



## Summary

# TELESCOPING THE TIMES *The Rise of Democratic Ideas*

**CHAPTER OVERVIEW** *The ancient Greeks established the first democracy, while the Romans contributed to the development of democratic law. The Judeo-Christian tradition promoted ideas of social responsibility, individual worth, and equality. The rights of individuals and the power of Parliament increased over time in England. Enlightenment ideas influenced the American and French revolutions. The struggle for democracy continues to this day.*

## 1 The Legacy of Ancient Greece and Rome

**KEY IDEA** *The first democracy, which was limited, developed in Athens. The Romans developed key principles of law and a written legal code.*

Ancient Greece was made up of city-states. The first democracy developed in the city-state of Athens.

At first, Athens had a king. Then, it became an aristocracy, a state ruled by the noble class. In the 6th century B.C., the statesman Solon created four new kinds of citizenship. All free adult males were citizens, and all citizens were able to vote in the assembly, or governmental body. Citizens of the three higher classes could also hold public office. Still, democracy in Athens was limited. Officially, only about one-tenth of the population were citizens. Women, slaves, and foreign residents could not be citizens. Slaves made up about one-third of the Athenian population.

About one hundred years after Solon, a leader named Cleisthenes increased the power of the assembly. He allowed all citizens to submit laws for debate and passage. He also created a council consisting of people chosen at random.

During the Golden Age of Greece, Pericles strengthened democracy by increasing the number of paid public officials. This allowed poorer citizens to serve in government. He also introduced the idea of direct democracy, in which citizens participate directly in government rather than by means of people who represent them.

The Golden Age lasted less than 50 years. War and invasion brought the end of democracy. Respect for reason didn't die, however. The philosophers Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle examined beliefs and set forth new visions of government and society.

As Greece fell, Rome began to rise. By 509 B.C. Rome was a republic. A republic is a form of gov-

ernment in which citizens have the right to vote and to select their leaders. In Rome, as in Athens, however, citizenship with voting rights belonged only to males who were not born slaves.

Rome's republican government had separate branches. The legislative branch consisted of a Senate and two assemblies. Although the Senate was aristocratic, the assemblies were more democratic.

Rome's laws have influenced democracy. Some of the most important laws were

- All citizens have the right to equal treatment under the law.
- A citizen is considered innocent until proven guilty.
- The burden of proof rests with the accuser rather than the accused.
- A person is punished only for actions, not for thoughts.
- Any law that seemed unreasonable or grossly unfair could be set aside.

In 451 B.C. the Romans created the Twelve Tables. It gave all citizens the right to the protection of the law. About 1,000 years later, the extensive Code of Justinian was developed. Its many provisions became a guide on legal matters throughout western Europe. The Code established the idea of "a government of laws, not of men."

## 2 The Judeo-Christian Tradition

**KEY IDEA** *Both Judaism and Christianity emphasized the worth of the individual and social responsibility. The Reformation and Renaissance further promoted ideas of individual worth.*

The Hebrews were the ancient people who developed Judaism. According to the Hebrew holy book, which is the Christian Old Testament, the Hebrews are the children of God. This Hebrew belief and others led to a new emphasis on the

worth of the individual.

The Hebrews, also known as the Jews, had a written code of law. It was the Ten Commandments. God gave these laws to Moses in about 1200 B.C. These laws focused more on morality and ethics than they did on politics.

The Hebrews believed in acting responsibly toward others. They believed that the community should help the unfortunate. The prophets of Judaism hoped for a world without poverty or injustice.

Jesus was born in approximately 6 to 4 B.C. At age 30, he began preaching Jewish ideas, including the Ten Commandments. He also stressed the importance of people's love for God, their neighbors, their enemies, and themselves.

In the first century after Jesus' death, his followers started a new religion based on his messages. It was called Christianity. The apostle Paul spread this faith. He preached a message of equality. Equality of all human beings is an idea central to democracy.

By the Middle Ages, the Roman Catholic Church was the most powerful institution in Europe. During the Renaissance, people began to question the church. This questioning led to the Reformation. The Reformation was a protest movement against the power of the church. It was a call for change.

In Germany, Martin Luther criticized the church for selling pardons for sins. He also contradicted the church teachings that people were saved by grace and good works. Luther said people were saved only through faith in God. Soon, many new Protestant faiths sprang up.

Protestant ideas strengthened the idea of the importance of the individual. In Protestant faiths, the clergy did not have special powers. People could find their own way to God. They could read and interpret the Bible for themselves.

The Reformation broke apart the religious unity of Europe. It challenged the authority of Catholic monarchs and popes. It contributed to the growth of democracy.

## Ⓢ Democratic Developments in England

**KEY IDEA** *The Glorious Revolution completed a quest for democracy that began in the 12th century.*

An early democratic development in England was a form of trial by jury. It began in the 12th century.

Another early democratic development in England was "common law. Unlike Roman law, which expressed will of the ruler or lawmaker, common law reflected customs and principles established over time. Common law became the basis of the legal systems in many English-speaking countries, including the United States.

When King John became involved in a conflict with the English nobles in 1215, they presented their demands in the Magna Carta. This document contained important principles that tended to limit the power of the English monarch. One of the Magna Carta's 63 clauses said taxes could only be raised by the "common consent of our kingdom." Another clause had to do with the right to a jury trial and the protection of the law. This right is called due process of law.

In 1295, Edward I needed money to pay for a war. He called together all the lords, plus some knights and leading citizens of the towns. They helped Edward make decisions. This gathering was known as the Model Parliament. Parliament increasingly saw itself as a partner of the monarch in governing. Over time, its power also grew. It voted on taxes, passed laws, and advised on royal policies.

In the 16th century, monarchs began claiming greater authority. When they insisted on their divine right, or God-given right to rule, conflicts arose. In particular, Parliament clashed with James I. When James's son, Charles, became king, Parliament tried to limit royal power by forcing him to accept the Petition of Right. The petition, written in 1628, is a landmark in constitutional history. It demanded an end to

- Taxing without Parliament's consent
- Imprisoning citizens illegally
- Housing troops in citizen's homes
- Military government in peacetime

Although Charles signed the petition, he later ignored the promises he made. The English Civil War broke out between supporters of the king and his opponents. Charles was executed in 1649.

After a brief rule by Oliver Cromwell, a new Parliament restored the monarchy to England. Things had changed, however. The monarch could not tax without Parliament's consent. In addition, *habeas corpus* prevented authorities from wrongly or unjustly detaining a person.

A few years later, when Parliament withdrew its

support from King James, the Glorious Revolution began. As a result, England became a constitutional monarchy. In a constitutional monarchy, a ruler's powers are controlled by a constitution and the laws of the country.

In 1689, the king and queen accepted a bill of rights from Parliament. It limited the power of the monarchy. Democratic protections included free speech in Parliament, and no taxation without the consent of Parliament.

## 4 The Enlightenment and Democratic Revolutions

**KEY IDEA** *Enlightenment ideas influenced the American and French revolutions. Struggles for democracy continue to this day.*

In the 17th and 18th centuries, an intellectual movement called the Enlightenment developed. Thinkers of this movement built their ideas around the earlier Greek philosophers' ideas of natural law. They hoped to use reason to discover the natural laws that govern society. They hoped to apply the scientific method to human affairs.

One Enlightenment thinker, Thomas Hobbes, decided the best form of government was absolute monarchy. He said people should form a type of social contract in which they submit to their ruler in order to prevent disorder. John Locke took a different view. He said all people had natural rights to life, liberty, and property. He said people form governments in order to protect these natural rights. He also said people have a right to rebel against a government that does not protect their rights. His ideas about government became the cornerstone of modern democratic thought.

French Enlightenment thinkers included Voltaire, Rousseau, and Montesquieu. Voltaire fought for tolerance, freedom of religion, and free speech. Rousseau called for direct democracy. He said the only legitimate government came from the consent of the governed. Montesquieu said that liberty was best safeguarded by dividing government into three branches: a law-making body, an executive branch, and courts.

Enlightenment ideas and British traditions influenced American colonists. They opposed British efforts to tax them without representation. They issued a Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. Locke's ideas strongly influenced this declaration.

Enlightenment ideas also shaped the American Constitution. The Constitution included a representative government and a federal system. In a federal system, powers of government are divided between the federal, or central, and state governments. The Constitution also separated powers, into three branches, based on Montesquieu's ideas.

Near the end of the 18th century, revolution also occurred in France. The peasants were hungry and restless, and the middle class was dissatisfied with Louis XVI's government. In 1789 the commoners formed a National Assembly. It made many reforms. It adopted the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. This document guaranteed the rights of liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression to all people. The Assembly also ended feudalism in France, drafted a constitution that made France a limited monarchy, and made many other reforms.

The work of the Assembly did not last long. A radical legislature took charge, and a reign of terror followed. Napoleon Bonaparte assumed control of France and created a dictatorship. Democracy in France did not develop until much later in the 1800s.

Today, the struggle for democracy goes on in various places around the world. The United Nations promotes this quest. Its Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948, states the right to life, liberty, and the security of person. It also includes rights to equal protection under law, to freedom of movement, and to freedom to assemble.

Recent struggles for democracy have occurred in Brazil, in the newly created republics of the former Soviet Union, and in South Africa. While democracy may be difficult to achieve and preserve, the desire for it remains constant.

## Review

1. **Summarizing Written Texts** Describe changes in democracy over time in Athens.
2. **Perceiving Cause and Effect** Why were Roman developments in law so important?
3. **Making Generalizations** How did the Judeo-Christian tradition contribute to the development of democracy?
4. **Inferring Main Idea** How did the role of Parliament change over time in England?
5. **Making Judgments** Why do some democratic revolutions, like the one in the United States, succeed, while others fail?