

# War: more benefits than destruction for athens

[History](#)



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Did war bring more benefits or more harm politically, socially, intellectually to golden age Athens? Generally, war has always been deemed as destructive to any civilization but Greece took an exception in a way because it initially benefited from war by using the war funds (through the Delian league of which it dominated) against the Persians to build herself. As it turned out, it was no longer the Persians that threatens Greece but rather Sparta which defeated her and Macedonia which conquered her. War eventually took its toll on Greece in the end when the Peloponnesian War erupted that defeated Greece and ending her Golden Age. Until finally, war caused Greece to lose her independence and become a subject of another state when Philipp II of Macedonia invaded Greece after it lost to Sparta in the Peloponnesian War. War can be said to have ushered Greece into the Golden Age. It started when Greece successfully defended herself twice from the invasion of the Persian in 480-479 BCE whereby it put up the Delpian league. The Delian League was an amalgamation of Greek City states that was created as a national defense mechanism by pooling ships and money to finance the defense (like a modern day NATO defense agreement). City states who wanted to join were asked to contribute money to build the defense against the Persians. The Greeks did not build their army to defend from external threat but rather used the resources to build a civilization which in a way good because she flourished politically, socially and intellectually. The Delian League was dominated by the Greeks through its leader Pericles. The Greeks took advantage of their dominant stature and begun controlling the League by treating other city states as a mere subjects. It also enforced the use of the Athenian coin as the common currency of the League. Being the dominant figure in the Delian League, <https://assignbuster.com/war-more-benefits-than-destruction-for-athens/>

Greece used the pooled funds or treasury of the League to build herself. Instead of using the money for defense against the Persians (who no longer pose as a threat), Greece withdrew money from the League and used it to construct buildings hence is the beginning of the Golden Age. During the Golden Age, other city states of the Delian League discovered that the funds were merely used for reconstruction effort instead of defense. Greece however capitalized on its dominant position to maintain a tight hold over other city states and to continue to give money to the League. The money given by city states to the Delian League later transformed to a tribute and became acceptable to other city states<sup>1</sup>. During this construction time using the Delian funds, Greece entered into a Golden Age where it flourished. Important construction sites which we know today were built such as “ the Parthenon which was built to honor the patron goddess Athena, and the Erectheum, which has beautiful columns of caryatids” <sup>2</sup>. Drama also became in flower where great dramatists were born which included Aeschylus (Oresteian Trilogy), Sophocles (Oedipus Rex), and Euripides (Medea). The Greek Golden Age also produced great philosophers such as philosophers Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle who influenced the modern western society today<sup>3</sup> and provided a modern day dimension to the Greek body politic. Things were going well for the Greeks until another war broke. This time, the Greeks lost and the war dragged for 27 years which almost decimated everything that was created during the Golden Age. The war was very unforgiving and very few Greeks were spared during the war with the Spartans (who belonged to another league, Peloponessian. Perhaps the Greeks also became a victim of their own success because when they became an empire during their Golden Age, the Greeks tend to meddle with

<https://assignbuster.com/war-more-benefits-than-destruction-for-athens/>

the affairs of other city state's which include those with the Peloponnesian League (which is similar to today with superpowers trying to influence smaller and weaker countries). The Spartans, did not appreciate the Greeks interference with their affairs and the Greeks would not also cease interfering in Sparta. It became inevitable that war would erupt. The two engage in a war that dragged for 27 years. Both were in ruins when the war ended. At the end of the war, the Greeks which did not have better army lost and the better disciplined Spartans emerged as victors<sup>4</sup>. Intramurals preoccupied the city states of the defeated Greece after the war which rendered it weaker. Philipp II of Macedonia seized the opportunity and conquered Greece which stamped the end of Greece's Golden Age. In summary, war benefited the Greeks because it ushered them to the Golden Age but it also caused the end of the Golden Age when it entered into war with the Spartan which left it in ruins. Finally, war caused her downfall when she was conquered by Macedonia. Bibliography Hanson, Victor Davis, War Like No Other: How the Athenians and Spartans Fought the Peloponnesian War [Westminster, MD, USA: 2005] 416 pages. Barrett, Matt. The Golden Age of Greece, online. <http://www.ahistoryofgreece.com/goldenage.htm> [accessed May 22, 2012]