

C. Republic and Democracy: Our Greatest Connection to the Past

1. In order to understand the value of studying ancient history, we must clearly understand the terms “republic” and “democracy,” and how they matter to modern *American* life.
2. Democracy
 - a) “Democracy” means “the rule of the people” (the “demos”).
 - b) To decide the laws in a democracy, the people vote.
 - c) The winning side in a vote is called a "majority."
 - d) The losing side is the "minority."
 - e) In a democracy, the majority *rules* (the minority).
 - f) Athenians invented democracy.
3. Republic
 - a) A “republic” is also a government involving the people (the "public").
 - b) In a republic, however, certain laws cannot be changed -- the "constitution."
 - c) A (republican) constitution prevents the majority from taking away the rights of the minority by vote.
 - d) This is why a republic is best defined as a system of government that protects rights.
 - e) The first republic was Rome.
 - f) America was created as a republic, but has become more of a democracy.