The Second Athenian League: An Alliance Crippled by Institutional Stagnation

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ABSTRACT

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A thesis presented to the Graduate Program in Ancient Greek and Roman Studies

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The Second Athenian Confederacy, established in 378/7 BCE, saw many defections of Athenian member states, both before and during the Social War of 357-5. One issue facing scholars of the fourth century is determining the impetus behind the defections and eventual outbreak of the war. To answer this question, this thesis examines both Marshall's seminal work on the League and Cargill's subsequent revised history. The main controversy rests on whether the defections and eventual collapse of the League should be attributed to outside forces or Athens' own imperialistic ambitions. The evidence derived from fourth-century Greek historians, orators, and epigraphy suggests Athens' foreign policy did have an imperialistic component and exhibited remarkable continuity from the fifth century. While League defections were often instigated by events external to the alliance, both allied discontent and widespread distrust of Athens are historically supported in our sources. Based upon this conclusion, the inquiry becomes one of identifying the force or forces behind unjust treatment of Athenian allies. Due to the paucity of primary sources documenting the history of the League, necessity demands close analysis of various circumstantial passages from the fourth
century. What emerges from these scattered sources is a picture of perennial League poverty as a result of institutional stagnation. Athens' inability to adjust to fourth-century circumstances, relying instead on fifth-century precedent, crippled the League from within. This debilitating poverty and institutional failure was exacerbated by an apparent lack of focus and allied disenfranchisement following the 371 Battle of Leuktra. With this understanding, the Social War becomes much better contextualized, and a clearer picture emerges of the war as a process rather than an event.
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Introduction

The fourth century BCE was a period of many crises for Greek city-states. The debilitating hegemonic struggle of the late fifth century had brought matters of imperial ambition to the forefront of Hellenic consciousness. Athens, deprived of its allies and thus stripped of its empire at the official conclusion of hostilities in 404, lost maritime hegemony in the Aegean. In many ways, the means of imperialism were so ready at hand for victorious Sparta that to refuse the mantle of an imperialistic power would have been more difficult than remaining politically isolated.¹

The Spartans, however, proved poor administrators of their empire. Events following the Corinthian War and the resultant Peace of Antalcidas helped prompt defensive alliances against the abusive power of Sparta. One such alliance encompassed a revival of alleged Athenian imperialism in the form of the so-called Second Athenian League.²

The League, officially founded in 378/7, has been inadequately dealt with by modern scholars of the fourth century.³ While several explanations are likely for this paucity of scholarship, perhaps Cargill was correct when he noted, “The Second Athenian League has

² The author is aware of Marshall’s insistence that imperialist Thrasybulus had earlier established a “Second League”, making this 378/7 League, in fact, the Third Athenian League. Few scholars have adhered to this terminology, however, and common convention is followed here.
seemed comparatively dismissible because it has been regarded essentially as an unsuccessful repetition of the first League." Indeed, a major facet of Cargill's revisionist interpretation of the League that broke academic silence on the topic in 1981 addresses this notion. While Cargill's work revived an interest in the subject of fourth-century Athenian imperialism in its own right, scholars have been slow to build upon his scholarship.

The purpose of this work is to adopt a holistic and multifaceted approach to dealing with the problems surrounding the Second Athenian League. The primary discrepancy between traditional and revisionist history of the League is the identification of Athens as oppressive imperialist versus leader of a free alliance. Closely linked to this inquiry is the question of why the League ultimately failed, despite achieving its original objective of checking Spartan aggression.

The traditional interpretations, espoused by scholars such as Busolt, Marshall, and more recently Hamilton and Badian, maintain the view that Athens never truly gave up the desire for empire. Cargill, arguing a more tempered view of Athenian ambition based largely upon epigraphy, needs to be held accountable to the historical realities presented in the primary literary sources we possess—a notion perhaps underappreciated by Cargill himself and his reviewers. Cargill's critics, offering nearly universal laudation for his epigraphy but hesitancy in accepting some of his historical conclusions, also require individual analysis. The ultimate objective is to continue and advance an academic conversation that has great relevancy for

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strategies in dealing with allied powers and the consequences of overly ambitious imperialistic policy.

Chapter 1 provides a brief, but detailed, diplomatic and political sketch of the fourth century to establish the background for the period following the Peloponnesian War. Understanding this politically chaotic time is critical to grasping the significance of the Second League's formation. Chapter 2 focuses on Athenian diplomacy and foreign policy in the fourth century prior to the formation of the League. Chapter 3 examines the formation of the League and specifically the principles upon which the League was to operate. These tenets have been preserved in their original form on the Stele of Aristoteles, thus a close examination of the stele is necessary. Chapter 4 provides an overview of Athenian conduct after the inception of the League. Chapter 5 discusses the conduct of the League and various scholarly interpretations of Athens as imperialist versus champion of autonomy, and the individual problems and strengths of these theories. Both views, traditional and revisionist, are evaluated based upon historical merit relative to primary sources and epigraphy from the fourth century. In Chapter 6, I reflect upon the particulars of the preceding theories, create a nuanced understanding of the Second Athenian League by offering an alternate theory for its collapse, and suggest avenues for further research.
Chapter 1: Post-War Athens and an Age of Renewal

In 404 BCE, the devastating Peloponnesian War concluded in the wake of the stunning Spartan naval victory at Aegospotami. The "greatest movement yet known in history"—unprecedented in both mobilization and scale—saw the temporary triumph of oligarchy over democracy. Terms of surrender imposed upon Athens were relatively lenient, considering the bitterness resultant from nearly three decades of conflict sporadically punctuated by atrocity. Crucially, the Athenians were compelled to dismantle the famed Long Walls, so long having bound their city to the sea. In addition, they were ordered to hand over all but twelve of their ships, effectively limiting Athens' immediate sphere of influence to Attica. The consequence of these impositions ensured the collapse of the remaining Athenian Empire and the dissolution of the Delian League. Dissatisfied League members formerly under imperial Athenian control were now free to join the pro-Spartan cause, and those still democratically inclined were forcibly obliged to adopt oligarchic systems of governance.

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7 Xen. Hellenika 2.1.21-29. Aegospotami took place in 405 and effectively ended the military phase of the war. Athens formally surrendering the following year in 404.
8 Thuc. 1.2.
9 Plut. Lysander 15.2 and Xen. Hellenika 2.2.19-20 From these passages, we see clearly the terms were more lenient than some of Sparta's allies would have preferred. Ostensibly, Spartan clemency stemmed from the role Athens played in the defense of Hellas during the Persian Wars of the early fifth century. Realistically, it likely had more to do with the balance of power in Greece and the growing power of Thebes. Perhaps the shifting political situation in Persia also affected the outcome, along with Theramenes' (who was a moderate oligarch) effective diplomacy.
10 Xen. Hellenika 2.2.20.
11 Without Athenian naval support, Samos (the last remaining Athenian ally following Aegospotami) had little hope of enduring any assault by Lysander, likely explaining their capitulation in the face of almost certain defeat (Xen. Hellenika 2.3.6).
The victorious Lacedaemonians opted to follow the lead of their Athenian predecessors and become an imperial power. In an Aegean world where *hegemony* was almost wholly equated with leadership through military force and presence, this presented isolationist Sparta with several novel challenges. In Athens, this translated to thirty Athenian oligarchs and a Spartan garrison overseeing the transition from democracy to oligarchy.

In less than a year, however, the bold democratic leader Thrasybulus was successful in both defeating the Spartan garrison and expelling the hated thirty tyrannical oligarchs. Leading a small group of men loyal to the democratic cause, he managed to capture the port of Piraeus, defeat the oligarchs in several skirmishes, and eventually battle the reinforcing Spartans to a stalemate. These actions led to the restoration of democracy at Athens in 403. Sparta had few options. As Kagan asserts, "Athens . . . was disarmed but unappeased, and to keep her disarmed would have required a degree of strength, commitment, cooperation, and unity of purpose not possessed by the victorious powers." 

As Spartan imperial administration subsequently struggled to hold its newly acquired empire together, conflict loomed yet again in the form of disaffected allies and Persian resistance to Sparta’s involvement in Asia Minor. The Corinthian War, spawned out of "resentment, fear, and hatred of Spartan . . . aggressiveness" finally resulted in the Peace of Antalcidas (387), or King’s Peace, which implicitly recognized Sparta as chief hegemon in Greece. The terms of the treaty, guaranteed by the Persian king at a conference in Susa,

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13 Xen. *Hellenika* 2.4.2-43
exemplify the degree to which Persia had influence in shaping fourth-century Aegean politics. The treaty further stipulated that all Greek city-states in Asia Minor were to be subject to the Persian king, a resounding concession considering Sparta had taken on the guise of liberator to the Hellenes during the Peloponnesian War.\textsuperscript{16}

During the course of the Corinthian War, however, Athens had begun to see a resurgence of wider influence in the Aegean. Operating aggressively but within the narrow confines of its terms of surrender to Sparta eventually opened avenues for political growth. For example, Athens was successful early on in arguing the necessity of at least a partial rebuilding of its defensive fortifications to avoid wholesale invasion by any foreign, opportunistic force.\textsuperscript{17} In addition, Spartan relations with Persia had been deteriorating even before the Corinthian War as the Spartan king Agesilaus undertook a campaign against the Persian satrapies along the coast of Asia Minor.\textsuperscript{18} To counter this threat, Persia eventually raised a fleet and sought out the experienced Athenian naval commander Konon to lead its newly acquired fleet of three hundred triremes.\textsuperscript{19}

In 394, the two fleets met at Knidus, where Konon coordinated a decisive victory over the inexperienced Spartan admiral Peisander.\textsuperscript{20} By the time Konon returned to Athens, the Long Walls were in some stage of reconstruction, which he promptly sponsored. This detail of sponsoring as opposed to initiating the rebuilding should not be overlooked. Konon should not

\textsuperscript{16} Thucy. 1.124.3.
\textsuperscript{17} Hamilton, \textit{Sparta’s Bitter Victories}, 289. The walls were in some state of repair by 393.
\textsuperscript{18} Xen. \textit{Hellenika}, 3.1.3.
\textsuperscript{19} Konon, at this time, was living in quasi self-imposed exile with Evagoras of Cyprus following his defeat at the Battle of Aegospotami. He had earlier feared the potential reprisal from Athens should he return and eagerly exploited this opportunity to avenge his previous defeat by opposing the Lacedaemonian fleet.
\textsuperscript{20} Xen. \textit{Hellenika} 4.3.10-12. and Plut. Ages. 17.52.
be viewed as a detached element of human agency, but as a catalyst for resurgent Athenian ambition and champion of those parties backing this cause. The arrival of Konon with eighty triremes after having removed Spartan garrisons from several Aegean islands did indeed herald a new chapter of Athenian ambition.\textsuperscript{21} Some of these newly defected city states simply threw off their Spartan garrisons and remained independent, while others actively joined with Konon. Thus, by extension, Athens took the first steps toward regaining wider influence in the Aegean.

Around this same time on the mainland, Athens was making military progress as well. At the Battle of Lechaeum in 391, the Athenian mercenary captain Iphikrates orchestrated the near annihilation of an entire Spartan \textit{mora}\textsuperscript{22} close to the walls of Corinth.\textsuperscript{23} Writing in the first century BCE, the Roman biographer Cornelius Nepos added the detail that Iphikrates’ accomplishments were possible due to the fact that he specifically altered \textit{peltast} battlefield tactics and weapons to deal damage to heavy infantry fighting in phalanx formation: "\textit{namque ille pedestria arma mutavit.}\textsuperscript{24} With the myth of Spartan hoplite invincibility shaken, peace became improbable and the war dragged on for another half-decade.

By the end of the 390s, Persian aid and sympathy toward Athens had dried up. With the wealth of Persia now backing Sparta, probably due to Persian recognition of a resurgent Athenian threat in the Aegean,\textsuperscript{25} Athens was left with few options. The aforementioned Peace of Antalcidas was ratified in 387, effectively putting an end to short-term Athenian ambitions.

\textsuperscript{21} Diodorus Siculus, 14.81.1-4. Diodorus implies the defection following the Spartan defeat was "infectious" and proceeds to name the first few: Cos, Nisyros, Teos, Chios, Mitylene, and Ephesus.
\textsuperscript{22} A Spartan military unit of roughly 600 men. Xenophon puts the number at 6,000 but this is unlikely.
\textsuperscript{24} Nep. \textit{Iph.} 1.3.
\textsuperscript{25} Hamilton, \textit{Agesilaus}, 116.
After having regained some degree of power in the wake of Konon's exploits, Athens was forced to give up control of all its allied states except Lemnos, Imbros, and Skyros.\textsuperscript{26} Later writers from antiquity addressing these events seem to suggest Persia's ultimatum was a serious blow to Konon's objectives.\textsuperscript{27} His primary intention appears to have been the renewal of Athenian hegemony in the downfall of Sparta, and the forced peace hindered any immediate possibility for progress to this end.\textsuperscript{28}

The era of the King's Peace is generally characterized by Sparta's energetic enforcement of its nominal hegemony.\textsuperscript{29} While unsurprising, the corresponding process in the 380s and early 370s of dismantling all confederacies that could oppose Spartan hegemony ultimately backfired. Once committed to this course of action, however, Sparta simply found it impossible to disengage. Two events in particular strained Atheno-Lacedamonean relations to the breaking point and pushed Sparta to the brink of disaster. These events also gave strong pretext for the formation of the Second Athenian League and thus directly affected the necessity of such an institution.

The first of these events occurred when Spartan allies suggested an army be raised to subdue rising Olynthos in the north.\textsuperscript{30} A strike force of two thousand emancipated helots, free

\textsuperscript{26} Xen. \textit{Hellenika}, 5.1.31.
\textsuperscript{28} Robin Seager, "Thrasybulus, Conon and Athenian Imperialism, 396-386 B.C." \textit{JHS} 87 (1967): 99. for further discussion on Konon's intentions.
\textsuperscript{29} Cargill, \textit{The Second Athenian League}, 189.
\textsuperscript{30} Xen. \textit{Hellenika}, 5.2.20-22.
\textit{peri}oikoi\textsuperscript{31} and \textit{Skiritai}\textsuperscript{32} was assembled and put under the command of Eudamidas.\textsuperscript{33} The troops not immediately available were put under the charge of Eudamidas' brother, Phoibidas, and were to follow him to the Chalcidice. En route, and while camped near Thebes, Phoibidas was drawn into a Theban factional dispute. Leontiades, the leader of the faction opposed to Ismenias, persuaded the ambitious but impulsive Spartan general to seize the Kadmeia and occupy it at night. Such an action clearly violated the spirit of the King's Peace\textsuperscript{34} and was otherwise problematic because Phoibidas had acted outside his authority.\textsuperscript{35} The expected reprisal, however, was undone by the argument of the Spartan king Agesilaos. He argued, apparently convincingly, that the actions of the young general had not in fact harmed Sparta, but had improved its position. On these grounds, Phoibidas escaped condemnation for the treacherous seizure of the Theban acropolis, and a Spartan force was sent to reinforce and garrison the Kadmeia.\textsuperscript{36}

Four years later, in 378, a second event transpired that resulted in even more immediate repercussions for the balance of political power in Greece. Sphodrias, the Spartan governor of Thespiai, was induced by unknown means\textsuperscript{37} to march ten thousand men overnight

\textsuperscript{31} \textit{Perioikoi}, or literally “dwellers around”, were inhabitants of various Laconian towns surrounding Sparta. They were technically free, but largely under the control of the Spartan state (despite not holding Spartan citizenship). They formed hoplite units, fighting on behalf of their stronger neighbor, and were also involved in manufacturing goods for the Spartans in the Classical era. See: Thucydides, Robert B. Strassler, and Richard Crawley. \textit{The Landmark Thucydides: A Comprehensive Guide to the Peloponnesian War}. (New York: Free Press, 1996), 591-2.

\textsuperscript{32} The \textit{Skiritai} were an elite corps of light infantry within the Lacedaemonian army. They occupied the left wing in engagements (the traditionally vulnerable side of the phalanx) and held other distinguished posts. Similar in status to the \textit{peri}oikoi, they hailed from a strategic and inhospitable area in northern Laconia. See: Thucydides, 5.67.

\textsuperscript{33} 382 BCE.


\textsuperscript{35} Xen. \textit{Hellenika}, 5.2.32.

\textsuperscript{36} Xen. \textit{Hellenika}, 5.2.35-6.

\textsuperscript{37} Xenophon suggests a monetary bride in \textit{Hellenika} 5.4.20.
and attack the Athenian port of Piraeus.\textsuperscript{38} Actual political backing from Sparta is conjectured, with Diodorus (a vehement anti-Spartan historian) singling out king Kleombrotus as prime instigator in the plot.\textsuperscript{39} Xenophon, an admirer of Spartan institutions and king Agesilaus in particular, is silent concerning specific guilt aside from perhaps Sphodrias' impetuousness.\textsuperscript{40}

The raid wholly failed due to a glaring miscalculation of distance and marching speed. As dawn broke, the Spartan army found itself still some miles from their destination with the element of surprise lost.\textsuperscript{41} Both Xenophon and Diodorus agree that Konon had begun the process of rebuilding the Long Walls after his successful appeal to Pharnabazos.\textsuperscript{42} Xenophon now adds that Sphodrias was spurred on in his purpose by the fact that the gates of Piraeus were not yet completed.\textsuperscript{43} The failure of the army to arrive nullified this advantage and put Sphodrias in an unusual position. Instead of retreating with haste or any attempts at diplomacy with Athens, he proceeded to ravage the surrounding countryside before departing.

Three Spartan ambassadors were present in Athens at this point, and they were at once seized in response to the abortive raid on the Piraeus.\textsuperscript{44} They were, however, successful in arguing that they had no previous knowledge that such an action was going to take place. They also assured the agitated Athenians that Sphodrias was certain to be tried and executed for acting without legitimate authority.\textsuperscript{45}

\textsuperscript{38} Xen. \textit{Hellenika}, 5.4.20-1.  
\textsuperscript{39} Diod. 15.29.5.  
\textsuperscript{40} Xen. \textit{Hellenika}, 5.4.20.  
\textsuperscript{41} The army ended up around Thria, by my own calculation roughly 10 miles from the port of Piraeus...a stunning miscalculation by a well-trained Spartan general.  
\textsuperscript{43} Xen. \textit{Hellenika}, 5.4.20.  
\textsuperscript{44} The detail that there so happened to be three Spartan ambassadors in Athens capable of negotiating the interests of Sparta at precisely the moment Sphodrias attempted his assault seems suspect, but is ultimately unenlightening information.  
\textsuperscript{45} Xen. \textit{Hellenika}, 5.4.22-24.
The crisis only deepened when Sphodrias was tried in absentee and acquitted of all charges. Agesilaus did not dispute his guilt, but rather insisted that Sphodrias had always performed his duties as a Spartan admirably prior to the ill-advised action against the Piraeus. Not even Xenophon, consistently partial to Sparta throughout his history, could justify the acquittal, a flagrant miscarriage of justice. For Diodorus, Sparta’s handling of the trial was the final straw that prompted the Athenians to complete construction of their defenses and form a defensive alliance against Sparta. This alliance, the Second Athenian League, was thus formed under these circumstances, in which no other alternative was possible. War was now inevitable, although what form it would take and where exactly it would be fought were two matters still largely uncertain.

In summation, consistently throughout the first two decades of the fourth century, Athens willingly sought to re-establish some form of external network with itself in command. While this occasionally manifested itself in direct efforts to revive a semblance of the empire—most explicit in the policies of Konon and Thrasybulus—Athens’ ambitions were largely checked by Persia and the terms of the King's Peace. The aggressive and pre-emptive actions of Sparta, especially those of Phoibidas and Sphodrias, necessitated the formation of an Athenian alliance.

The next task is to examine the specific conduct of Athens prior to the League's formation. The intentions of the League, and the role it filled in Greek politics following its

46 Ibid. 5.4.32.
48 Diod. 15.29.7.
inception cannot possibly be understood without first examining Athenian foreign policy from 404-377.
Chapter 2: Athenian Diplomacy and Foreign Policy in the Early 4th Century

The first few years after Lysander captured and dismantled the Long Walls at Athens were wracked with internal turbulence to a degree where serious pursuit of regaining empire was utterly abandoned. Historical evidence for Athenian foreign policy between 404/3 and the formation of the Second Athenian League in 377 is tantalizingly thin, but we can look to epigraphy to aid in reconstructing a partial history of this period. In addition, scattered historical sources exist that, while perhaps not addressing the immediate questions of imperialism, allude to a reformed Athens.

Andocides, for instance, talks explicitly about the benefits of peace for Athens before an Athenian Assembly contemplating a continuation of war in 392/1.49 His tone is unabashedly boastful that during the reconstruction period following the disaster in 404, Athens had made great strides toward regaining former prestige. Peace, Andocides argues, facilitated this situation, as opposed to war. Perhaps his most crucial argument is the distinction between accepting peace and accepting a truce: “εἰρήνη γὰρ καὶ σπονδαὶ πολὺ διαφέρουσι σφῖν αὐτῶν.”50 This language is intended to reassure the Athenian Assembly that agreeing to cessation of hostilities need not be adopted from a position of weakness, but rather prudence. His line of reasoning would be echoed by many influential thinkers and orators throughout the

49 Andocides, On the Peace With Sparta, 1.10-12.
50 Andocides, On the Peace, 1.11. “For a peace and a truce differ greatly.”
first half of the fourth century—including Xenophon’s optimistic treatise on Athenian financial
revival written in 354 entitled *Poroi.*

Even prior to Andocides' recognition of resurgence, however, inscriptions paint a picture of emboldened political posturing in Athens concerning foreign policy. The best example of these inscriptions is the decree on the so-called *Dionysius I* stele. This particular stele honors Dionysius of Syracuse, but is important in its posturing for sympathy of the anti-Spartan cause apparently growing in Greece. A similar stele, dated roughly to the same period, honors Evagoras of Salamis and even champions him as a defender of Greek freedom for his role at Knidus. Taken together, these and other inscriptions do not resemble desperate acts of defiance by a cowed and frightened democratic population, but a reinvigorated political core inclined to pursue aggressive diplomatic policy.

Athens was also active during this time in arbitration between city-states at variance with one another. One such instance is the arbitration between Miletus and Myus, and another is the case of Erythrae. The former cannot be dated precisely, but likely originates from 391-388, while the latter can be dated to the period immediately preceding the formation of the Second League (c. 386). The inscription regarding Erythrae is an attempt to reconcile the people of the city with those exiled. The last line also acknowledges the city’s fear of being

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51 Toward the end of this work (5.11-13), Xenophon reminds the Athenians that peace advances a democracy, and war without provocation diminishes it.
53 Rhodes, P.J. and Osborne, Robin, *Greek Historical Inscriptions* 50-4.
54 We also have inscriptions honoring Clazomenae (387/6) and Phanocritus of Parium (386), before a pivotal inscription dealing with Chios.
56 Rhodes, P.J. and Osborne, Robin, *Greek Historical Inscriptions*, 70-6.
“[given] up . . . to the barbarians" and thus must postdate the first attempted peace talks of Antalcidas with Persia in 392/1.57 Such details provided by epigraphy are largely unsupported directly in literary sources, but fit well with the narratives we do have. Two notable inscriptions plainly bear out this truth, and yield the first authentic proof of a revived maritime alliance.

In the first case, we find Athens fixing fines in the event of offense to the Eteokarpathians.58 Rhodes, Kos, and Knidos were also bound by oath to intervene on behalf of the Karpathians should they request assistance. If any party were to violate the terms of this agreement, the case would be settled by the Athenian thesmothetai.59 By establishing itself as the authoritative actor in this arrangement, Athens was once again asserting dominance in the wider Aegean, at least diplomatically.60 The dating of this act is not precise, but is certainly somewhere between 394 and 389.61

The Peace of Antalcidas in 387 separates this first case from the second. As previously mentioned, by the terms stipulated in the peace of 404, Athens was allowed to keep the islands of Lemnos, Imbros, and Skyros. Thrasybulus had managed to expel several Spartan garrisons in the Aegean and ensure that the critical grain supply through the Hellespont was open, but his untimely death in 389 slowed Athens' momentum.62

Xenophon gives a brief sketch of limited Athenian success in the Hellespont under the mercenary captain Iphikrates, followed by a lingering setback resulting from Aeginetan/Spartan

57 Ibid, 75.
59 These were the junior members of the city's archontes, and were primarily responsible for interpreting law.
60 Perlman, "Athenian Democracy", 262.
61 Hamilton, Sparta's Bitter Victories, 289.
piracy in Attica itself and surrounding waters. Indeed, these events, plus a raid on the Piraeus and a new Spartan/Persian blockade of shipping routes in the Hellespont, were enough to compel Athens to accept the terms of the King's Peace in 387.

This prefaces the second case of inscriptive evidence mentioned above. The engraving comes to us in the form of a stele fragmented into five pieces. Although some of the lines are lost, an excellent understanding of the writing is possible. Appeals to old ties of friendship extending back into the fifth century between Athens and Chios open the substantive portion of the stele. Following is the line, "Praise the people of Chios, and the envoys who have come," establishing that this was a mission received and not instigated by Athens (or at least presented that way).

The appeal was evidently for a "bilateral defensive alliance within the framework of the [King's] Peace," which was to "remain in force for all time." The nuance of the language reveals the caution with which both parties knew they must operate. As Diodorus states, the statutes of the King's Peace were absolutely enforceable by means of Persian intervention. These same terms had already been invoked at least twice by Sparta in breaking up the Boeotian Confederacy (386) and splitting Mantinea into its four ancestral parts (385/4).

Perhaps ambiguity existed for exactly what constituted a breach of the Peace, or how it might

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64 Ibid, 5.1.1-30.
65 Rhodes, P.J. and Osborne, Robin, Greek Historical Inscriptions, 82.
66 For a concise paper on the relationship of Chios and Athens leading up to this treaty, see I. A. F. Bruce, "The Alliance Between Athens and Chios in 384 B.C." Phoenix 19 (1965): 281-284.
67 IG, II2, 35, Lines 16-17.
69 IG, II2, 35, Line 35.
70 Diod. 14.110.3.
71 Xen. Hellenika, 5.1.32-5.2.7.
be enforced. Athens, regardless, left no room for interpretation that both parties were to
remain entirely autonomous, as stipulated by the King's Peace.

An external association between adherents to the prevailing Peace was a novel
construction in post-Corinthian War Greece. No evidence survives to hint at attempts in
forming such an alliance until the Chios/Athens alliance of 384/3. What remains, then, is a
remarkable prelude to the Second Athenian League as Spartan hegemony continued to create
friction in virtually every corner of the Greek world.\textsuperscript{72}

\textsuperscript{72} Rhodes, P.J. and Osborne, Robin, Greek Historical Inscriptions, 86.
Chapter 3: Formation of the League

Phoibidas' seizure of the Theban Kadmeia in 382 and the Sphodrias debacle in 378 only served to renew Athenian commitment to form bilateral defensive alliances. Epigraphy once again bears testimony to this, shedding light on a topic that Xenophon appears to go out of his way to avoid.\(^73\) Diodorus, however, provides a brief outline of the events surrounding the formation of the Second League, supplying an essential literary outline to supplement the existing epigraphy.

In the face of mounting Spartan aggression, Diodorus asserts, the Athenians sent ambassadors to many Aegean cities that remained under Lacedaemonian control. The rallying cry was to "adhere to the common cause of liberty,"\(^74\) with an implicit admission that Sparta ruled over its subjects harshly. The deposition supposedly was successful, as many city-states were immediately willing to break away from the Lacedaemonians.\(^75\)

Chios and Byzantium responded first, if we are to believe Diodorus, although his chronology may be erroneous.\(^76\) In reality, the prompt response of these two city-states should not be at all startling. As we have seen, Chios had existing ties with Athens prior to 378, and the Athenians were perpetually active in the Hellespont, attempting to fortify grain supply routes during the fourth century. Other cities soon came over to the Athenian cause, in large part due

\(^73\) Xenophon fails to even address the actual formation of the Second League, a glaring omission from an otherwise comparatively complete narrative for this period. In 5.4.34, he surreptitiously avoids direct mention of it in what appears to be intentional exclusion. In the entirety of the *Hellenika*, he only references it by name once (6.5.2).
\(^74\) Diod. 15.28.2.
\(^75\) Diod. 15.28.2.
\(^76\) Diod. 15.28.3.
to the fact that Athens was claiming to found an alliance based on membership equality.\textsuperscript{77} At least at the outset, Athens was keenly aware of how large the failings of the earlier Delian League would loom in the minds of potential members and was quick to reassure them that this would not be a repeat.

Still, there seems to be a missing portion of the equation here. How can we account for Diodorus’ assertion that the cities came over to Athens in great deserts?\textsuperscript{78} Are we to believe Spartan rule alone was truly that abhorrent? And with the “threat” removed (i.e., Spartan garrisons), and democracy not mandated by the liberating generals, why now turn to Athens for a new defensive maritime alliance? As it turns out, one impetus was likely due to a threat, but was far from one of novel construction.

As Thrasybulus\textsuperscript{79} and later Konon\textsuperscript{80} moved to support the overthrowing of Spartan ἁρμοσταί\textsuperscript{81} around the Aegean, they must have considered the same factors that their ancestors did nearly a century earlier. The question of how to handle the Greeks living in the liminal space (Ionia and islands in close proximity) between the Greeks and Persians stretched back well before the Persian Wars of the early fifth century. Herodotus recounts a pivotal conference after the Greek victory at Mycale in 479, where the fate of the Ionians is to be decided by the Spartans and Athenians. The challenge was balancing the daunting task of guarding the cities “forever” and risking the retribution of the barbarians. Sparta was in favor of

\textsuperscript{77} Diod. 15.28.4.
\textsuperscript{78} Diod. 15.28. 2.
\textsuperscript{81} The Spartan term for resident governors with military connotation. Literally, “joiner”. These were the commanders of garrisons set up during the Spartan hegemony to safeguard Spartan interests and ensure oligarchic systems of governance in their territories.
depopulating all city-states that had medized during the invasions and repopulating them with exiles. Athens, likely with an eye toward future empire, protested the relocation of its colonists, and argued the case for a defensive maritime alliance.82

While no more large-scale Persian invasions of the Greek mainland were to occur, the position of Ionia and the islanders was always in flux. Persia, the wealthy third party with a hand seemingly in every aspect of Greek politics of the fourth century, still represented a threat to the Ionians. Real or imagined, this threat—coupled with distaste for Spartan authority—helps contextualize Diodorus’ comments. As we have seen, the overthrow of oligarchy in the fourth century BCE did not necessarily precipitate an immediate adoption of democracy.83 One effect of the regime change was to expose the newly freed city-states and islands to the threat of Persian rule and open up new possibilities for reshaping the Aegean political landscape.

Thrasybulus and Konon had set Athens on a course toward maritime revival, but neither would live to see the fruition of his efforts. Their legacy, nevertheless, culminated in the determined Athenian response to Spartan aggression in the latter half of the 380s and into the next decade. The role reversal of Sparta from self-proclaimed liberator of the Greeks during the Peloponnesian War to its menacing and overbearing behavior during this time period is curious, but perhaps not entirely unexpected. After the relatively brief setback with the outcome of the Corinthian War and the resultant King’s Peace, Athens was ready, at least ideologically, to become a major player in Aegean politics once again—and Sparta provided the justification.

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82 Herodotus, 9.106.
83 For an example of this phenomenon in Rhodes around 397, see: I. A. F. Bruce, "The Alliance Between Athens and Chios in 384 B.C." Phoenix 19 (1965): 281.
The Stele of Aristoteles

In response to the attempted raid on the Piraeus by Sphodrias in 378, the Athenian Assembly determined that the basic tenets of the King’s Peace had been broken. Our sources here, Xenophon and Diodorus, agree that this maneuver—and Sparta’s subsequent refusal to punish Sphodrias—effectively ended the already uneasy truce between the Athenians and Lacedaemonians. While both authors are in accord regarding the general course Athens took after the breach, they each add their own details.

Xenophon, focusing on Sparta in his usual manner, is brief in describing how Athens began at once to construct gates at the Piraeus to safeguard its naval interests, rebuild its fleet, and actively assist the Boeotians in their struggle against Sparta.

Diodorus, presenting a somewhat more Atheno-centric narrative, offers a few welcome details. He adds that Athens declared war; chose three generals (Timotheus, Chabrias, and Kallistratus) to lead their cause; voted upon the number of troops to commit; admitted Thebes to its counsel; and voted to restore its former kleruchies. The next step was to consolidate and formalize existing ties into a league under the alleged purpose of preserving the autonomy of individual city-states from the oath-breaking Lacedaemonians. This league has

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84 Xen. Hellenika 5.4.34. and Diod. 15.29.7.
85 Xen. Hellenika 5.4.34.
86 Diod. 15.29.7-8.
87 Timotheus was the son of Konon, victor at Knidus.
88 An impressive force of 20,000 hoplites, 500 cavalry, and 200 crewed ships.
become known to us as the Second Athenian League, and its statues and list of members were
carved in stone and displayed publically within a year of the Sphodrias debacle.

The prospectus for the Second Athenian League of 378/7 has fortuitously been
preserved on twenty fragments of a stele, recovered from the Athenian agora. Commonly
known as the Decree of Aristoteles, the stele is our single best source for the League.90 The
readings of the inscriptions are imperfect and allow for a degree of ambiguity for translation in
some cases, but the stele preserves well the overall nature of the alliance.

Aristoteles, a writer of speeches for the Athenian law court, is identified as the
individual proposing the alliance. The stele has received full scholarly treatment on four
occasions,91 making an entire translation and reconstruction here unnecessary. The language of
the stele at certain points, however, is of great importance and will be translated and
examined. Lines 7-12 state the reasons for the League’s formation:

τύχη̂ν αγαθήν τῆι Α-
θηναίων καὶ τ[ω]ν [συμμ]άχων τῶν Αθηναίω-
ν ὅπως ἄν Λακε[δ]αιμόνιοι ἔωσι τὸς Ἑλλη-
10 νας ἐλευθέ[ρ]ος [καὶ] αὐτόνομος ἴσηχιαν
ἀγειν τῆ[ν χώραν] ἔχοντας ἐμ βεβαιῶι τῆ-
[ν ἑαυτῶν . . . ]92

For the good fortune of the Athenians
and of the allies of the Athenians.
In order that the Lacedaemonians might let the Greeks
10 be free and autonomous, and in peace
holding their own land in safety . . .

91 Busolt (1874), Marshall (1905), Accame (1941), and Cargill (1981), the latter of whose work is of particular
interest to this paper.
92 I use the Rhodes and Osborne system everywhere degradation of the lines has occurred except for lines 12-5.
The translations, unless otherwise noted, are my own. See: Rhodes, P.J. and Osborne, Robin, Greek Historical
Inscriptions, 92.
The inscription presents the Spartans as clear aggressors, and their actions—alluded to but not named—the prime motivator for initiating the alliance. The rallying cry is autonomy and freedom, with the promise of peace. As far as the language is concerned, clearly this was meant to be a defensive coalition bent on preserving the ideals of the King’s Peace.

Lines 12-15 are severely degraded, but are crucial for understanding the limits of the treaty and where Athens intended to stand in relation to Persia. Using the best reconstructions available, we are able to distinguish the following:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ικ\[. . \]οσ[. . 5. . ]ημ[. . ]αι} \\
[. . . . . . . . 30. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . \alpha} \\
[. . . 11. . . ]\alpha\pi[. . ]\sigma[. . ]\epsilon[. . ]\sigma[. . 6. . ]\omega\sigma[. \nu} \\
15 \quad [. . 5. . \text{ ύψηφίσθαι τωι δήμωι}^94
\end{align*}
\]

“... so that the peace and friendship sworn by the Greeks and the King may be in force and endure in accordance with the agreements, let it be decreed by the people...”

Athens has claimed in lines 7-12 to be creating a new system to mend Spartan grievances, thus ensuring the terms of the King’s Peace. These next lines 12-15 make absolutely clear that Athens is not attempting to renegotiate the terms of the Peace, but is actually promising to uphold and defend them. The careful historian will note that Leuktra and the true exposure of the depleted Spartan state was still six years in the future at the time this stele

93 We are indebted to Accame, who claimed he could see faint traces of these lines. Modern studies have supported his work. Rhodes, P.J. and Osborne, Robin, Greek Historical Inscriptions, 101.
95 Rhodes, P.J. and Osborne, Robin, Greek Historical Inscriptions, 92.
96 The Battle of Leuktra in 371, where the Thebans, under the brilliant generalship of Epaminondas, crushed the Spartans in a large hoplite engagement.
was published in Athens. We must avoid historical self-determinism here and realize that the weakness of Sparta was several years yet to be revealed. Sparta might have already lacked the military capability of threatening the island states (the majority of signatories on the stele) in 377.97 The Athenians and their new allies, just as likely, had no notion that this was the case. Admittedly, the evidence for this claim is almost entirely circumstantial, but by 376 Sparta could only field sixty triremes against Chabrias.98 By 375, Sparta could only outfit fifty-five triremes against Timotheus.99 These dwindling numbers, however, contrast sharply with Athens rapidly expanding navy after 377.100

To the insular Aegean states witnessing these pitched clashes at sea, there must have been some consideration for their individual autonomy. And autonomy, as we have seen, was certainly a political tool that could be wielded with great effectiveness—as in the case of Sparta’s energetic dismantling of smaller alliances post-Corinthian War101—but our speculation should only be carried so far.

Without presuming ulterior motives on the part of Athens, there remains little to criticize considering Sparta’s behavior leading up to the League’s formation. One circumstance, however, had the potential to unravel the entire enterprise: Athens’ intentions toward those states already under the ownership of the king. Athens had no room to negotiate in this

97 Isok. Evagoras, 9.56. and Xen., Hellenika, 4.3.10-2. The entire Spartan fleet had been lost at Knidus in 394.
98 Xen., Hellenika, 5.4.61. Diodorus claims the number is sixty-five. Diod. 15.34.5.
99 Xen., Hellenika, 5.4.65.
100 Athens was capable of deploying 100 triremes in 376, and by the start of the Social War in 357, that number had increased to at least 283 and was perhaps as high as 383. See F.H. Marshall, The Second Athenian Confederacy (Cambridge: University Press, 1905), 106.
101 For example, the episode involving Olynthus and the Chalkidian League in 379, and Sparta’s willingness to break up Mantinea into its five ancestral villages as recounted in Diod. 15.5.1 and 15.12.2. This last episode, according to Diodorus, is actually what rekindled violence in Greece again.
matter—the political situation demanded a transparent notation that the League was only to be made of those not currently under the control of Persia. The king, otherwise, had every right by the terms of the King’s Peace to declare war—a war Athens was not prepared to fight, with or without allies. Lines 15-25 lay out the criteria for membership and the basic expectations prospective members might have:

15 εάν τις βόλ- [ηται τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἢ τῶν βαρβάρων τῶν ἐν [ἥπειρωι ἐν]ουκόντων ἢ τῶν νησιωτῶν, ὡς- [οι μὴ βασι]λέως εἰσίν, Ἀθηναίων σύμμαχ- [ος εἰναι κ]αὶ τῶν συμμάχων, ἔξειναι αὐ[τ]-

15 If anyone wishes, of the Greeks or barbarians dwelling on the mainland or of the islanders, those who are not of the King, to be allies of the Athenians and of (their) allies, it is to be allowed—
20 Being free and autonomous, ruled by any form of government he wishes, not accepting a garrison nor being under a governor nor bearing tribute, on those (same) conditions as the Chians and Thebans
25 and the other allies.

The stipulation that no state could enter this League if it were already under the rule of the king added legitimacy to the Athenian cause and stripped away any potential claims that Athens was attempting to usurp Persian domination of any Ionian states. The further guarantee

102 Rhodes, P.J. and Osborne, Robin, Greek Historical Inscriptions, 92-4.
of freedom and autonomy, without a ruling governor from Athens, an imposition of democracy, or requirement of tribute seems a bold step toward political harmony between allies. This is essential, for one of the marks against the Delian League of the fifth century was Athens’ despotic treatment of its allies.\textsuperscript{103} As J.B. Bury notes, eventually the Delian League allies fell into three categories: non-tributary allies responsible for providing ships, tributary allies that retained independence, and tributary allies completely subject to Athens.\textsuperscript{104}

Thucydides remarks early on in his work that “Athens had taken the ships of its allies over time . . . and drawn up a deal for them to contribute money.”\textsuperscript{105} The gradual reduction of allied naval power not only boosted Athens’ position in the years following the Persian invasions, but also removed the only real means by which an island city-state might defend itself. Their fate, therefore, largely rested in the hands of Athens, which began exacting tribute as a substitute for ships. The famous revolt of Mytilene in 428 was predicated on the point that, once the immediate threat from Persia had subsided, Athens had nefariously used the Delian League to its own personal advantage and finally enslaved the Greeks.\textsuperscript{106}

Any hope of re-establishing a maritime alliance would have to introduce assurances that these Delian League infractions would not be repeated. Lines 25-35 move next to address the possibly contentious issue of property ownership:

\begin{quote}
τοῖς δὲ ποισαμένοις συμμαχίαν πρὸς Ἀθηναίους καὶ τὸς συμμ[μ]άχος ἀφεῖναι τὸν δήμον τὰ ἐγκτήματα ὅποσ ἄν τυγχάνη ὄντα ἡ ἰδία ἢ [δ]-
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{103} Aristotle, \textit{Athenian Constitution}, 24.4. The exceptions are Chios, Lesbos, and Samos, which were allowed to retain their free status and remain autonomous.
\textsuperscript{105} Thucydides, 1.19. “Ἀθηναίοι δὲ ναῦς τῆς πόλεως τῷ χρόνῳ παραλαβόντες... καὶ χρήματα τοῖς πᾶσι τάξαντες φέρειν.”
\textsuperscript{106} Thuc. 3.9-14.
ημόσια Αθηναίων ἐν τῇ χρήσει τῶν ποιο-
30 μένων τὴν συμμαχίαν καὶ περὶ τούτων πι-
ίστιν δόναι αὐτοῖς. ἕναν δὲ ὑπὲρ τοῦ μι-
τῶν πόλεων τῶν ποιομένων τὴν συμμαχ-
iαν πρὸς Ἀθηναίων ἀνέπηλε ὅσαι Ἀθηνα-
ικῶν ἀνεπιτήδευσιν, τῇ δὲ μὴν τὴν ἄμελε-
35 χόρσαν κυρίαν εἶναι καθαρεῖν.107

25 And those who make an alliance
with the Athenians and the allies,
the people108 are to give up the property,
however much there might be, being held in foreign territory
either private or common,
30 in the lands of those making the alliance and about
these things, they109 are to give a pledge. And if there
happens to be of the cities making the alliance
with the Athenians inconvenient stelai,
the council at the time being
35 will have the authority to take them down.

Another benefit for Athens during the time of the Delian League was the acquisition of
foreign property.110 Poorer Athenian citizens could hope to improve their social positions by
settling in allied territory, and rich Athenians could benefit from overseas property as well. This
phenomenon of poor Athenians becoming overseas property owners may have had the effect,
intentionally or not, of relieving social tension in the capital itself. Having an outlet and source
of social mobility kept the interests of the rich and poor aligned to a degree impossible without
the structure and framework of the Delian League. The Second League, at least at the outset,

107 Rhodes, P.J. and Osborne, Robin, Greek Historical Inscriptions, 94.
108 Meaning the Athenian demos.
109 Again, the Athenians.
claims not only that this practice will become illegal among the allies, but that land already in the hands of Athenians abroad will be returned to the respective allied states.\textsuperscript{111}

The mention of “inconvenient stelai” simply refers to existing sources of tension between Athens and potential members. Having these stelai demolished would be another added incentive to join. Athens had been reduced economically following the dissolution of the Delian League, but still functioned as a major player in maritime trade and business in the fourth century, in a way Sparta never could. A mechanism was now in place for efficient removal of recorded wrong, and more importantly, no veiled threats for failure to join.

Lines 35-46 go into further detail on property, making it illegal for Athenian citizens to acquire so much as a house, by any means, in allied territory. The failsafe mechanism is the ability for anyone to appeal a violation of this rule by summoning σύνεδροι\textsuperscript{112} and presenting their case. If the charges were validated, the illegally gained property would be split, with half going to the accuser and half to the common property of the allies. The Athenians have left the power to judge these matters wholly in the hands of their allies, offering yet another measure of authority.

Lines 46-51 establish the League as a multilateral enterprise, especially in times of war:

\begin{verbatim}
εάν δέ τι-
ζ [η] ἐπὶ πολέμωι ἐπὶ τ[ὀ]ς ποιησαμένος
tὴν συμμαχίαν ἢ κατὰ γ[ῆ]ν ἢ κατὰ θάλαττ-
αν, βοηθεῖν Ἀθηναίος καὶ τὸς συμμάχος
50 τούτως, καὶ κατὰ γῆν καὶ κατὰ θάλαττα-
ν παντὶ σθένει κατὰ τὸ δυνατὸν.\textsuperscript{113}
\end{verbatim}

\textsuperscript{111} The hope of reacquiring overseas territory lost in the disaster of 404 was finally dashed for thousands of Athenians by the terms of this new agreement between allies. See Diod. 15.29.7-8.
\textsuperscript{112} Council delegates made of alliance members.
\textsuperscript{113} Rhodes, P.J. and Osborne, Robin, \textit{Greek Historical Inscriptions}, 94.
If anyone makes war against those who have made the alliance either by land or by sea, Athens and the allies are to assist them both by land and by sea, with all (their) might, as much as possible.

The remainder of the stele is devoted to the penalties for attempting to change any part of the original principles upon which the League was founded, the placement for the stele itself, the amount to be paid for its construction, and an important mission of three delegates to be sent at once to Thebes for negotiating its prospective incorporation into the League.

The listing of the those joining the League begins and includes (among others): Chios, Mytilene, Methymna, Rhodes, Byzantium, Thebes, Chalcis, and Eretria. In total, the list contains upward of fifty-some city-states and factions of people that have joined the League. Degradation of the stone upon which the names are carved has caused some uncertainly as to the total number of names inscribed, and in some cases names appear to have been scratched out deliberately.

To summarize, the Second Athenian League was presented not to destroy the King’s Peace, but to uphold it as defensive alliance against the aggressive and overbearing...
Lacedaemonians. Each member was guaranteed to receive aid in the case of attack by any and all means available to the rest of the members. Membership was prohibited to those already under the rule of Persia, a strategy balancing caution with determination. The rights of autonomy, self-governance, and property were protected under oath, with judges to be raised from the member states themselves. Tribute, a primary and despised means by which the earlier Delian League had originally gained its empire, was prohibited. Lastly, to ease further the apprehension of its members, any alteration to the initial inscribed tenets of the alliance was forbidden upon threat of exile or capital punishment.

With the new treaty in place, Athens now looked to the rebuilding of its fleet and any way to irritate the Lacedaemonians and foment insurrection without provoking the ire of the Persians. The Spartans were still nominal hegemons charged with the responsibility of enforcing the King’s Peace, which the Athenians accused them of breaking. The next few years would define what sort of an alliance this would be in reality, and determine whether Athens was capable of learning from its mistakes with the Delian League nearly a century before.
Chapter 4: The League in Politics and Practice: 377-355

We know from Xenophon’s *Hellenika* that most Spartan military action from 379-6 was centered in Boeotia. Athens had fought on the side of Thebes during the Corinthian War, but since the mid-380s had been more concerned with balancing the power of its troublingly ascendant neighbor. After Phoibidas’ capture of the Theban Kadmeia in 382, however, Athens began a process of strengthening ties with its northern competitor to counter Spartan aggression. We find Thebes’ name inscribed on the *stele* of Aristoteles not by accident, but as a result of a process of political maneuvering.

Just prior to the official formation of the Second League, Athens had provided refuge and a base of operations from which the Theban exiles could launch a coup.\(^{120}\) Plutarch recounts how Pelopidas, a young and impassioned Theban in exile at Athens, exhorted his fellow expatriates to march on the Kadmeia. He had a persuasive arguing point, in that it was from Thebes in 403 that an exiled Athenian, Thrasybulus, had launched his assault upon the oligarchs and retaken Athens.\(^{121}\) In 379, Pelopidas succeeded in gathering the exiles together for an attempt on the Spartan-garrisoned acropolis.\(^{122}\) A fierce storm aided the exiles as they ran about the streets of Thebes assassinating the oligarchic leaders. More exiles were recalled from Attica, and, as dawn broke, the Thebans woke to find Pelopidas in full control of the city with the Spartans confined to the acropolis.\(^{123}\) The subsequent assault on the acropolis resulted

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\(^{120}\)Plutarch, *Life of Pelopidas*, 7.1.

\(^{121}\) Plut. *Pelopidas*, 7.2.

\(^{122}\) Twelve men set out from Athens; once received by sympathizers in Thebes, their number was still only 48.

\(^{123}\) Plut. *Pelopidas*, 11-12.
in the surrender of the garrison, on the condition that the occupiers might be allowed to leave unharmed. The narrowness of the victory was confirmed by the fact that the retreating occupiers met their intended reinforcements near Megara, not far from Thebes.\textsuperscript{124}

Diordorus’ version of this episode adds the detail that a desperate appeal for help from the exiles to Athens was met with success after a vote by the Athenian Assembly.\textsuperscript{125} Xenophon’s account, however, emphasizes the private nature of the assistance lent by Athens.\textsuperscript{126} Seeing that Sparta’s immediate retaliation was directed toward Boeotia and no official protest came to Athens, Xenophon’s explanation emerges as more convincing. Whatever the reality, the raid of Sphodrias and formation of the League\textsuperscript{127} followed these events and pitted Thebes and Athens against Sparta.

Athens largely falls out of Xenophon’s account in the immediate aftermath of the Theban coup, as the conflict between the Thebans and Lacedaemonians heated rapidly. The Spartan King Agesilaus twice invaded Boeotia during this time, with varying degrees of success, before he fell ill and was forced to retire to Sparta.\textsuperscript{128} According to Diodorus, Athens began its successful recruiting campaign during this period, frightening the Spartans to the degree that they initiated diplomatic missions promising better treatment of their allies in attempts to win

\textsuperscript{125} Diod. 15.26.1.
\textsuperscript{126} Xenophon, \textit{Hellenika}, 5.4.19.
\textsuperscript{127} Due to dating discrepancies between our sources, we cannot ascertain which event occurred first. The author has treated Diodorus’ dating as erroneous, seeing that the reaction from Athens is better explained as a reaction to the raid. For the timeline see Plut., \textit{Agesilaus}, 26.1. and Xen. \textit{Hellenika}, 5.4.34.
\textsuperscript{128} Xenophon, \textit{Hellenika}, 5.4.47-57. Sparta is successful in ravaging the land around Thebes and punishing some of the allies, but cannot take the city once the grain supply has been assured.
them back.\textsuperscript{129} Sparta could afford to show no outward weakness, though, and assiduously prepared for war.\textsuperscript{130}

The intervening period between the Theban coup and Leuktra is also where Diodorus places the war between Persia and Acornis, king of the Egyptians, of which several other authors\textsuperscript{131} from antiquity make mention. His dating is again, in all probability, erroneous. He places the events during the Theban-Lacedaemonian conflict, but there is good evidence to suggest an earlier dating of 385-3.\textsuperscript{132} Owing to the ongoing Peace of Antalcidas after 387, Egypt and Cyprus were left alone to fend off the invasions of Artaxerxes II. Acornis appealed to the Athenian general Chabrias—the same Chabrias chosen as one of the three delegates to negotiate Thebes into the Second Athenian League some years later—who promptly took command of the forces fighting against Artaxerxes II.\textsuperscript{133}

He was eventually recalled by the Athenians, who had cut a deal with Pharnabazus, the Persian satrap in charge of the army, in order to remain in good standing with the Persian King.\textsuperscript{134} The recall had to have occurred by 380, because Xenophon places Chabrias in charge of Athenian forces defending Thebes against the Spartan king Kleombrotus in 379.\textsuperscript{135}

After Xenophon’s vague reference to the formation of some alliance against Sparta (378) in \textit{Hellenika} 5.4.34,\textsuperscript{136} we do not hear any specific mention of Athens until Chabrias

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Diod. 15.28.4.
\item Diod. 15.28.5.
\item Isocrates, 4.140; Demosthenes 20.76; Nepos, \textit{Chabrais}, 2.1.
\item Diod. 15.29.2. This was done without official approval from Athens. An official endorsement by the Athenian Assembly at this point could have shattered the newly established peace. Chabrias’ circumventing of the process removed this danger.
\item Diod. 15.29.4.
\item Xen., \textit{Hellenika}, 5.4.14.
\item As close as he comes to mentioning the formation of the Second Athenian League.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
returns to the narrative again in charge of Athenian forces (376)\footnote{Xen., \textit{Hellenika}, 5.4.59-61.} in defense of Thebes. As Kleombrotus attempted to cross into Boeotia via the mountain pass of Cithaeron, Chabrias set an ambush that forced the Spartan king to retreat and essentially call off the entire campaigning season on land. A setback of this caliber resulted in general dissatisfaction among Sparta’s allies as to how the war was being conducted.\footnote{Xen., \textit{Hellenika}, 5.4. 60-1.}

We can surmise that this discontent was at least partially due to the formation of the Second Athenian League and its initial successes in recruiting.\footnote{To supplement our literary sources, we also possess a number of stele that record the admission of individual city-states into the League. Curiously, a few of the individual states admitted are repeats of names on the original prospectus for the League. This is likely a product of simple lag between the enactment and publication of the stele. See: Ehrenberg, Victor, and E. Badian. \textit{Ancient Society and Institutions}. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1967. and Rhodes, P.J. and Osborne, Robin, \textit{Greek Historical Inscriptions}, 108. For example, we know there were existing treaties between Athens and other city-states (as in the case of Chios) prior to the publication of the prospectus for the League. The oddity we observe in the multiple recordings of some of these names is likely a product of the difficulty in getting all treaties formalized at once.} The Peloponnesian allies next proposed going after Athens directly, but by sea rather than land. Sparta still had the resources necessary to build a navy comparable to the Athenian fleet, and could block access to the Piraeus, starving out the Athenians.\footnote{As discussed in Chapter 3, the Spartan navy was initially diminished after Knidos in 394, but was still strong enough to possibly push states towards the Second Athenian League up to at least 376 when Chabrias defeated the Spartan navarch Pollis at the Battle of Naxos.} This amounts to a dramatic recycling of the strategy that wore down the Athenians at the conclusion of the Peloponnesian War.\footnote{Athens lost nearly its entire fleet at Aegospotami in 405, and the blockade forced the surrender a year later in 404.} The allies had good reason to believe this strategy would succeed; as Athens had now rebuilt the Long Walls connecting it to the sea and had secured a potential source of inexhaustible resources. Waging large-scale land campaigns would likely only result in ravaging the Attic countryside.\footnote{For Sparta, committing to long-distance campaigns outside of Laconia was always a risk due to the potential of a helot revolt. Generally speaking, any strategy to keep the army closer to home was good for Sparta.}
Spartan allies were essentially demanding Sparta invest heavily in knocking out the true source of power for the thalassocracy.

Swayed by this reasoning, Sparta committed to outfitting sixty triremes and chose Pollis to be its navarch. The encirclement was a resounding success at the outset, as Athenian allied ships would not risk running the blockade, and a suddenly strained Athens now realized the only hope lay in breaking the siege with its own navy. The first direct consequences of forming the League were now upon Athens, and Athens again turned to Chabrias.

In the straits between Naxos and Paros, the conclusive battle was fought between Pollis and Chabrias.\footnote{Diod. 15.34.4., Xen. Hellenika 5.4.61, Plut. Phocion 6.} The result was a resounding victory for the Athenians, and Athens demonstrated for the first time since Arginusae in 406 that it could win a naval victory without Persian aid. The lessons of Arginusae were also not forgotten, however, as Chabrias did not follow up his rout of the Spartan ships with pursuit. Recalling the fate of those victorious Athenian generals before their own Assembly in 406, Chabrias deemed it wiser to recover the dead and thus allowed some part of the Spartan force to escape.\footnote{The lengthy ordeal involving the trial and execution of the generals caps the first book of the Hellenika. See Xen., Hellenika, 1.6.24-1.7.35.}

Victory at Naxos further legitimized the League, and Chabrias was even successful in bringing over other islands formerly hostile to Athens.\footnote{Demosthenes, Against Leptines, 20.77.} Timotheus, for his part, embarked on a naval mission around the Peloponnese to Kerkyra, which he brought under his control.\footnote{Xen., Hellenika, 5.4.64.} The matter of whether Kerkyra was admitted as a member of the Second Athenian League or to an
external alliance is a controversial topic, but the evidence makes clear that some form of alliance was in place between the two following the Battle of Naxos.\textsuperscript{147}

The cost of war was beginning to put a great strain on the Athenian economy, however, and was allowing Thebes to grow in power by shirking League responsibilities. Due to this, in 375/4 Athens concluded a peace with Sparta that was part of a larger common peace.\textsuperscript{148} Details of the peace are uncertain, but it appears Thebes objected and refused to ratify the peace, while still remaining in the League.\textsuperscript{149} Diodorus adds that Sparta acknowledged Athenian naval superiority while maintaining supremacy on land.\textsuperscript{150} The Thebans were now a strong tertiary contender for hegemony, but this concession made Athens nominally joint hegemon with Sparta.\textsuperscript{151}

Xenophon’s account includes mention of the treaty, but immediately skips forward roughly two years to 373, with Timotheus being recalled from Kerkyra by the Athenians.\textsuperscript{152} While en route back to Athens, however, he dropped off some Zacynthian exiles on their native island and sparked another round of desultory fighting when Sparta determined this was a breach of the peace.\textsuperscript{153}

The renewed hostilities resulted in a stalemate, with Sparta still the pre-eminent land force and Athens the maritime hegemon. By 371, Athens was exhausted from perpetual fighting and caught between its inveterate enemy, Sparta, and its problematic ally, Thebes. The

\textsuperscript{148} Xen., \textit{Hellenika}, 6.2.1; Diod. 15.38.2.
\textsuperscript{149} Diod. 15.38.3.
\textsuperscript{150} Diod. 15.38.4.
\textsuperscript{151} From the account in Diodorus, it also appears the Persian King had a hand in the treaty.
\textsuperscript{152} Xen., \textit{Hellenika}, 6.2.2.
\textsuperscript{153} Xen., \textit{Hellenika}, 6.2.3.
primary impetus for seeking peace in 371, Xenophon asserts, was the apprehension Athens had
toward the rapidly expanding power of Thebes. One of Xenophon’s few allusions to the
Second Athenian League comes from this episode: “ἐπὶ τούτοις ὠμοσαν Λακεδαίμονιοι μὲν
ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν καὶ τῶν συμμάχων, Αθηναῖοι δὲ καὶ οἱ σύμμαχοι κατὰ πόλεις ἐκαστοι.” From
this, we know Athens was allowing the cities in the League to swear individually the oath for
peace.

The call for peace was satisfactory to all parties except the Thebans, who originally
ratified, but then requested to sign on behalf of all Boeotia the following day. Agesilaus,
unwilling to accept this proposal, gave the ultimatum to abide by the truce the way it had been
written or withdraw from the enterprise entirely. The Athenians had found a way, so they
thought, of dealing with the Theban problem with no risk to themselves and without drawing
the ire of Sparta or the Persian King.

The response from the Thebans, however, exemplifies how much the political landscape
had shifted in the eight years since the Spartan garrison in their city had been overthrown. They
withdrew from the talks dejected yet willing to stake everything on this principle. While Athens
and the allies looked on, the Spartan King Kleombrotus entered Boeotia with a force of ten
thousand infantry and one thousand cavalry. Xenophon asserts that seven hundred soldiers
in the strike force were Spartiates.

154 Xen., Hellenika, 6.3.1-3.
155 “To these terms, the Spartans swore for themselves and their allies; and the Athenians also [swore] with the
156 This would essentially require Sparta to recognize Thebes as leader of a revived Theban confederacy.
157 Xen., Hellenika, 6.3.19-20.
159 Xen., Hellenika, 6.4.15. That is, Spartans with full citizen rights.
Kleombrotus offered battle near the village of Leuktra, about seven miles south of Thebes, and the Thebans arrayed for battle against them. Led by the brilliant general and tactician Epaminondas, the Thebans not only crushed the Spartan army, but also managed to kill Kleombrotus and four hundred Spartiates on the field. The magnitude of this victory and its impact on Sparta cannot be overstated. A full Spartan army being defeated in pitched battle was utterly unprecedented, and the death of a king in battle the first since Leonidas I fell in battle defending the pass at Thermopylae in 480.

Thebes now looked to Athens and the allies for assistance in the final push to subdue Sparta, but the Theban herald reporting victory and petitioning for support was not met enthusiastically at Athens. Instead of joining forces, Athens called a council and again ratified the King’s Peace, which still stipulated that all cities were to remain autonomous. The League had been incredibly successful in checking the power of Sparta, the original mandate, but now had to deal with an emboldened and aggressive Thebes.

Mantinea, meanwhile, took the reaffirming of the common peace to mean that the breaking up of its city into its four ancestral parts in 384 by Sparta had been illegal. In response to the reinstating of the Peace, and Sparta’s humiliating defeat at Leuktra, it began to

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160 Along with Pelopidas, who had led the Theban coup in 379.
161 Xen., Hellenika, 6.4.13-4.
162 Losing 400 Spartiates in a single battle was devastating to a Spartan state besieged by population issues already. See: Ian Morris and Barry B. Powell. The Greeks: History, Culture, and Society (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 2010), 377. The immediate danger had to be met with the promise of emancipation for any helot who would take up arms and defend the city. When 6,000 helots accepted this offer, the Spartans were initially fearful of their numbers, but were reassured when many reinforcing allies did not desert them. See: Xen., Hellenika, 6.5.28-9.
163 Xen., Hellenika, 6.4.19-20.
164 Xen., Hellenika, 6.5.1-3.
165 384.
rebuild its walls and unite as one city again.\textsuperscript{166} Xenophon neglects to address perhaps the two most humbling events for Sparta following Leuktra: the founding of Megalopolis in Arcadia and Epaminondas’ liberation of Messenia from Spartan rule.\textsuperscript{167}

Sensing that the balance of power had shifted, and with the Theban army having fought to within sight of the city at one point, Sparta turned to Athens for support.\textsuperscript{168} Corinth also advocated for assisting Sparta before the Athenian Assembly, and reminded them of their obligation under the terms of the Peace to come to the aid of any state under attack. While the arguments persuaded the Athenians, the relief force sent under Iphikrates did little to affect the overall situation, as Thebes retired from the campaigning season without offering further battle.\textsuperscript{169}

Thebes’ refusal to ratify the common peace in 371 had been tantamount to secession from the League. Furthermore, Athens could do nothing about it, although from the League’s point of view it affected little.\textsuperscript{170} In theory, the way the new treaty with Sparta was structured, Athens and the League were responsible for upholding the tenets of the original King’s Peace.

\textsuperscript{166} Xen., \textit{Hellenika}, 6.5.4.
\textsuperscript{167} Epaminondas founded Megalopolis (371) to be a center and capital of Arkadian independence. Its function was similar to the of Messene, in that it existed as a counterweight to Spartan power. Messenia had been subject to Sparta for hundreds of years. Their fertile land was a breadbasket for Sparta, and the local population worked the fields as \textit{helots}. Epaminondas reestablished their independence, invited refugees back to the land, and built the impressive walled city of Messene (369) to act as a check on Spartan power.
\textsuperscript{168} Xen., \textit{Hellenika}, 6.5.33-5.
\textsuperscript{169} Xen., \textit{Hellenika}, 6.5.49-52.
\textsuperscript{170} F.H. Marshall, \textit{The Second Athenian Confederacy} (Cambridge: University Press, 1905), 75. The main objective of the League was to reduce Sparta, and after Leuctra, the objective was complete. Marshall goes so far as to say the very fact Thebes ever joined the League was an anomaly, spawned out of hatred for the Spartans. Once the threat was reduced, Thebes had no use for a maritime alliance, as all her interests were traditionally land based. Epaminondas’ naval expedition in 364 calls this assessment into question, and will be dealt with fully in Chapter 6.
In reality, from roughly 370-362, Thebes operated with near-impunity and with the backing of Persia after the 367 conference at Susa.\textsuperscript{171}

The Theban hegemony, however, was to be short-lived. Xenophon’s \textit{Hellenika} concludes with the stunning battle of Mantinea in 362 that further crippled Sparta, but also put an end to Theban ambition.\textsuperscript{172} While a tactical victory for the Thebans, the battle was a strategic disaster. Epaminondas, so crucial to the success of the Theban forces in the field, was mortally wounded and beseeched his fellow Thebans from his deathbed to pursue a course of peace. Athens had fought with the Lacedaemonians at Mantinea, with no support from the allies, and claimed victory despite the rival Theban claim.\textsuperscript{173} Xenophon finishes his narrative by emphasizing that no party gained anything from the struggle, and Hellas, as a whole, was thrown into even greater chaos and uncertainty after Mantinea.

In summary, we see from 377-371 that Athens and the allies were successful in their objectives and countered the threat from Sparta. Following Leuktra, Thebes emerged as the new threat to autonomy and the League. The Theban hegemony lasted only until the Battle of Mantinea in 362, with the Social War among the League allies looming. The Social War can only be understood within the context of Theban politics and other political variables that require closer examination. From Mantinea in 362 to the start of the Social War in 357, and even as early as the late 370s, revolts had been taking place within the League. This phenomenon, however, as well as the details of the Social War, is best given its own treatment and thus will be studied in Chapter 5. Defections from the League between 371-355 are among the most

\textsuperscript{171} Marshall, \textit{The Second Athenian Confederacy}, 87-9.
\textsuperscript{172} Xen., \textit{Hellenika}, 7.5.15-27.
\textsuperscript{173} Xen., \textit{Hellenika}, 7.5.27.
compelling evidence for an imperialistic Athens and demand meticulous analysis.
Chapter 5: Collapse of the League

We must now turn to the evidence, such as it is, for determining to what degree, if any, Athens returned to aggressive imperialism as in the days of the Delian League. As laid out in Chapter 3, the pretext for the formation of the League and its statues were both reasonable and well-calculated. We might agree with Cargill that the League was “admirably conceived,” but share his stipulation that its function in practice would determine the true nature of the enterprise. After all, we already know the League disintegrated in the wake of the Social War and was hemorrhaging members even before this. The questions remain: What factors led to this, and how should we interpret the data?

Cargill has identified a number of apparent grievances traditionalists use to justify the accusation that Athens relentlessly pursued empire through the guise of a free alliance. The first is in regard to the supposed bypassing of an ally’s right to judge cases without Athenian interference, as guaranteed on lines 35-46 of the Stele of Aristoteles. Although no inscription survives that can attest to how the σύνεδροι were to be chosen and the office set up, the stele still makes it indisputably clear these matters were to be left to the allies.

The problem arises with two undated inscriptions, one addressed to the Syphnians and the other the Naxians. The first demands no Athenian be put to death abroad without the

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174 The author recognizes that the term “imperialism” has no settled definition that will satisfy all readers. Imperialism here is treated in possibly its simplest form: a policy in which a state exerts power or influence over another state that violates or neutralizes the latter state’s autonomy and right to self-governance.


participation of the Athenians and a trial. The Naxian inscription also appears to be referring to a law—this time on Naxos—and an external city, presumably Athens, involved in appellate matters. Cargill’s defense is the extremely uncertain restoration of the fragmented inscriptions. In addition, Naxos was possibly not a League member, although Syphnos most certainly was.\footnote{There is an additional inscription involving an abortive revolt on Chios, and this one is attached to a date: 362. The provisions regarding treatment of the exiles resulting from this event are actually quite moderate, and focused on damage control with the chance at fair trial. See Ibid, 138-40.}

Cargill also points toward evidence that might be considered as encouraging allied autonomy rather than Athenian encroachment. Lines 8-10 of an inscription dated to 375 and recovered from the Athenian agora read:

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ἐὰν δὲ τις προσενέγκῃ ἕξεν ἱκὸν ἀργύριον
ἐχον τὸν αὐτὸν χαρακτήρα τῷ Ἀττι[κῷ], ἐ[ἀν καλὸν,]
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“And if anyone brings forward [foreign silver] having the same character as the Attic [if it is good] 10 Grant it to him who bore it forward.” Essentially, this means coins minted outside Attika but adherent to the Attik standards were to be regarded as no different from Athenian coinage. This is a stunning reverse from fifth-century Athenian law, which mandated that all commerce with Athens be conducted with Athenian coinage, weights, and measures.\footnote{Cargill, \textit{The Second Athenian League}, 141.}

With what we have observed from the League thus far, this piece of epigraphical evidence fits well—for Athens was still building up the alliance in the first half of the 370s and was likely particularly cognizant of allied concerns at this point.

Two years after this dated inscription, however, we have seen that Timotheus was getting involved in Zakynthian affairs with provocative moves that immediately led to war with
Sparta. Cargill’s defense of this is that Zakynthos was a Spartan ally and thus not subject to the clause on the *Stele* of Aristoteles that guaranteed freedom to self-govern (lines 20-1). He also notes that Athens was quick to abandon this course anyway, realizing it would entangle itself further into another conflict with Sparta. Entanglement, as a result of allied responsibilities, had been a dangerous precedent in the Greek world since at least the fifth century. Thucydides labels it as the trigger that set off the Peloponnesian War, through the belligerence of Kerkyra and Korinth that drew in Athens and Sparta. At this early stage, in 373, Athens still needed to operate with caution and within the general guidelines of the King’s Peace.

Addressing the issue of tribute in the Second League, a virulently hated component of the Delian League and forbidden in Line 23 of the *Stele* of Aristotles, Cargill dismisses the notion definitively. In truth, the issue is much more complicated, and there is a wide range of opinion on the matter. The discrepancies are not novel to modern scholars, but stem from antiquity, where various authors found Athens to be disingenuous in its running the League.

The Greek word for tribute is φόρος, and it is outlawed unequivocally by the statues of the League. To operate the League, however, there had to be a system of income. As Marshall aptly notes, “it would be impossible for the Confederacy to get on without some form of

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180 The affair in which Timotheus was recalled to Athens but returned pro-Democratic Zacynthian exiles to their homeland in 373.
182 Thuc. 1.31-45. Athens also had ulterior motives, in that if Kerkyra were to fall to the Korinthians, the combined fleet and naval potential could rival that of Athens itself.
monetary assistance from the allies.” The answer to the problem was what Athens deemed σύνταξις, or roughly “contributions.” These would have to have been set early on, and in equal measure for each state, as the League was founded on the principle of member equality.

Plutarch’s scathing indictment in his Life of Solon gives basis for finding nefarious purpose behind the use of the word σύνταξις. He remarks that the Athenians were in the habit of “covering up unpleasant things with auspicious names” and uses the σύνταξις/φόρος comparison as a prime example. Still, Cargill insists this is simply anti-Athenian bias and that there is absolutely no evidence from the fourth-century that “any League member ever paid φόρος to Athens.

The final discussion Cargill offers on the “minor” issues before devoting himself to the massively more problematic questions of kleruchies and defections pertains to another clause on the Stele of Aristoteles (Lines 46-51). These are the lines that actually form the defensive alliance and establish its defensive nature. As we have seen, this clause entailed coming to the aid of any member state whose autonomy was threatened. Athens’ record, in this regard, seems above reproach.

Cargill lists the instances where member states were threatened, and notes that Athens responded each time. Rebutting, Cargill asserts that Athens was actually the state most wronged by this clause, as the call for help from Athens when Oropos was seized by the

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186 Isok., On the Peace, 8.36.
188 Plut., Life of Solon, 15.2-3.
189 Cargill, The Athenian League, 143.
190 To the Euboians (377/6), Thebans (376), Zakynthians (374), Akarnanians (373/2), Peparethians (361/0) and the Euboians again (357). See: Cargill, The Athenian League, 144.
Thebans in 366 went unanswered. Disappointed, the Athenians made a bilateral, external alliance with the Arkadian League in response.\textsuperscript{191}

The issue of Athenian settlements abroad is of great importance to any discussion of Athenian imperialism from the establishment of the first \textit{kleruchy} on Salamis in the sixth century.\textsuperscript{192} As discussed in Chapter 1, Lemnos, Imbros, and Skyros remained Athenian possessions throughout the existence of the League, and legally by the terms of the King’s Peace. Cargill’s argument is that because they were always owned by Athens, “there was no pledge to abandon all Athenian holdings ‘outside’ Attica . . . only holdings within the territory of states joining the League.”\textsuperscript{193} This neatly does away with the evidence from these three Athenian staples, but we are fortunate to have evidence for other \textit{kleruchies} from antiquity.

Both Diodorus and Aristotle attest to the fact that Athens had established a \textit{kleruchy} on Samos by ca. 365.\textsuperscript{194} But Samos was not a part of the League, and Demosthenes later claimed that Timotheus’ actions had actually been a liberation as opposed to an imposition.\textsuperscript{195} Timotheus also captured Poteidaia, but apparently the Potidaeans requested \textit{kleruchs} be sent to their territory, undermining any argument of violating the League charter.\textsuperscript{196}

Inscriptional evidence for \textit{kleruchies} in the territory of League members is all either “doubtful or ambiguous” according to Cargill, at least until the time of the Social War.\textsuperscript{197} Literary sources, however, seem to imply that garrisons were set up in League cities, especially

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{191} Cargill, \textit{The Athenian League}, 145.
  \item \textsuperscript{193} Cargill, \textit{The Athenian League}, 147.
  \item \textsuperscript{194} Diod. 18.18.9, and Aristotle, \textit{Rhetoric}, 1384b.
  \item \textsuperscript{195} Dem. \textit{On the Liberty of the Rhodians}, 15.9.
  \item \textsuperscript{196} Cargill, \textit{The Athenian League}, 149.
  \item \textsuperscript{197} Ibid. 153.
\end{itemize}
early on. For instance, Diodorus recounts the garrisoning of Abdera\textsuperscript{198} and other similar episodes, as Sparta and Athens sparred with one another down until the Spartan cataclysm at Leuktra.\textsuperscript{199}

This leads us to perhaps Cargill’s most significant point in his defense of Athenian garrisons. His claim is that at some point, early on in the existence of the League, the allies would have come to the conclusion that a strict adherence to the statues on the Stele of Aristoteles would result in failed objectives.\textsuperscript{200} On the surface, this notion seems a convenient way to explain away troublesome references, but the logic holds up well in the case of garrisons.

The primary objective of the League was defense of its members from Spartan encroachment, and this would likely have been impossible without Athenian military presence abroad. By the penalties established in the League charter,\textsuperscript{201} no Athenian citizen or allied member could suggest altering the statutes in any way, but clearly this statute must have been overridden at some point. The evidence, if we believe Cargill, is simply that the League continued to exist, and was quite successful in ultimately reducing the power of Sparta. Without the ability to adapt to wartime circumstances, the League might have been utterly ineffective and guaranteed to fail from its inception.\textsuperscript{202}

\textsuperscript{198}Diod. 15.36.4.
\textsuperscript{199}Cargill, \textit{The Athenian League}, 153-4.
\textsuperscript{200}Ibid., 154-60.
\textsuperscript{201}Lines 51-64 on the Stele of Aristoteles.
\textsuperscript{202}This last claim should come with the caveat that Sparta was reduced on land almost singlehandedly by Thebes, and the League had little to do with it. Even though Thebes was still a member of the League in 371, they were largely operating on their own terms. Athens and the League did have a large role in clearing the seas of Spartan warships, however. See Isok., \textit{Antidosis}, 15.110.
The single greatest threat to Cargill’s thesis, threatening to undermine his entire theory, are the many defections from the League. Defection is understood to be likely the result of dissatisfaction with the League, its overseer (Athens), and/or abuses suffered by inclusion in the alliance. While never stipulated in the original mandate of the League, Cargill’s notation that the Second Athenian League was a permanent alliance with members not allowed to secede is reasonable.203 The rest must be taken on a case-by-case basis, as defections occurred over many years and under different circumstances.

Paros is the first instance we see of trouble arising within the League.204 The inscriptive evidence hints at a revolt having taken place, with the Parians being now reconciled to Athens. Democracy has been restored by the time of the writing of the decree, from which we know a civil war has taken place on Paros.205 The revolt was instigated by a pro-oligarchic faction, and Athens had intervened to restore the democracy, which was the government that had joined the League. Even though a portion of the Parian population attempted to break away, a portion of the inscription actually advocates a tempering of vengeance. Athens reminded the Parians that all murders related to the revolt or otherwise will still be judged in accordance with the law—local Parian law, however, not some imposition of Athenian law.206 Little indication exists suggesting Athenian oppression instigated the Parian revolt, and thus, in the broader terms of imperialism, the incident elucidates little.

203 Permanent alliances were not unprecedented in the Greek world, and the very alliance that the Second League was modeled after, that between Athens and Khios, was a permanent alliance. See Cargill, The Athenian League, 162.
204 Rhodes, P.J. and Osborne, Robin, Greek Historical Inscriptions, 148.
205 373/2.
206 Rhodes, P.J. and Osborne, Robin, Greek Historical Inscriptions, 149.
We have already seen the circumstances by which Thebes—the next case of secession—withdrawn from the League in Chapter 4. Clearly, Athenian oppression or League grievances are not applicable in this case, and no historian espousing the traditionalist view has proposed that they should be. The Thebans were not expelled from the League, but did not attend the second peace conference following Leuktra in which the League spelled out its commitment to defend members against the aggressiveness of any state. This commitment was a pledge that held little weight when it came to Thebes until the Battle of Mantinea in 362. The Theban withdrawal had great implications, however, for in its wake followed a spate of revolts that did not abate for the remainder of the League’s existence.

For example, we know from various ancient sources that, at some point prior to 365, Amphipolis and Olynthus were both in revolt from the League. Demosthenes records the involvement of two Athenian generals in the north attempting to restore them to the League: Iphikrates and Timotheus. Cargill casts this apparent Athenian aggression, or at least opportunism, in the light of Theban meddling in north Aegean affairs sometime after 369. Athens and Thebes were certainly rivals by this point, but there is no concrete evidence to support anything beyond speculation for the original secession of Olynthus and Amphipolis. All that can be said with certainty is by the mid-360s, both cities were in open revolt and unsuccessfully besieged by the Athenians.

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207 371, following Leuktra and the Athenian peace conference ratified by all but Thebes.
208 A compulsory commitment this time, as opposed to optional involvement.
211 Dem., *Against Aristocrates*, 23.149-50.
Cargill uses a similar argument to explain the detachment of Byzantium from the League, but in this case also claims the desire to profit from the grain supply passing through the Bosporus en route to Athens was likely another factor. By 362/1, we see active interference in the Athenian grain supply from Byzantium. The strategically placed city also later actively assisted the rebels in the Social War against Athens.

Also in 362, we have epigraphic evidence attesting to a revolt on the island of Keos. The lengthy inscription deals with reparations for the rebellion, including arrears to be made in the form of σύνταξιϛ. The inhabitants of Iulis, a city on the island, had previously been at war with Athens before Chabrias restored them to the League. After this, those who had originally revolted destroyed the stele containing the treaty, killed a number of pro-Athenians, confiscated their property, and sentenced others to death. Athens is surprisingly lenient in limiting vengeance to those involved with the uprising. Under the condition that the treaty is reestablished, the σύνταξιϛ is paid on time, and the stolen property is returned, there are no additional penalties imposed upon Keos. Cargill implies that this last notion is evidence that Athens was acting in the complete opposite fashion that an overbearing imperialistic power might.

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213 Ibid. 169.
214 Dem., Against Polycles, 50.6.
215 Dem., On the Liberty of the Rhodians, 15.3.
216 Marcus Niebuhr Tod. Greek Historical Inscriptions: From the Sixth Century B.C. to the Death of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C., (Chicago: Ares, 1985), (Part V) 125.
217 Tod, GHI, (Part V) 128.
218 Ibid. (Part V) 129.
The major defections prior to 357 have now been discussed. Defections from 357-5 require additional context, as these were the years of the Social War. The following section will provide a framework for the two-year conflict, and its significance for the League.

**The Social War: 357-355**

As mentioned briefly above, the campaign to regain Olynthus and Amphipolis met with little success in the north. Things were not much better around the Hellespont, as the Odrysian king Kotys fomented rebellion against Athens that threatened incoming Athenian-bound cargo.\(^{221}\) As the resultant food crisis deepened in Athens, Demosthenes tells us that Athens solved the problem by triremes to escort the convoys.\(^{222}\)

A series of “bewildering and chaotic” events also took place on the Chersonese among three Thracian kings, threatening the autonomous Greek cities in the area.\(^{223}\) The situation was not settled definitively until Chares, an aggressive Athenian general, arrived and settled the dispute in 357. Most importantly, however, Athens had no uniform strategy for its involvement in the northern Aegean. Ultimately, as Buckler concludes, Athens only managed to “re-arouse distrust among the Macedonians, the Northern Greeks, and the Thracians.”\(^{224}\) The campaign in the north, coupled with trouble maintaining peace on the islands, set the stage for war.

Athens had managed to subjugate twenty-four cities in its northern campaign, but treated them separately from League members.\(^{225}\) As we have seen, they were establishing

\(^{221}\) Buckler, *Aegean Greece*, 372.
\(^{222}\) Dem., *Against Polyclees*, 50.6.
\(^{224}\) Ibid., 377.
kleruchies on several islands as well.\textsuperscript{226} Athens’ support for the Satraps’ Revolt\textsuperscript{227} by sending Chabrias to lead the naval contingent in 364 also put some of the Greek islands in danger.\textsuperscript{228} When the rebellion was put down, a Persian satrap named Mausolos—who had remained faithful to the king—emerged as the most influential figure in western Anatolia. This influence would later haunt Athens, as Mausolos opportunistically used his position to stir up rebellion on Rhodes, Khios, and Kos.\textsuperscript{229}

Taken together, these data suggest a prevailing distrust of Athens, and its infringements upon the spirit of the League made war inevitable.\textsuperscript{230} The direct causes for the simultaneous rebellion of fourteen major allies are likely disparate, but the individual trails lead back to dissatisfaction with Athenian leadership. In lieu of evidence as to what specifically led to the onset of actual conflict, Mausolos typically absorbs the blame.\textsuperscript{231} This scapegoating, however, is an oversimplified approach and will be addressed further in Chapter 6.

The loss of Khios was acknowledged to be the greatest threat to Athens, and therefore Chabrias and Chares were both sent to put down the revolt. They found that the rebels, to their dismay, had coordinated with Byzantium, Rhodes, and Kos and were also reinforced with a substantial naval contingent from Mausolos. In the ensuing attack, Chabrias lost his life after attempting to take the harbor, while Chares narrowly escaped with his own life leading the

\textsuperscript{226} Samos and Poteidaia.
\textsuperscript{227} A massive uprising against the Persian King that took place in 364. The details are largely outside the scope of this paper and belong to Persian history.
\textsuperscript{228} Buckler, \textit{Aegean Greece}, 366.
\textsuperscript{229} Ibid. 378.
\textsuperscript{230} Isokrates, \textit{On the Peace}, 8.23 alludes to the general fear of the allies from Athens’ increasingly despotic behavior.
\textsuperscript{231} Buckler, \textit{Aegean Greece}, 379.
ground assault.\textsuperscript{232} These setbacks put Athens on the defensive and greatly emboldened the rebellious allies. Athens moved to shore up relations with remaining allies while concerning itself with keeping the vital grain trade through the Hellespont open.

The following campaign season in 356 saw the rebels assault Imbros, Lemnos, and Samos with a fleet of 100 ships.\textsuperscript{233} Athens moved to counterattack after lifting the siege of Samos, sending Timotheus, Iphikrates, and Chares to take Byzantion. The rebels, understanding they could not be victorious if Athens were allowed to hold the Hellespont, raced to intercept. Neither fleet reached the city, but met off the coast of Khios. Stormy weather compelled the experienced Timotheus and Iphikrates to put into harbor and await conditions conducive for naval warfare. Chares, ever belligerent, stood his ships in the channel and offered battle. He lost several ships to the storm and later defended himself in front of the Athenian Assembly by claiming cowardice on the part of his compatriots.\textsuperscript{234} Timotheus was successfully prosecuted and promptly retired, while Iphikrates was acquitted but did not participate in any further military actions.

The loss of Timotheus, Iphikrates, and Chabrias in a single calendar year was an enormous blow to Athens in terms of generalship. Chares, an impetuous and occasionally incompetent commander, was left in charge of Athenian forces. Chares proved his ineptitude by getting caught up in a separate Persian rebellion that led to his sacking of Lampsakos and Sigeion, both Persian holdings.\textsuperscript{235} These actions were flagrant breaches of the King’s Peace, still

\textsuperscript{232} Ibid., 381.
\textsuperscript{233} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{234} Ibid., 382.
\textsuperscript{235} We know of these events from Isokrates, \textit{Areopagiticus}, 7.9-10 and 29.
nominally in effect. The Persian King responded by threatening to unleash three hundred tremes and subdue Athens for overstepping the terms of the Peace. Athens was in no position to resist the full might of Persia while also dealing with rebellious allies. Faced with overwhelming odds, Athens sued for peace on both fronts.

The loss of the Social War did not immediately end the League, but it effectively crippled it. By the terms of the new peace, Athens was forced to recognize the independence and autonomy of Byzantion, Khios, Kos, and Rhodes while observing all the statutes of the original King’s Peace of 387. With Athens thus diminished to a level it had not been in at least a decade, Mausolos extended his influence through the eastern Aegean.236

Athens found itself in a vastly different world in 355 at the conclusion of hostilities. It had lost its most powerful allies, still faced continued hostility from Thebes, had alienated itself from most of the Aegean world, and essentially seen its League paralyzed with an ambitious Persian satrap on its doorstep.237

Cargill, of course, interprets the evidence much differently. While acknowledging the defections and various breaches of the League’s statutes, he understands Athens’ misfortunes to largely be the product of Chares’ “unsavory career,” Theban aggression, and Mausolos’ instigation.238 While not disputing the fact that the war was a catastrophe for Athens, Cargill maintains his premise that Athens only exhibited late “source-supported ‘imperialism’” when threatened, weakened, and desperate.239

236 Buckler, Aegean Greece, 383.
239 Ibid., 185.
Cargill sums up his points quite efficient at the end of his work (1981) on the League by asserting:

1. The League generally kept its promises of 377 to its members.
2. The rebellious states rebelled under the influence of their own ambition.
3. Monetary contributions (σύνταξιϛ) were low and levied by the League’s appointed representatives.
4. The desperate elements of the Social War were brought about largely by the Athenian general Chares, and do not reflect a direct desire for empire.\(^{240}\)

These points can be neatly juxtaposed with the more traditional narrative, maintained from Marshall’s work (1905) to the present time with only mild alterations:

1. Athens implemented questionable policies that aroused disaffection towards the League resulting in defections. Allied discontent was both widespread and serious (particularly after Leuktra).
2. The impetus for secession came from outside the League, but Athens’ behavior naturally pushed its allies towards defection.
3. Monetary contributions were increasingly being diverted to issues of Athenian interest, extraneous to the original mandate of supporting the strictly defensive alliance.
4. While Chares as an individual did great damage to the League’s image with his political machinations, Athens shoulders the blame for failing to control the conduct of its generals.\(^{241}\)

\(^{240}\) Ibid., 195-6.
\(^{241}\) Marshall, The Second Athenian Confederacy, 78-121.
While both traditional and revisionist interpretations of this time period rest upon the same (at times) scant evidence, the opinion of the author is that only one explanation for the ultimate fate of the Second Athenian League is plausible. What remains is to make this judgment, based upon the primary sources and epigraphy, to determine if Athens was in outright pursuance of empire through the guise of a free alliance from 377-55. If so, did the imperialistic tendencies of Athenian actions lead to the collapse of the League? Chapter 6 concludes by addressing these questions directly.
Chapter 6: The Evidence and Arguments

To this point, we have observed both the spirited revisionist defense of Athens through the fourth century and some of the problems with this interpretation. Cargill’s work is, in some respects, quite impressive and probably indicative of fourth-century realities. In other areas, however, his analysis does not align well overall with the historical period as described by its witnesses. Cargill uses epigraphy to great effect, stringing together a narrative that challenges traditional interpretations. His account, though, leaves the reader baffled as to how the Social War could be a natural result of the world he creates for Athens. In other words, the Social War ends up looking like an event rather than the process that it assuredly was.

The fact remains that the war did occur, attesting to the fact that some widespread dissatisfaction existed within the League. Perhaps Thebes and Mausolos provided the spark necessary to ignite the conflagration, but Athens had prepared the pyre. The defection—the most serious mark against the League before the war—cannot all be definitively confined to the period following the outbreak of hostilities; some revolts had occurred beforehand.

Cargill’s insistence that Kerkyra was not a member of the League has been questioned by Fauber. 242 This note is important, because some of Athens’ worst misdeeds were committed here. 243 It must be conceded that they were committed by Chares, whose unrelenting ineptitude characterized his entire generalship, but his actions were still ostensibly Athenian.

242 Fauber, Was Kerkyra a Member of the Second Athenian League?, 116.
243 Diod. 15.95.3.
Diodorus includes that the Kerkyra event in 362 reflected poorly on the League. By this point, was this simply another incident to add to a growing list justifying the secession of the allies?

Kos, whose membership in the League Cargill asserts is all but certain, also presents a problem. Scholarship existed before the writing of his book that called into question what he took for certainty. Kos participated in the Social War opposite Athens and soon after fell to Mausolos. Cargill’s omission of these facts is an oddity. A likely explanation is Cargill downplaying the evidence of anti-Athenian sentiment echoing ever louder in the Aegean, particularly after Leuktra.

Even before Leuktra, however, there existed clues as to what lengths Athens was willing to go to achieve superiority around the Aegean. As early as 377, Athens was waging a war against Histiaea on Euboea and establishing a permanent garrison there. While Histiaea was not a League city—in fact, it was a Spartan-sympathizing state—could this precedent possibly have reflected well on Athens? Was this not the exact sort of behavior it was attempting to reassure its own allies would not happen to them? Far from a smoking gun, this early episode is, nevertheless, buttressed by a continuity of questionable Athenian moves through the mid-fourth century.

246 See: Simon Hornblower. 1982. “The Second Athenian Confederacy”. Review of *The Second Athenian League: Empire or Free Alliance?* *The Classical Review* 32 (2). [Classical Association, Cambridge University Press]: 235–39. Hornblower also points out in this review that Mausolos was a convenient scapegoat for orators such as Demosthenes in *On the Liberty of the Rhodians*, 15. (p. 237). Mausolos was certainly pro-oligarchy, but it was just as much the fault of the democratic states revolting from Athens that they later succumbed to his advances (p. 238).
247 Diod. 15.30. This was two full years before Chabrias also garrisoned Abdera, as mentioned in chapter 5.
In 375, Timotheus landed on Kephallenia and subjugated the cities there. Marshall argues the case for their garrisoning—a claim that makes sense considering their distance from Athens and closer proximity to Athens’ enemies. The Kephallenian expedition took place just before his aforementioned interference on Zakinthos in 374.

After Leuktra, as well, trouble was brewing within the League. Thebes’ departure was not without additional complications. A number of states on Euboea defected along with the Akarnanians. Things quickly went from bad to worse.

Sometime shortly after Leuktra and these various defections associated with it, Athens began a campaign in the north to press its claim of Amphipolis. Thebes used the opportunity to encourage the detachment of the Olynthian League, a member of the League since 375. This move must have had the precise effect of undermining any feelings of security Athens felt with the stability of its League. A most enlightening set of inscriptions dated to 369/8 attests to a prevailing discomfort among the allies with regard to Athens’ conduct. In them, Athens attempts to reassure Mytilene that recent actions have been for the good of Hellas. The tone is unabashedly conciliatory, and speaks to the otherwise unrecorded proof of allied suspicion.

The Mytilene decrees raise another important question: What was the purpose of the League following Leuktra? The question is a reasonable one. Mytilene, and the other allies, might have expected the dissolution of the confederacy based upon the tenets inscribed on the Stele of Aristoteles. No such disintegration was forthcoming, however, and we cannot help but

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248 Diod. 15.36.
250 Xen. Hellenika, 6.5.23.
251 Dem., Aristocrates, 23.150.
252 Rhodes, P.J. and Osborne, Robin, Greek Historical Inscriptions, 152-6.
draw the comparison with the fifth-century Delian League, which declined to disband after the Persian threat had subsided. The justification this time around was the newly established Theban threat.

Athenian conduct began increasingly, at this point just after Leuktra, to exhibit behavior that appears decisively self-serving in its interests. For instance, the Athenian alliance with the Peloponnesian states and Sparta following Leuktra must have aroused discontent. Most of the members of the League were island states with little to gain from involvement with the Peloponnese. In fact, entanglement in affairs with no tangible benefit was likely a primary concern for the allies. Aside from the Mytilene decree, evidence supporting this theory is hard to uncover, but we can infer from the existing data that widespread anxiety plagued (especially) the island confederates post-Leuktra.

Similarly, the Athenian alliance with Dionysios of Syracuse in 367 seems of little benefit to anyone aside from Athens.253 The islanders could not possibly have been enthusiastic about Athenian relations with the Sicilian tyrant, even though the signed treaty was an independent bilateral agreement to exist only between the two signatories.

The widening gulf between Athenian interests and allied interests appears to grow steadily wider after the signing of these extraneous alliances. Matters began to come to a head especially in the Peloponnese, about which Marshall quips, “It was impossible to assist one ally without running the risk of offending another.”254 Diodorus confirms this in recounting an event

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253 Marshall, The Second Athenian Confederacy, 86.
254 Ibid. 80.
in which Athens was compelled to refuse an Arkadian call for assistance in 370/69 for this very reason.\textsuperscript{255}

Understood in this light, it becomes much easier to contextualize the events of the mid- to late 360s and even beyond into the 350s. Timotheus’ annexation of Pydna, Methone, Torone, and Potidaea, among others, in his northern campaign\textsuperscript{256} highlights endeavors evocative of imperial ambition.\textsuperscript{257} His garrisoning of Potidaea following its capture is circumstantially confirmed for us by Demosthenes.\textsuperscript{258}

Most importantly, however, is the apparent ease with which Epaminondas detached Rhodes, Byzantium, Keos, and Chios in his short-lived naval expedition in 364/3.\textsuperscript{259} These states, as we have seen, were wealthy and important maritime members of the League. Some, if not all, had existing ties with Athens before being formalized into the League, and their loss was near tantamount to loss of naval hegemony. Whether we choose to ascribe the defections to Athenian grievances or fear of entanglement, the fact remains that these states were nervous enough with Athenian League management to forsake the oaths they took. The intricacies of the naval expedition and its results, known to us from a single source in Diodorus, are dealt with at length by Ruzicka and require no further exposition here.\textsuperscript{260}

Athenian preoccupation with Amphipolis, the Hellespont, and the north in general allowed for a period of time in which Athens apparently was not actively attempting to recover these founding members. By the time Athens got around to interests of League defections, it

\textsuperscript{255} Diod. 15.62.3.
\textsuperscript{256} Dated approximately to 364.
\textsuperscript{257} Diod. 15.81 and Isok., Antidosis, 15.108.
\textsuperscript{258} Dem., Philippic II, 6.20.
\textsuperscript{259} Diod. 15.79.
was roughly 357, or six years since Epaminondas’ expedition. A campaign was waged on Euboea in an attempt to bring the cities back in, and was remarkably successful.\textsuperscript{261} Buoyed by this accomplishment, Athens likely started to put pressure on the defected allies.\textsuperscript{262} Ruzicka supports the idea that at least Byzantium, Rhodes, and Chios had been estranged from the League for the duration of time between Epaminondas’ expedition and the outbreak of war in 357.\textsuperscript{263} If this is true, then it only further promotes the theory that serious divides existed between Athens and its members and former members.

This proposed framework for the chaotic and badly documented League history from Leuktra to the Social War also transitions well to what we know of the Karian satrap Mausolos. His involvement in Greek affairs appears opportunistic and well-timed. Sensing weakness in Athenian foreign policy, and desiring to further his own rule, Mausolos induced resistance to Athenian advances in the eastern Aegean.\textsuperscript{264} Thus, we see that the impetus for “revolt” may have come from outside the League, but there is a distinct continuity between Athenian behavior, the loss of various allies, and eventually the outbreak of the Social War in 357.

**Conclusion**

Recalling the four points outlined at the conclusion of Chapter 5, Cargill’s first holds up fairly well, and his use of epigraphy in support of this is probably the best available for documenting the League. Despite this, it remains difficult to dismiss Marshall’s claim, especially

\textsuperscript{261} Aeschines, Against Ctesiphon, 3.85.
\textsuperscript{262} Our primary sources are practically non-existent for the League at this time, and any attempted history is conjectural.
\textsuperscript{263} Ruzicka, “Epaminondas”, 60-9.
\textsuperscript{264} Marshall, The Second Athenian Confederacy, 109.
when we observe the downward trend for League cohesion after 371. The fourth point, relating to the conduct of Chares, is largely confined to the Social War, and thus explains little of what drove the allies to the point of rebellion. We are left with Points 2 and 3, which both contain elements of subjective interpretation but deserve further consideration.

Athens in the fourth century was desperately trying to hold it all together—not just for itself, but in the wider Panhellenic sense. The power dynamics were such that Athens was kept from achieving anywhere near the level of empire as in the Delian League era. Internecine warfare, allied suspicion, and the rising power of Thebes, Macedon, and Mausolos checked Athenian ambition.

One of the minor works of Xenophon from shortly after the conclusion of the Social War gives a strong hint as to why Athens stuck to a similar pattern of politics that had brought ruin in the fifth century. This easily overlooked piece, *Poroi*, is largely an Athenian financial text, but should not be overlooked in its significance for the collapse of the League.265

The opening lines of *Poroi* outright state the Athenian leaders’ attempted justification for their actions in the Aegean: “Owing to the poverty of the masses, we are forced to be somewhat unjust in our treatment of the cities.”266 Xenophon understands the failings of foreign policy to have roots in their leaders’ responses to poverty within the city. He goes on to show that Athens has no natural enemies on its borders—only those it makes for itself among

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265 The *Poroi* is thought to be Xenophon’s last work, written a year after the Social War, in 354.
other Greeks.\textsuperscript{267} That is to say, Athens is ideally situated to flourish economically without the need of war.

Specifically, Xenophon is doubtlessly writing with several instances exposing poverty as it directly correlated to League practice and grievances. A few examples come readily to mind: About the time Timotheus was annexing Kephallenia in 375, his finances were severely strained and he was forced to petition Athens for money to pay his forces.\textsuperscript{268} The situation was apparently so dire that Timotheus resorted to fronting grain rations three months in advance to pacify the troops.\textsuperscript{269} He again found himself in financial trouble, this time truly exposing the League’s financial woes, in 373 after bringing in new states.\textsuperscript{270} A heavy war tax was levied in 369 so that Iphikrates could campaign in the Peloponnese.\textsuperscript{271} This last incident also exhibits how war taxes were levied often, but the task of maintaining the fighting force was left to the field generals.\textsuperscript{272} Timomachus, another Athenian general, attempted to unlawfully seize Stryme to supplement revenues.\textsuperscript{273} This event was one in many occurring, as Marshall claims, because “generals were driven to acts of sheer robbery through their lack of funds.”\textsuperscript{274}

We can see from just these few examples that Athens must have relied massively on allied contributions, whether we agree with Plutarch in their definition as obligatory taxes or not. Poverty was, regardless, an ongoing and crippling issue for Athens throughout the fourth

\textsuperscript{267} Xen., \textit{Poroi}, 1.8.
\textsuperscript{268} Aristotle, \textit{Economics}, 2.1350a.
\textsuperscript{269} Ibid., 2.1350b.
\textsuperscript{270} Demosthenes, \textit{Against Timotheus}, 49.13-5.
\textsuperscript{271} Demosthenes, \textit{For the Megalopolitans}, 16.12.
\textsuperscript{272} Marshall, \textit{The Second Athenian Confederacy}, 107.
\textsuperscript{273} Demosthenes, \textit{Against Polycles}, 50.22.
\textsuperscript{274} Marshall, \textit{The Second Athenian Confederacy}, 107.
century. But, fundamentally, can we ascribe this poverty to a particular problem? Xenophon believed he had the answer, and spelled it out in his Poroi.

Xenophon identifies a crucial failing in the Athenian system: social institutions for metics living in Attika. He argues that they provide one of the best sources of revenue to the city, are self-sustaining, and render many services to the state. Instead of creating institutions to incorporate and assimilate these residents, Athens makes them responsible for an additional tax and forces their service in the hoplite ranks. This practice not only damages their trade by separating them from their work, but also creates a heterogeneous fighting force—a quality not typically enviable in ancient warfare. Xenophon is not opposed to any voluntary service on their part, but rather separating them from the infantry. This notion has the added effect of increasing loyalty and pride among the metics toward Athens.

Other institutions are targeted next by Xenophon, including metic rights to own land within the city and the lack of a board of guardians to look out for their interests. Shipping, he contends, should be incentivized with social benefits to promote more trade, further enriching the city. The simple beauty of Xenophon’s proposal, according to him, is that it will not cost the state anything at all, beyond enacting benevolent legislation.

Poroi exposes two areas of Athenian deficiency, if we look closely. The first is obvious and spelled out explicitly when he identifies the issue of poverty as causal to what we would

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275 Resident aliens. Typically, skilled workers, craftsmen, and merchants.
276 Xen., Poroi, 2.1.
277 Ibid., 2.2-4.
278 Ibid., 2.5.
279 Ibid., 2.6.
280 Ibid., 2.7.
281 Ibid., 3.2-3.
282 Ibid., 3.6.
consider imperialistic policy. The second must be inferred from his assessment of how Athens treats its resident aliens. Athens was not interested in drastic societal or institutional overhauls in the fourth century. Indeed, if we remove ourselves from the immediate narrative of League collapse for a moment, we observe that the overarching drive of the first half of the fourth century for Athens is restoring the past, or “making the past present,” as Lambert states.283

This can be partially explained by the brutal regime of the Thirty Oligarchs, who, more than perhaps any other external cause, united the surviving democratic faction in Athens and ensured that nearly everyone in Athens was a democrat.284 A revival of the maritime empire, following the expulsion of the Thirty, was only a matter of time unless something fundamental changed in the nature of Athenian politics and institutions. No such change was forthcoming.

We see a real effort from Thrasybulus early on to re-establish the empire, but the timing was poor. Athens needed time to let the wounds from the Delian League heal; time for Spartan foreign policy to undermine its own newly discovered hegemony; and time for Persian sympathy to coincide with Athenian agenda. That right time was 378/7, just as Spartan grievances reached unsustainable levels, and Athens seized upon this opportunity at once to form the Second League.

Being at the head of a new confederacy did not alleviate poverty, however, nor did it guarantee an era of changed policy toward allied powers. Thus, it becomes impossible to remove the stigma of the Delian League from the Second League unless we can find some

284 Ibid, 254.
definitive proof that Athens made real progress toward reorganizing its institutions and preventing a repeat of the fifth century. In short, remarkable continuity exists from the fifth to fourth century in Athenian institutions and policy.

Xenophon’s comprehensive plan in Poroi appears radically different, but only because Athenian institutions had remained stubbornly inflexible for so long. The failings of the institutions caused poverty, which led to “unjust treatments” of allies, which invariably led to war. Xenophon had spent his entire life observing this vicious cycle and devoted his last known treatise to the topic of putting an end to it, peacefully and with little monetary risk to Athens itself.

Xenophon is not a lone voice in this line of reasoning, either. Andocides also rails against certain policies earlier in the fourth century, with one example being the Athenian obsession with retaking the Chersonese.\footnote{Andocides, On the Peace, 3.15.} Clearly an imperialistic endeavor, the costs far outweighed the benefits, according to his calculations. Had Athens not already learned this lesson?\footnote{This is the same Andocides mentioned in Chapter 2 who spoke at length about the benefits of peace for the democracy, as opposed to war.}

We also have seen from Isokrates\footnote{Isokrates, On the Peace, 8.23} the allusions to despotic behavior of Athens toward its allies, and their resultant suspicion. No better system was in place to assimilate the allies into a true Athenian League than was in place to assimilate the metics into the fabric of the system and the city itself. Recall also Plutarch’s insistence that Athens was always seeking to subvert by subtlety in the fourth century—yet another damning criticism of systemic failure.\footnote{Plut., Life of Solon, 15.2-3.} Not only did fifth-century policy and institutions greatly inform fourth-century Athenian policy
and opinion, but they led to a decisive lack of reasoned purpose in many Athenian foreign endeavors.\textsuperscript{289}

Nothing threatened Athens more than debilitating poverty as a result of institutional stagnation leading to questionable policy in the fourth century. From Thrasybulus to Chares, the Athenians stuck to a rigid set of social structures that kept the city in a perpetual state of poverty. This poverty could be alleviated, according to Xenophon, but the city was simply too uncompromising in its policies. Failure to assimilate the allies fully into the system perpetuated a broken arrangement that ultimately led to defections and war within the League. Severely weakened, Athens—or any Greek city-state, for that matter—was unable to deal with the rising power of Macedon in the north. A century of failed social and political policy combined with crippling institutional stagnation set the stage for Chaeronea, and the permanent loss of all Greek autonomy.

The blame cannot be shouldered entirely by the younger generation of Athenians in the fourth century. As Hornblower notes, “Athens’ institutions were too old for the younger generation to discard them altogether.”\textsuperscript{290} Older, lingering issues, however, are rarely solved by simply adapting old, failed policy. Macedon circumvented this problem with a younger and more “complex [and] elastic society,”\textsuperscript{291} finally unifying its quarrelsome southerly neighbors. Much is made of Macedon’s military adaptations and reforms in the conquest of the Greek city-states—and certainly these deserve recognition—but forgetting that Macedon had a much younger body politic with unique answers to old institutional problems is ignoring an entire

\textsuperscript{289} Marshall, \textit{The Second Athenian Confederacy}, 108.
\textsuperscript{290} Hornblower, \textit{The Second Athenian Confederacy}, 239.
\textsuperscript{291} Ibid.
facet of the Macedonian conquest. An exhaustive institutional and societal study comparing Macedon and Athens in the fourth century is likely the next step in scholarship advancing this academic inquiry.
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