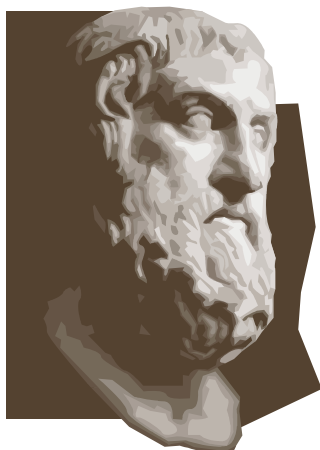


## Democracy in Ancient Greece

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- ◆ **Prior to the 8th century BCE:** Most Greek city-states were monarchies.
- ◆ **800 BCE:** Sparta develops the first code of Greek written law to govern its military city-state.
- ◆ **From the 8th century BCE to 650 BCE:** Most Greek city-states become oligarchies ruled by the wealthy wine and olive oil merchants and landowners. In this period, many farmers in Greece become impoverished and are sold into slavery.
- ◆ **650 BCE:** Tyrants rule some Greek city-states as a result of the poorer classes' discontent with the ruling class. (In a tyranny, the power of the ruler is not limited by the people or by the law.)
- ◆ **621 BCE:** Athens develops a written code of laws.
- ◆ **584 to 559 BCE:** Solon becomes sole ruler in Athens and makes reforms to government. The poorer classes are included in making government decisions through an elected council, and many people are freed from slavery due to debts.
- ◆ **505 BCE:** Cleisthenes establishes the first democratic constitution (a set of laws to define and limit the government's power). Free speech and political involvement is extended to all Greek citizens.
- ◆ **460 to 429 BCE:** Pericles leads the Athenian government. A Council of 500 is chosen by lottery from among all male citizens over the age of 30: they serve as the decision makers for a term of one year, to a maximum of two terms. The assembly of all Greek citizens (adult males of Greek descent from both parents) meet 40 times a year to approve or reject the decisions of the Assembly of 500.



- ◆ **431 to 404 BCE:** The Greek city-states are weakened through competition with one another and heavy taxes during the Peloponnesian Wars.
- ◆ **335 BCE:** Alexander the Great, King of Macedonia, defeats Athens, Thebes, and the Greek city-states, and extends his power throughout the Persian Empire and into India. He spreads Greek or "Hellenistic" culture throughout the region, but most of the Greek city-states return to oligarchy or monarchy.