

### **5.3 – Democracy and Greece's Golden Age**

The Golden Age drama, sculpture, poetry philosophy architecture and science all reach new heights.

#### **Pericles Plan for Athens**

- Pericles had three goals 1) to strengthen Athenian democracy, 2) to hold and strengthen the empire 3) to glorify Athens

#### **Stronger Democracy**

- paid salaries to officials so that a poor citizen could serve if elected
- direct democracy

#### **Athenian Empire**

- Athens dominated the city-states in the Delian League
- Money from the Delian League was used to make the Athenian navy the strongest in the Mediterranean – Athens needed overseas trade to obtain supplies of grain and other raw materials
- The Delian League allowed Athens to treat other members of the Delian League as part of the Athenian Empire but the Spartans were resistant to Athens

#### **Glorifying**

- Money from the Delian League was also used to glorify Athens using the League's money to buy gold, ivory and marble and went to architects, artists for Athens.

#### **Glorious Art and Architecture**

- the Parthenon in the traditional Greek style – built to honor Athena the protector of Athens – contained a giant statue of Athena which contained many precious materials such as gold and ivory
- Classical Art – values of harmony, order balance and proportion – faces of figures showed neither joy or anger only serenity – idealized body in motion not realistic

#### **Drama and History**

- Tragedy – is a serious drama about common themes such love, hate, war or betrayal – a tragic flaw in the main character, such as hubris or excessive pride, usually caused the downfall of the main character.
- Comedy – contained scenes of slapstick situations or crude humour. Playwrights often made fun of politicians and respected people and ideas at the time.
- History – Herodotus wrote the first work of history by writing about the Persian Wars.
- Thucydides believed political situations and events would recur over time

### **Athenians and Spartans Go to War**

- as Athens grows in wealth and power other city-states view it with hostility, especially Sparta – Sparta declares war on Athens
- Athens had a stronger navy and Sparta has a stronger army
- First year of war Spartans move into Athenian territory – Athens remains safe as long as ships could sail into port with supplies
- Second year of war - a plague sweeps through Athens killing about 1/3 of the population but Athens continues to fight for the next few years until a truce is signed between Athens and Sparta
- The Athenians then attack Sicily, which is one of Sparta's allies. Sparta fights Athens for another nine years until Athens is defeated.

How does the concept of hubris from Greek tragedy apply to the Peloponnesian war?

Why would philosophers start questioning traditional beliefs at this time in Athenian history?

### **Philosophers Search for Truth**

Philosophers – means “lovers of wisdom”

#### Socrates

- believed that there were absolute standards for truth and justice
- encouraged Greeks to question themselves and their moral character
- “The unexamined life is not worth living”
- “There is only one good, knowledge, and one evil, ignorance.”

#### Plato

- wrote the Republic where he writes about what he considers to be the perfectly governed society – all people fit into three groups: farmers and artisans, warriors and the ruling class – the person with the greatest insight and intellect from the ruling class would be the philosopher king
- “Philosophy begins in wonder”

#### Aristotle

- questioned the nature of the world and of human belief
- he invented a method for arguing according to the rules of logic which later provides the basis for the scientific method
- “He who studies how things originated...will achieve the clearest views of them”