

THE FIRST DEMOCRATIC STATES

At the end of the Archaic Period, some Greek cities overthrew their tyrants and replaced them with a radical new form of government. The new system - which provided a model for political systems in the modern world - is called democracy, from the Greek words *demos* (people), and *kratos* (rule). Unlike modern democracies, though, only citizens had a say. Women, slaves and men born outside the city were all excluded.

THE ATHENIAN MODEL

The Athenian system was introduced in 508BC, by an aristocrat named Cleisthenes. He set up an Assembly, where every citizen could speak and vote. It met every 10 days, on a hill called the Pnyx, and debated proposals made by the Council (see opposite).

The Assembly required 600 citizens for a meeting to take place. If there were too few people, police were sent to round up more.

PERICLES

Pericles was an enormously popular politician in Athens.

He dominated the political scene from around 443BC, and was responsible for rebuilding the Acropolis. He was elected *strategos* (see opposite) nearly every year, until his death in 429BC.



INTERNET LINK

For a link to a website where you can find out lots more and watch short films about Pericles and Cleisthenes, go to www.usborne-quicklinks.com

This 19th-century painting shows a man making a speech at the funeral of Pericles.

