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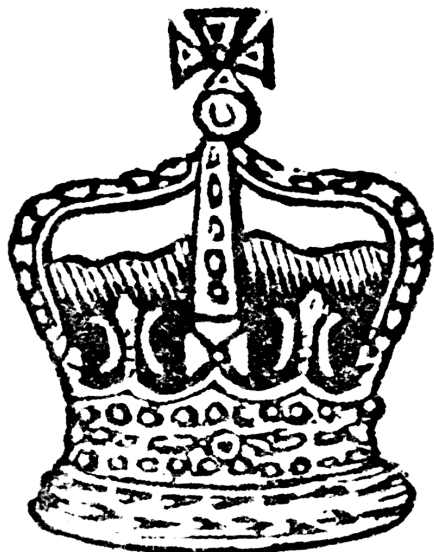
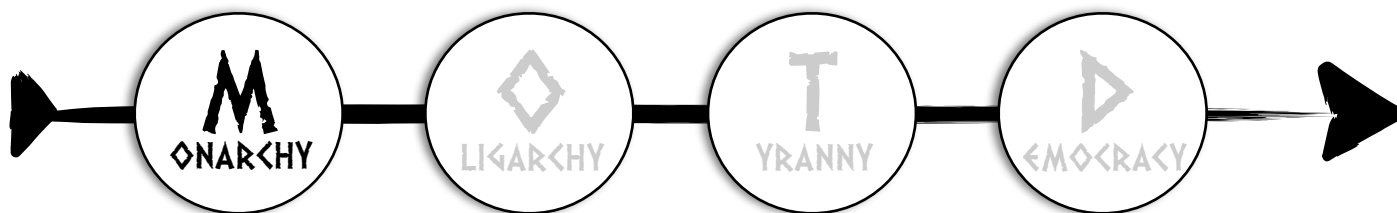
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THE FOUR GOVERNMENTS OF ANCIENT GREECE



In a **monarchy**, the power to rule rests in the hands of a single person, historically either a king or a queen. The word *monarch* comes directly from two Greek words “monos” and “archon.” In English, “monos” is translated to mean “one” while “archon” means “to rule.” Literally, monarchy translates to mean “*one to rule.*”

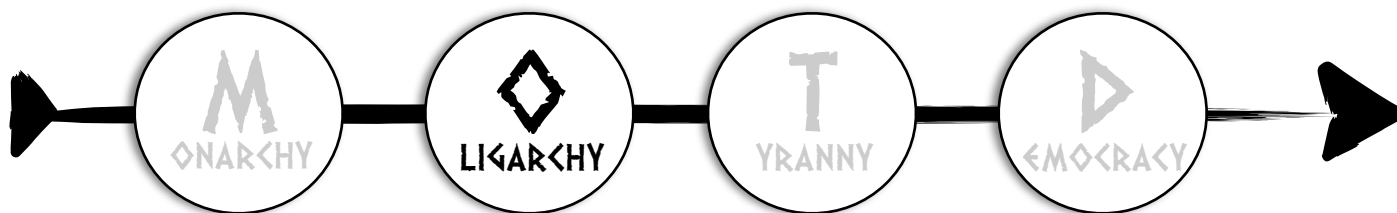
A monarchy is distinguishable from many other forms of government because of how power is transferred upon the death of the king. When the king dies, the power to rule falls to the oldest son. If no son exists, typically a close relative or cousin will inherit the throne. If the son is too young to rule, it was common for a council to advise him until he reached a certain age.

One of the first known groups to rule over ancient Greece were the Mycenaeans. This group inhabited the island of Crete and most of mainland Greece. The Mycenaeans were also the first to implement this form of government throughout their territory. Other than a king that was seen almost like a god, the Mycenaeans had a powerful warrior class known as the aristocracy that eventually began to challenge the king's authority.

While monarchies are an example of the earliest form of Greek government, this type of government soon became very rare. The Mycenaean government was seemingly always under attack. Kings had to frequently worry about wars in their territories as tribes fought routinely over land. Since Greece is very mountainous and good farmland is rare, it is believed that kings were constantly at war. Soon, the powerful warrior class realized that they had more power than the king. They were doing all the fighting -- and soon they began to ignore their king's orders. It was not long before these aristocrats gained the support of the people, and a new style of government replaced the “one-rule” system.

Today, some countries like Great Britain have what is called a “Constitutional Monarchy.” The power of the King or Queen is limited by a written constitution, which puts a group of elected officials in charge. In Britain, this is called Parliament and their leader, the Prime Minister, hold the majority of power.

THE FOUR GOVERNMENTS OF ANCIENT GREECE



In an **oligarchy**, the power to rule rests in the hands of a small group of leaders. Typically, an oligarchy will have just a few people, but all will share power evenly. The word *oligarchy* shares the same suffix as the previous form of government (“archon”), but its prefix comes directly from the Greek word “oligos.” In English, “oligos” is translated to mean “few.” Literally, oligarchy translates to mean “*few to rule.*”

The oligarchy was a very common form of government in ancient Greece. This form of government was centered around the rule of the noble families who seized power when the monarchy crumbled. Sometimes, it was not necessarily the noble families but the strong warrior class who controlled the oligarchy. In a true oligarchy, power would be shared evenly among three or four very powerful families. When the father of an elite family died, he would be replaced by his

eldest son, just as in a monarchy. This was not always the case, however. Many Greek city-states

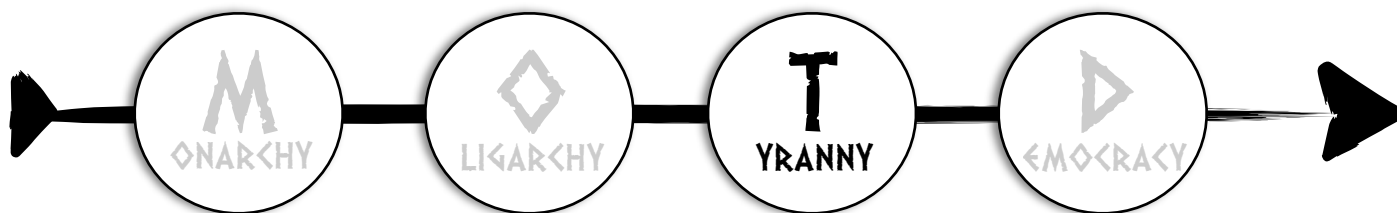
established practices where the oligarchs would be elected by a small group of eligible voters.

Perhaps the best known city-state that practiced an oligarchy was Sparta. Sparta had two kings who ruled over its territory. Two other city-states that practiced an oligarchy were Corinth and Thebes. Even Athens, known for its democracy, established an oligarchy during and after the Peloponnesian War.

In some parts of Greece, however, oligarchies began to decline for many of the same reasons that monarchies had. The people of Greece grew tired of seeing the oligarchs live luxurious lives while they lived in poverty. Too, in many cases the oligarchs ruled harshly over the people - so harsh that the people eventually fought back. Eventually, the people started to follow individual leaders who had their own military experience. These leaders had knowledge of how to organize people and orchestrate small armies. Soon, this new form of government would replace the “few rule” system.

Today, Russia serves as a good example of a modern day oligarchy. While Vladimir Putin is often viewed as the leader of Russia, he actually is part of an oligarchy where the leader of the state oil company (Igor Sechin) and a major investment broker (Roman Abramovich) have incredible power and influence in the decisions that are made.

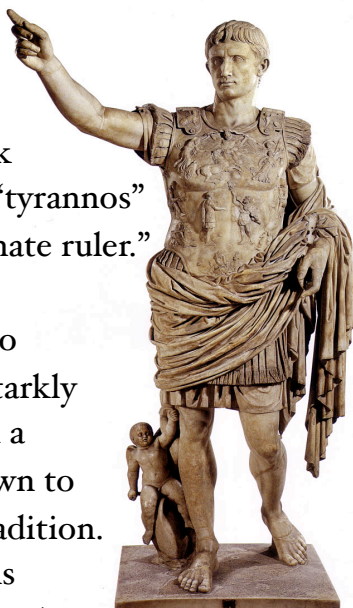
THE FOUR GOVERNMENTS OF ANCIENT GREECE



In a **tyranny**, the power to rule rests in the hands of a single person who controls almost everything. The word *tyranny* comes directly from the Greek word “tyrannos.” In English, “tyrannos” is translated to mean “illegitimate ruler.”

It is very important, though, to understand that a tyranny is starkly different from a monarchy. In a monarchy, power is passed down to the oldest son in a peaceful tradition. A tyrant is a ruler who controls almost everything, but has seized power illegally, often by killing the king or oligarchs. In order to seize power in such a way, tyrants almost always had prior experience as military leaders. Often generals or other high-ranking officials, tyrants understood how to inspire men in battle and how to strategically move personnel to secure victories.

In ancient Greece, tyrants often ruled alone and always took power in an unconstitutional manner. This is precisely why they have taken on a name that means their rule is illegal. However, just because their rule was illegal does not mean they were not loved by the people. Tyrants desperately needed the support of the people in order to



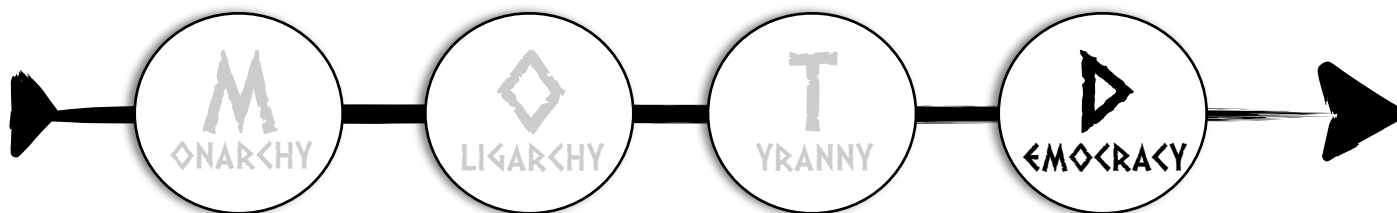
overthrow the king or oligarchs. In order to gain and keep their approval, tyrants would often lavish the people with food, luxury items, money, and even forgive their debts.

Over time, though, tyrants often developed bad reputations as they began to abuse their power. In the Greek city-state of Syracuse, Dionysios is often remembered as one of the most corrupt tyrants in history. Seizing power in 405 BCE, Dionysios was a very oppressive ruler, never hesitating to murder those around him whom he believed had an eye on the throne.

Soon, the people of Greece grew tired of the instability the tyrannic form of government offered. People lived their lives in fear instead of in peace. Eventually, the people turned to themselves in order to achieve a fair and system system of government. In 594 BCE, a noble lawmaker named Solon helped orchestrate the first system that put the people in charge of their own government.

Did you know that when the United States broke away from Great Britain in 1776, the author of the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson, was so furious with King George that he called the king a tyrant? Needless to say, King George was furious!

THE FOUR GOVERNMENTS OF ANCIENT GREECE



In a **democracy**, the power to rule rests in the hands of all the citizens. To say that *all* people have a say in a democracy is inaccurate - only those who are considered to be “citizens” are given the right to vote. Regardless, the word *democracy* comes from two Greek words: a noun, *demos*, which means “people” and a verb, *kratia*, which means “to rule.” Literally, democracy translates to mean “*people rule*.”



In the Assembly, all male citizens over eighteen years of age were permitted to debate laws and discuss foreign policy decisions. The Assembly passed the laws. In the Council of 500, citizens were chosen by lottery, and they debated laws before they reached a vote in the Assembly.

It is very important to note that a democracy does not mean that all people are allowed to vote. This is an often misconception. A democracy means that *citizens* are given the right to vote, and a country (or city-state) has the power to determine who qualifies to be a citizen. For example, in Athens, the vast majority of people were restricted from voting. Only adult males who had completed their military training had the right to vote.

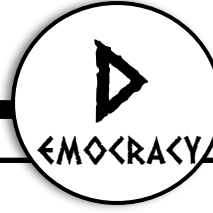
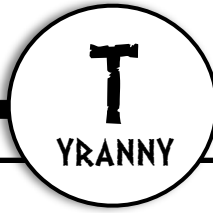
Still, the Athenian version of democracy opened government to many more people than any other form of government. In 594 BCE, an Athenian lawmaker named Solon laid the foundations for the Athenian democracy.

However, the Athenian democracy was not perfect. Only about one-fourth of those living in Athens could vote. Since all male citizens could attend the Assembly, meetings were often loud and unproductive. In some cases, riots even broke out at the Assembly. Athens was so afraid of a tyrant seizing power they took excessive safeguards against it; if there was an overly determined politician, the citizens could elect to have him sent into exile for ten years!

While democracy still exists today, this does not mean it was always perfect for Athens. In fact, during and after the Peloponnesian War the city-state reverted to an oligarchy. The oligarchy was short-lived, however, before it returned to its democracy

Today, there are 192 countries in the world and 123 of them have a democracy. This means that over-third of the world still lives under some form of authoritative ruler!

Directions: Complete this chart as you learn about each of the four governments of ancient Greece! Be sure to be thorough, detailed, and specific!



HOW DOES THE WORD ORIGINATE?

HOW IS THIS GOVERNMENT PRACTICED?

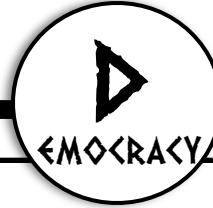
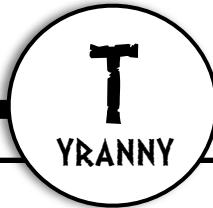
WHAT IS KNOWN ABOUT THIS GOVERNMENT IN GREECE?

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT IT TODAY?

DRAW A SYMBOL TO SHOW THIS GOVERNMENT!

	MONARCHY	OLIGARCHY	TYRANNY	DEMOCRACY
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democracy comes from two Greek words: a noun, demos, which means “people” and a verb, kratia, which means “to rule.” Literally, democracy translates to mean “people rule.”

HOW IS THIS GOVERNMENT PRACTICED?

one ruler who passes the right to rule to the eldest son. If no son, a close relative may take over.

a few rulers share power over government control; sometimes ruled by warrior family; Power usually passed to oldest son but sometimes elected

a tyrant gains the support of the people to overthrow government; oldest son does not take over, but another tyrant usually replaces him.

citizens participate in government, debate, and discuss key issues; citizens vote on issues or elect representatives to vote for them.

WHAT IS KNOWN ABOUT THIS GOVERNMENT IN GREECE?

the earliest Greeks had monarchies (Minoans and Mycenaean) but their constant warfare led to warrior class demanding more of a say and seized control.

Sparta had an oligarchy that focused around two kings; eventually oligarchs abused their power and the people revolted.

Tyrants used their military leadership to gain support of the people; tyrants often bribed people for their support (gave money, gifts, land). Some were very corrupt, like Dionysios, who killed anyone who he thought was eyeing his throne.

Solon instituted the first democracy in Greece and it was Athens main form of government. Only 1/4 of people could vote, however. They were so fearful of having a tyrant, any overly-ambitious politician could be sent away for 10 years.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT IT TODAY?

Most monarchs today are actually Constitutional Monarchies, where the king/queens power is limited by a written constitution and power is held by elected officials.

Russia has an oligarchy, where political leadership and financial wealth call the shots.

The term tyrant is used to describe an unfair or not well liked ruler, such as the colonists called King George III.

Today, 123 of the 192 world countries have a democracy.

DRAW A SYMBOL TO SHOW THIS GOVERNMENT!