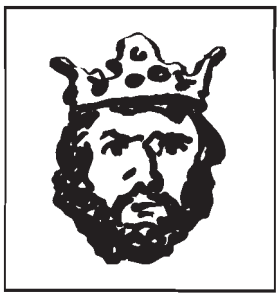
POLITICAL SYSTEMS -- GLOBAL HISTORY		
TERM	DESCRIPTION	WHO / WHEN / WHERE
DIRECT DEMOCRACY		
OLIGARCHY		
REPUBLIC		
FEUDALISM		
ABSOLUTE MONARCHY		
LIMITED MONARCHY		
PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY		
THEOCRACY		
DICTATORSHIP		
TOTALITARIANISM		
FASCISM		

Four Forms of Government in Ancient Greece

Monarchy



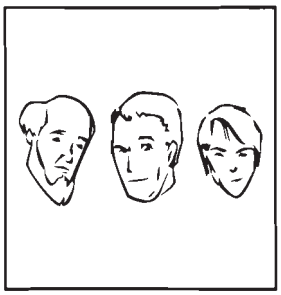
A *monarchy* is a form of government in which the ruling power is in the hands of a single person. Most monarchies have been ruled by kings, usually with the help of a council of advisors. The word *monarchy* comes from the Greek terms, *monos* (meaning "single") and *arkhein* (meaning "rule").

The Mycenaeans, who ruled ancient Greece from 2000 to 1100 B.C.E., were warrior peoples who established monarchies to rule their kingdoms. The king of each city-state lived in a lavish fortress-palace in the capital city. Beyond the capital city was an outlying network of villages. The people of these villages paid taxes to the king, obeyed his laws, and depended on him for their defense. The king often relied on heavily-armed soldiers to enforce his rule and to ensure that the people paid taxes and obeyed his laws. He usually retained his political power for life. His eldest son—the prince—succeeded him on the throne. When there was no direct male successor, the king's closest military advisors often battled among themselves to become the new monarch.

The Mycenaean monarchies survived until around the 1200s B.C.E. At that time, many of their eastern trade routes began to close because of fighting between kingdoms in Asia Minor. As a result, the Mycenaeans could no longer obtain raw metals, and their ability to make weapons and conquer other lands diminished. Eventually, the Mycenaeans began to fight among themselves for survival, and they slowly destroyed each other. Finally, a people from the northwest called the Dorians invaded Greece and destroyed what remained of the Mycenaean monarchies. Monarchy as a form of government soon disappeared in Greece. It was replaced by a system in which a small number of individuals shared power and ruled as a group.

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Oligarchy



An *oligarchy* is a form of government in which the ruling power is in the hands of a few leaders. The word *oligarchy* comes from the Greek terms *oligos* (meaning "few") and *arkhein* (meaning "rule").

Between 1100 and 800 B.C.E., small groups of people began to share the ruling power in several Greek city-states. Political power was often shared among aristocrats, who inherited wealth and power from their families, and a king. Over time, this ruling arrangement changed. Oligarchies developed in which political power rested with a few selected wealthy individuals. Some of these members of the ruling circle were of aristocratic birth, while others were wealthy members of the middle class. Like monarchs, oligarchs usually had luxurious lives and enforced their rule with military support. Citizens in an oligarchy enjoyed certain protections, although they lacked full political rights, such as voting. Therefore, most citizens of an oligarchy had very little say in how the city-state was run.

Over time, oligarchies began to disappear in Greece for various reasons. In Corinth, for example, the people lived well, but the oligarchy ruled harshly and the citizens eventually overthrew it. In Athens, dissatisfaction with the oligarchy arose as the peasant population increased and food shortages became common. The power of oligarchies was also weakened when powerful and wealthy individuals assembled armies of hired, or *mercenary,* warriors, called *hoplites,* and used them to intimidate political leaders. By the 400s B.C.E., a stable oligarchy ruled only one city-state, Sparta.

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Tyranny



A *tyranny* is a form of government in which the ruling power is in the hands of an individual who has seized control, often by illegal means. The word *tyranny* comes from the Greek word *tyrannos,* which means "usurper with supreme power." Over time, a person who ruled by tyranny, or a *tyrant,* became known for holding onto power by cruel and abusive means.

Tyrannies in Greece first arose during the mid 600s B.C.E. In many city-states, a growing wealthy middle class of merchants and manufacturers became angry with their rulers. This middle class demanded political and social privileges to accompany their new-found wealth, but the ruling oligarchies refused to grant them a say in the government. Various individuals—mostly former military leaders—responded to the demands of the middle class population and promised to make the changes they wanted. Backed by the middle class, these individuals seized power from the ruling groups. Once in power, these leaders—or tyrants—often reformed the laws, aided the poor, canceled debts, and gave citizens other than nobles a say in the government. As a reward, citizens often gave gifts to tyrants, who in turn became quite wealthy.

Many tyrants ruled for short periods of time. In some city-states, tyrants became harsh and greedy, and were simply overthrown by the people. The last important tyrant to rule mainland Greece was Hippias of the city-state of Athens. In 510 B.C.E. a combination of Spartan invaders and Athenians, who were opposed to his harsh rule, forced Hippias to resign and leave Greece. A new form of government—one in which all citizens shared in the decision making—eventually replaced him.

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THE ROMAN REPUBLIC (SPQR)
509 BCE - 27 BCE

Representatives for the People

2 Consuls
(Rulers of Rome)

Senate
(Representative body for *patricians)*
Patricians are Rich Landowners

Assembly
(Representative body for *plebeians*)
Common People of Ancient Rome



The Twelve Tables, 450 BCE

- Providing political and social rights for the plebeians.

