

Ch. 3A Recap ~ Comparing the Persians and Greeks

“While both the Persians and the Greeks controlled increasingly large areas and populations and stimulated the exchange of ideas, cultures, and values among people in the Classical period, each developed new and different techniques of political organization, based largely on the success of earlier political forms. “

Directions: Copy the above statement and then write an additional 2 to 3 sentences to describe and explain one key difference between the two ancient civilizations. Choose from one of the following topics to focus your attention.

- Structure of the State / Type of Government
- Source of State Authority
- Administrative Institutions

- **Structure of the State / Type of Government**
 - Drawing on the example of previous Mesopotamian polities, including the Babylonian and Assyrian empires, the Persians built an imperial political system to stretch their control from Egypt to India. In contrast, the Greeks organized around hundreds of independent city-states and thus established colonies throughout the Mediterranean and Black Seas.

- **Source of State Authority**
 - The Persian system was centered on an elaborate cult of kingship in which the emperor was seen as an absolute monarch and was often secluded through rituals from the people. Whereas the Greeks created an early form of democracy in which state authority was drawn from the people. While not fully equal, Athenian citizens participated directly in the decision making of the state.

- **Administrative Institutions**
 - In order to govern increasingly expansive empires both civilizations created administrative institutions to maintain order throughout the empire. The Persian Empire was ruled by a system of satraps, or governors, in each of the twenty three provinces, while lower level officials were taken from local authorities. The Greeks on the other hand relied on the development of “demos kratia” to oversee the empire, but especially early on, only the wealthy and wellborn had the rights of full citizenship.