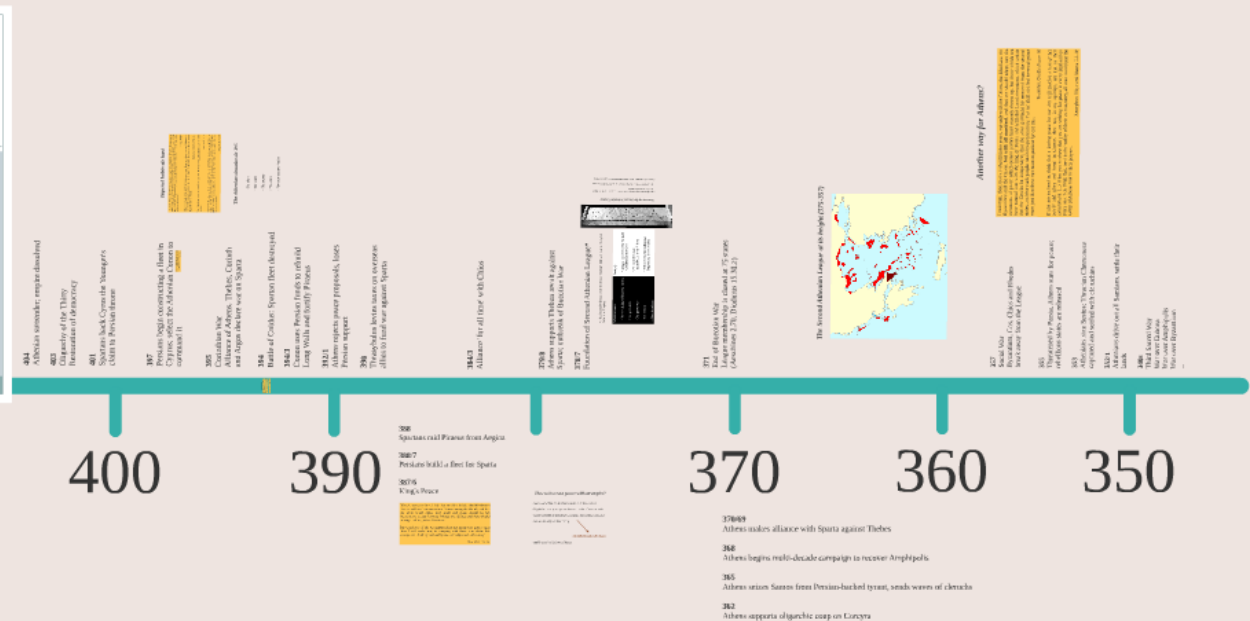


- Did Athenian imperialism survive the disaster of 404?
The democracy remained proudly imperialist, remembering the many benefits of ruling others
- What was the character of Athenian foreign policy in the fourth century?
Under threat from Sparta and Persia, Athens knew better than to pursue empire openly - but they came close
- Did Athens succeed in its foreign policy aims?
Athenian return to prominence offset by crippling moral and financial cost of Social War

Athens after the Peloponnesian War

Democracy and Imperialism

TERM 2, LECTURE 5
THE SECOND ATHENIAN EMPIRE



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- 404** Athenian surrender; empire dissolved
- 403** Oligarchy of the Thirty; Restoration of democracy
- 401** Spartans back Cyrus the Younger's claim to Persian throne
- 397** Persians begin constructing a fleet in Cyprus; select the Athenian Canon to command it
- 395** Corinthian War; Alliance of Athens, Thebes, Corinth and Argos declare war on Sparta
- 394** Battle of Cnidus: Spartan fleet destroyed
- 394/3** Canon uses Persian funds to rebuild Long Walls and fortify Piræus
- 392/1** Athens rejects peace proposals, loses Persian support
- 390** Thersybulus levies taxes on overseas allies to fund war against Sparta

Imperial habits die hard

After the Peloponnesian War, Athens continued to act as an imperial power, demanding tribute from its allies and interfering in their internal affairs. This habit of imperialism was deeply ingrained in Athenian politics and society, and it would continue to shape the city's foreign policy for generations to come.

The Athenian situation in 395

In 395 BC, Athens was in a state of relative stability but still faced significant challenges. The city had recently recovered from the devastation of the Peloponnesian War and was working to rebuild its infrastructure and economy. However, the presence of Persian forces in the region and the ongoing tensions with Sparta and Corinth remained major concerns for the Athenian leadership.

- 388** Spartans raid Piræus from Aegina
- 388/7** Persians build a fleet for Sparta
- 387/6** King's Peace

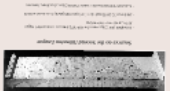
How to increase power without conflict?

1. Diplomacy: Establish alliances and negotiate favorable terms with neighboring powers.

2. Economic: Focus on trade and commerce to increase wealth and influence.

3. Cultural: Promote the city's culture and values to attract talent and resources.

4. Military: Invest in a strong navy and maintain a well-trained army for deterrence.

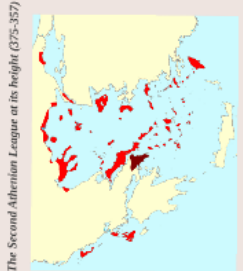


379/8 Athens supports Theban revolt against Sparta; outbreak of Boeotian War

378/7 Foundation of Second Athenian League*

* The Second Athenian League was a coalition of Greek states formed in 378 BC. It was led by Athens and included 45 member states. The league was established to provide mutual defense and to counter the power of Sparta and Persia.

- 371** End of Boeotian War; League membership is closed at 75 states (Aeschines 2.70, Diodorus 15.30.2)



The Second Athenian League at its height (375-357)

Another way for Athens?

There is a possibility that Athens could have chosen a different path after the Peloponnesian War. Instead of focusing on rebuilding and maintaining its empire, Athens could have pursued a policy of isolationism or a more aggressive expansionist strategy. However, the historical record suggests that the Athenian leadership was deeply committed to the idea of a democratic empire, and this commitment was a central part of their identity and political system.

- 357** Social War; Byzantium, Cos, Chios and Rhodes break away from the League
- 355** Threatened by Persia, Athens sues for peace; rebellious states are released
- 353** Athenians raze Sestos; Thracian Chersonese captured and settled with cleruchs
- 352/1** Athenians drive out all Sunitians, settle their lands
- 348** Third Sacred War; War over Euboea; War over Amphipolis; War over Byzantium

400

390

370

360

350

404

Athenian surrender; empire dissolved

403

Oligarchy of the Thirty

Restoration of democracy

401

Spartans back Cyrus the Younger's
claim to Persian throne

397

Persians begin constructing a fleet in Cyprus; select the Athenian Conon to command it

Conon, in the hope not only that he would recover the leadership in Greece for his native country if the Lacedaemonians were subdued in war, but also that he would himself win great renown, accepted the command.
Diodorus 14.29.3

395

Corinthian War

Alliance of Athens, Thebes, Corinth and Argos declare war on Sparta

394

Battle of Cnidus: Spartan fleet destroyed

394/3

The significance of Cnidus

The defeat of the Spartan fleet at Cnidus in 394 BC was a decisive moment in the Peloponnesian War. It marked the end of Spartan naval supremacy and the rise of Athenian naval power.

The battle was fought between the Spartan fleet, commanded by Callicratidas, and the Athenian fleet, commanded by Conon and Artemisia. The Athenians emerged victorious, destroying the Spartan fleet.

The significance of Cnidus was that it allowed Athens to become the dominant naval power in the Aegean Sea and to establish the Delian League.

Imperial habits die hard

It was not easy to deprive the Athenian people of its freedom, almost a hundred years after the deposition of the tyrants, when it had not only been not subject to any during the whole of that period, but accustomed during more than half of it to rule over subjects of its own.

Thuc. 8.68.4

Those who hated [the Spartans] in Athens were those who hoped to turn Athens (...) to war and a vigorous policy, so that it might be possible for them to obtain money from the public treasury.

Hellenica Oxyrhynchia 7.2

The Athenians were nevertheless eager for the war, thinking that theirs was the right to rule.

Xen. *Hell.* 3.5.2

'Furthermore, men of Athens, although we all understand that you would like to recover the dominion which you formerly possessed, we ask in what way this is more likely to come to pass than by your aiding those who are wronged by the Lacedaemonians?'

Xen. *Hell.* 3.5.10

The Athenian situation in 395

- No ships
- No walls
- No money
- No allies
- Spartans occupy Aegina

401

Spartans back Cyrus the Younger's claim to Persian throne

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Corinthian War

Conon

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Conon uses Persian funds to rebuild Long Walls and fortify Piraeus

392/1

Athens rejects peace proposals, loses Persian support

390

Thrasybulus levies taxes on overseas allies to fund war against Sparta

The significance of Cnidus

Pharnabazus and Conon, after defeating the Lacedaemonians in the naval battle, made a tour of the islands and the cities on the sea coast, drove out the Spartan governors, and encouraged the cities by saying that they would not establish fortified citadels within their walls and would leave them independent.

Xen. Hell. 4.8.1

He has the unique distinction of being thus mentioned in his inscription: “Whereas Conon,” it runs, “freed the allies of Athens.”

Demosthenes 20.69

All Greece fell under the power of Athens after the naval victory of Conon.

Isocrates, *Areopagiticus* 12

394

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King's Peace

'King Artaxerxes thinks it right that the cities in Asia should belong to him, as well as Clazomenae and Cyprus among the islands, and that the other Greek cities, both small and great, should be left independent, except Lemnos, Imbros, and Scyros; and these should belong, as of old, to the Athenians.

But whichever of the two parties does not accept this peace, upon them I will make war, in company with those who desire this arrangement, both by land and by sea, with ships and with money.'

Xen. *Hell.* 5.1.31

King's Peace

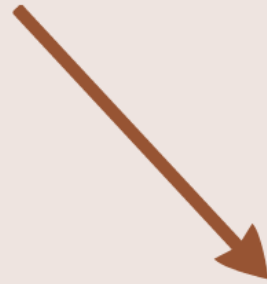
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How to increase power without empire?

- Secure ownership of settled lands (Lemnos, Imbros, Scyros)
- Regularize property tax system; increase number of taxes on trades
- Lower threshold for trierarchy by allowing joint funding (symmory)
- Increase intensity of silver mining



Strength through self-reliance

- Build network of defensive alliances

384/3

Alliance 'for all time' with Chios

379/8

Athens supports Theban revolt against Sparta; outbreak of Boeotian War

378/7

Foundation of Second Athenian League*

Second Athenian League*

* also Second Athenian Confederacy, Second Delian League, Second Athenian Empire

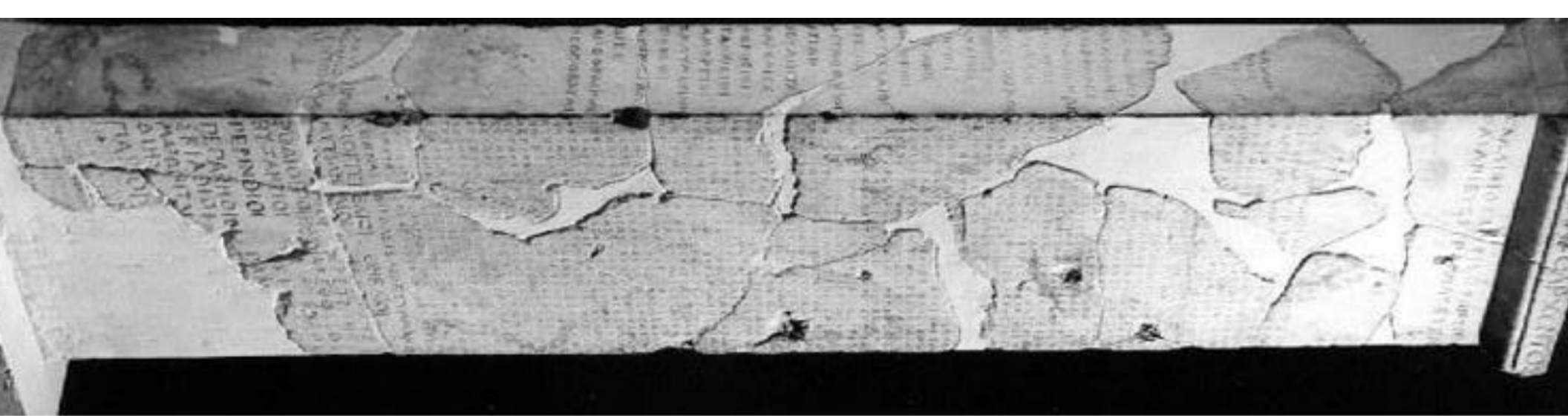
Athens swears:

- No meddling with constitutions
- No garrisons
- No governors
- No tribute
- No cleruchies

Instead:

- League controlled by council of allies (*synedrion*)
- All members pay 'contributions' to Athens
- Allies recognize Athenian hegemony (but not rule)





Sources on the Second Athenian League

- Xenophon (our main source for 410-362) does not mention the League, its composition or its function
- Diodorus (15.28-30 and elsewhere) provides patchy but crucial account
- Scattered comments in the orators: Demosthenes, Aeschines, Isocrates



371

End of Boeotian War

League membership is closed at 75 states
(Aeschines 2.70, Diodorus 15.30.2)

The Second Athenian League at its height (375-357)





370

370/69

Athens makes alliance with Sparta against Thebes

368

Athens begins multi-decade campaign to recover Amphipolis

365

Athens seizes Samos from Persian-backed tyrant, sends waves of cleruchs

362

Athens supports oligarchic coup on Corcyra



360

357

Social War

Byzantium, Cos, Chios and Rhodes
break away from the League

355

Threatened by Persia, Athens sues for peace;
rebellious states are released

353

Athenians raze Sestos; Thracian Chersonese
captured and settled with cleruchies

Another way for Athens?

I maintain, then, that we should make peace, not only with the Chians, the Rhodians, the Byzantines and the Coans, **but with all mankind**, and that we should adopt, not the covenants of peace which certain parties have recently drawn up, but those which we have entered into with the king of Persia and with the Lacedaemonians, which ordain that the Greeks be independent, that the alien garrisons be removed from the several states, and that each people retain its own territory. For we shall not find terms of peace more just than these nor more expedient for our city.

Isocrates, *On the Peace* 16

If any are inclined to think that a lasting peace for our city will involve a loss of her power and glory and fame in Greece, they too, in my opinion, are out in their calculations. (...) Were you to show that you are striving for peace in every land and on every sea, I do think that, next to the safety of their own country, all men would put the safety of Athens first in their prayers.

Xenophon, *Ways and Means* 5.2-10

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Athenians drive out all Samians, settle their lands

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Third Sacred War

War over Euboea

War over Amphipolis

War over Byzantium

...

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Imperial habits die hard

As the Athenians returned to their homes after the war, they found that many of the habits of imperial rule had become ingrained in their society. The Athenian Canon, a group of officials responsible for the city's finances, continued to operate in a manner similar to that of an imperial bureaucracy. This was a sign that the Athenians had not fully returned to their traditional democratic ways of governing.

The Athenian situation in 395

In 395 BC, Athens was in a difficult position. It had just won the Corinthian War, but it was still recovering from the economic and military setbacks of the Peloponnesian War. The city was facing a new challenge from the east, as Persians began to build a fleet in Cyprus. Athens had to decide whether to support the Persian effort or to focus on rebuilding its own power.

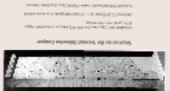
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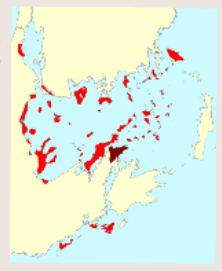
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Another way for Athens?

Restoring their empire would have been a difficult task for Athens. The Peloponnesian War had left the city in a state of economic and military decline. The Athenians had to decide whether to try to restore their empire or to focus on rebuilding their city. The Athenian Canon, a group of officials responsible for the city's finances, continued to operate in a manner similar to that of an imperial bureaucracy. This was a sign that the Athenians had not fully returned to their traditional democratic ways of governing.

If you are inclined to think that a living power for you will involve a loss of freedom, you are right. But if you are inclined to think that a living power for you will involve a loss of freedom, you are right. But if you are inclined to think that a living power for you will involve a loss of freedom, you are right.

*See also: War and Peace 12-13

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390

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