

Four Types 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
- Monarchy comes from *monos* meaning “single” and *arkhein* meaning “rule”
- Rule of Monarchs began in 1100 BCEs and lasted until 1200 BCEs with the Mycenaeans



Oligarchy

- An oligarchy is a form of government in which the ruling power is in the hands of a few leaders
- Oligarchy comes from the Greek *oligos* meaning “few” and *arkhein* meaning “rule”
- Lasted from 1100 BCE to 800 BCE
- Began to disappear from Greece when the ruling aristocrats were overthrown or dissatisfaction amongst general population
- Only city-state to keep an Oligarchy was Sparta



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
- Tyranny comes from Greek word *tyrannos* meaning “usurper with supreme power”
- A person ruling in a tyranny is known as a tyrant
- Developed in 600BCEs in Greece
- Last important tyrant was Hippias of Athens, the people of Athens forced him to resign due to his harsh rule, and replaced it with government ruled by the people



Democracy

- A democracy is a form of government in which the ruling power is in the hands of the people
- The word democracy comes from the Greek word *demos* meaning “people” and *kratos* meaning “power”
- Democracy started in Greece around 500 BCE in the city-state of Athens
- Only free males could be citizens
- The Citizens Assembly and Council of 500 were the main governing bodies