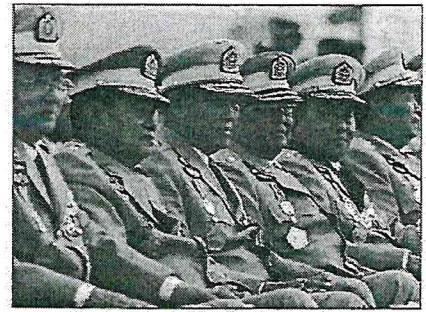


Who Rules?

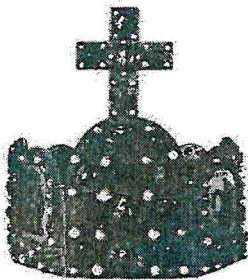
Name: _____

We, Ourselves, and... um... Us

In an **oligarchy** (OH-lih-gar-kee), a small group of people has all the power. *Oligarchy* is a Greek word that means "rule by a few." Sometimes this means that only a certain group has political rights, such as members of one political party, one social class, or one race. For example, in some societies only noble families who owned land could participate in politics. An oligarchy can also mean that a few people control the country. For example, a **junta** is a small group of people—usually military officers—who rule a country after taking it over by force. A junta often operates much like a dictatorship, except that several people share power.



From 1962 to 2011, Myanmar (also known as Burma) was ruled by a military junta that was condemned by the world for its human rights violations.



Crown of the Holy Roman Empire, which was tied to the Catholic church and lasted from the 10th–19th century.

Religious Rule

A **theocracy** is a government that recognizes God or a divine being as the ultimate authority. ("Theo" is a Greek word that means *god*.) In a theocracy, religious law is used to settle disputes and rule the people. A theocracy can also be a democracy, dictatorship, monarchy, or just about any other kind of government. For example, the Republic of Iran recognizes Islamic law, but Iran's citizens vote to elect their leaders. Modern theocracies are usually found in countries where the population is strongly religious.

Rule by None

In an **anarchy**, nobody is in control—or everyone is, depending on how you look at it. Sometimes the word anarchy is used to refer to an out-of-control mob. When it comes to government, anarchy would be one way to describe the human state of existence before any governments developed. It would be similar to the way animals live in the wild, with everyone looking out for themselves. Today, people who call themselves anarchists usually believe that people should be allowed to freely associate together without being subject to any nation or government. There are no countries that have anarchy as their form of government.



An A inside a circle is the traditional symbol for anarchy.

