

Important terms for Greek government in the Archaic and Classical periods

Oikos: Household in the sense of a household like Odysseus's with extended family, slaves, servants.

Phratry: Military unit based on the oikos: sort of an oikos based platoon

Phyle: Tribe

Polis: City-state. This is the basic unit of Greek (Hellenic) government in these periods as there is no national government, although there is a larger Hellenic culture.

Amphictyony: A grouping of cities that can be political, military and/or religious

Agora: Marketplace and the center of the polis. Government functions usually occur here along with buying and selling

Tyranny: rule by one who seizes power with the help of the people (and doesn't necessarily rule badly)

Aristocracy: Literally, rule by the best

Oligarchy: Rule by the few, which is usually an aristocracy of a few old families

Democracy: rule by the people

Demos: the people

Hoplites: light armed Greek soldiers beginning about 750 BC who fought as a unit

Phalanx: Extremely effective military grouping of hoplites

The Gerousia: Spartan council of 30 elders including the two kings

Ephors: similar to Roman tribunes, two annual representatives of the Spartan Homoioi (equals)

Helots: Spartan slaves

Homoioi: Spartan citizens, here meaning equals

Pentakosionedonoi: The richest class of Athenians: the 1%

Equities: The knights: the second richest class: they were wealthy enough to own horses

Zeugetai: The third class of Athenians: essentially the middle class

Thetes: The Athenian free poor

Areopagus: oldest Athenian court

Helileia: newer Athenian Court

Archon: yearly annual executive position in Athens

Strategoi: Athenian generals

Boule: sort of like our Senate, it's a frequently rotating council of 500 citizens that creates the agenda for the ecclesia

Ecclesia: the assembly of all citizens at Athens