

CLAH4005

Lecture 15: *The Second Athenian League*



The Institution of the League

- When Calles was archon at Athens, the Romans elected as military tribunes with consular power four men, Lucius Papirius, Marcus Publius, Titus Cornelius, and Quintus Lucius. During their term of office, following the failure of the Lacedaemonians at Thebes, the Boeotians, uniting boldly, formed an alliance and gathered a considerable army, expecting that the Lacedaemonians would arrive in Boeotia in great strength. [2] The Athenians sent their most respected citizens as ambassadors to the cities which were subject to the Lacedaemonians, urging them to adhere to the common cause of liberty. For the Lacedaemonians, relying on the size of the force at their disposal, ruled their subject peoples inconsiderately and severely, and consequently many of those who belonged to the Spartan sphere of influence fell away to the Athenians. [3] The first to respond to the plea to secede were the peoples of Chios and Byzantium; they were followed by the peoples of Rhodes and Mytilene and certain others of the islanders; and as the movement steadily gathered force throughout Greece, many cities attached themselves to the Athenians. Diodoros 15.28.1-3

The Agreement between the allies

- The democracy, elated by the loyalty of the cities, established a common council of all the allies and appointed representatives of each state. [4] It was agreed by common consent that, while the council should hold its sessions in Athens, every city great and small should be on an equal basis and enjoy but one vote, and that all should continue independent, accepting the Athenians as leaders.
Diodoros 15.28.3-4

Memories of Empire

- If any of the Greeks or of the barbarians living in Europe or of the islanders, who are not the King's, wishes to be an ally of the Athenians and their allies, he may be – being free and autonomous, **being governed under whatever form of government he wishes, neither receiving a garrison nor submitting to a governor nor paying tribute...** Rhodes & Osborne 22.15-23

The League against Sparta

- The league's official purpose for existence was to war against Sparta and any other power that may encroach upon the territory of the allies.

Athenian imperialism revealed

- Since those of the Iulietans who broke the oaths and the agreement and made war against the people of Athens and the Ceans and the other allies... because they had spoken against Antipater when the Athenian council had condemned him to death for killing the Athenian proxenos Aeson contrary to the decrees of the Athenian people, and contravening the oaths and the agreement. Rhodes & Osborne 39.27-40

A return to aggressive imperialism

- Since Androtion has been a good man with regard to the people of Arkesine; and in governing the city has not distressed any of the citizens or of the foreigners arriving in the city; and lent money to the city in a crisis and was willing to take no interest; and when the city was in difficulties over the pay for the garrison he advanced it from his own resources...
Rhodes & Osborne 51.2-10

Athens' obsession with Amphipolis

- and when Pausanias was coming back to contend for the throne,¹ an exile then, but favoured by opportunity and the support of many of the people, and bringing a Greek force with him, and when he had already seized Anthemion, Therma, Strepsa, and certain other places, at a time when the Macedonians were not united, but most of them favoured Pausanias: at this crisis the Athenians elected Iphicrates as their general to go against Amphipolis--for at that time the people of Amphipolis were holding their city themselves and enjoying the products of the land. Aischines 2.27

From anti-Spartan to anti-Theban

- Accordingly the people immediately voted to construct a hundred triremes and dockyards to accommodate their number, and to urge the peoples of Rhodes, Chios, and Byzantium to assist their schemes. Epameinondas himself, who had been dispatched with a force to the aforementioned cities, so overawed Laches, the Athenian general, who had a large fleet and had been sent out to circumvent the Thebans, that he forced him to sail away and made the cities friendly to Thebes. [2] Indeed if this man had lived on longer, the Thebans admittedly would have secured the mastery at sea in addition to their supremacy on land; when, however, a little while later, after winning a most glorious victory for his country in the battle of Mantinea, he died a hero's death, straightway the power of Thebes died with him. Diodoros 15.79.1-2

The Social War, 357-355 BCE

- [3] **For we were charged by the Chians, Byzantines and Rhodians with plotting against them**, and that was why they concerted the last war against us ... [15] Moreover I should never have made this proposal, had I thought that it would benefit the Rhodian democrats alone, for I am not the official patron of that party, nor do I count any of them among my private friends. Yet even if both these motives had been present, I should not have proposed it, if I had not thought that it would benefit you, since I share in your satisfaction at the fate of the Rhodians--if one who is pleading for their deliverance may be permitted to say so. **For they grudged you the recovery of your rights**, and now they have lost their own liberty; they spurned an alliance with you who are Greeks and their betters, and now they are slaves of barbarians, slaves of slaves, whom they admitted into their citadels. Demosthenes 15.3 & 15.15

Persia against Athens

- Now the Boeotians returned home and remained quiet, [3] but the Athenians, who had suffered the revolt of Chios, Rhodes, and Cos and, moreover, of Byzantium, became involved in the war called the Social War which lasted three years. The Athenians chose Chares and Chabrias as generals and dispatched them with an army. The two generals on sailing into Chios found **that allies had arrived to assist the Chians from Byzantium, Rhodes, and Cos, and also from Mausolus, the tyrant of Caria.** Diodoros 16.7.3

The End of the War

- The Athenians at first approved Chares' action, but later, when the King sent ambassadors and denounced Chares, they changed their minds; for word had been spread abroad that the King had promised Athens' enemies that he would join them in their war against the Athenians with three hundred ships. The assembly, accordingly, taking a cautious attitude, decided to bring to a close the war against their revolted allies; and finding that they too desired peace they easily came to terms with them. Diodoros 16.22.2

The End of Empire?

- The second Athenian league was not officially disbanded until the creation of the League of Corinth under Philip II.
- However, without most of its most powerful allies, Athens had lost yet another chance at a successful empire.
- As in the fifth-century empire, Athens lost its power because it ignored the needs of the allies and espoused a more heavy-handed imperialism than initially projected.

Questions?



Follow-up reading

- Diodoros 15.25-31, 16.7, 16.21-2
(Available from the Perseus Digital Library:
www.perseus.tufts.edu/)
- P. Rhodes and R. Osborne, *Greek Historical Inscriptions* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 92-105. Available from Google books