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Activity #2

Greece and Rome implemented similar but different ways of law and government control.

Classical Greece started after the Dark Age around 800 B.C.E. and played an important role in Greek history. With the institution of the Polis (city-state), many Greek cities started to appear, each with their own culture and political economy but still retained a sense of Greek identity. Athens and Sparta were the most influential of these Poleis because they had totally different ways of ruling. “Athens was the center of Greek educational, artistic, and scientific activity as well as the birthplace of political democracy. Sparta was a militaristic, authoritarian society that held the arts and intellectual life in contempt and dreaded the extension of freedom to the individual or the community” (Adler & Pouwels 2018 98). Athens was an urban commercial polis while Sparta was a rural agrarian polis. An increase in politics (more complex) and a decrease in agriculture (less complex) means an increase in sociopolitical complexity. Cleisthenes, the father of Athenian democracy, became the ruler in 508 B.C.E. and gave his tyrannical powers away to the political bodies of Ekklesia (town meeting), Boule (council), and Deme (political subdivision). This is important as most of the Poleis were monarchies, oligarchies, or aristocracies. Athens at this time also used the idea of Ostracism that casted citizens who did not agree with the will of the neighbors out of society for a set time which effectively wiped the fringe citizens who wanted sole power. Direct democracy does not exist in many places today because the number of citizens in countries is too large. However, the idea of democracy is ubiquitous and cannot be ignored in today's age.

Rome evolved similarly because of a democratic society. However, it was a republic comprised of patricians (upper class), plebeians (common people), consuls (chief executives), and censors (surveillance officials) who were elected to represent others. “In that year, a rebellion ousted the last king, and the city became a res publica—a state without a monarch, ruled by a combination of the Senate and the citizens of Rome” (Adler & Pouwels 2018 119). Greece's direct democracy in comparison to Rome's republic was less developed. While Rome had ideas such as elections, veto power, and supervision of each other branch Greece simply did not have most of these. Republic is what is more common in today's age because of the vast population of countries. Direct democracy would be inefficient as millions of people would have to vote for each policy or law, no matter how significant.

Archaeological digs confirmed what was written by Homer in the Iliad and the Odyssey of the Ancient City of Troy and aspects of ancient Greek civilization. Therefore, archaeology remains an important part of the discipline of anthropology as a whole. Without relevant relics and information of societies it is up to mere speculation of ancient history and the corresponding civilizations.