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Cleisthenes

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Similar to what most people think, it is really difficult for us to develop our world without democracy since it seems to be an integral part of our world. Freedom is all we need and it is so clear that many thinkers all over the world try it so hard to make the world a better place, shared everything equally, even speech or idea. Speaking of the famous democratic thinkers, Cleisthenes, a noble Athenian of Alcmaenonidae family<sup>1</sup>, is the one who did make it happen. He not only laid the foundation of democracy but he was also an inspiration for the next generation, or he is even called a significant reformer in ancient Athens. Cleisthenes is a pioneer who created democratic idea which made the world become fairer and more systematical. It could be said that democratic system nowadays is based on his idea and his thought is the starting point making everybody equal.

At first, Cleisthenes took his first step of being a reformer in Athens, by collapsing the tyrant son of Pisistratu, Hippias, with Isagoras. But after that they were completes for power<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, Athenian liberated from tyranny. After breaking down oppression, the political condition was more flexible and ready to be organized. This occurrence was not only a changing point of the political situation in that moment, but also a fundamental of the forthcoming considerable reformation.

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<sup>1</sup> "Cleisthenes." *Cleisthenes*. N.p., n.d. Web. 17 Sept. 2012.  
<<http://www.ancientworlds.net/aw/Families/Family/1010>>.

<sup>2</sup> "Cleisthenes Of Athens (Greek Statesman)." *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*. Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d. Web. 14 Sept. 2012.  
<<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/120922/Cleisthenes-Of-Athens>>.

Because of him, there are huge variation on Athenians' role which was more visible than before. So Athenians began to recognize themselves as citizens of Athens. Little by little, having their own aspect to evaluate what is good or bad repeatedly. Which is different from the age of being possess by the tyrant, it is similar to some kinds of the followers who just follow the tyrant rule and command without complaining or resistance. The more people are aware of their important role, the more will absolutely pay more attention to and try to participate in it. Then, after Athenians realized their right, they started learning thinking and expressing their opinion rather than just working and following the rule. In other words, Cleisthenes' reforms, revolutionizing all aspects of the citizens of Athens.

After his first victory, he reformed a lot of political idea, such as an ideal concept which is called "Isonomia"<sup>3</sup>. aiming at diluting the power of aristocratic oligarchy by obtunding the factional dissension among the stronger oligarchy. Later on, changing four traditional tribes into ten tribes based on their area of habitat called deme, systematized into thirty groups called trittyes<sup>4</sup>. Therefore, Athenians citizens increased sense of involvement in democracy. In addition, he also reorganized the court system, from two-hundred and one to five-thousand and one jurors, selected each day, increase to five-hundred from each tribe<sup>5</sup>. In that time, Cleisthens plays the considerable role on reorganized most of the significant Athenians system. Which is the heart of how Athenians developing themselves as well as indicating what the way they are going on. Since those system is their social regulation. In the other words, all

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<sup>3</sup> Porter, John. "Athenian Democracy." *Solon, Univ. of Saskatchewan*. N.p., n.d. Web. 17 Sept. 2012. <<http://homepage.usask.ca/~jrp638/CourseNotes/SolonNotes.html>>.

<sup>4</sup> "Cleisthenes." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, 13 Sept. 2012. Web. 17 Sept. 2012. <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cleisthenes>>.

<sup>5</sup> "The World of Athens." *Solon, Univ. of Saskatchewan*. N.p., n.d. Web. 17 Sept. 2012. <<http://homepage.usask.ca/~jrp638/CourseNotes/SolonNotes.html>>.

of this express that he is a careful reformer since he developed only just one system, but also other related system that impact the whole society. That is the answer why his reformation is so effective.

Cleisthenes also introduced the rule of "Each man having one vote"<sup>6</sup>.

Although in that period of time was no definition of it, it was so distinct that our present election system which we are now calling a democracy, based on his idea. Nowadays, democracy is not only our major social rule but also the significant influence since it depends a lot on the chosen leader. Therefore, people can be assumed that they will be able to choose a leader who serves them by voting in an election. Being without election, what will be another method for us to choose the leader, maybe a brutal tyrant or such an unfair communist whom we have no choice but follow them. Although nothing can guarantee that the leader who is selected by an election will be absolutely better than the one who came from the tyrant or communist, at least all the associated people can participate in, reveal their opinion, respect the majority and allow the one who is eligible for exposing their opinion independently. Election is the most justice method that why we had been using it since Cleisthenes first formed it until now.

Considering Cleisthenes's actions, there are a lot of impact which not only happened in the past but also affected our society nowadays. Since he is one of the world's most famous reformer as historians refer to him as the father of Athenian democracy<sup>7</sup> who has a big influence on people's attitude, From just a believer to

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<sup>6</sup> "Cleisthenes." PBS. PBS, n.d. Web. 17 Sept. 2012.  
<[http://www.pbs.org/empires/thegreeks/characters/cleisthenes\\_p1.html](http://www.pbs.org/empires/thegreeks/characters/cleisthenes_p1.html)>.

<sup>7</sup> "Cleisthenes: "The Father of Democracy"" 8170/. N.p., n.d. Web. 17 Sept. 2012.  
<<http://8170.pbworks.com/w/page/1115547/Cleisthenes%3A%20%22The%20Father%20of%20Democracy%22>>.

having their own aspect. As well as revolutionizing the Athenians way of life, Although he could not bring the whole change to them, next generation reformer has done it by setting him as an inspiration. As well as, he is a great thinker now that the democracy which plays on our present society prominent role is based on his idea .In addition, democracy plays a significant role that is too hard to organize our society without. Without him, our world would become less justice and nothing could be fair.