mycenae happened, and they used the discovery of the Mask of Agamemnon as proof to this story from Homer’s Iliad. However due to modern research this discovery is not possible due to the mask being dated 300 years prior to the era of Agamemnon. It just shows how important Greek culture, their history is to the Greeks, and they take great pride in this. They want to believe this even if Schliemann’s excavations could be thought as inaccurate. I learned that the Greeks have great pride in their past, and want anything to help strengthen their culture and their history as a civilization.

From Akrotiri and the Mask of Agamemnon, I have learned how important it is to the Greeks to build and maintain their culture and that; they have great pride in the Greek history and culture. In studying the life, history and actions of an Athenian general names Alcibiades who changed his allegiance from Athens to Sparta to Persia and back to Athens again. All while maintaining face with the Athenians in the end and returning back to full honors as he was before he defected in the first time.

This goes to show that the Greeks realized how important he was to the Greek military and that they needed him to finish the Peloponnesian Wars and were willing to act like nothing had ever happened in the first place. All of this just to preserve Greek culture. That is how important this is to the Greeks.

In doing my research on Alcibiades, I have come to realize that the Greeks were willing to look past what he had done to them by changing his allegiance and defecting from Athens to Sparta and then from Sparta to Persia, they were willing to allow him to come back with full honors as if he never left. They did this because he redeemed himself with what he did to the Persians in slowing down their armies and not letting them attack Greece and also attempting to create an alliance between Greece and Persia.

They noticed that he wanted to return home to Athens and looked past all of his wrong doings from his youth and accepted him for who he had become. They were willing to give him another chance, for because they may have believed he had changed and matured a little bit, and also for the fact that he was an excellent military leader as a general and the Greeks wanted to use his expertise again and use him for Athens’s benefit. After doing my research I have come to believe that Athenians believes in second chances when it comes to their own, as well as preserving the strength and importance of the Greek culture.

In reflecting on my research of all three term papers, Akrotiri, the Mask of Agamemnon, and Alcibiades there are ways that these three topics can be connected. Even with these topics being not alike in physical appearance there is a way that these are similar to one another. It is all about Greek culture, the development, strengthening and repairing of Greek culture all throughout the long ancient history of Greece.

I have come to know that Greek culture is something held near and dear to the Greeks and that they take great pride in their past. And that no matter how small and insignificant something may seem; it is very important to the Greeks if it has help develop the culture that they know and love.