



Ancient Government


CULTURE TALK



Ancient Government



- The Ancient and Classical Period covers the foundations and development of government through the Mesopotamian empire to the Roman empire.
- Nomadic lifestyle was the foundation of many civilizations before agriculture and domestication was introduced. Chieftains and tribes were the political units that developed during this period of time.

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- Monarchy was one of the first forms of government that developed, and Mesopotamia was the first civilization to incorporate it.
 - Sumer, which was one of the civilizations in Mesopotamia consisted of 12 city states.
 - Citizens originally held political power, but with ongoing rivalries, each adopted a kingship , resulting in eight kings that ruled.
 - However, under Sargon's rule, states united, but eventually separated after an invasion of barbarians.
 - The Dynasty of Ur (city state) published earliest Law Code, which simply stated crime and punishment that would be administered by state

Mesopotamia



Ancient Egypt

- Religion also played a key role shaping the government.
 - In ancient Egypt, religion played a key role in shaping government.
- The Pharaohs were to honor the Gods and were viewed as a God since Pharaohs were viewed as the leaders chosen by God.



FOUNDATION OF DEMOCRACY

Some of the provisions that developed in ancient Greece were males over 18 years old (10-20%*) able to participate in politics. They would meet in the City Center to speak and vote on various matters (food supply, military) in Athens

POWER OF MONARCHY

Monarchy was also present in ancient Greece, but in certain states. Sparta had a two king system, in peacetime they were kept in check by ephors (elected from assembly). The king held most power in times of war and could be put on trial and exiled.

Ancient Greece

Other forms of government

TYRANNY

Tyranny also developed in ancient Greece with leaders going over the law and leaders exercising their power. Peisistratos (Athens 560 BCE) was a “benevolent tyrant who actually paved the way for democracy. Tyranny was also seen in Pheidon in Argos, Syracuse in Sicily, also on Corinth.

OLIGARCHY

Oligarchy, which means rule by a few, was also present in ancient Greece. It most often occurred in City-states, and was a result of democracy that went wrong.

The Foundation of the Roman Republic

The Romans took some of the democratic principles of government that the Greeks developed. The entire empire consisted of city-states with a king and Senate for the entire empire. It developed checks and balances with each of the different institutions checking on power so that no one branch of government gets too powerful.

Representation of the People

Assemblies were also present in the Roman empire for laws to pass with the consent of the people. These forums served to represent the Roman citizens and their views.

