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INTERPRETING ATHENIAN STATECRAFT: THE DELIAN LEAGUE

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Abstract

This paper examines the multifaceted nature of Athenian politics during the “Golden Age,” particularly during the Peloponnesian War, and its enduring influence on modern political thought. While democracy is commonly associated with ancient Athens, this study reveals that Athens’ political landscape was characterized by a triad of interwoven ideologies, including democracy, imperialism, and a quest for Hellenic unity, each comprising various sub-ideologies. The research draws from ancient literary and epigraphic sources as well as modern scholarship to deconstruct the Athenian statecraft of the time. It argues that Athens employed a citizen-based democracy alongside economic exploitation, military imperialism, and a search for unity in classical Greece. The paper also provides a historical review of scholarship spanning from the 18th century to the 20th century, followed by an exploration of Athens’ political policies and relations within the Delian League. By highlighting the complex coexistence of democratic ideals and imperialistic actions, this paper underscores the importance of reevaluating historical and modern concepts of governance. It suggests that the intricate dynamics of Athens during this period offer valuable insights for contemporary historians engaged in discussions regarding democracy, empire, and neo-colonialism.

Keywords: *Athens, Delian League, Peloponnesian War, Democracy, Citizenship, Cleruchies, Ancient Greece*

Introduction

Democracy, in one form or another, is the standard form of modern government in many countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and indeed many ‘western’ countries. The concept has roots in practices established long before the rise of these countries as people know them today. Although the term is both familiar and relevant to many people today, its expression in the ancient world was drastically different,

specifically as practiced and arguably invented by the Greek city-state Athens. Athens, a city located on the Greek peninsula, is commonly considered to be the first state to have engaged in this form of government, and indeed fostered the term democracy, or *democratia*, since the 6th century BC. Athens set forth what they considered to be the fundamental rules of democracy, where every citizen enjoyed the freedom to participate in the government. However, in modern discussions regarding

Classical Athens, there is a tendency to focus primarily on democratic ideologies, while ignoring other ideologies and policies which were also fostered at the same time. While ancient sources indicate that democracy was undeniably an influential component in Athens' policymaking, it was not the sole ideology in its statecraft. This paper strives to deconstruct the reality of the Athenian political system during a particular period – the Peloponnesian War – and discover the other elements composing Athens' statecraft during the 'Golden Age'. This will be done through analysis of ancient literary sources, ancient epigraphic sources, and modern scholarship. It will be shown that within this time, Athens exhibited significant variations in terms of political policy. Furthermore, through analyzing secondary literature, it will be shown that Athens itself has been received controversially by modern scholars studying this period. The significant disagreements, consensuses, and concessions in the past three centuries of Athenian scholarship will be highlighted in this paper, to give context to the various interpretations of evidence presented. This paper argues that democracy, imperialism, and a desire for Hellenic unity were the three cornerstones in Athenian statecraft, each being composed of several sub-ideologies. During the Golden Age, Athens practiced a citizen-based democracy and constructed a social hierarchy within its reign to ensure the superiority of the Athenians and Athens state; as its military hegemony remained in the region, a sense of imperialism rose through economic exploitation, political intervention, and military expedition, while Athens also remained a search for unity within classical Greece through warfare, revenge, and colonization.

The structure of this paper is as follows. First, a review of relevant scholarship from the 18th century to the 20th century. This will present and contrast popular arguments from previous scholars in chronological order. The chronological order provides important context for the secondary literature, as relevant events and movements may have influenced the perspectives of the scholars, such as the Age of Enlightenment in the 18th century. This section also serves to provide a clearer context on the arguments regarding Athens' politics. Then, a brief historical con-

text of Athens during the Golden Age will be given. This will contextualize the analysis. The paper will then investigate the statecraft of the Athens state from its political policies and relations within the Delian League. These two sections will focus on interpreting Athens and provide a clearer image of the reality of Athens' statecraft and politics. Certain modern comparisons may be drawn to add familiarity with some ancient events. Finally, summative conclusions and discussion will be given in the closing paragraphs.

Literature Review

This section draws on and expands the body of works analyzed in the book *Interpreting the Athenian Empire*, authored by a group of classical scholars. Athenian democracy has been the subject of significant scholarly investigation, and a particular topic of interest from the late 18th century till the modern era. Over the past three centuries, scholars have proposed completely distinctive perceptions of Athens and its reputation, often using the same ancient sources. Early works saw scholars arguing over the legitimacy and morality of the Athenian empire regarding its democracy and economic leverage, influenced by scholars' contemporary concerns in Europe regarding colonization and imperialism. Athens incurred perhaps the worst of its criticisms in the 18th century from scholars such as Temple Stanyan (1707–39). Stanyan considered the early stages of the Delian League a success but wrote that the "tributaries and vassals" marked the downfall of the confederacy and contributed to Athens' ultimate defeat at the hands of Sparta. (Liddel, 2009) In the late 18th century when the Age of Enlightenment took place in Europe, it inevitably sparked another debate on Athens and led to more examinations of Athenian democracy and imperialism. For example, English historian William Mitford analyzed, and disapproved of, Athens' shift of the treasury from Delos to Athens, as well as their imposition of democracy on other city-states. Along with the rise of capitalism in Europe, democracy was also likely judged negatively from a capitalistic standpoint, for allowing those with power to overrule those with wealth.

Moving forward, scholars in the mid to late 18th century often considered Athens' dip-

lomatic hegemony as negative, to the point where Athens was once named a “tyrant-city” (Mitford, 1795, as cited in Liddel). More neutral and less critical Enlightenment thinkers, such as Montesquieu (1758), acknowledged the absolute sea empire of Athens and compared it with Britain’s hegemony on the water. Critical scholars like Young (1777) and Mitford were more interested in the economic leverage and the exploitative nature of Athens inside of its democracy. This survey shows that while some scholars were not critics of Athens itself, they did question its democracy and treatment of other city-states. The reputation of Athens remained quite negative in the late 18th century when the interpretations of Athens focused on the oppressive aspects of democracy, the levy of tributes, and subsequent comparison to contemporary Britain.

The work published in 1837 by Edward Bulwer Lytton, *Athens: Its Rise and Fall*, reversed this reputation and praised Athenian democracy during the Peloponnesian War. The author was resoundingly positive regarding Athenian democracy and somewhat critical of the oppression in the Delian League, though he was in sum a supporter of Athenian imperialism. George Grote (1851), meanwhile, favored Athens as well. Grote deemed the Athenian empire a success and the most effective, government model in the Grecian world: “A sight marvelous to contemplate”. Grote regarded the Athenian empire as a liberal and modern imperial state compared to contemporary Britain. Revolts and financial exploitation were, to Grote, natural traits of an empire and therefore not unique to Athens. Building upon the work of Lytton, Grote revived to a large extent the positive reception of the Athenian power and its policies in the 19th century. U. Koehler (1869, as cited in Liddle), a German scholar, also promoted the power of the Athenian empire and emphasized the extent of the confederacy after the discovery of certain epigraphic evidence. However, counterarguments also emerged following the discovery of the same epigraphic evidence; arguments highlighted the oppressive role of Athens and blatantly rejected some of Grote’s defense of Athens.

Epigraphic discoveries led by the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century triggered more complex discussions on Athens in his-

toriography. The epigraphic evidence threw into question some fundamental aspects of Athenian imperial machinations, questioning specifically when the transformation of the Delian League into an Empire took place, and whether it can be even reckoned in the available language of the European Empire. Initially, U. Koehler first set the decade of the 460s as the period of transformation, after the decline of Eurymedon. This conclusion perhaps reflected the contemporary German empire since Koehler stated the political ideology underlying the transformation was colonialism, or “Kolonialpolitik”. The later findings in coinage also supported his theory that the coinage decree enhanced the Athenian imperial control. In the 20th century, the discovery of a more complete Athenian Tribute List, known as the ATL, offered a different view. The absence of several ally city-states from the ATL in the late 450s aligned with the revolts of the same city-states. When Athens quelled the revolts in 450, many of the defeated cities were turned into colonies, or “cleruchies”, and resumed their tribute. David Malcolm Lewis (1966) therefore established the mid-fifth-century reconstruction theory, which recommended 450 as the turning point of the Athenian empire. The theory, however, is not flawless. The literary sources, including Thucydides and Plutarch, appeared to have no interest in emphasizing the importance of 450. Therefore, a theory that emphasized the role of literary evidence was born. The leading scholar of the theory, H. B. Mattingly (1963), advocated the 420s as the transformation of the Athenian empire; Mattingly argued that the death of Pericles and a sudden increase in tribute marked a watershed of the Athenian empire from ruling moderately to oppressively. He cast doubt on the accuracy of the epigraphic evidence used in the mid-fifth-century reconstruction theory. Furthermore, Grote in the late 18th century also questioned the legitimacy of the epigraphic evidence. The reliability of the sources has always been a source of concern for scholars and will be considered in this paper. In sum, few of the arguments regarding the reputation of Athens, oppression, and its imperialism are ironclad; it is no surprise that scholars cannot reach an agreement on a contentious topic given the difficulties in dating a critical event in historiography, given

the versatility of the evidence and uncertainty in the Athenian ideologies.

Given the contentiousness of the sources, their credibility must be considered. Thucydides' History of the Peloponnesian War will be one of the primary literary sources in this paper. The referenced edition will be the translation work by Martin Hammond (2009), published by Oxford World's Classics. Thucydides was an Athenian and was ostracized in 442 BC for his military failures. He was an elite politician, general, and most importantly historian. After returning to Athens, he claimed he witnessed the entirety of the war and could not be biased in his writing, as an observer of the war. It is yet still questionable how historically accurate Thucydides is as a source. There is some consensus that Thucydides was pro-Athens and omitted certain oppressive acts to maintain Athens's reputation. (Low, 2023) It can be argued that Thucydides' citizenship as an Athenian and his political perspective hindered him from writing with objective historical accuracy; however, considering his proficiency as a historian and the limited primary sources, Thucydides must be considered, albeit carefully and alongside other works. Another book this paper references often for historical chronology and interpretations is *The Cambridge Companion to The Age of Pericles* published by the Cambridge University Press. The authors engage multiple sources from several Greek historians, philosophers, and intellectuals. The wide array of information and the academic rigor support the credibility of the work and its usefulness alongside Thucydides.

The position of this paper is as follows. In the first discussion regarding Athenian democracy and imperialism, Grote has made valid points in his defense of Athens, arguing that financial exploitation is common to all forms of empire, inevitably. However, rather than debating over the legitimacy of the Athenian empire, it is perhaps more reasonable to evaluate to what extent Athens was exploitative and discover the underlying ideologies of Athens. With regards to dating the transformation of the empire, the mid-fifth-century reconstruction theory seems now to be most reasonable and coherent. There is no evidence firmly rejecting that the transformation took place in the late 450s other than raising a new

theory. Although there is a gap in Thucydides and Herodotus' writing, it does not necessarily disprove the theory. With the finite amount of evidence, the mid-fifth-century reconstruction theory is considered the most probable as multiple critical dates took place during this very time. Therefore, this paper will take the late 450s as the transformation of the empire and further examine Athens upon that point in the corresponding section. Furthermore, these theories also impacted how scholars have considered the fundamental underlying ideologies of the Athenian Empire. For example, the mid-fifth-century reconstruction theory defined in some regards the unity of the League and pacification of rebellions as the determining factor along with a few other elements; on the other hand, the 420s theory would consider heavy monetary exploitation as the decisive element. These ideologies and behaviors will also be further analyzed from the management viewpoint of the Athenian Empire.

Historical Context

For the sake of convenience, a brief timeline bar is arranged which shows several key dates relevant to this paper:

- 499 BC- The first Greco-Persian War.
- 480 BC- The Second Persian Invasion
- 478 BC- The Delian League was formed.
- 471 BC- Naxos revolts against the Delian League.
- 460 BC- The start of the First Peloponnesian War
- 461 BC- Pericles takes power.
- 454 BC- The Treasury of the Delian League moved to Athens.
- 450 BC- General Cimon was killed in a military expedition.
- 449 BC- The Greco-Persian conflict ends.
- 445 BC- Thirty Years Treaties signed. The First Peloponnesian War ended.
- 431 BC- Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War.
- 421 BC- A brief pause in conflict.
- 415 BC- Athens launches the Sicilian expedition and resumes the conflict.
- 413 BC- Athens' defeat in Sicily.
- 404 BC- Athens defeated.

The analysis of the Athenian Empire cannot begin without a discussion about the Delian League. The Delian League was formed initially as a response to the second Persian

invasion of mainland Greece during the Persian War in 480. Shortly before that, Athens underwent a major reform in its democracy, which introduced the lottery selection for magistrates, which influenced many of their future decisions. (Ober, 1990) The alliance aimed to ensure protection for each member city-state, and Athens was acknowledged as the leader of the league. While it can be argued that the Delian League was started without any imperial ambitions on the part of Athens, as inter-alliance conflicts emerged, Athens began to exploit its allies. It can be argued that the loss of individuals, such as the Spartan-friendly general Cimon, spurred a desire for Hellenic hegemony. Tensions increased as Athens engaged in Themistocles' objectives of weaponizing against Sparta. (Fliess, 1961) Meanwhile, the Delian League experienced a series of revolts. Initially in 471 by Naxos, the revolts and successions culminated in the 450s. After quelling the revolts in the Greek peninsula in 450 and the end of the Great Peloponnesian War, Athens signed the Thirty Years Treaty with Sparta, empowering their navy and securing its dominance in the Aegean Sea. It also enhanced and tightened Athens' control within the Delian League. With a growing demand for land and power, Athens became involved in conflicts surrounding Potidaea and Corinth, directly contributing to regional instability. As another conflict appeared, between Athens and Megara due to an economic sanction, Corinth officially protested the hegemony and exploitation of Athens and forced Sparta and the Peloponnesian members to declare war on Athens. This conflict, revolving around Athens and Corinth, represented the growing tensions between the Delian League and the Peloponnesian League, which culminated in the Second Peloponnesian War, or the Great Peloponnesian War in 431. The magnitude and extent of the Great Peloponnesian War was unprecedented in Classical Greece. It facilitated direct conflict between the two most powerful Greek entities, and pitched many city-states against each other, as well as involving certain foreign regions like Persia and Sicily. After several political reforms, political turbulence, indecisive military movements, and foreign intervention, the Delian League eventually lost the Peloponnesian War, with Athens almost being sacked and entirely enslaved. That loss would mark

the end of Athens' Golden Age and its prime (Samons, 2007).

Political Policies

Formation of the Delian League and Policymaking

The Delian League was founded in 478 following a major victory by Greece. It was initially founded only as an alliance that prevented further invasion of the Persia Empire. Athens, being the richest and most powerful member in the alliance, was accepted as the leader of the Delian League on a consensus of the members (Raaflaub, 2009). The league was an unprecedented attempt to ally the Greek world permanently together as Sparta relinquished the temporary Hellenic League. Arguments have been made claiming that the policies of the Delian League, most notably of Athens, assimilated certain policies from the Persian Empire in its statecraft. Kurt A. Raaflaub argued that educated elite Athenians looked towards the Persian Empire and their methods for ruling due to its success. This can be seen that Athens taxed the member states for contributions annually to be stored in Delos, an unparalleled form of tribute for the Greek world. The contributions consisted of either military shipments or money, and scholars have considered these contributions like those collected by the Persian empire. The monetary and military support allowed Athens to embark on foreign campaigns for the ostensible purpose of "[ravaging] the Great Persian King's land". (Samons) These campaigns indicate that Athens was using the Delian League to increase its foreign power and influence. The founding principle of the Delian League was to continue warfare against Persia for more economic gains and restore freedom, rather than simply protecting Greece from further damages. (Larsen, 1940) From the outset, the Delian League was formed upon Athenian imperialistic ambitions and ideologies, and Athens expressed many of these ideologies through its policies.

Alongside this growing imperialism, the Delian League adhered to a sense of Hellenism. Hellenism reflected one's identity as a Greek, referring to shared cultural, linguistic, and religious features. The realization of shared cultural backgrounds and identities within the Delian League seemed

to emerge during and after the defeat of the Persian Empire since they shared a common god to worship (Samons). The formation of the Delian League indicates a phenomenon: the cultural and linguistic identity assembled the Greeks to oppose non-Greek intervention even though they were under different reigns. Koehler notes this, arguing that the Greek world may have expressed a desire for unity following the Persian Wars. Athens incorporated Hellenism into its statecraft, whilst also subordinating it to their pro-Athenian aims. In the Athenian democracy, being an Athenian Greek made oneself superior to non-Athenian Greeks, and democracy was not enjoyed by non-Athenian Greeks, or the “metics”. (Ober) Athens set forth a ladder that displayed a social ranking system according to one’s cultural identities: with Athenian being the most superior, non-Athenian Greek in the middle, and non-Greek foreigners at the bottom. This social ladder was greatly emphasized in the Delian League in the years to come. The Athenian statecraft engaged with cultural identities throughout the Golden Age, which, as will be demonstrated, to a large degree influenced its policymaking in Athens and every other member of the Delian League.

Moving the Treasury and Religious/Cultural Imposition

In 454, Pericles, the sole leader of Athens from 461 until his death in 429, moved the treasury capital from Delos to Athens to prevent a Persian invasion. This transfer ensured Athens’ hegemony in the league that Athens now seized official control over the contributions from each member state. Mitford, who wrote critically of the Athenian empire, regarded the shift of the treasury as a central factor that led to the more repressive aspects of Athens’ management of the league. Mitford’s argument is well-grounded. Epigraphic evidence suggests a doubling of tribute to Athens during the treasury shift, although these same inscriptions were firmly rejected by pro-Athens scholars, such as Grote, as epigraphic evidence directly conflicted with their arguments. Along with the increase in demand for money, Athens gradually showed its desire for imperial control. Therefore, the shift from Delos to Athens was also seen as

an initiating stage of the transformation from a league to an empire. Politically, the shift also set forth the goals of Pericles to promote Athenian democracy in the league. It implied a transformation in the ruling ideologies in Athens from Cimon to the Age of Pericles. In contrast to Cimon’s strategy to favor Sparta and other Greek states, Pericles pursued exploitative relationships with the members of the league and encouraged unity against the Persian Empire. The shift of treasury did not only further the political interests of Pericles but also consolidated Athens’ control over other member states.

Cultural and religious beliefs were also involved in the shift of treasury capital, as it involved two important gods in Greek mythology. Each Greek city-state worshiped different gods and goddesses. The common god of the Delian League was Apollo, following the worship of Delos. Considerable resources were invested in constructing temples for Apollo. However, by transferring the treasury from Delos to Athens, Athens shifted religious economic contributions away from temples to Apollo and towards Athena and Athens. This act can be understood as a form of religious imposition and religious propaganda by Athens as dedications of the Greeks turned to Athena. Along with the transformation of the league to an empire, the religious transformation was an expression of a cultural ideology underpinning the Athenian Empire and helped consolidate its control in the Aegean. Athens also accomplished its dedication to Athena by funding temples through Athenian dedications and tributes. (Samons, 1993) Incidentally, this event also supports the theory ascribing the transformation of the empire took place to the late 450s.

The transfer of the treasury from Delos to Athens, and the religious emphasis on Athena over Apollo, demonstrated an attempt at forced cultural unity. As in the case of political unity, the members of the Delian League were forced to take part in cultural unity throughout their alliance. The unity is, perhaps, another early Hellenistic action, aiming to consolidate ideology regarding what defines them culturally. Ultimately, it can be read as an imperialistic cultural campaign to gain further control over Athens’ allies. The transfer of the treasury denotes another sig-

nificance that the league treasury turned into a state treasury that only benefited Athens since. The funding allowed Athens to wage war, resolve civil unrest, and construct grand temples in dedication to Athena.

Imposing Athenian Democracy and Citizenship

There is significant scholarly consensus that in the Delian League, Athens imposed democratic political systems on its allies or colonies. However, consensus of occurrence does not mean consensus of interpretation. Scholars have argued over the legitimacy and the nature of Athenian democracy. Scholars who were critical of the ethics of Athenian democracy frequently used terms revolving around oppression and imperialism to condemn Athens. On the other hand, Bonner (1933), a Grotean scholar, exonerated the imposition of democracy. Whatever the interpretation, both scholars note the driving ideologies behind the imposition. This can be seen in the case study of Samos. After pacifying a conflict in the alliance in 441, Athens imposed democracy on the oligarchy Samos to fulfill the desires of certain Athenian partisans. (Legon, 1972) The imposition of democracy eventually led to garrisons in Samos. The pursuit of Athenian interests included, according to Thucydides, securing Athenian power and the land of Samos. Similar to many other impositions of democracy, Athens claimed that the fundamental driving factor was to protect the territory of the empire (post-450). Although Athens did not make every state a cleruchy, imperialistic ideology encouraged Athens to impose democracy on its allies to prevent them from branching off the Athenian Empire. Athens' desire for unity led them to establish garrisons to protect the lands in the empire, while democratically making each state independent from each other, even the cleruchies but subjected to Athens' control.

However, the imposition of democracy on other city-states did not mean equality with Athenian Democracy. Athens' democracy ensured citizens' rights rather than human rights, and the democracy imposed on the cleruchies, and allies followed suit. This can be seen in the fact that legislation of imposed democracy followed the principal guidelines from Athens such as their constitution.

(Samons) While retaining a similar structure in trials and legislation, the colonies or the allies were made **subordinate** to Athens. If any Athenian citizens were involved in a harsh punishment in the allied courts, the Athenian assembly would transfer them to the courts in Athens to protect them. (Raaflaub) This links to the earlier discussion on cultural identities, with a clear case regarding citizenship. Citizenship was a crucial term in the statecraft of Athens. In Aristotle's definition, he focused on the relationship between *polis* (the city-state) and *polititia* (what governs the city-state). (Blok, 2017) Those who shared in the same *arche* (origins) under a specific *polititia* and proper descents were citizens of the *polis*. In other words, Aristotle interpreted (Athenian) citizenship as a natural right given to those who were born in Athens with citizen parents. Aristotle's explanation greatly aligned with Athens' policies regarding citizenship, where Athens only acknowledged those who were born in Athens with two Athenian parents as citizens in political affairs. The awareness of citizenship greatly impacted Athens in its policymaking to benefit the citizens of Athens. In the statecraft of the Athens state, male citizens were granted opportunities to serve in the office from a lottery. In the statecraft of the Delian League during the Age of Pericles, Pericles granted privileges to Athenian citizens to avoid harsh punishment. As demonstrated in the works of Aristotle, citizenship was a fundamental ideology underpinning the political system in Athens, as citizens were considerably bonded with the *polititia* and the *polis*. (Blok) As a broader assumption, it can be interpreted that Athenian democracy protected its citizens because they were bonded by their place of birth and political obligation. Therefore, the imposition of democracy was concatenated with the hierarchical system that Athenians composed and imposed on their allies, which was fundamentally interconnected with the ideologies regarding citizenship.

Democracy

Democratia, a combined idea from *dem* (people or citizenry) and *kratos* (power), was the central theme of Athens' statecraft. The Assembly and other democratic councils in Athens governed every aspect of Athens in policymaking. (Ober) Democracy was con-

controversial for Athenians themselves. Herodotus (cited in Ober) noted that the success of Athens in the Golden Age and the military success was due to the equality of speech, or *isegoria*. In fact, later Athenians often considered *isegoria* as the cornerstone of their democracy. On the other hand, oligarchs or philosophers like Plato were hostile towards democratic ideals and the application of which for several distinctive concerns. (Samons) Indeed, the scholar Mitford attributed Athens' oppression of their allies to their democracy as their statecraft was directly dependent on the system.

Although the Athenian democracy is drastically different from modern forms of government, many of the ideas discussed above remain, in some form, in modern countries. Citizenship, which partakes in an inherent hierarchy within countries, is a major concept in several democratic states, assigning social benefits to individuals; the sense of unity, or even Hellenism, can be found a resemblance in modern citizens' patriotism, where people are bonded by a specific set of cultures and beliefs; imperialism is also expressed by various countries, often in efforts to advance their economic capabilities. Similarly, modern democratic ideologies can attract similar criticism to that of Athens. Thus, the form of government in Athens has been shown to blend concepts of citizenship, imperialism, unity, and *democratia*.

Revolts and Regiments

Revolt: Rebellions and Secessions

The Delian League was anything but a stable entity for the duration of its existence. Several members revolted against Athens beginning in the late 470s, which culminated in a series of crises in the 450s. Several states grew discontent with Athens, particularly due to the economic demands regarding the tribute to Delos. They were also dissatisfied with an endless war against the Persian Empire from which Athens seemed to enjoy individual economic gain. Various other reasons are given by Balcer (1974):

- in 465 the Thasians seceded specifically because Athenians were occupying Thasos' mainland territories rich in timber and silver. In 459, the Aeginetans, across from Athens' harbor of

Piraeus, seceded as the Athenians had contracted a separate alliance with the neighboring Megarians and perhaps had occupied Troizen to the south of Aegina. The Athenian development of Megara's ports and the large Athenian military fleet in the Saronic Gulf conflicted with the Aeginetans' commercial interests in that Gulf. The Athenians subjected each rebel state in turn and deprived it of its political autonomy.

As above, many other scholars also conjecture that the statecraft of Athens led to these revolts. Bonner noted in his paper and speech that economic exploitation and advantages for Athenians were the core of the Athenian Empire, which is a likely factor contributing to the outrage of the allies. Raaflaub, similarly, argued that it was predominantly economic exploitation that was the dominant factor. Raaflaub analyzed Athens' interactions with its allies as composed of instruments of similar economic interaction within the Persian Empire. While economic exploitation was a key aspect in Athens' diplomacy within the Delian League, it was not the only pressure that allied states faced.

Raaflaub also analyzed Athens' imperialism and its desire for empire. Expanding on the link noted earlier, Raaflaub argues that the Persian empire was something of a role model for Athens on how to manage the Delian League. Through modeling certain interactions in the Persian Empire, Athens demonstrated a desire for imperialism beyond the scope and mechanisms that were currently available to Greek city-states. Oppressive, Persian-influenced practices seem to have continued under Pericles' reign, as the frequency of rebellion rose exponentially in the late 460s and 450s. (Balcer) The relationship between these two events appears to hinge on Pericles' elevation of the status of Athens within the Delian League. Arguably, the rise of Pericles advanced imperialism in Athens, though practices and policies prior to his reign indicate that this ideology had deeper roots.

In the aftermath of the revolts and secession, Athens strived to demolish the defeated city-states, rendering them defenseless, turning partial lands into cleruchies for Athenian citizens, or imposing democracy. This was an expression of Athenian colonialism, which

transformed several allies into cleruchies that were given to the Athenian settlers. The settlers in the cleruchies were usually descendants of poor farmer families with Athenian citizenship. This further promoted the ideology of Athenian supremacy and benefited Athenian citizens over others within the Delian League. The enslaved population in the rebellious allies had to swear an oath including "I shall obey the People of the Athenians." "People of the Athenians" referred specifically to Athenian citizens rather than to the Acropolis, to Athena, or to the democracy that Athens was known for. (Samons) This promotion of Athenian citizenship was tied in with harsher measures, including the demolition of the defense of the city as well as, on occasion, the massacre of the population. A precedent for this can be found, again, in the Persian Empire. Massacring the population in the defeated allies guaranteed Athenian control, as Athens had by that time already established its democratic system and encroached upon the autonomy of the allies by installing a garrison. These actions expressed underlying ideologies of civic supremacy, reflected in Athens' statecraft in the aftermath of the revolts and successions.

Regiment: Garrison and Cleruchies

As noted earlier, having crushed the revolts, Athens sent garrison troops to the conquered states and political governors to oversee the political reconstruction. Certain areas of land were confiscated and made colonies, or cleruchies. The garrison and commanders were responsible for the establishment of a democratic constitution and assisting in lawsuits to enforce democratic ideals in the subject states. From the encroachment of the autonomy of the ally states, European scholars, during an age of colonialism in the 18th and 19th centuries, regarded Athens as a colonial state. Early British Historians of Greece denoted Athens as a failing version of their contemporary reign as Athens' downfall in 404 (Parker, 2009). However, it can be argued that Athens' statecraft was predominantly imperial rather than colonial, distinct from future European colonialism. Historically speaking, several city-states craved to secede from the Delian League due to Athens' foreign military failures and their disappointment with Ath-

ens' hegemony, compounded by their support from the Persian Empire and Sparta. (Balcer) Several ally states clearly demonstrated an interest in affiliating with Persian protection and sought to achieve a mutually beneficial relationship with Persia. (Balcer) That fact, consequently, triggered Athens to reclaim the land and regain its control. As Athens only made certain states cleruchies, it seems that this measure was **punitive**, rather than part of a larger expansionist strategy. The lands were *confiscated*, a sort of repayment by its definition, to maintain Athens' authority. In this way, one could characterize their approach as 'reactive' colonialism or, as this paper contends, 'pre-emptive' Imperialism. The nuances between Athenian colonialism and Western colonialism, specifically of Britain, are key features indicating what ideologies dictated them in their actions. For example, The British colony fostered the idea of mercantilism to directly provide resources to mainland British (Nettels, 1952). While 18th and 19th century scholars sought to understand Athenian expansion within their own terms, this paper argues here that the term 'colonialism' may be less accurate in describing what was, as indicated by the evidence, driven by imperialistic, economic, and underlying civic ideologies.

Relations and Conclusion

From Athens' interactions with its allies and colonies, specifically from the 470s to 440s, economic exploitation and the political regiment remained a high priority in Athens' diplomatic policies due to their imperialism. To a large degree, most modern criticisms of the Athenian democracy tightly stuck to the economic oppression of Athens and the "colonization" in the Delian League. They focused on Athens' economic oppression of the members of the Delian League and the encroachment of their autonomy due to its flawed democratic system. Building on the earlier discussion on democracy, economic exploitation was not a direct causation of the democratic system and thus should be studied separately from democracy. It is perhaps more aligned with the ideals of imperialism that Athens was attempting to further its impacts. Whether via economic oppression or the encroachment of autonomy, Athens was fundamentally seeking greater control in the

league by several means imperialistically. Among such means, imperial economic policies and imperial political policies were Athens' primary means to launch imperialism. It is crucial to note the relationship between different ideals; as presented here, oppression was an act of imperialism rather than an act of radical democracy, diverging from what Mitford has suggested. Although imperialism was an abstract idea defined after Athens, Athenians clearly expressed several ideals in their statecraft that were imperialism. Indeed, there were other ideologies of Athens shown from Athens' interactions in the Delian League, in *Revolts, Reforms, and Regiment*, including Athens' vindictive nature and understanding of citizenship. Athens also expressed a strong interest in combining the power of every Greek state in the Delian League, whether it was for the greater purpose of the league or its own benefits. However, imperialism was overt from an economic and political standpoint. Perhaps not as comparable to the importance of the Athenian democracy in its overall statecraft, imperialism was still a major ideology in Athens' diplomacy, including Athens' interactions with the states in the Delian League and the foreign states.

Conclusion

In the long run of history, those civilizations that have functioned under organized systems of government have all had to face the same existential threats of war, economic downfall, and collapse. Athens, being a small city located on the Greek Peninsula, was an ambitious and powerful local power, which took advantage of the Delian League to try to meet these threats. Among Athens' many contributions to European history, culture, and technology, its contribution to the modern-day understanding of politics was perhaps greater than any other aspect.

However, as has been demonstrated, in their interactions with other city-states, democracy, imperialism, and civic superiority were interwoven to expand Athenian power. In Athens' democracy, a rigid social hierarchy was employed in Athens itself and in Athens' Delian League, which emphasized the concept of citizenship and free citizens. Ostensibly for the purpose of repelling Persian incursions, Athens united with several other Greek States and formed the Delian League. From its military hegemony, Athens began economic exploitation and political intervention to achieve its needs. During the Age of Pericles, imperial incursions took place in several allies of Athens. Through warfare, revenge, and occupation, Athens simultaneously remained a search of unity in Greece, which also dominated another aspect of the Athenian statecraft.

To many, Athenian democracy holds an important place in the history of modern government, promoting concepts of citizen participation and unity. However, similar to some modern expressions of the concept, Athenian democracy was delivered alongside economic exploitation, imperialism, and military occupation. Although Athens' hypothetically supported the concept of *isegoria*, or 'free speech', there were clear limits to self-expression, especially for their allies. Now more than ever, it is vital that scholars revisit and analyze these concepts in historic and modern contexts. For example, the tension between China and Taiwan has some parallels with the interactions between Athens and its allies, involving several complex political ideologies from both countries' past. Granted, history cannot be repeated. Nevertheless, the statecraft and the success of Athens are worthwhile to investigate for modern historians and politicians. Just like how Mark Twain argued, "History does not repeat itself, but it often rhymes."

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