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**THE MAIN RULES OF TRIBUTE PAYMENT
IN MID 5th CENTURY
ATHENIAN *ARCHE* ACCORDING TO *CLEINIAS DECREE***

The main priority of my paper is to point out, through epigraphic sources and evidence from the 5th century Athens, one of the most characteristic features and objectives of Athenian “imperialism” during the last two decades of the period called Pentekontaetia (the period of fifty years – 479–431 B.C.). I will especially focus my attention on one of the most important epigraphic sources from this period – Cleinias decree (448/7, 425/4(?) B.C.). The importance of this decree is significant, because it puts an exact view on the process of collection of the tribute (foros) in the mid-5th century Athenian arche. The financial regulations prescribed in the decree were valid for all members of the Athenian arche, and had a great impact on restriction of their autonomy at the expense of growth of Athenian dominance in the symmarchy. The main objective I want to achieve in this paper, the importance of epigraphic material and evidence as one of the most important (and in some cases irreplaceable) sources of information about the image of Athenian “imperialism” and Athenian relationship towards their subject-allies in the 5th century B.C. The reason why I choose particularly this decree as a representative type of epigraphic evidence, is to show how important the annual collection of the tribute was for the Athenians, and how the Athenians used the collection of the foros, as Isocrates mentions to “publicly humiliate” the allies and how they strengthened their hegemonic position in Delian symmarchy transforming it into their own thalassocratic “empire” and allies into their “subjects”. At the end, besides the political motives and economical profits of Athenian “imperial” foreign policy, I will mention another very strong element, which also had a significant impact in terms of Athenian attempts to achieve not only political, but also cultural dominance over its allies by linking and implicating some of the most important control mechanisms of imperialism with various religion aspects.

Key words: Cleinias Decree, Athenian *arche*, *foros*, subject-allies, “imperialism”, “empire”

Introduction

Histories of emerge of the Athenian naval power in Aegean in 5th century B.C. have traditionally been offered as political and military narratives. They explain the origins of a naval alliance created in 478/7 B.C., the so-called Delian League (*συνμαχία*; *symmachia* – alliance, offensive and defensive) under Athenian leadership and its development into an “empire” (*ἀρχή*; *arché* – empire, realm, magistracy, office etc.) sometime in mid-century.¹ Moreover, most treat the phenomenon as comprehensible as a self-contained period of enquiry. Through close examination of a wide variety of evidence connected with Athenian activity during the years of forming the Delian League, most scholars believe that the Athenians made immediate use of the League navy and funds to gain and appropriate resources, profits and territory for themselves. The story of Athenian aspirations to hegemony and the history of Athenian imperialism are well established subjects of research in Greek history. Discussion of Athenian imperialist policy generally also touches on the problem of connection between foreign policy and the composition and ideology of the political parties within the state. Though the composition of the political parties and the “inner circulation” of their leadership have been reconsidered by historians in the past, it seems that there is still a widespread tendency to attribute “extreme” imperial policy to “radical” democratic parties and a “moderate” foreign policy or opposition to imperialistic expansion to “moderate” – the rich and the oligarchically inclined political parties. And therefore, the main question on which we should try to find an explanation is whether the mid-5th century Athenian *arche*, with all its characteristic forms and features, should be considered as an “empire” in the true sense? This question evoked much disputes in scholarship in the past, and most historians, dedicated on this topic, even nowadays are not unified in their opinion about usage of this term in conjunction with 5th century Athens. However, if we want to speak about 5th century Athenian *arche* as the empire, firstly we have to take in consideration various aspects and different points of view.

Methodological approach and terminology

The first point on which we should focus is the size. According to standards of some ancient multi-ethnic empires, such as were Persia or Rome,

¹ In translation of some key words and terms applied in paper I used Liddell–Scott. (1940).

the Athenian *arche* was tiny. It covered just a couple of thousand square miles and less than a million people lived there in the height of its power in the mid 5th century B.C. However, compared to Persia or Rome, the Athenian *arche* was ethnically and culturally remarkably homogeneous — not just all Greeks, but almost all Ionian Greeks. Second, the rule in *polis* wasn't in the hands of autocratic monarch or small group of privileged individuals, but in the hands of Athenian *δημος* (*demos* – “the people” – meaning adult male citizens) and the system of government, applied either in domestic and foreign policy, was called *δημοκρατία* (*demokratia* – “rule of the people”). And third, for something so seemingly insignificant as for its size, the Athenian *arche* attracted a remarkable amount of attention. The reason is that it represents the unique form of ancient “naval empire” that the Greek world had never known before. Therefore, the modern-day scholars are not primarily focusing on its size, but quite the opposite. They try to find an explanation for some more relevant questions and discuss topics, which primarily focus on various forms and features of Athenian “imperial” foreign policy and its growing intensity during particular periods of *Pentekontaetia* that played a decisive role in process of transforming Delian symmarchy into Athenian empire.²

There is of course a lot of other evidence, both literary and epigraphic, which attests to varying degrees of political control and curtailment of the autonomy of allies in conjunction with the 5th century Athenian *arche*. Because of that historians often use modern-day terms like “empire” or “imperialism”, although these don't precisely express the exact image, and therefore need to be cared with special attention. However, both of these terms are used mostly as a technical term; fit enough to get the closest expression on political organization, which Athenians led in the 5th century B.C. The term “imperialism” appeared only in the middle of the 19th century to signify an imperial system of government; the rule of an emperor, especially

² General discussion of the various meanings of “imperialism” is provided by Mason Hammond (1948: 105–161). Author pointed out various kinds of imperialisms and stated that the term has no clearly defined meaning and has become a political catchword rather than a scientific term. Also Polly Low (2005: 93–111) primarily focused on sets of mid 5th century Athenian epigraphic inscriptions, and challenge them with Thucydides and his conventional portrayal of Athenian imperialism. An interesting view on imperialism is also provided by Thomas Harrison (2008: 1–22). In his article author deals with modern imperialism, but also gives us historical resume of its features in past. He also mention how the term made its way into the history of 5th century Athenian empire, focused primarily on the economic benefits and costs of empire, but also on more intangible aspects of imperialism: the cultural benefits of being part of a larger community, for example; the sense of identity shared between imperialists and subjects, or the benign intentions of the imperialists.

when despotic or arbitrary. During the 20th century it became a “political catchword”, quite popular among scholars, and finally found its place in conjunction with many ancient empires, including the 5th century Athens.³ The imperialism was defined simply as “the principle or policy of seeking an extension of empire.” or as “an urge on the side of one people to extend its political rule over others”.⁴ Although the word imperialism itself is modern, I suggest that it can also characterize certain people or political organizations, existed far back as history reaches. Moreover, reflective persons among these ancient people were not blind to its existence, whatever term they applied to it. Their attempts to rationalize and justify the imperialism

³ Russell Meiggs in his paper (1963: 1–36) focused mainly on the economic benefits and costs of empire. However, he also regularly applied “imperialism” on to more intangible aspects, for example: the cultural benefits of being part of a larger community, or the sense of mutual identity shared between Athenians and their allies, based on common cult etc. Moses Finley in his article (1978: 1–15) deals almost exclusively with Athens and Rome, suggest (p. 6.) that various characteristic forms of imperial policy, like 1.) restriction of freedom of action in interstate relations, 2.) political, administrative, or judicial interference in local affairs, 3.) military and naval conscription, 4.) the exaction of ‘tribute’ in some form, whether in the narrow sense of a regular lump sum or as a land tax and also 5.) confiscation of land, with or without subsequent emigration of settlers from the imperial state, were all applied by the Roman as well as they were by the Athenians, although in a vastly reduced scale.

⁴ The causes and methods of imperialism had been much discussed by scholars in the past. Mason Hammond (1948: 105–161) provides us with some main opinion on this topic in historiography. According to him (p. 105–107), some historians argued that imperialism was to the effect that whereas various real and powerful motives of pride, prestige, and pugnacity, together with the more altruistic professions of a civilizing mission, figured as causes of imperial expansion, the dominant directive motive was the demand for markets and for profitable investment by the exporting and financial classes within each imperialistic regime. This economic interpretation of imperialism became very fashionable and had been applied by many historians to Athens, e.g. Finley (1978), Meiggs (1963, 1979.). However, according to Hammond, other factors have as much importance as the economic. For instance, imperialism “by satisfying the superiority complex of the general public, affords demagogues the opportunity to enlarge on the theme of conquest, or a people who thinks itself better than its neighbours may invoke the presumed right of the fittest to dominate over the less fit and to carve up the decadent.” Many people sincerely feel that they have a better religion or higher culture than others and should extend the benefits thereof by a sort of „cultural imperialism“. In the end, the strongest element in the imperialistic urge is, as he quotes (p. 107), the “atavistic, irrational disposition of a state to forceful expansion without any special object and without a definable limit.“ Although the present day discussion is concerned primarily with the causes and methods of imperialism it will appear that all the above motives were invoked by ancient thinkers to account for process of “empire-building” in 5th century Athens.

of their respective people form a suitable introduction to a consideration of imperialism in general.⁵

“Imperial” nature of Athenian foreign policy

In the mid-5th century B.C., the Athenian *arche* was at the height of its power. After assignment of the so-called Peace of Callias,⁶ which officially terminated almost a half-century long period of mutual confrontation with Persians, the Athenians under Pericles’ leadership could finally focus all their attention on building up and managing their thalassocratic (*θαλασσοκρατία* – “rule of the sea”) empire. Although the fundamental purpose of the League’s existence – to fight against Persians – was now finally fulfilled, the Athenians didn’t want to disband the League. On the contrary, they strengthened their hegemonic position in the League by

⁵ Thucydides for example, championed most vigorously by the imperial Athenians, and puts the following justification of Athenian harsh behavior towards their subject-allies (Th. I, 76): „*We have done nothing extraordinary, nothing contrary to human practice, in accepting an empire when it was offered to us and then in refusing to give it up. Three very powerful motives prevent us from doing so – honor, fear and self-interest. And we were not the first to act in this way. It has always been a rule that the weak should be subject to the strong; besides we consider that we are worthy of our power*”. Also Plutarch (Plu. *Cim.* 11) mentions that „*the allies continued to pay their assessments, but did not furnish men and ships according to allotment, since they were soon weary of military service, and had no need of war, but a great desire to till their land and live at their ease. The Barbarians were gone and did not harass them, so they neither manned their ships nor sent out soldiers. The rest of the Athenian generals tried to force them to do this, and by prosecuting the delinquents and punishing them, rendered their empire burdensome and vexatious.*”

⁶ Much has been disputed about Peace of Callias among historians in the past. Our knowledge of it comes from references by the fourth century orators Isocrates (Isoc. IV, 118–120; XII, 59–60) and Demosthenes (D. XIX, 273) as well as from the historian Diodorus (D. S. XII, 4), who puts it in 449/8 B.C. However, according to some modern historians (e. g. Rhodes, 2009: 208–209) it is possible that the treaty never officially existed and if did exist, its importance is disputed. Thucydides did not mention it, however, Plutarch (Plu. *Cim.* 14) thought that it had been signed much sooner – after the Battle of the Eurymedon in 467/6 B.C (on this dispute see: Fornara & Sammons, (1991: 172–176) or Badian (1987: 1–39). Also Herodotus (Hdt. VII, 151) mention Athenian embassy led by Callias, which visited Susa after Xerxes’ death in 465/4 B.C. The editors of the Athenian Tribute List (*ATL*, III, p. 275f.) put 450/49 B.C as the date for the peace and this date has been also supported by Meiggs (1979: 125f.). In any case, it seems that there has been some agreement, which ended the hostilities between both sides, and allowed Athens to focus its attention on affairs in mainland Greece. Nonetheless, the case of Peace of Callias remains an increasingly controversial topic among historians till nowadays.

unleashing a full-scale imperialism, which included various types of policies and means of control, applied in most allied *poleis* throughout the Aegean limiting their autonomy.⁷

The most fundamental method of oppression was forcing allies to annually pay *Φόρος* (*foros* – payment, tribute), which supposed to serve as a financial contribution on military purposes of symmarchy and its height was precisely defined for every single *polis*, according to its financial possibilities.⁸ Annual collection of money from allies as an alternative solution instead of sending military envoys was something new in the Greek world. It was caused primarily by the fact that the majority of *poleis* which joined the League were small states for which it was easier to contribute money every year to allied treasury, instead of building and manning ship to allied fleet. On the other hand, the strongest and the wealthiest allies, such as Chios, Samos, Lesbos and Thasos, had privileged status among others in the League and from the beginning were contributing ships instead of money.⁹ After the transfer of the League's treasury from Delos to Athens in

⁷ Some of these “imperial” policies and means of control were applied by Athenians basically shortly after establishment of Delian symmarchy. Ancient historians mention various revolts, e.g. Naxian revolt – Th. (I, 98), or Thasian revolt – Th. (I, 100–101; IV, 102), D.S. (II, 70; XI, 64), Plu. (*Cim.* 14), which both took place in first half of the 5th century B.C. However, these two most famous examples of Athenian harshness against their allies in first decades of League's existence, whether their reasons were either political or economical, should serve as examples to prevent other members of the League from revolting. They also helped Athenians to gain supreme control over the alliance. In case of any sign of disunity inside the symmarchy, Athens had to act swiftly, if they want to protect their emerging realm in Aegean. Although their economic interests, dependent mostly on allied financial contributions, from which both foreign and domestic Athenian policy had been financed, played without any doubt key role in this process. Therefore, if Athenians wanted to fully concentrate on building up their hegemony in Greece, they could not afford to risk League's disintegration under any circumstances.

⁸ Collecting of *foros* started right after establishment of Delian symmarchy in 478/7 B.C. The members were given a choice of either offering armed forces or paying a tax to the joint treasury. As Thucydides mention (Th. I, 96) the most of allies chose the tax, because ship building was costly and they couldn't afford it. The first sum collected into League's treasury was according to Plutarch (Plu. *Arist.* 24.) and Thucydides (Th. I, 96) 460 talents. On contrary, D. S. (XI, 47) states 560 talents as the final amount of money collected from allies. However, some historians argue, e. g. Hornblower (1997: 145) that both numbers are impossibly high due to limited number of allies in 478/7B.C. Nonetheless, the most attractive solution for us would be to accept that the ship suppliers were also assessed in a *foros* equivalence (possibly one ship was the equivalent of 1 talent), and therefore both numbers probably include beside cash money also value of provided ships altogether with their crews.

⁹ Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 24, 2.

454 B.C., the money of allies had been more often used not on military purposes of the League, as they were supposed to, but primarily on Athenians' personal interests. Thucydides mentions that the biggest sum collected on Acropolis during *Pentekontaetia* was 9 700 talents (probably in 449 B.C.). He also says that apart from other sources of Athenian annual revenue, only *foros* accounted *c* 600 talents.¹⁰

Besides various literary sources, there is also another type of evidence from which we can make a detailed view on Athenian system of collecting *foros*. Epigraphic sources, especially those concerning financial affairs from the 5th century Athens, provide us with various very important notes about the state of Athenian finances in general, but also inform us about the common practice of its collection. The most important epigraphic source, which in detail informs us about the latter, is Cleinias Decree.¹¹ In attempt to put the most precise interpretation of some of the most important parts of the decree, I used its reconstructed version provided in Meritt's – Wade-Gery's – McGregor's *Athenian Tribute List (ATL)* edition and compared it with decrees English translation, provided in Meiggs & Lewis' *A Selection of Greek historical Inscriptions to the End of the 5th Century B.C. (GHI)*.

Cleinias decree – the procedure of taxpaying and regulation of allies' autonomy

Let us, then, look at the practicalities of tribute payment in an attempt to reconstruct the processes of payment and recording. The first question addressed surely must be who pays the tribute. As with many of the questions in this section, our information is extremely limited. We depend on a handful of literary references and more importantly on three Athenian decrees – the Cleinias (M&L 46), Thoudippos (M&L 69) and Cleonymos

¹⁰ Apart from Thucydides (Th. II, 13), we have testimony from D. S. (XII, 38), who uses Ephoros's account of 8 000 talents, which was the total sum accumulated in the League's treasury shortly after its transfer to Athens in 454 B.C., and 10 000 talents D. S. (XII, 40, 54; XIII, 21) as the highest amount of money deposited on Acropolis during *Pentekontaetia*. Also Isocrates (Isoc. VIII, 69, 126) mentions 8 000 and 10 000 talents, which Pericles brought up into the Acropolis, apart from the sacred treasures.

¹¹ There have been various disputes among historians about dating of Cleinias Decree. Some of them put decree as early as 448/7 B.C. (e.g. *ATL*, II, D7; *GHI* 46 (M&L), primarily because of a subsequently discovered fragment that discloses that the name of the man who proposed this decree – Cleinias – was in fact the father of Alcibiades, who died at the battle of Coronea in 447/6 B.C. On the other hand, for example Rhodes (2006: 174) or Fornara (1991: 180–182) took a different approach on decree's dating, believing that it is best to be dated to the middle of 420s (c. 425/4 B.C.).

(M&L 68) decrees.¹² It seems that the people responsible for the collection of the tribute were the *eklogeis*, (“collectors”), who, we assume, were local citizens. As these were rich citizens, it is reasonable to assume that the burden of the tribute fell on the rich citizens of each community. It is, however, extremely difficult to be certain that such a system for local tribute collection would apply to all the members of the *arche*. Certainly, in terms of who had the ability to pay the tribute which had to be paid in silver, either coined or bullion (or in some cases electron), I think it is reasonable to say that at least at an initial stage it would be the wealthy who could carry the burden. However, different *poleis* and communities may have used different systems of distributing the burden of payment among their citizen body.¹³ For example, the Cleonymos decree (M&L 68) is specifically concerned with the appointment of tribute collectors in 426 B.C. The problem addressed in this decree was the leaking of tribute between dispatch and arrival and receipt at Athens. Cleonymos introduced heavy penalties for those who obstruct the arrival of tribute. Obviously, this was a problem that needed urgent attention. The decree also regulated that collectors were to be elected in each city, which lead us to assumption that they would be held personally responsible for any problems arising. Once tribute was locally collected, the next stage was its dispatch to Athens. And this was the main concern and objective of the Cleinias decree, which is now to be dated not before as suggested, but after the Cleonymos, somewhere around 425/4 B.C., Sammons (2000: 189–194).

Formerly, the decree was dated to early forties (c. 447 B.C.), primarily because of discovery of the fragment which discloses that the name of the man who proposed this decree was Cleinias, father of Alcibiades, who died at the battle of Coronea in 447/6 B.C. Another argument for earlier dating of decree is its similar “tone” and “analogy” with the another famous decree – Clearchus’ Coinage Decree (c 449/8 B.C.), which imposed Athenian silver coinage, weights and measures throughout Athenian *arche*, and was obligatory for all allies (probably except Chios, Lesbos and Samos, which

¹² It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the dating of these decrees. In some ways, it does not matter when we date them for the reconstruction of the practicalities of the payment of the tribute I am discussing here.

¹³ Kallet (2001: 211ff) suppose that the change of tribute to the *eikoste* tax, recorded in Thucydides (Th.VII, 28.4), may have had as a consequence that noncitizens, as well as citizens, would now carry the burden of tribute paying. However, that even with the system of tribute payment, non-citizens were usually excluded from these contributions.

were the strongest and the wealthiest *poleis* from among the allies which still possessed some guarantees of their autonomy).¹⁴

As mentioned above, the decisive objection to the new and early date for the Cleinias Decree follows from its sequential connection with the decree Cleonymus passed in 426. The Cleonymus Decree saw to the appointment of “tribute collectors,” nationals from the tribute-paying states, who were made accountable for the amount of tribute brought to Athens. A record was to be made of those cities falling short and the names of the tribute collectors involved. The procedure in the Cleinias Decree implies the use of such tribute collectors. However, more important, the precautions taken against malfeasance were considerably more sophisticated than those that had contented in Cleonymus decree. According to the terms of the Cleinias Decree, however, the tribute-paying *polis* was also to inscribe the sum sent to Athens in an account book, which was sealed and the sum being then sent off to Athens. The account book would be read out at Athens simultaneously with the paying down of the money. It is difficult to see, therefore, how Cleinias decree can have preceded Cleonymus’s when it appears to be an “improvement” on the earlier arrangement. The main reason was probably that it resulted from some instance of mismanagement of the tribute funds, whereby sums of money fell short, and everyone involved in collection disclaimed responsibility, each blaming one another for the shortfall. The proper context for the decree is therefore the twenties, precisely when the bureaucracy it implies had already been sprung over the Aegean.¹⁵

In general, Cleinias decree imposed an appointment of tribute collectors from the tribute-paying *poleis*, who were made accountable for the amount of tribute brought to Athens. A record was to be made of those allied cities, which fall a short in paying the tribute and of the names of the tribute collectors that were involved. The procedure in the Cleinias decree implies the use of such tribute collectors, and moreover, multiple precautions were taken against corruption and embezzlement. According to the terms, the

¹⁴ For closer view on Clearchus’ Coinage Decree and its characteristic features see e.g. *ATL*, II, D14, p. 61, 67–68; *GHI* 45, 1–14 (M&L); Meiggs (1963: 28–29).

¹⁵ The propriety of the later date is also confirmed by a reference in lines 41–43, referring to ally’s obligation to bring cow and panoply. Cleinias declared that “if anyone acts improperly with regard to the bringing of the cow and panoply,” shall be indicted. In Thoudippos (the so-called “Reassessment Decree”) which proclaim that all tribute-paying states assessed in 425/4 B.C. were required to bring a cow and panoply to the Panathenaea and to take part in the procession “just as [Athenian] colonists do”. This indicates that this requirement had been limited until 425/4 B.C. only to Athenian settlements. In the Cleinias Decree however, this order is directed to every tribute-paying *polis* and therefore we can assume that the later date is more mandatory.

tribute-paying *poleis* were also obligated to inscribe on a special “account” tablet the precise sum of collected tribute, which was sealed, and then send off to Athens. This tablet would be then read out at Athens simultaneously with the paying down the money.

The introductory part of the decree (lines 5–22)¹⁶ concerns mainly on the precise description of the procedure of how the tribute should be collected in allied cities and subsequently sent to Athens. The councils in allied cities, supervised by Athenian *archontes* (ἄρχοντες) and *episkopoi* (ἐπίσκοποι), were to ensure that the tribute would be collected each year and brought to Athens.¹⁷ They had to arrange seals for the cities in order to make it impossible for those bringing the tribute to defraud. As already mentioned above, the cities were also obligated to record on a special account tablet the exact amount of tribute which they are sending, and after that they had to seal the

¹⁶ *Atl*, II, D7, 5–22. „*τεμ Βολεμ καὶ τὸς ἄρχοντας ἐν τει πόλεσι καὶ τὸς ἐπισκόπος ἐπιμέλεσθαι ὅπως ἂν χυλλέγεται ὁ φόρος κατὰ τὸ ἐτος ἕκαστον καὶ ἀπάγεται Ἰ Αθήναζε. Χσύμβολα δὲ ποιέσασθαι πρὸς τὰς πόλεις, ὅ πως ἂμ μὲ ἔχσει ἀδικεν τοῖς ἀπάγοσι τὸμ φόρον. γράφασσα δὲ ἐ πόλις ἐς γραμματεῖον τὸμ φόρον, ὄντιν ἂν ἀποπέμπει, σεμεναμένε τοι συμβόλοι ἀποπεμπέτο Ἰ Αθήναζε. τὸς δὲ ἀπάγοντας ἀποδόνα τὸ γραμματεῖον ἐν τει βολει ἀναγνοναι ὄταμ περ τὸμ φόρον ἀποδίδοσι. οἱ δὲ πρυτάνες μετὰ Διονύσια ἐκκλεσίαν ποιεσάντων τοῖς ἔλλενοταμίαισι ἀποδεῖχσαι Ἰ Αθηναίοις τομ πόλεον τὰς ἀποδόσας τὸμ φόρον ἐντελε καὶ τὰς ἔλλιπόσας χορίς, ὅσαι ἂν τινες ὄσιν.*“

¹⁷ In order to protect their interest, Athenians were sending political overseers – *episkopoi* and *archontes* – to allied *poleis*. They were widespread throughout the *arche* and their primary concern was to install puppet, or at least compliant government, which would act in accordance with Athenian political conception. The councillors in allied *poleis* were all put under the oath, for whose violation the councillor could be executed together with his sons. The Athenian supervisors could sometimes become a regular board of political residents and an oath of obedience was sometimes exacted from the people as well as from the members of Council. A regulation decree from 453/2 B.C. (*GHI* 40, /M&L/, *ATL*, II, D10) represents a classic example of how the Athenians made their policy towards those allies, who rebelled against them in this period. The decree made arrangements for a council of 120, whose members were appointed by a lot and were established to office by Athenian *episkopoi*. The democratic constitution was given to the city and after that all the members of the Council had to swear an oath of allegiance to Athenians. Sometimes (like in the case of Erythrae) this oath had to be taken not only by the members of the Council, but also by all citizens in a city. Similar regulations were later applied also against some other *poleis*, for example: Kolophon in 447/6 (*ATL*, II, D15), Eretria and Chalkis in 446/5 (*Ibid.* D16–17), Samos in 439/8 (*Ibid.* D18), Lesbos in 427/6 (*Ibid.* D22). Therefore we could presume that overseers and compliant governments were probably implied in most allied *poleis* to secure their allegiance towards Athens, not just in those who had recently rebelled. The democracy itself in the mid 5th century B.C. became one of the most characteristic control mechanisms, which the Athenians used in allied *poleis* as the guarantee of their obedience.

whole sum and send it to Athens. Those who brought it were obligated to submit the tablet in the Athenian Council – *Boulé* (βουλή) – where it has been read simultaneously with the paying down of the money. Each year after the *Megala Dionysia* (Μεγάλα Διονύσια), the acting members of the Council – *prytaneis* (πρυτάνεις) – were to hold an Assembly – *Ekklesia* (ἐκκλησία) – for the *hellenotamiai* (ἑλληνοταμίαι) to report to the Athenians which cities had paid their tribute in full, and separately those, which had defaulted.

For the first sentence of the decree speaks of the Athenian governors in the cities and the *episkopoi* as the persons responsible for the supervision of the tribute payments. The assumption is that representatives of the cities are the ones who accompany the dispatch of the tribute to Athens. But is it safe to make this assumption for all the cities in the empire? First of all, I find it difficult to accept that all the cities and communities required to pay tribute would be able to send representatives to Athens, for what may have been, especially in assessment years, a considerable amount of time, from Maimakterion in the autumn till March, during the *Dionysia*, when tribute was presented. Secondly, we have a series of references of silver-collecting ships that were under the control of the generals and are sent to collect tribute. Nowhere in the decree, however, do the generals appear as having any jurisdiction for the collection of the tribute. The reference to the silver-collecting ships, therefore, must imply local *ad hoc* collections, perhaps in order to cover expenses during expeditions. This proclamation can be supported by the next passage (lines 22–31)¹⁸ which tells us that the Athenians usually chose four men and sent them to the cities to give a receipt for the tribute, which had been paid and also to demand the unpaid tribute from those cities, which have defaulted. Two of these men sailed on a *triērēs* (τριήρης) to the cities of the Islands and of Ionia and the other two sailed to those of Hellespont and Thrace.¹⁹ Immediately after *Dionysia*, the

¹⁸ *Atl*, II, D7, 22–31; „Ἀθηναίος δὲ ἐλομένος ἀνδρας τέτταρας ἀποπέμπεν ἐπὶ τὰς πόλεις ἀντιγραφόμενος τῶν φόρων τεσι ἀποδόσει καὶ ἀπαιτήσοντας τὸν με [ἀποδοθέντα παρὰ τον ἑλλιποσ]ον, τὸ μὲν δύο πλεν ἐπὶ τὰς ἐπὶ τὰς ἐφ’ Ἑλλεσπόντο καὶ ἐπὶ Θράικες. ἐ[σάχεν δὲ ταυτα τὸς πρυτάνες ἐς τὲμ] βολέν καὶ ἐς το[ν] δεμον εὐθὺς μετὰ Διονύσια καὶ βο]λεύεσθαι περὶ τ[ού]τον χσνεχος ἕος ἂν διαπραχθ]ει.“

¹⁹ *Foros* was collected from every tributary *polis* or, where a number of them was too small, by one “representative” *polis*, which was made responsible for a group. In order to simplify the financial accounts, the allies were listed and divided into five geographical tributary districts – Ionia, Hellespont, Thrace, Caria and Islands. These districts varied in size, interests, accessibility and their political, judicial and commercial relations to Athens were governed by separate treaty in each case. For detailed view on the list of the tribute-paying cities in each of these financial districts see *ATL*, I, List 12, p. 138f; Lists 1–40, p. 128–153.

prytaneis had to introduce this subject to the Council, where it was continually discussed, until the matter was settled. So let us reconstruct a likely scenario of payment processes in a year when there is no reassessment and therefore no possibility for appeal against a possible increase⁵⁵: The citizens of allied polis agree on how to collect the tribute from their internal resources, using possibly local *eklogeis*. They then send the tribute to Athens, with their own representatives and produce the tribute and receipt to the Boule. They open the receipt and count the money in front of the Boule. Once the Boule has received the tribute, it then instructs the Assembly to chase up the cities who had not paid the full tribute. This was the role of the *hellenotamiai*. The *hellenotamiai* make temporary records of the tribute received, of cities in arrears, and written instructions about irregularities of payment and so on. This elaborate and complicated procedure produced an immense number of documents that were never inscribed on stone and are therefore lost to us⁵⁶. The receipt of tribute by the *hellenotamiai* at Athens must have formed the basis for what was then inscribed on stone as the Athenian Tribute Lists, recording the amount of the tribute dedicated to the goddess Athena⁵⁷. In other words, what we have inscribed on stone is the record of the portion dedicated to the goddess: that is the portion of the tribute that arrived at Athens at a particular point in the year, and was then separated in order to be dedicated to the goddess⁵⁸. The first conclusion from this reconstruction of events is that the sums preserved do not in fact represent the total of the tribute that the Athenians received from the empire⁵⁹. For example, I find it very difficult to believe that the tribute extorted by the generals would necessarily find its way back to Athens in order for the exact amount to be dedicated to Athena. This is hardly a new and original conclusion⁶⁰; however, I assume that this reconstruction of events, which stresses that the Athenian Tribute Lists give us only a partial picture, at best, is not always highlighted adequately in the modern reconstructions of the history and the overall financial workings of the *arche*.

Next, in lines 31–41²⁰ we could observe, how important the procedure of collecting the tribute was for the Athenians. The decree states that if any Athenian or ally committed an offence in respect of the tribute against those

²⁰ *AtI*, II, D7, 31–41 „ἐὰν δὲ τις Ἀθ[εναιος] ἢ χσύμμαχοι ἀδικεῖ περὶ τὸν φόρον, ὃν δεῖ [τὰς πόλεις] γραφσάσας ἐς γραμματεῖον τοῖς ἀπάγοσ[ιν] ἀποπέμπεν Ἀθ[ε]ναῖζε, ἔστο αὐτὸν γ[ρά]φασθαι πρὸς [τὸς] πρυτάνες τοὶ β[ολο]μένο[ι] Ἀθ[ε]ναῖον καὶ τον χσ[υ]μμάχον. οἱ δὲ πρυτάνες ἔσαγ[όν]τον ἐς τὲμ βολέν [τὲν] γραφέν ἔν τ[ι]ς ἄγ[ρα]φαστα[ι] ἢ εὐθηνέσθο δόρο[ν] μωρίασι δραχμ[ε]σι ἕκαστος. [ὁ δὲ ἄν]καταγνοι [ἐ] βολέ, μὲ τιμαν αὐτ[ο]ι κυρία ἔστο [ἄλλα] ἔσ[φ]ερέτο ἐς τ[ὲν] ἐλιαίαν εὐθύ[ς]. ὅταν δὲ δόχσει [ἀδικεῖν], γνόμας πο[ι]όντων οἱ πρυτάνες ὁ τὶ ἄν δοκ[εῖ] αὐτ[ο]μ παθεν ἔ ἀποτεῖσαι.“

who brought it, any Athenian or ally who wished, could prosecute him and take before *prytaneis*.²¹ The *prytaneis* were ought to bring any kind of prosecution, which had been made before the Council, or each of them had to pay a fine of 1 000 drachmas for bribery. However, the Council didn't have the final authority to decide the penalty for any man, who had been convicted, but had to send the case at once to the Athenian law-court – *heliaia* (Ἡλιαία).²² If the judges – *heliastai* (Ἡλιασταί) – decided that the man was found guilty, the *prytaneis* recommended the exact punishment or fine they thought he should pay. Therefore I assume that although the *prytaneis* could not decide the guilt of the prosecuted man on their own, however, from the decree it is quite obvious that the Athenian Council was the main, principal authority in Athens, concerned with collection of the *foros* in general. To support this claim, we know from Antipho (V, 69) about one occasion when all but one of the *hellenotamiai* were put to death for malfeasance in office. However, as later events proved, they were guiltless.

The importance of religious aspects of tribute collection

When we take look at the next three lines, at the first glance, they could seem quite insignificant for us. However, the information which they provide us with is also very important. In lines 41–43 the decree informs us that if anyone (from the allies) commits an offence of bringing the cow or the panoply, he shall be prosecuted and the penalty shall be in accordance with these same principles.²³ Besides the political motives and economical profits of Athenian “imperial” foreign policy, there was also another strong element that has to be mentioned: the relation between imperialism and religion. The religious consequences of the ties of common Ionian kinship

²¹ Pseudo-Xenophon (also known as “old Oligarch”) in his “controversial” Constitution of Athens speaks of the advantages accruing to the Athenians because of their custom of judging the allies at Athens. He points out (I, 18) that by this means every Athenian was treated sycophantically whereas, if the trials were held in the allies’ cities, the allies would honour only the Athenian officers, trierarchs, and military envoys.

²² This judicial control operated at both state and also individual level. With the demise of the Delian League synods (probably in the early 440s) the Athenian law courts took over responsibility for judicial action involving allied *poleis* in general. In the same way an ally that wishes to appeal against its assessment of *foros* has to make the appeal before an Athenian law-court. As P. J. Rhodes states (2006: 175–176), the allies would need to furnish the relevant proof at Athens in an open tribunal to have any chance of a reduction of *foros*.

²³ *Atl*, II, D7, 41–43; „Καὶ ἐάν τις περὶ τὴν ἀπα[γογὲν] τες βοῶς ἔ[τες πανοπλία]ς ἀδικεῖ, τὰς γραφὰ[ς ἕνα]ι κατὰ αὐτο κ[αι τὴν ζεμίαν κ]ατὰ ταῦτά. “

which made the allies willingly acquiesce in Athenian leadership at the founding of the Delian League were skilfully exploited by Athens after the transfer of the League's treasury from Delos to Athens in 454 B.C. to secure imperial control over the allies. After League's establishment in 478/7 B.C., the Apollo's sanctuary on Delos, which had developed into a religious centre of the Ionians since the time of Pisistratus tyranny, became League's official headquarters. Nonetheless, in 449 B.C., shortly after the treasury had been moved to Athens and the peace of Callias had been signed, Pericles initiated the temple-rebuilding program on Acropolis.²⁴ In the Athenian point of view (or at least in the statesman's), its greatness shall demonstrate that *Ἀθηνᾶ Παρθένος* ("Athena the Virgin") would now replace Apollo as the recipient of the *foros*, which, as I already mentioned above, was assessed every fourth year at the *Μεγάλα Παναθήναια* (Great Panathenae) and was annually collected at the Great Dionysia.²⁵ All tribute-paying *poleis* were required to bring these „offerings“ of cow and panoply to the *Panathenaea* and were also expected, as all Athenian colonists were, to take part in the religious processions of the festival.²⁶ I agree with Bleicken (2002:

²⁴ Meiggs (1963: 24, 27–28).

²⁵ As it is stated in the so-called "Papyrus Decree" from 450/49 (*ATL*, II, D13, Lines 6–8) 5 000 talents representing the current balance of the League's funds transferred from Delos) were stored up in the state treasury "according to the assessment of Aristoteles". If we accept Thucydides' statement about Athenian finances (Th. II, 13), the capital expenditure on the building program, which was recovered from unspent annual surpluses, could therefore offset to a total of *c* 3,000 talents. The authors of the Athenian Tribute List: Wade-Gery and Meritt suggests (*ATL*, III, p. 328.) that Pericles, in 450/49 B.C. moved a decree for the funding of the building program which included two main provisions: 1.) 5000 talents were to be given to Athena on her birthday, only a short time hence, at the Panathenaia of 449 B.C. 2.) A sum of 200 talents should be taken up to the Acropolis at every succeeding Panathenaic festival until an additional total of 3000 talents had been reached. This reconstruction of events was accepted by Meiggs (1979: 515–518), however, objected by Fornara (1991: 93–96).

²⁶ Famous 4th century Athenian orator Isocrates criticized the Athenians for their approach to public humiliation of allies in festivals, mentioning (Isoc. VIII, *On the Peace* 82–83) that "*They passed a decree to divide the surplus of the funds derived from the tributes of the allies into talents and to bring it on the stage, when the theatre was full, at the festival of Dionysus and not only was this done but at the same time they led in upon the stage the sons of those who had lost their lives in the war, seeking thus to display to our allies, on the one hand, the value of their own property which was brought in by hirelings, and to the rest of the Hellenes, on the other, the multitude of the fatherless and the misfortunes which result from this policy of aggression. And in doing this they themselves counted the city happy, while many of the simple-minded deemed it blessed, taking no thought whatsoever for future consequences but admiring and envying the wealth which flowed into the city unjustly and which was soon to destroy also that which justly belonged to it.*". see also

171–172), who states that the democracy was continuously trying to put Athena not only to the position of mother-goddess and patron of the city: for the Athenians, she was a personification of democracy itself. And as long as the 5th century democracy in Athens was closely related with Athenian thalassocracy, the goddess had also been presented among Greeks, especially amongst the allies, as the symbol of Athenian power. Therefore, it can be claimed that the primary aspect of the huge re-building program on Acropolis, which started in 447 B.C. and was financed primarily from allied sources, wasn't Pericles' attempt to provide work for poor Athenians, nor the simple plan of re-building the temples destroyed by the Persians in 480 B.C.; but through outside expression to convey the power and greatness of Athens to the Greeks and extend the importance of Athena' cult, especially among Ionian allies, and therefore it should primarily symbolize that the Athena, instead of Apollo, should become new protector of the League, not just for the Athenians themselves, but for all Leagues' members.²⁷

Conclusion

At the end of the paper, it has to be said that in addition to the commonly known and widely respected narrative sources provided by classical authors, the epigraphic sources also provide us with various valuable information about the nature and form of Athenian "imperialism" in the 5th century B.C. However, the most distinctive feature between these two types of historical evidence is that for modern-day scholars the epigraphic sources represent another essential source of information, with relatively high level of objectivity and authenticity in the contrast of sometimes significantly subjective views and opinions provided by classical authors. From this point of view, epigraphic material offers us the possibility of a more consistent historical analysis, criticism and also subsequent interpretation and mutual comparison with the data contained from the narrative classical sources and therefore should be cared with special attention by scholarship in general. However, the biggest problem is that significant parts of them are very fragmentary, leaving historians with various presumed interpretations about their possible content and meaning.

²⁷ One of the most precise, and nowadays also by many historians used reconstruction of this final part of Cleinias decree is provided in *ATL*, II, D7, 57–77, for English translation see e. g. *GHI* 46, 57–77. (M&L).

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