



# The Legacy of Ancient Greece and Rome

## MAIN IDEA

**POWER AND AUTHORITY** The Greeks developed democracy, and the Romans added representative government.

## WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Representation and citizen participation are important features of democratic governments around the world.

## TERMS & NAMES

- government
- monarchy
- aristocracy
- oligarchy
- democracy
- direct democracy
- republic
- senate

**SETTING THE STAGE** Throughout history, people have recognized the need for a system for exercising authority and control in their society. Small bands of people often did not need a formal organization. Councils of elders, for example, worked together to control a group. However, most people in larger groups lived under rulers, such as chieftains, kings, or pharaohs, who often had total power. Over the course of thousands of years, people began to believe that even in large groups they could govern themselves without a powerful ruler.

## CALIFORNIA STANDARDS

**10.1.2** Trace the development of the Western political ideas of the rule of law and illegitimacy of tyranny, using selections from Plato's *Republic* and Aristotle's *Politics*.

**CST 1** Students compare the present with the past, evaluating the consequences of past events and decisions and determining the lessons that were learned.

## Athens Builds a Limited Democracy

About 2000 B.C., the Greeks established cities in the small fertile valleys along Greece's rocky coast. Each city-state had its own **government**, a system for controlling the society.

The Greek city-states adopted many styles of government. In some, a single person called a king or monarch ruled in a government called a **monarchy**. Others adopted an **aristocracy** (AR•uh•STAHK•ruh•see), a government ruled by a small group of noble, land-owning families. Later, as trade expanded, a new class of wealthy merchants emerged in some cities. Sometimes these groups took power or shared it with the nobility. They formed an **oligarchy**, a government ruled by a few powerful people.

Ancient Greek civilization claims the distinction of developing the first democracy in a country. In fact, the word **democracy**, meaning "rule of the people," comes from the Greek words *demos*, meaning "people," and *kratos*, meaning "power."

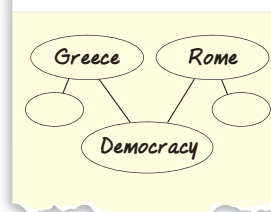
**Building Democracy** Athens was the largest and most powerful city-state to emerge in Greece. In Athens, citizens participated in governmental decision making. Citizens were adult male residents who enjoyed certain rights and responsibilities. Each year, an assembly of citizens elected three nobles to rule the city-state. After a year of service, the nobles became part of a larger council of advisers.

Around 600 B.C., Athens suffered severe economic problems. In order to pay their debts, poor farmers pledged part of their crops to wealthy landowners. They later pledged their land. Then, they sold themselves into slavery and were not able to leave the land. Eventually, a strong leader stepped in to deal with the political and economic crisis.

## TAKING NOTES

### Determining Main Ideas

Use a web diagram to record the contributions of Greece and Rome to democracy.



## > Analyzing Key Concepts

# Government

CALIFORNIA STANDARDS

10.1.1, REP 4

Every society must create ways to regulate the behaviors of its members. Government consists of the people and institutions with the authority to establish and enforce rules for society. The rules are designed to keep order within the society, to promote the behaviors that the society approves of, and to protect the society from outside dangers. The government has the authority to administer punishments if the rules are broken. Different societies have forms of government that may feature different types of leaders, lawmakers, and enforcers, such as police or the military.

### Major Forms of Government

#### Monarchy

- State ruled by a king
- Rule is hereditary
- Some rulers claim divine right



#### Aristocracy

- State ruled by nobility
- Rule is hereditary and based on family ties, social rank, wealth
- Social status and wealth support rulers' authority



#### Oligarchy

- State ruled by a small group of citizens
- Rule is based on wealth or ability
- Ruling group controls military



#### Direct Democracy

- State ruled by its citizens
- Rule is based on citizenship
- Majority rule decides vote



### One Early Democracy: The Igbo People

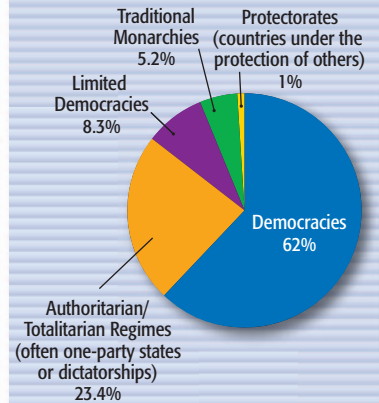
The Igbo (IHG•boh) people—also called Ibo—of southern Nigeria in Africa practiced a form of democracy as early as the ninth century. Igbo village government was made up of a council of elders and a village assembly. In the council, any adult male could take part in discussion, although the elders made the final decisions. In the assembly, everyone—young or old, rich or poor—had the right to speak. This practice encouraged a spirit of equality among the Igbo.

#### INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY

**RESEARCH LINKS** For more on forms of government, go to [classzone.com](http://classzone.com)

## > DATA FILE

### CURRENT WORLD GOVERNMENTS



### Democracy Facts

- Theoretically, 40,000 people could attend the Greek Assembly. In practice, about 6,000 people attended.
- In 1215, King John of England granted the Magna Carta, which largely influenced subsequent democratic thought.
- In the 1970s, there were 40 democratic governments worldwide.
- In 2002, over 120 established and emerging democracies met to discuss their common issues.

Source: adapted from *Democracy's Century*, Freedom House online (2003)

## Connect to Today

- 1. Categorizing** In which forms of government is rule based on wealth or property ownership?  
 See Skillbuilder Handbook, page R9.
- 2. Hypothesizing** How might the mass media in modern life help make democracy an achievable form of government?

## History Makers



**Solon**  
630?–560? B.C.

Solon is known as one of the Seven Wise Men of Greece. Solon began a series of political reforms that greatly increased citizen participation in Athenian government. He said that he “stood with a strong shield before both parties [the common people and the powerful] and allowed neither to win an unfair victory.” His reforms, unfortunately, did not please either the wealthy or the poor.

Solon left Athens for ten years to travel. He spent that period warning people wherever he traveled against rulers who would not uphold his reforms.

### INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY

**RESEARCH LINKS** For more on Solon, go to [classzone.com](http://classzone.com)

**Reforms of Solon** In 594 B.C., Solon (SO•luhn), a respected statesman, passed a law outlawing slavery based on debt and canceled the farmers’ debts. This simple act enabled Athens to avoid revolution or civil war.

Solon continued his policies of political reform. He established four classes of citizenship based on wealth rather than heredity. Only citizens of the three higher classes were able to hold public office. Yet, even the lowest class of citizens could vote in the assembly. All free adult males were citizens. Solon also created a new Council of Four Hundred. This body prepared business for the already existing council. Solon also introduced the legal concept that any citizen could bring charges against wrongdoers.

Although these acts increased participation in government, Athens was still limited as a democracy. Only citizens could participate in government, and only about one-tenth of the population were citizens at the time. Athenian law denied citizenship to women, slaves, and foreign residents. Slaves formed about one-third of the Athenian population.

**Cleisthenes Enacts More Reforms** Beginning in 508 B.C., the Athenian leader Cleisthenes (KLYS•thuh•neeZ) introduced further reforms. Because of his reforms, Cleisthenes is generally regarded as the founder of democracy in Athens. He worked to make Athens a full democracy by reorganizing the assembly to balance the power of the rich and poor. He also increased the power of the assembly by allowing all citizens to submit laws for debate and passage. Cleisthenes then created the Council of Five Hundred.

The Council proposed laws and counseled the assembly. Council members were chosen at random from among the citizens. These reforms allowed Athenian citizens to participate in a limited democracy. However, still only one-fifth of Athenian residents were actual citizens. **A**

### MAIN IDEA

#### Summarizing

**A** Why is Cleisthenes generally considered the founder of Athenian democracy?

## Greek Democracy Changes

From 490 to 479 B.C., the Greeks fought Persian invaders who were attempting to conquer Greece. The Greek city-states fought side by side as allies and defeated the Persian forces.

The Athenians maintained democracy during the Persian Wars by holding public debates about how to defend their city. After Persia’s defeat, Athens continued to develop democracy. A wise and able statesman named Pericles led Athens for 32 years, from 461 to 429 B.C.

**Pericles Strengthens Democracy** Pericles strengthened Greek democracy by increasing the number of paid public officials and by paying jurors. This enabled poorer citizens to participate in the government. Through greater citizen participation, Athens evolved into a **direct democracy**. This is a form of government in which citizens rule and make laws directly rather than through representatives. In Athens, more citizens were actively involved in government than in any other city-state. In a speech, Pericles expressed his great pride in Athenian democracy when

he said, “Our constitution is called a democracy because power is in the hands not of a minority but of the whole people.”

Democracy ended in Greece after a war between the two strongest city-states, Athens and Sparta. Macedonia, a nearby state, invaded Greece and defeated the weakened city-states.

**Greek Philosophers Use Reason** During the fourth century B.C. in Athens, several great thinkers appeared. They used logic and reason to investigate the nature of the universe, human society, and morality. These Greek thinkers based their philosophy on the following assumptions: (1) The universe (land, sky, and sea) is put together in an orderly way and is subject to absolute and unchanging laws; and (2) people can understand these laws through logic and reason. The Greeks’ respect for human intelligence and the power of reason had allowed the ideas of democracy to flourish.

The first of these great philosophers was Socrates (SAHK•ruh•TEEZ). He encouraged his students to examine their most closely held beliefs. He used a question-and-answer approach that became known as the Socratic method. Socrates’ greatest pupil was Plato (PLAY•toh). In his famous work *The Republic*, Plato set forth his vision of a perfectly governed society. He wanted society governed not by the richest and most powerful but by the wisest, whom he called philosopher-kings.

**PRIMARY SOURCE** **B**

Until philosophers are kings, or the kings and princes of this world have the spirit and power of philosophy, and political greatness and wisdom meet in one, and those commoner natures who pursue either to the exclusion of the other are compelled to stand aside, cities will never have rest from their evils, no, nor the human race.

PLATO, *The Republic*

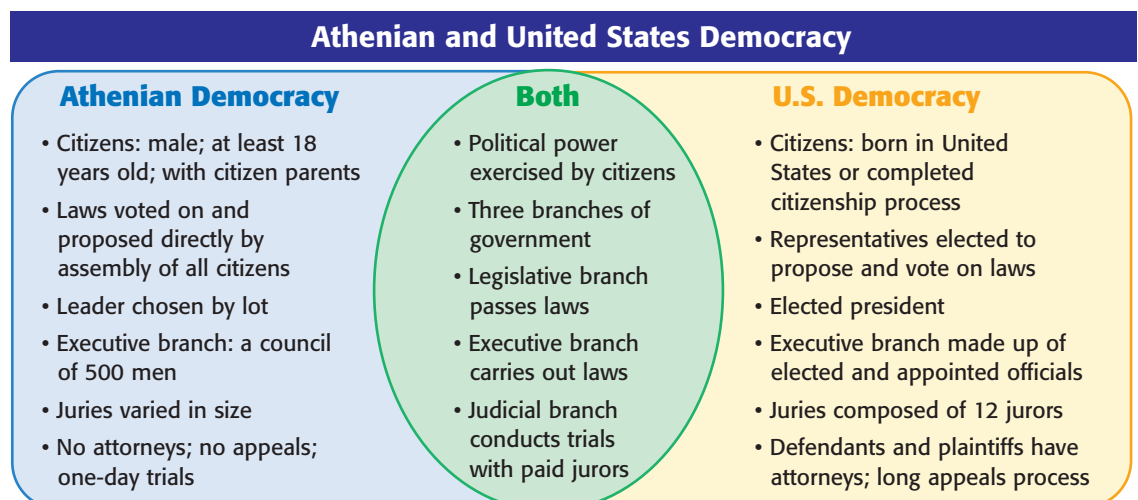
**MAIN IDEA**

**Analyzing Primary Sources**

**B** What does Plato believe needs to happen to bring peace and harmony to cities and to the human race?

Plato’s student Aristotle (AR•ih•STAHT•uhl) examined the nature of the world and of human belief, thought, and knowledge. In *Politics*, he wrote, “Man is by nature a political animal; it is his nature to live in a state.”

**Legacy of Greece** Greece set lasting standards in government and philosophy. The Greeks used reason and intelligence to discover patterns and explanations of the world that they called natural laws. The Greeks did not wish to be subject to authoritarian rulers. So they developed direct democracy in order that citizens could actively participate in political decisions. They also were the first to develop three branches of government—a legislative branch to pass laws, an executive branch to carry out the laws, and a judicial branch to settle disputes about the laws. (The chart below compares democracy in ancient Athens and in the United States.)



## Juries in Athens

Jury duty was one of the most important civic functions of a citizen of Athens. Juries ranged in size from at least 201 to as many as 2,500 men. (Athenian women were not allowed to serve as jurors.) The jurors would hear both sides of a legal case. Then they would render their verdict by casting bronze ballots in a large ballot box.



### ▲ Selecting a Jury

Each potential juror was given a bronze ticket inscribed with his name. After the tickets had been placed in a basket, jurors were randomly selected.



#### CALIFORNIA STANDARDS

**10.1.1** Analyze the similarities and differences in Judeo-Christian and Greco-Roman views of law, reason and faith, and duties of the individual.

**CST 1** Students compare the present with the past, evaluating the consequences of past events and decisions and determining the lessons that were learned.

### ◀ Making a Decision

These round disks are ballots. A hollow ballot was cast for a guilty vote, while a solid ballot indicated a vote in favor of the defendant. (The detail from a Greek drinking cup pictured above shows ballots being cast in a ballot box.)



solid ballot



hollow ballot

### ▶ Deciding on a Punishment

Citizens could vote to ostracize, or banish, a leader from Athens for ten years to prevent a person from gaining too much power. The person's name was inscribed on a pottery fragment called an ostrakon. This one bears the name of Pericles.



ballot box

#### SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Visual Sources

- 1. Comparing and Contrasting** In what ways are the jury practices of Athens similar to those of the United States? How are they different?
- 2. Forming and Supporting Opinions** What advantages or disadvantages do you see in the number of jurors on an Athenian jury?

## Rome Develops a Republic

While Greece was in decline, a new civilization to the west was developing. From about 1000 to 500 B.C., the earliest Romans—the Latins—battled with Greeks and Etruscans for control of the Italian peninsula. The Romans were the victors.

**From Kingdom to Republic** Beginning about 600 B.C., a series of kings ruled Rome. Then, in 509 B.C., a group of Roman aristocrats overthrew a harsh king. They set up a new government, calling it a **republic**. A republic is a form of government in which power rests with citizens who have the right to elect the leaders who make governmental decisions. It is an indirect democracy, in contrast to the direct democracy in which all citizens participate directly in the government. In Rome, as in Greece, citizenship with voting rights was granted only to free-born males. **C**

In the early republic, two groups struggled for power. The patricians were aristocratic landowners who held most of the power. The plebeians were common farmers, artisans, and merchants. The patricians inherited their power and social status. They claimed that their ancestry gave them the authority to make laws for Rome and

its people. The plebeians were citizens of Rome with the right to vote. But they were barred by law from holding most important government positions. In time, plebeian pressure on the patricians gained them political power.

**Twelve Tables** An important victory for the plebeians was forcing creation of a written law code. With laws unwritten, patrician officials often interpreted the law to suit themselves. In 451 B.C., a group of ten officials began writing down Rome's laws. They had the laws carved on 12 tables, or tablets, and publicly displayed. The Twelve Tables established the idea that all free citizens had the right to protection of the law and that laws would be fairly administered.

**Republican Government** Like the Athenians, the Romans had established a government with separate branches. Two officials called consuls commanded the army and directed the government. Their term of office was only one year. The legislative branch was made up of a **senate** and two assemblies. Patricians made up the senate. It controlled foreign and financial policies and advised the consuls. The two assemblies included other classes of citizens. In times of crisis, the republic also provided for a dictator, a leader who had absolute power to make laws and command the army. The dictator was limited to a six-month term.

For hundreds of years after the founding of the republic, Rome expanded its territories through conquest and trade. But expansion created problems. For decades, Rome alternated between the chaos of civil war and the authoritarian rule of a series of dictators. Eventually, the republic collapsed. In 27 B.C., Rome came under the rule of an emperor.

## Roman Law

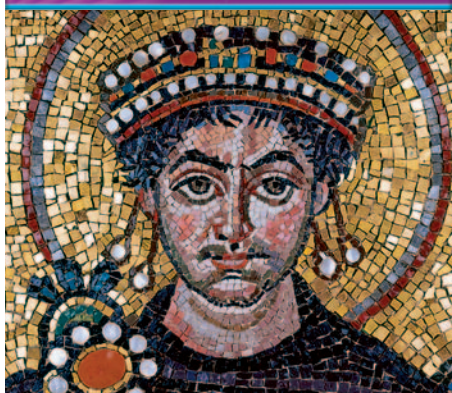
Rome had become a great power not only by conquering other lands but also by bringing the conquered peoples into its system. The Romans tried to create a system of laws that could be applied throughout the Roman Empire. Like the

### MAIN IDEA

#### Contrasting

**C** How does an indirect democracy differ from a direct democracy?

### History Makers



#### Justinian 482–565

Justinian believed that “imperial majesty should not only be adorned with military might but also graced with laws, so that in times of peace and war alike the state may be governed aright.”

To regulate the Byzantine Empire, Justinian set up a panel of legal experts to comb through hundreds of years of Roman law and opinion. The panel's task was to create a single, uniform legal code for Justinian's “New Rome.”

The Justinian Code has had a profound impact on the law of most Western countries.

### INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY

**INTERNET ACTIVITY** Create a table comparing some of Justinian's laws with similar ones in the United States. Go to [classzone.com](http://classzone.com) for your research.

Greeks, they believed that laws should be based on principles of reason and justice and should protect citizens and their property. This idea applied to all people regardless of their nationality. It had a great influence on the development of democracy throughout the Western world.

Some important principles of Roman law were

- All citizens had the right to equal treatment under the law.
- A person was considered innocent until proven guilty.
- The burden of proof rested with the accuser rather than the accused.
- Any law that seemed unreasonable or grossly unfair could be set aside.

**A Written Legal Code** Another major characteristic of Roman government was its regard for written law as exemplified by the creation of the Twelve Tables in 451 B.C. Nearly 1,000 years later, in A.D. 528, Emperor Justinian ordered the compilation of all Roman laws since the earlier code. After its completion, this new code consisted of four works. *The Code* contained nearly 5,000 Roman laws. *The Digest* was a summary of legal opinions. *The Institutes* served as a textbook for law students. *The Novellae* contained laws passed after 534. The Code of Justinian later became a guide on legal matters throughout Western Europe. Written laws helped establish the idea of “a government of laws, not of men,” in which even rulers and other powerful persons could be held accountable for their actions.

**Legacy of Rome** Rome gave the world the idea of a republic. Rome also adopted from the Greeks the notion that an individual is a citizen in a state rather than the subject of a ruler. Perhaps Rome’s greatest and most lasting legacy was its written legal code and the idea that this code should be applied equally and impartially to all citizens. Rome preserved and added to Greece’s idea of democracy and passed on the early democratic tradition to civilizations that followed. **D**

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▲ A coin from 137 B.C. shows a Roman citizen taking part in the democratic process by voting.

**MAIN IDEA**

**Recognizing Effects**

**D** How did Rome influence the development of democracy in the Western world?

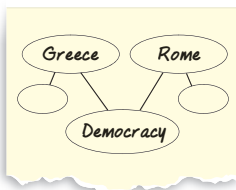
**SECTION 1 ASSESSMENT**

**TERMS & NAMES 1.** For each term or name, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- government • monarchy • aristocracy • oligarchy • democracy • direct democracy • republic • senate

**USING YOUR NOTES**

2. Which contribution, shown on your web diagram, do you think had the greatest impact on the modern world? (CST 1)



**MAIN IDEAS**

3. How does an aristocracy differ from an oligarchy? (10.1.2)
4. What steps did Cleisthenes take to strengthen democracy in Athens? (10.1.2)
5. What are the four basic principles of Roman law? (10.1.2)

**CRITICAL THINKING & WRITING**

6. **DRAWING CONCLUSIONS** How do the steps taken by leaders of Athens reflect a turn toward democracy? (10.1.2)
7. **FORMING AND SUPPORTING OPINIONS** Was Athenian democracy under Pericles truly a democracy? Explain. (10.1.2)
8. **SYNTHESIZING** Which characteristic of the government under the Roman Republic had the greatest impact on the democratic tradition? (CST 1)
9. **WRITING ACTIVITY** **POWER AND AUTHORITY** Write a **dialogue** between a Roman citizen and a Greek citizen each arguing that their style of democracy is a better form of government. (Writing 2.4.a)

**CONNECT TO TODAY CREATING AN ORAL REPORT**

New England town meetings are similar to the kind of democracy practiced in Ancient Greece. Research New England town meetings and prepare an **oral report** on your findings. (Writing 2.3.b)