

## F. The Third Persian Campaign (480-479 BC) (cont.)

### 1. Greek Preparations for a Last Stand

- a) With the Persians advancing into the heart of Greece, the Greeks sought the advice of the Oracle at Delphi. The Oracle gave the following advice:

*"Far-seeing Zeus grants to...Athena a wooden wall,  
The only place not to be sacked, it will help you and your children.  
Do not wait...turn your back and withdraw from the foe.  
Eventually you will stand opposite them.  
O divine Salamis, you will destroy the sons of women..."*

- b) The Athenian leader Themistocles believed the best approach was to use the Athenian fleet of ships as a "wooden wall" at the island of Athens.
- c) Meanwhile, the Persians found Athens abandoned, and they destroyed it.

### 2. Battle of Salamis (480)

- a) Salamis was surrounded by narrow waterways, where the Persian fleet could not attack all at once.
- b) The Greeks attacked the best Persian ships first. Once these were defeated, the battle turned in favor of the Greeks.
- c) Without a navy, Xerxes had to withdraw from Greece because the Greeks could destroy his bridge at the Hellespont and cut off his supply lines from Asia.

### 3. Battle of Plataea and the End of the War in Greece (479)

- a) Xerxes withdrew with half his army, leaving his brother-in-law Mardonius to try to win the land war with the remaining army.
- b) The Greeks assembled a combined force of 100,000 men and defeated Mardonius at the Battle of Plataea in 479.
- c) The remaining Persians withdrew and Persia was no longer a threat to Greece.

## G. The War Continues after 479

### 1. The Athenian Empire

- a) In order to continue attacking Persia, Athens formed an alliance called the Delian League.
- a) At first it was a voluntary alliance, in which member states contributed either ships or money to build them.
- b) Many cities preferred to send money rather than build ships and provide crews to participate in the ongoing war.
- c) When other city-states no longer wanted to contribute, however, Athens forced them to stay. The Delian League became the Athenian Empire.

## 2. The Danger of a New War

- a) Many of the cities that Athens now had power over asked Sparta for help, but the Spartans were busy with a slave revolt in their own territory.
- b) Athens actually agreed to help Sparta put down the revolt, but the Spartans were suspicious of Athens and turned away their army.
- c) If the two had found a way to continue cooperating, it is hard to predict how differently history would have turned out. Maybe Greece would have become even more glorious than it did.
- d) Eventually, however, Sparta and Athens collided over control of Thebes. Athens wanted to help the commoners of Thebes create a democracy. Sparta wanted to help the aristocracy.
- e) The two sides fought at the Battle of Tanagra (457 BC). It was the first time Athenians and Spartans had fought as enemy city-states.
- f) Neither Sparta nor Athens wanted to fight another war so soon after fighting the Persians. They agreed to the Thirty Years' Peace in 445 BC.

## **II. The Athenian Golden Age (449 – c.429/c.399 BC)**

For the first time in 50 years, the Greek world was at peace. This allowed a wonderful time of progress known as the *Athenian Golden Age*. If the modern world comes from the *Renaissance* or rebirth of Greek ideas and values, then the Athenian Golden Age is the *birth itself*—the beginning of life beyond the archaic plateau!

### A. A New World of Ideas

#### 1. Democracy and Education

- a) In the Athens, where every individual was allowed to participate in the government, it was important for the citizens to be able to make good laws.
- b) The Athenians created schools for their children that started at age seven, and taught literature, music, mathematics, and writing, in addition to physical education.

#### 2. Philosophy

- a) The Athenians invented “philosophy,” which means “the love of wisdom.”
- b) Greek philosophers believed that it is possible to think carefully about important questions using logic to arrive at correct answers that can be used to guide one's life.
- c) The teachings of Athenian philosophers Socrates, and especially Plato and Aristotle became so important in Europe that the Renaissance painter Raphael created a massive painting for the pope called *The School of Athens*. The theme of the painting is the importance of Greek philosophy to the Renaissance.

### 3. History

- a) The first two great historians lived in Athens at times during the Golden Age.
- b) Herodotus created the first major work of history called “the Histories.” His main interest was the story of the Greco-Persian wars.
- c) Thucydides wrote “The History of the Peloponnesian War” (which we are about to learn of next) because he believed that history could teach lessons about the past that would help people make better choices in the future.

### 4. Art and Architecture

- a) There were also many great Athenian sculptors, including Phidias (who made the sculptures of the Parthenon), and Myron (who made the famous *Discus Thrower*). They created sculptures of great beauty and realism that inspired the artists of Rome and the Italian Renaissance (including Michelangelo).
- b) Athens became the home of great new monuments, including the Parthenon, which is now one of the most famous buildings in all of history. Many modern buildings copy its design.