Greek Government Styles: Critical Analysis
Why would Ancient Greece have multiple types of governments?
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there were many different city states ancient Greece · each had their own government · people’s ideas about what made a good government changed over time.
What type of government styles existed in Ancient Greece?

What order did they occur?
What type of government styles existed in Ancient Greece? What order did they occur?

1. Monarchy  (Mycenaean Period)
2. Oligarchy  (Archaic Period)
3. Tyrannical (Archaic Period)
4. Democratic (Classical Greece)

* it is important to remember that some city states only had one style of government, while others had multiple
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government Style</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monarchy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oligarchy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrannical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Style</td>
<td>Characteristics</td>
<td>Criticisms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Monarchy         | - rule by kings or queens  
                   | - rule by birthright     |            |
CRITICAL EXAMINATION: OLIGARCHY

DEFINITION
-Oligarchy means the rule of the few, and those few are generally the people who are richer and more powerful than the others, what you might call the aristocrats or the nobles
-most cities were ruled by aristocrats during Archaic Period in Ancient Greece (ie. Sparta)

CASE STUDY: SPARTA
- The state is governed by a well balanced combination of two kings, five ephors, a council of elders and an assembly of all
- Each king / crown is hereditary
- Spartan armies are nearly always led into battle by one of the kings.
- The Spartan kings, even when in agreement, do not wield absolute power
- Politically the leadership of Sparta is attractive to the aristocratic families who still control most Greek city-states.
- The chief threat to their interests is from tyrants, seizing power on behalf of a newly enriched class.
- Sparta, ruled by an aristocracy within a constitutional framework, is unusually secure against any such upheaval.
- There is no risk of a new commercial class developing, for there is no commerce (even coins are banned)
- So Sparta becomes associated with a policy of opposing tyrants - even deposing them

WHAT WOULD BE THE MAJOR CRITICISMS OR WEAKNESSES OF OLIGARCHY?
CRITICAL EXAMINATION: TYRANNY

DEFINITION
-rule by one person who came to power in some method outside of the law, by force or by charm
-stemmed from notion that aristocrats wanted more power and believed that power would come from gaining the support of the poor
-aristocrats that were able to gain more power than his friends could be put in charge of the city- but would then be called a tyrant

CASE STUDY: CORINTH
- the earliest tyrants were in Corinth. Soon other aristocrats in other Greek cities (and in West Asia) copied this idea
-by 550 BCE many cities were still ruled by aristocrats, especially the ones where Dorians lived, but many others were ruled by tyrants, especially the ones where Ionians lived, like Athens.
-Other aristocrats hated the tyrants, but a lot of poor people loved them.
-Most of the tyrants did a good job
- They protected the poor people from the rich aristocrats, they built a lot of new buildings, and they helped people to trade with West Asia and the other nearby places

WHAT WOULD BE THE MAJOR CRITICISMS OR WEAKNESSES OF TYRANNY?
CRITICAL EXAMINATION: DEMOCRACY

DEFINITION
-rule by the people; demo "people"; cracy "rule"
-in the Athenian democracy, ordinary men could make all the most important decisions but they had to be male, free born citizens (slaves, foreigners, women and children had no vote)

CASE STUDY: ATHENS
1) ASSEMBLY: once a month, male citizens would attend meetings of the Assembly (Ekklesia ek-LAYZ-ee-ah) on a hill in Athens called the Pnyx. There had to be 6000 men at a meeting of the before they could decide anything.
2) COUNCIL OF 500 (Boule -boo-LAY): Athenians also chose five hundred men every year through a lottery to meet more often and decide things that weren't as important. The Boule suggested new laws to the Assembly, made sure the laws were being enforced, and took care of things like street repair, fixing public buildings and temples, and building ships for the Athenian navy.
3) ARCONS: nine elected officials called archons (AR-kons). Arcons mostly took care of religious things like organizing public sacrifices.
4) STATEGOI (STRAT-eh-goy) There were also ten strategoi (generals), who were elected by the Assembly. At first they just commanded the Athenian army and navy, but later these officials were running the government like Pericles, Themistocles and Alcibiades
5) JUSTICE SYSTEM: made up of judges and the courts. Men (women couldn't serve) volunteered to be on juries. They needed six thousand volunteers every year. Then for each day, they picked about five hundred men to be on that day's jury and hear cases. The jury decided cases by a simple majority - whichever side got more votes won. You could not appeal. If the jury convicted you, then they would hold another vote to decide on a sentence, as in the trial of Socrates. Athenian juries not only decided criminal and property cases, but also decided whether laws passed by the Assembly were legal or not.
6) OSTRACISM: reverse election to decide which leading politician should be exiled for 10 years; at least 6000 citizens had to vote for ostracism to be valid. The function of ostracism was to abort serious civil unrest or civil war; eventually by the end of the 5th century it was replaced by a jury system

WHAT WOULD BE THE MAJOR CRITICISMS OR WEAKNESSES OF DEMOCRACY?