SYRACUSAN IMPERIALISM (431-367 BC)

An Analysis of Syracusan Foreign Policy in Sicily, South Italy, and Greece

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2 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine the foreign policy of the Greek city-state of Syracuse between the second half of the fifth and the first half of the fourth centuries BC, and in particular from the beginning of the Peloponnesian War in 431 BC, to the death of Dionysius the Elder in 367 BC. This study is specifically focused on ancient contemporary as well as modern perceptions of Syracuse as an imperialist, expansionist power. The imperialism of contemporary traditional maritime powers such as Carthage and Athens has been well-documented, for example by scholars C. R. Whittaker and M. I. Finley respectively.[1] These scholars defined imperialism as a sum of activities carried out by a powerful state usually towards weaker parties, including territorial conquest and annexation, the imposition of administrative mechanisms and tribute, the cessation of the ability of a state to conduct its own foreign policy, the confiscation of land, and the imposition of trade monopolies and controls.[2] The latter detail is perhaps the only activity not found in our evidence – owed to the scarcity of Sicilian inscriptions – but all the other examples make their appearance one way or another in our ancient texts.

There can hardly be any doubt that Syracuse was a powerful city-state which, in the period we examine, 'exercise[d] its power over others for its own benefit'.[3] As I demonstrate in this study, the theme of an ambitious, consistently aggressive, imperialistic, and expansionist Syracuse with an impressive amount of resources at its disposal to carry out such policies is present amongst the majority of ancient authors who wrote about the Sicilian city. In a way, Syracuse is presented as the alter ego of Athens, the latter being the hegemon of the Delian League, and the center of contemporary debates about imperialism and the merits of empire-building as demonstrated for example in the work of Thucydides.[4] Since most of our sources about Syracuse

[1] C. R. Whittaker, "Carthaginian Imperialism in the Fifth and Fourth Centuries," in *Imperialism in the Ancient World*, edited by P. D. A. Garnsey and C. R. Whittaker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 59-90; M. I. Finley, "The Fifth-Century Athenian Empire: A Balance-Sheet," in *Imperialism in the Ancient World*, edited by P. D. A. Garnsey and C. R. Whittaker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 103-126.

[2] A prime example of trade monopolies and controls being the Athenian Coinage Decree, which enforced uniformity of coinage, weights, and measures across the Athenian empire. *Cf*. David Lewis, "The Athenian Coinage Decree," in *The Athenian Empire*, edited by Polly Low (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 118-131.

[3] Finley, "Athenian Empire," 107.

[4] *Cf*. Hunter R. Rawlings, "Thucydides on the Purpose of the Delian League," in *The Athenian Empire*, edited by Polly Low (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 55: 'Thucydides' very selection of material in the Pentakontaetia exposes his historiographical point of view: he goes out of his way to draw attention to Athenian hegemonial ambition and aggressiveness, and consistently underplays League actions against the Persians. He

are Athenian, or Athenian-based authors, it is no surprise that their perceptions of Syracuse are Atheno-centric. Thus, while ancient authors have assessed Syracusan foreign policy as being driven by imperialism, I aim to demonstrate that Syracuse was a typical city-state which to a large extent reacted to external events and pursued a limited and modest foreign policy aimed at preserving the city in light of an increasingly unstable political environment, while occasionally taking advantage of unique opportunities to pursue limited expansion. By the end of the study, the reader should be able to discern the bias of ancient authors, understand their motivations, and form a more pragmatic and realistic assessment of Syracusan foreign policy. It will be demonstrated that Syracuse was a typical city-state with limited resources, and well-defined, consistent goals, as opposed to the more adventurous imperialistic and at times opportunistic goals ascribed to Syracuse by authors influenced by Classical Athenian imperialism. It will be shown how and why Syracuse fell short of the exaggerated expectations of friend and foe alike, concerning the city's capabilities and the role which it was envisaged playing in various regions of the Classical world.

The co-existence of so many different cultures and interests in Sicily, an island only a little larger than the Peloponnese in size, certainly presents unique opportunities and problems for study. And since our study intends to treat Syracuse as a 'state' with a 'policy', a few definitions are necessary. Modern scholarship has accepted the notion of 'states' in the ancient world, and, although the discussion on which considerations brought about their creation, one of the state's chief functions was to provide security and regulate relations with other communities.[5] In his study on *International Law in Antiquity*, David Bederman accepts that 'there existed States conscious of their own status and sovereignty, actually conducting international relations along predictable patterns which emphasized the necessity of diplomatic relations, the sanctity of agreements, and controls on the initiation and conduct of war'.[6] Since these international relations were conducted between states, a definition of the concept of state system is also necessary. As Hedley Bull has stated, 'A society of states (or international society) exists when a group of states, conscious of certain common interests and common values, form a society in the sense that they conceive themselves to be bound by a common set of rules in their relations to one another, and share in the

takes pains, in other words, to stress the contrast between the League's announced programme and its actual conduct under Athenian hegemony.'

[5] For a recent discussion of the debate, *cf.* David J. Bederman, *International Law in Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 16-21.

[6] Bederman, *International Law*, 21.

working of common institutions'.[7] This definition seems acceptable for mainland Greece. Frank Adcock and D. J. Mosley have noted that interactions between Greek city-states were conducted in a framework governed by common customs and deeply established traditions, in which historical and mythical past, religion, and institutions such as oracles, amphictyonies, leagues, confederations, and athletic contests played a significant role, along with, of course, pragmatic considerations.[8]

The situation was hardly as clear in Sicily, where, by virtue of the more recently established *poleis*, the mixed populations, and the constant influx of immigrants,[9] most of these institutions never developed. In fact, even the political institutions of Siceliot *poleis* had not developed enough to be stable, which led Alcibiades, in Thucydides' words, to argue that 'the cities in Sicily are peopled by motley rabbles, and easily change their institutions and adopt new ones in their stead'.[10] Thus, while institutions and unwritten laws (*agraphoi nomoi*) regulated inter-Hellenic interactions around the Aegean, leading to more predictable and stable patterns of behaviour, these interactions were far more volatile and fluid across Sicily. For example, in discussing Greek diplomatic practice around the Aegean, Adcock and Mosley pointed out that 'it was not the normal procedure to indulge in total destruction of a state'.[11] However, as will be observed, enslavement, destruction and refoundation of cities, and voluntary or involuntary movement of populations were rather common phenomena across Sicily.

In particular, as the balance of power turned in favour of Syracuse, the city adopted a more radical and hegemonic attitude. Thus, in several instances of the Syracusan interactions vis-à-vis the Siceliots and the Italiots,[12] we can clearly see a total neglect for unwritten law, as best demonstrated in the Athenian response to the Melians: 'right, as the world goes, is only in question between equals in power, while the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must'.[13] Syracuse, however, did not itself avoid the relative instability and chaotic nature of Sicilian politics, as well as the frequent interventions of foreign powers in the island, which brought even

[7] Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (London: Macmillan, 1977), 13.
[8] Frank Adcock and D. J. Mosley, *Diplomacy in Ancient Greece* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1975), 183-226. As the authors note, the development of these practices was a result of tradition and did not stem from a codified body of international law.
[9] Simon Hornblower, *The Greek World: 479-323 BC* (Oxon: Routledge, 2011), 53.
[10] Thuc. 6.17.2.
[11] Adcock and Mosley, *Diplomacy*, 196.
[12] These terms refer to the Greek inhabitants of Sicily and Italy respectively.
[13] Thuc. 5.89.

more instability. This is an important thing to note, because as I will demonstrate, Syracuse's foreign policy was frequently conducted as a response to external developments which radically influenced the political situation in Sicily. Moreover, Syracuse's internal politics were affected by outside developments, most notable being the abolition of democracy and the installation of Dionysius the Elder's tyranny in 406/5.

As for Greek relations with the 'Other' in Sicily, as these are presented by Greek historians, they revolve around the Greek moral superiority over the 'barbarians'.[14] Thus, in imitation of Herodotus, historians with a western focus such as Ephorus, Timaeus, and Diodorus Siculus often present a united Siceliot front fighting for freedom against the common threat of 'barbarian' Carthage, which aims to subjugate the whole island. However, things are not as clear-cut. As Wolfgang Preiser notes, 'the fact that they [the Greeks] had a common heritage never prevented them from treating subjects of other Greek States in exactly the same way as non-Greeks, or from forming alliances with non-Greek powers against their fellow Greeks'.[15] In Sicily too, the Greeks were evidently not in a perpetual state of war with the Carthaginians and the Sicilians but engaged in a variety of other interactions. It is, thus, necessary to go further than the simplified reading presented by the ancient Greek authors and examine the Carthaginian and Sicilian motives, as well as the political situation within the Greek cities, aspects which drove and shaped Greek interactions with foreign peoples.

When treating the subjects of foreign policy and imperialism during the Classical era, modern scholars have usually focused on the most notorious powers of the period, such as Carthage, Athens, and Sparta, with other city-states, including Syracuse, receiving significantly less attention. Most recently, the interactions between Persia and the Greek city-states have been treated in detail by John O. Hyland's *Persian Interventions: The Achaemenid Empire, Athens, and Sparta, 450-386 BCE*.[16] Naturally, the foreign policy and imperialism of Rome in the Hellenistic period has received a good amount of attention, with works such as Erich S. Gruen's *The Hellenistic World and the Coming of Rome* and Arthur M. Eckstein's *Rome Enters the Greek East:*

[14] Adcock and Mosley, *Diplomacy*, 145: 'The Greeks made a good deal of propaganda concerning their assumed natural physical, intellectual and moral superiority over non-Greeks, and it is true that in times of war they did observe certain civilized conventions'.
[15] Wolfgang Preiser, "History of the Law of Nations: Ancient Times to 1648," in *7 Encyclopedia of Public International Law*, edited by Rudolf Bernhardt (Amsterdam: Elsevier Science Publishers B.V., 1984), 134-5.
[16] And previously by David M. Lewis, *Sparta and Persia: Lectures delivered at the University of Cincinnati, Autumn 1976 in Memory of Donald W. Bradeen* (Leiden: Brill, 1977).

From Anarchy to Hierarchy in the Hellenistic Mediterranean, 230-170 BC analysing the attitudes of the Roman Republic vis-à-vis the Hellenistic states of the Eastern Mediterranean. These historians have incorporated the use of inscriptions and coinage to examine interstate interactions, and while literary evidence has remained the main source of such interactions, there has been a growing tendency of scrutinising ancient authors in terms of motives and the sources they drew upon. Furthermore, the aforementioned historians have shown the importance of examining foreign policy in its wider political and historical context. For example, Gruen looked at developments in the Eastern Mediterranean to reach the conclusion that 'Hellas ultimately fell under Roman authority not because the Romans exported their structure to the East, but because Greeks persistently drew the westerner into their own structure - until it was theirs no longer'.[17] Whether accepted or not, this statement alerts us to the importance of being aware of the context in which decisions are taken and diplomatic developments take place. Finally, by examining foreign policy in a broad timeframe, as opposed to covering a particular statesman's or ruler's tenure, such historians have made it possible to look at the development, evolution, and consistency of the foreign policy of the states examined amidst changing circumstances. This is the reason why I have opted to cover a period of roughly sixty years, almost equally divided between Democratic Syracuse and Dionysius the Elder's tenure as tyrant of Syracuse.

Our modern understanding of fifth and fourth century Syracusan foreign policy remains limited. Naturally, the long struggle between Athens and Sparta, the Peloponnesian War, has dominated the modern historians' interest, and most developments in the foreign policy of the fifth century BC are viewed from the Athenian-Spartan perspective, that is, the other Greek cities are of secondary importance, mere pawns operating within the Athenian or Spartan political space. Thus, while Syracuse has received the historians' attention by virtue of its participation in the Peloponnesian War during the fifth century, the focus has centred on the Athenians' motives and goals in their Sicilian adventures.[18] The situation changes somewhat regarding the fourth century,

[17] Erich S. Gruen, *The Hellenistic World and the Coming of Rome*, vol. 1 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 730.

[18] *Cf.* T. Wick, "Athens' Alliances with Rhegion and Leontinoi," *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 25(3) (1976): 288-304 for a discussion about Athens' motives behind the conclusion of alliances with Leontini and Rhegium prior to the Sicilian expedition. The following historians have discussed Athenian motives for the Sicilian expedition in their wider works on the Peloponnesian War: George Cawkwell, *Thucydides and the Peloponnesian War* (London: Routledge, 1997), 75-91; Donald Kagan, *The Peace of Nicias and the Sicilian Expedition* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1981), 159-191; J. F. Lazenby, *The Peloponnesian War: A Military Study* (London: Routledge, 2004), 131-135; Martha C. Taylor, *Thucydides, Pericles, and the Idea of Athens in the Peloponnesian War*

as the emergence of powerful political figures of Panhellenic importance such as Dionysius I and Timoleon in Syracuse has led to more Sicilian-specific scholarly interest. Thus, Brian Caven's *Dionysius I: Warlord of Sicily* and R. J. A. Talbert's *Timoleon and the Revival of Greek Sicily, 344–317 B.C.* have contributed towards our understanding of Syracusan foreign relations. However, being biographies as they are, their particular concern lies on examining the character and wider activities of their protagonists; furthermore, they are subject to chronological limitations which prohibit them from tracing the development of Syracusan foreign policy.

Having covered modern scholarship, some things must be said about the state of our ancient sources regarding Syracuse. By virtue of lying on the periphery of the Greek world, Syracuse has received considerably less attention by the most highly regarded ancient Greek historians such as Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon, whose works have an Aegean focus. Herodotus makes a short digression on Gelon's reign to discuss the attitude of the Siceliot Greeks towards the Greco-Persian conflict, as well as to draw parallels with the Greco-Carthaginian conflict.[19] Thucydides' attention to Sicily and Syracuse stems from the island's role as a battleground of the Peloponnesian War (Books 3-5), the Sicilian Expedition (Books 6-7) of course being a turning point in the future of the Athenian Empire. Xenophon continues Thucydides' account mentioning Syracuse a few times by virtue of the expeditionary forces sent to Greece in the later stages of the Peloponnesian War, and by Dionysius I to fight in the Corinthian War and the Boeotian War.[20] A wider focus on Sicilian affairs is present in the Greek historians' works which only survive in fragments. Perhaps between 360 and 334 BC, Ephorus of Cyme wrote a universal history in thirty books down to 341 BC, treating Sicilian affairs more extensively than before.[21] Theopompus of Chios, in his *Philippics* probably written in the 340s and 330s made a lengthy digression, covering the reigns of Dionysius I and Dionysius II in three books.[22]

However, already a century earlier, Sicilian historians had made an appearance in their own right. Antiochus of Syracuse had written a Sicilian history in nine books covering the period

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 135-151; Lawrence A. Tritle, *A New History of the Peloponnesian War* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2010), 144-64.

[19] Hdt. 7.153-167.

[20] Xen. *Hell.* 1.1.26-31; 5.1.26, 28; 6.2.4, 33, 35.

[21] Ephorus is explicitly mentioned as a source on Sicilian affairs by Diodorus (13.54.5, 60.5, 80.5, 14.54.5) and Plutarch (*Dio* 35.4, 36.3; *Tim.* 4.6). *Cf.* Pol. 5.33.2. For the date, *cf.* G. L. Barber, *The Historian Ephorus* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1935), 7-13.

[22] Diod. 16.3.8, 71.3. For the date, *cf.* Gordon S. Shrimpton, *Theopompus the Historian* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991), 5-6.

from the reign of Cocalus, king of the Sicani down to 424/3 BC.[23] More known are the works of Philistus, a wealthy Syracusan who had a role in Dionysius I's rise to power and proved a lasting supporter of both Dionysius and his son. He wrote a history of seven books from the earliest times to the fall of Acragas in 406/5 BC, another four covering the reign of Dionysius the Elder, and a final two covering the first five years of Dionysius II's rule.[24] As a close advisor to both tyrants, as well as by virtue of his activity in the diplomatic stage, he is a chief source on Syracusan foreign policy.[25]

Philistus' successor, so-to-speak, was Timaeus, who wrote specifically about events in 'Italy, Sicily, and Libya', as Polybius comments.[26] Ideologically, however, Timaeus was on the opposite side of the spectrum to Philistus. His father Andromachus had established the city of Tauromenium in 358/7 at the head of Naxian refugees who had been expelled by Dionysius I and he had later cooperated with Timoleon of Corinth.[27] Timaeus himself was exiled in the late 300s by another Syracusan tyrant, Agathocles, and settled in Athens, where he spent about fifty years. There, he wrote much of his history, which ends in 264/3 BC.[28] Timaeus was criticized for denouncing Dionysius,[29] just as Philistus was criticized for being a staunch support of the Dionysian regime, but both historians' works were nevertheless extensively used by later historians.[30] Unfortunately, the works of Ephorus, Theopompus, and the aforementioned Sicilian historians have been lost, but not before they had been used each to varying degrees by later historians, chief amongst whom was Diodorus Siculus. The polarizing political sentiments of Timaeus and Philistus have naturally influenced their work and in turn the motivations they ascribe to the leading Syracusan statesmen in matters of foreign policy, a factor which should keep us alert. On the other hand, their differing allegiances render it easier for the modern historian to trace

[23] Diod. 12.71.2.
[24] Diod. 13.91.4, 103.3, 14.8.5-6, 15.89.3.
[25] A full account of Philistus as a historian and a state official is provided by Lionel Jehuda Sanders, *Dionysius I of Syracuse and Greek Tyranny* (New York: Routledge, 1987), 43-71. For a more recent treatment, *cf*. F. Pownall, "The Horse and the Stag: Philistus' View of Tyrants," in *Ancient Historiography on War and Empire*, edited by T. Howe, S. Müller, and R. Stoneman (Oxford; Philadelphia: Oxbow Books, 2017), 62-78.
[26] Pol. 39.8.4-5.
[27] Diod. 16.7.1, 68.8; Plut. *Tim.* 10.6-8, 11.2-3; P. J. Stylianou, *A Historical Commentary on Diodorus Siculus Book 15* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 66-67.
[28] Pol. 1.5.1, 12.25h.1; Diod. 21.17.1. *Cf.* Truesdell S. Brown, *Timaeus of Tauromenium* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1958), 1-6.
[29] *Cf.* Plut. *Dio* 36 for a direct comparison and criticism of Timaeus and Philistus.
[30] Timaeus is explicitly referred as a source used by Diodorus (13.54.5, 60.5, 80.5, 108.4, 109.2, 14.54.6) and Plutarch (*Dio* 6.3, 14.5, 31.3, 35.6, 36.1; *Nic.* 19.4, 28.3-4).

them as sources within the text of Diodorus. Any such attempt for the other 'lost' historians would likely be an exercise in vain. Before discussing Diodorus, it is worth mentioning that comments and criticism about Dionysius the Elder's activities survive in orations and letters of prominent Athenian literati figures, primarily Isocrates, Lysias, and Plato.

Finally, the chronological survey of our sources takes us to Diodorus, writing in the second half of the 1st century BC, roughly between the 50s and 30s.[31] He offers the only extant continuous historical narrative of Sicilian affairs for the period that concerns us, that is, from 431 to 367 BC in four books (Books 12-15). Most modern scholars accept that Diodorus was essentially an epitomist who utilised two main sources for his western narrative, Timaeus and Ephorus.[32] His direct use of Philistus[33] has been discounted primarily on the basis that 'Philistus, unlike Ephorus and Timaeus, is never cited for historical detail of any kind by Diodorus', a prime example being that Diodorus explicitly quotes army and navy strengths from Timaeus and Ephorus.[34] However, Ephorus is understood to have utilised Philistus, therefore certain positive material towards Dionysius and extremely detailed information about Sicilian affairs found in Diodorus is held to have reached him via Ephorus.[35] While Diodorus offers little additional information concerning Aegean affairs that has not been covered by Thucydides and Xenophon, the Siceliot historian is particularly valuable in providing the most complete extant treatment of Dionysius the Elder's reign and his activities in Sicily and South Italy. However, P. J. Stylianou has pointed out the lack of consistency throughout Diodorus' work and his severe abbreviations and abridgments on several instances,[36] as well as his failure to 'appreciate the timescale of the account he abbreviated' from Ephorus, who did not organise his account in an annual manner.[37] Apart from the literary evidence, we can also turn to inscriptions to illuminate aspects of foreign policy. Several inscriptions from Athens recording treaties or honorary decrees involving Syracuse under Dionysius I are extant.[38]

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[31] Peter Green, *Diodorus Siculus, Books 11-12.37.1: Greek History, 480-431 BC, The Alternative Version* (Austin: University of Texas, 2006), 2-7.
[32] Stylianou, *Commentary*, 50-51 and especially n. 145 in p. 51 for a summary of scholars' views.
[33] As proposed for example by Sanders, *Dionysius*, 141-154.
[34] Stylianou, *Commentary*, 63 & n. 178, 70.
[35] Stylianou, *Commentary*, 68.
[36] Stylianou, *Commentary*, 80. Stylianou, ibid., 80-84 also argues in favour of Ephorus still being the primary source of Diodorus for Book 15.
[37] Stylianou, *Commentary*, 83.
[38] The main examples being alliances of Athens with enemies of Syracuse: *IG* I^3 53 = OR 149A = ML 63 = Fornara 124 = *Sylloge*^{3} 71 (433/2 BC, alliance between Athens and Rhegium); *IG* I^3 54 = OR 149B = ML 64 = Fornara 125 =

The ultimate purpose of this study is to examine the foreign policy of Syracuse in a way that it has not been done before. By focusing on a period of roughly sixty years, we should be able to trace the diplomatic developments and evolution of Syracusan foreign policy and its goals in a cohesive way. The study will strive to scrutinise the motivations of the ancient sources and retain the awareness of the political context of the various states which interacted with Syracuse. I have opted for a geographical approach, which means that the study is divided into three chapters, focusing on Syracusan imperialism and attitudes in the regions of Sicily, South Italy, and Greece. Each chapter is divided into three chronological subsections covering the period of Democratic Syracuse from the start of the Peloponnesian War in 431 to its abolition in 405, the first half of Dionysius' reign from 405 to 387, and the second half of Dionysius' reign from 386 down to his death in 367. The first subsection mostly follows Thucydides account, whereas the division of Dionysius' reign in two periods follows Diodorus' own transition from Book 14 to Book 15 in 387/6. There is a stark contrast between the two books, as the first part of Dionysius' reign is dealt with in a more detailed and positive manner, while the second part is notably briefer and abridged.

3 Syracuse and the Greeks of Sicily: Reconciling Imperialism and Pan-Sicilianism

3.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the foreign policy and attitudes of Syracuse vis-à-vis the Greek city-states in its immediate neighborhood, the island of Sicily. What is of particular interest in the period examined in this study, is the repeated foreign interventions in Sicily by two imperialist city-states, Athens and Carthage. The former sent expeditionary forces in the context of the Peloponnesian War, while Carthage – after a long hiatus following the battle of Himera in 480 BC – began intervening in Sicily in the last decade of the fifth century and continued to do so for much of the fourth century. These foreign interventions had profound consequences for the political

Sylloge^{3} 70 (433/2 BC, alliance between Athens and Leontini); *IG* I^{3} 11 = *SEG* 61.48 = ML 37 = Bradeen and McGregor, *Studies*, 81 (ab, l. 10) = *SdA* II 139 = Fornara 81 = Immerwahr, *Script*, 107 no. 739 = OR 166 (ab, l. 1) (418/7 BC, alliance between Athens and Segesta); *IG* I^{3} 123 = ML 92 = *SdA* II 208a = Fornara 165 = OR 189 (406 BC?, very fragmentary decree indicating diplomacy between Athens and Carthage). Relations between Athens and Syracuse under Dionysius I are also recorded in two inscriptions: *IG* II^{2} 18 = *Syll.*^{3} 128 = Lawton 16 = RO 10 (394/3 BC); *IG* II^{2} 103 = *Syll.*^{3} 159 = Osborne, *Naturalization*, D10 (ll. 35-6, 41-2) = RO 33 (l. 5) = *IALD* II 147 no. 13 (369/8 BC).

future of Sicily. In particular, they led to the development of a local version of Panhellenism, which can be appropriately be referred as Pan-Sicilianism. According to David C. Yates, Panhellenism refers to 'an awareness of shared Greek culture and identity, which emerged slowly within the Greek-speaking world and was then sharpened by contact with the so-called barbarians.'[39] But - in particular to our topic - he continues, '[Panhellenism] can also refer to a program advocating political unity among ethnic Greeks […] usually in reaction to a real or perceived external threat, often the Persian Empire.' Substitute 'Greeks' with 'Siceliots' and 'the Persian Empire' with 'Athens and Carthage', and there we have a definition of Pan-Sicilianism. The notion of Pan-Sicilianism, its contemporary definition by the Syracusans, and the context of its use will become apparent in this chapter, but the important thing to note is, following Yates, that '[c]laims to hegemony and empire often lurked behind the ideals of political panhellenism.'[40] Apart from developing the notion of Pan-Sicilianism as a vehicle for hegemony and empire, these foreign interventions facilitated the growth of Syracusan power, simultaneously leading to the decline of the other Siceliot city-states. The aim of this chapter is to examine how Syracusan foreign policy and attitudes developed in this political context of foreign interventions and how democratic Syracuse and subsequently Dionysius I attempted to balance and reconcile imperialism with the notions of Pan-Sicilianism and Pan-Siceliot freedom, effectively presenting a hegemonic Syracuse as the only viable alternative to foreign subjugation.

During this period, Syracusan foreign policy in Sicily faced the very similar challenge that Athenian policy faced in reconciling imperialism with the idea of Panhellenic unity against the Persians. The Persian invasion of 480-479 was a great facilitator for the growth of Athenian power, as in 478 Athens replaced Sparta as the leader of the Greeks in the war against the Persians. Thucydides and later writers like Isocrates are clear in their statements that Athens was willingly chosen as the hegemon of the Delian League on its foundation.[41] According to Thucydides,

[39] David C. Yates, *States of Memory: The Polis, Panhellenism, and the Persian War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 6.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Thuc. 1.75-76; 95.1-2; 96; 6.76.3; Xen. *Hell*. 6.5.34. *Cf*. Isoc. 8.30: 'as the result of keeping our city in the path of justice and of giving aid to the oppressed and of not coveting the possessions of others we were given the hegemony by the willing consent of the Greeks'; 8.42: 'they liberated the cities of Hellas and lent them their aid and so were adjudged worthy of the hegemony.'; 8.76: 'and that they [Themistocles and Miltiades] were so trusted that most of the states of their own free will placed themselves under their leadership.'; Isoc. 8.135: 'nothing is more important, save only to show reverence to the gods, than to have a good name among the Greeks. For upon those who are so regarded they willingly confer both sovereign power and leadership.'; Isoc. 8.140: 'What a turn

'initially, the Athenians commanded autonomous allies and made their decisions in general congresses.'[42] He was convinced, however, that in assuming the leadership of the Greeks, Athens was pursuing its own selfish goals. This is evident in Thucydides' statement that the openly declared aim of the Delian League, 'to retaliate for their sufferings by ravaging the King's country' was a πρόσχημα (specious pretext).[43] However, it has been pointed out that Thucydides places the Athenian imperialistic aspirations extremely early, and to serve his goal, obscures Cimon's campaigns against Persia which indeed pursued the declared program of the Delian League from the 470s to the 450s, and thus served a useful purpose for all Anatolian Greeks.[44] Historians have usually regarded two key events, the transfer of the treasury from Delos to Athens in 454 and the Peace of Callias in 449 as signifying the end of the Panhellenic purpose of the Delian League and the formal beginning of Athenian imperialism, which henceforth used the League members strictly to pursue Athenian aggrandizement.[45]

Thus, the examination of the Athenian attitudes provides a useful a framework to examine the relation between Syracuse's role as the hegemon of the Siceliots against foreign interventions and Syracuse's aggrandizement at the expense of the other Siceliot cities. The central question of this chapter is, thus, whether Syracuse was sincere in its advancing the notion of Pan-Sicilianism, or whether it used it as a 'specious pretext' to pursue its own imperialistic goals. We therefore seek to examine the development of Syracusan imperialism in light of external developments, that is, foreign interventions in the island, in the three periods on which this study focuses. There are several aspects which must be examined in order to answer this question, including the reaction of the Siceliots to the Athenian interventions in Sicily, the role of Syracuse as leader of the Siceliot resistance against Carthage, the importance that the Syracusans themselves bestowed upon the resistance against Carthage, and the status of the Siceliot cities in the aftermath of the devastating Carthaginian expeditions.

for the better should you expect the affairs of our city to take when we enjoy such good will from the rest of the Greeks? What wealth will flow into Athens when through it all Hellas is made secure?'. *Cf*. Isoc. 4.72; 12.67.

[42] Thuc. 1.97.1.

[43] Thuc. 1.96.1. For the πρόσχημα, *cf*. Rawlings, "Thucydides on the Purpose of the Delian League," 49-57.

[44] Rawlings, "Thucydides on the Purpose of the Delian League," 54-55.

[45] Donald Kagan, *The Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1969), 101, 107-119.

3.2 Pan-Sicilianism and Syracusan Imperialism in Democratic Syracuse (431-405 BC)

The period of the Peloponnesian War in Greece coincides with a period of increasing instability and renewed antagonism among the Siceliots, after a hiatus dating from 446, when Democratic Syracuse had warred with Acragas.[46] In a passage under year 439/8, Diodorus notes the latest development and growth of Syracusan power and resources, stating the Syracusan 'intention of subduing all Sicily little by little',[47] and quite possibly reflecting contemporary suspicions of Syracusan imperialistic aims. By 427, the growth of Syracusan power brought the city into open conflict with the neighboring city of Leontini.[48] This conflict essentially evolved into an offshoot of the Peloponnesian War, with Syracuse being supported by Selinus, Gela, and Epizephyrian Locri and Leontini by the other Chalcidian cities (Naxos, Catana, and Rhegium), Camarina and Athens. This conflict has received enough coverage in Thucydides, and to a lesser extent in Diodorus, to permit the examination of how Democratic Syracuse approached and responded to contemporary accusations and criticism concerning the issues of aggression, expansionism, and imperialism.

In the summer of 424, an armistice between Gela and Camarina evolved into a Pan-Sicilian Congress, the so-called Congress of Gela, which put an end to Syracuse's war with Leontini and pacified the whole island.[49] It was in that Congress that the notion of Pan-Sicilianism made its first appearance as an aspect and justification of Syracusan foreign policy. Thucydides provides a lengthy speech of the famous Syracusan statesman Hermocrates, who represented Syracuse at the Congress (4.58-64). Among his main points for the benefits of Sicilian pacification, Hermocrates stated that 'above and beyond this we are neighbors, live in the same country, are girt by the same sea, and go by the same name of Sicilians.'[50] The main aim of Hermocrates' message was to shift attention from the individual differences of the Siceliot city-states to the threat represented to Sicily as a whole by foreign interference. Thus, he pointed out that 'there is also the question whether we have still time to save Sicily, the whole of which in my opinion is menaced by Athenian ambition',[51] a reference to the Athenian expeditionary fleet which had been operating

[46] Diod. 12.26.3. For the development and nature of democracy in Syracuse, *cf*. Eric Robinson, "Democracy in Syracuse, 466-412 B.C.," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, 100 (2000): 189-205.
[47] Diod. 12.30.1.
[48] Thuc. 3.86.2.
[49] Thuc. 4.58.
[50] Thuc. 4.64.3.
[51] Thuc. 4.60.1.

in Sicily since summer 427.[52] Hermocrates recognised that differences among Sicilian states may persist 'but the foreign invader, if we are wise, will always find us united against him, since the hurt of one is the danger of all; and we shall never, in future, invite into the island either allies or mediators.'[53] Was Hermocrates being sincere? The successful conclusion of the Congress indicates that the Siceliot cities were persuaded for the time being that Syracuse would not represent a significant threat after the Athenian fleet had retired from Sicily.[54] Moreover, Syracuse demonstrated moderation and goodwill, by handing over the town of Morgantina to Camarina in return for a fixed price.[55] However, the timing of the peace is important. Westlake, in his Essay about Hermocrates, has focused on what he perceived to be the sincere patriotism of the Syracusan statesman and does not dwell on the danger represented to Syracuse by the recently arrived Athenian armament.[56] It was concluded at a time when about sixty Athenian triremes were present in Sicily, forty of which had only arrived late in the campaigning season of 425.[57] Syracuse stood to lose the most from the tripling of the Athenian expeditionary fleet and its expected activity in 424, since even the twenty Athenian ships active in Sicily between 427 and 425 had already caused quite the damage.[58]

This Pan-Sicilian peace settlement was disrupted in 422, when *stasis* led to the collapse of Leontini. When newly enfranchised citizens attempted to redivide the land, the Syracusans intervened on the invitation of the Leontinian elites, expelled the commons and moved the aristocrats to Syracuse.[59] There can hardly be any doubt that the depopulation of Leontini and the effective annexation of its territory by Syracuse was an imperialistic act which went contrary to Hermocrates' declared policy of Pan-Sicilianism. It came only two years after the effective expulsion of the Athenian expeditionary forces from Sicily, and thus, it can be said that the Syracusans had precisely exploited the absence of Athenian protection to pursue aggrandizement. Indeed, this act offered the Athenians the opportunity to attempt a restart of hostilities in Sicily,

[52] Donald Kagan, *The Archidamian War* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1974), 181-186.
[53] Thuc. 4.64.4.
[54] Cawkwell, *Thucydides*, 87.
[55] Thuc. 4.65.1.
[56] H. D. Westlake, *Essays on the Greek Historians and Greek History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1969), 174-180. On the other hand, Cawkwell, *Thucydides*, 87 and Kagan, *Archidamian War*, 267-268 have highlighted the importance of the timing, doubting Hermocrates' sincerity.
[57] Thuc. 4.48.5.
[58] Most importantly, the Athenians had captured and briefly held Messina in 426: Kagan, *The Archidamian War*, 188-192.
[59] Thuc. 5.4.2-4.

dispatching an envoy to 'convince their allies there and the rest of the Sicilians of the ambitious designs of Syracuse'.[60] Similarly, much was made of Syracusan imperialistic ambitions when the Athenians returned to Sicily in 415. In the debate that aimed to win over Camarina, the Athenians argued that the Syracusans' 'ambition is to rule you, their object to use the suspicions that we excite to unite you, and then, when we have gone away without effecting anything, by force or through your isolation, to become the masters of Sicily', claiming that Athens was the power 'that has thus far maintained Sicily independent.'[61] There is no reason to doubt that similar arguments were heard in the other Siceliot cities which the Athenians attempted to court. The Athenian propaganda, thus, implied that Syracuse was utilising the ideology of Pan-Sicilianism as a 'specious pretext' to pursue its own ambitions. However, the Siceliot response suggests that the Athenian propaganda exaggerated the fears of the Siceliots and the imperialistic ambitions and ability of Syracuse to carry them out.

By the time the Athenians returned to Sicily in 415, Camarina was aligned with Syracuse even if its support was lukewarm, while Gela and Selinus steadfastly supported their Syracusan allies.[62] Messina resisted Athenian attempts of courting, and so did Himera.[63] Acragas remained neutral throughout the expedition, not joining the Athenians even when the pro-Syracusan party was expelled from the city.[64] Ultimately, only Naxos and Catana sided with the Athenians, and the latter was, in fact, forced to do so, an act which cannot have made a good first impression about the honest intentions of the Athenian expedition.[65] The only explanation for the lack of response is that the annexation of Leontini had not been adequate to cause widespread alarm among the Siceliots and indicate that Syracuse was bent on a path of domination over them. Almost all Siceliot cities remained true to the Congress of Gela, insofar as they did not support foreign interference in Sicilian affairs. As Hermocrates had argued before the Camarineans, the survival of Syracuse was essential for the security of the rest of the Siceliots against Athens or

[60] Thuc. 5.4.5-6. Camarina and Acragas were upset with Syracuse and demonstrated interest in joining a new anti-Syracusan coalition, but Gela's refusal to join put a halt to the scheme.
[61] Thuc. 6.85.3. *Cf*. Thuc. 6.86.3-4: 'the Syracusans, […] plot always against you, never let slip an opportunity once offered, as they have shown in the case of the Leontines and others.'
[62] Camarina: Thuc. 6.52.1; 67.2; 88.1-2; 7.33.1; 58.1; Diod. 13.4.2; 12.4. Gela: Thuc. 7.1.4-5; 33.1; 57.6; Diod. 13.4.2; 7.7; 12.4. Selinus: Thuc. 6.6.2; 65.1; 67.2; 7.1.3, 5; 58.1; Diod. 13.4.2; 7.7; 12.4.
[63] Messina: Thuc. 6.48; 50.1; 74.1; Plut. *Alc*. 22.1. Himera: Thuc. 6.62.2; 7.1.1-5; 58.2; Diod. 13.4.2; 7.6-7; 8.4; 12.4.
[64] Thuc. 7.32.1; 33.2; 46; 50.1; 58.1.
[65] Thuc. 6.50.3; 51; Diod. 13.4.2-3. Catana was under the influence of a pro-Syracusan party in 415 and joined the Athenians after their army entered the city.

another potential foreign invader.[66] Syracuse might survive without the Siceliots' assistance, but the Siceliots cannot survive without Syracuse.[67] Thus, we can conclude that Thucydides reflects Athenian contemporary propaganda that suited Athenian interests in Sicily, although he does not himself appear to endorse it. This is an important observation because it demonstrates that this Athenian propaganda saw limited Siceliot support, insofar as Syracuse was not considered to represent a significant imperialistic threat in the island. The Siceliots were willing to tolerate the annexation of a city like Leontini, instead of endorsing a foreign expedition which they apparently deemed to represent a far bigger threat than Syracuse to their freedom.

If the Sicilian Expedition left a legacy in Sicily, it was because it ultimately had profound consequences in the emergence of Syracuse as the hegemon of the Siceliots, as the events of 480-478 had for the emergence of Athens as the hegemon of the Ionian Greeks. The narrative of Diodorus is problematic, insofar as it does not explicitly describe the formation and mechanisms of a Siceliot League.[68] But there are indications that such League had been formed by the last decade of the fifth century, likely with the formal intention of providing a better and more organized response to any future foreign threat, and that Syracuse had been acknowledged as its leader.[69] However, when the Carthaginians invaded Sicily in 409, the League demonstrated its weakness. While Syracuse was already waging war in two theaters,[70] it was ultimately the only Siceliot city to make a serious effort in defending Selinus and Himera.[71] It is evident that the Siceliots had failed to mount a coordinated united effort which might have saved the two cities. By 406, when the Carthaginians embarked on their second Sicilian expedition, the danger had been realised and the response was far more energetic. Syracuse assumed the central role in the preparation of an anti-Carthaginian coalition, directing diplomatic overtures towards the Greeks

[66] Thuc. 6.78.3: 'what is nominally the preservation of our power being really his [the Siceliot's] own salvation.'
[67] *Cf*. Thuc. 6.88.1: 'From the very fact, however, that they were their neighbors, they [the Camarineans] feared the Syracusans most of the two and being apprehensive that the Syracusans might win even without their help.'
[68] Sanders, *Dionysius*, n.89 in 170. Sanders attributes this silence to suppression of non-Syracusan evidence by Philistus.
[69] For example, in 410 Carthage turned to Syracuse asking it to arbitrate in the territorial dispute between Egesta and Selinus (Diod. 13.43.6-7). When Selinus was besieged by Carthage in the following year and asked for assistance from the neighboring Acragas and Gela, these cities refused to dispatch their forces unless the Syracusan army joined them (Diod. 13.56.2).
[70] Against the Chalcidians (Catana and Naxos) in Sicily and against the Athenians in the Aegean.
[71] Syracuse dispatched 3,000 men to Selinus: Diod. 13.59.1. The same number of men and twenty-five ships were dispatched to defend Himera: Diod. 13.59.9; 61.1, 4-5. Of the rest of the Siceliot cities, nothing is heard of, besides of a force of 1,000 Siceliots, presumably volunteers, who accompanied the Syracusans to Himera.

of Sicily and South Italy 'to fight for the common freedom.'[72] Indeed, the Greeks from South Italy, Messina, Camarina, and Gela, all sent forces to join the Syracusans. Acragas, which had remained passive to Selinus' plight now refused Carthaginian overtures to ally with Carthage or remain neutral.[73] Diodorus' account makes it clear that in the operations of 406-405, Syracuse had assumed the leadership of the Greeks and the Greek forces were led by a Syracusan general in 406 and by Dionysius in 405.[74] However, despite the achieved unity of 406-405, military defeat and the constant civil turmoil for which the Siceliot cities were notorious,[75] led to the loss of Acragas, Gela, and Camarina, which subsequently and along with Selinus and Himera became Carthaginian tributaries under the peace treaty of 405 between Dionysius and Himilco.[76]

If the purpose of the short-lived Siceliot League had been to defend Sicily against foreign interference, it failed in its goal, leading to a radical change in the political landscape of the island, in which Syracuse had to adapt and reappraise its policy.

3.3 First Half of Dionysius' Reign (405-387 BC)

The first half of Dionysius' reign, from 405 to 387/6 is narrated in Diodorus' Book 14, in which the Second Carthaginian War of 397-392, the Magnum Opus of Dionysius' reign as far as Diodorus is concerned, holds a prominent position. Apart from the lengthy description of the war, there is much material positive towards Dionysius, thought to derive from Ephorus' use of Philistus,[77] and highlighting the general Siceliot patriotic feeling of the war. As Pownall has noted, these passages suggest 'that Philistus played up the tyrant's self-proclaimed role as saviour of

[72] Diod. 13.81.2.
[73] Diod. 13.85.2.
[74] Diod. 13.80.6; 86.4-5; 87.4; 88.1.
[75] Westlake, *Essays*, 174 put it well when he argued that, in Sicily, 'strife between rival factions, often combined with strife between neighbouring cities, was even more prevalent and intense than in the Greek homeland', a situation he attributed to the fact that the Siceliots were 'less firmly rooted in their homes, because their cities, comparatively new, had not accumulated a store of local traditions.' Westlake pointed out that the constant emigration and mobility of populations in the Siceliot cities, with the constant enfranchisement of new citizens, was responsible for friction between the older citizenry and those new citizens who owned no land, often leading to revolution. From Diodorus we know that during the Carthaginian expedition of 406-405 Acragas and Gela had both experienced civil turmoil which hampered their defensive efforts (Acragas: 13.87.5; 91.2. Gela: Diod. 13.93.2-3).
[76] Diod. 13.114.1.
[77] Stylianou, *Commentary*, 68. In particular, Philistus appears to have dedicated a lengthy part of his narrative to Dionysius' extraordinary preparations for this war as noted by the first-century AD rhetor Theon in *Prog*. 68.1717-20 = *FGrHist* 556 F 28. These massive preparations are also present in Diodorus (14.41.2-6; 42; 43.1-4), having reached the latter probably via Ephorus' use of Philistus.

Sicily from the Carthaginian menace.'[78] In a Syracusan assembly held in 398, Dionysius described the Siceliot cities then tributary to the Carthaginians as eager to 'obtain their freedom', urging action by the Syracusans because it was a terrible thing 'to allow the Greek cities to be enslaved by barbarians.'[79] The ambassadors he dispatched to the Carthaginians in 398 threatened war 'unless they restore freedom to the Greek cities that they have enslaved'.[80] The loss of many Siceliot cities to Carthage apparently provided an opportunity for Dionysius to emerge as what Isocrates later called, referring to Athens, 'champion of the freedom of the Greeks.'[81] Dionysius could, moreover, capitalize on the recent, albeit short-lasting, legacy of Syracuse as hegemon of the island and victor of the Sicilian Expedition (415-413). Finally, given Dionysius' affiliation with Hermocrates – having been one of his supporters[82] – it is not surprising to see the former adopting and advancing Hermocrates' aforementioned ideas on Pan-Sicilianism, as a most useful vehicle to carry out his foreign policy. In stark contrast with this agenda of Pan-Sicilian freedom is the fact that one of Dionysius' first actions once he firmly established himself at Syracuse was to deal with the Chalcidian cities of Naxos and Catana, and the recently re-established Leontini. Between 402 and 400,[83] he captured and desolated all three cities, selling the Chalcidian populations to slavery and removing the population of Leontini to Syracuse.[84] In this section, is it possible, therefore, to reconcile the tyrant's imperialism vis-à-vis the Chalcidian cities with his Pan-Sicilian propaganda?

As far as the Chalcidian cities were concerned, Dionysius effectively put an end to a conflict which had raged intermittently since at least 427 and must have been seen as a considerable success by contemporary Syracusans.[85] Moreover, the attitude of the Chalcidian cities could have easily been interpreted as sabotaging the Greek effort against Carthage, just as Carystus' and

[78] Pownall, "Philistus' Views of Tyrants," 69.
[79] Diod. 14.45.4.
[80] Diod. 14.46.5; 47.2.
[81] Isoc. 8.141.
[82] Dionysius had supported Hermocrates in 408 when the exiled statesman attempted to force a return to Syracuse. Hermocrates was killed in the attempt and Dionysius had to go into hiding (Diod. 13.75.7-9). For Dionysius' connection with the House of Hermocrates, *cf*. Diod. 13.96.3; Plut. *Dion* 3.1. For the 'parallel paths' of Hermocrates and Dionysius in historiography, *cf*. Sanders, *Dionysius*, 66.
[83] Brian Caven, *Dionysius I: Warlord of Sicily* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990), 84.
[84] Diod. 14.15.
[85] Important is also the fact that Athenian survivors of the Sicilian Expedition had sought refuge at Catana, revitalizing the Chalcidian effort against Syracuse: Lys. 20.24-25; Paus. 7.16.5.

Naxos' attitude had justified their capture by the Delian League in the 470s.[86] The Chalcidian cities were the only Siceliot cities which had not supported the Greek effort against Carthage and had in fact delayed Syracusan aid to Selinus in 409.[87] Furthermore, the elaborate preparations needed to challenge Carthage, such as the hiring of mercenaries and the construction of a large fleet required significant funds. A source whence such funds could be procured on short notice was the sale of populations to slavery,[88] and Dionysius could, thus, claim that his policy vis-à-vis the Chalcidian cities was justified, insofar as it put the resources of those 'recalcitrant' cities in use against the Carthaginian menace. The imperialism towards the Chalcidian cities could, thus, be reconciled with the notion of Pan-Sicilianism, and Dionysius does not appear to have considerably reappraised the foreign policy which Democratic Syracuse had pursued. The demands directed to the Carthaginians demonstrate that Dionysius must have appreciated the opportunity to carry on Syracuse's recent legacy as hegemon of the Siceliot cities, with himself being willingly chosen by them because of his services. In fact, we cannot rule out the possibility that as the Ionians had 'requested' from Athens to assume leadership of the war against Persia, so did the Siceliots – those exiled as well as those now subject to the Carthaginians – request and put pressure upon Dionysius to do the same.[89] The hostile narrative of fugitives fleeing en masse to the Greek cities under Carthaginian control to escape Dionysius' tyranny[90] is contradicted by the fact that there is no indication that any group opposed the war, and when it began in 397, the Siceliots from all the cities subjugated to the Carthaginians rushed to join Dionysius with their full levies, regarding the affair as a Pan-Sicilian effort, rather than Dionysius' strictly personal endeavour.[91] Syracuse, therefore, pursued a similar, consistent, policy to that of the period of the Peloponnesian War, in

[86] Thuc. 1.98.3-4.
[87] Diod. 13.56.2.
[88] Franco De Angelis, *Archaic and Classical Greek Sicily. A Social and Economic History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 279.
[89] The other motive offered by Diodorus, that Dionysius needed to strengthen his political position by means of a war with the Carthaginians is a common *topos* of the anti-tyrannical narrative and ought to be dismissed because Dionysius' position appears to have been relatively secure at the time. For passages in Diodorus, presumably derived from Timaeus (*Cf*. Diod. 13.96.2 (406); 112.1; 14.41.1 (399); 68 (396); 75.3 (396)), and depicting Dionysius as a ruthless, unpatriotic tyrant who exploits the wars with Carthage to retain control of the Syracusan population, see Sanders, *Dionysius*, 125-127.
[90] Diod. 14.41.1.
[91] Diod. 14.46.3-4; 47.5-6. *Cf*. Diod. 14.47.5: 'In the course of his march he [Dionysius] received from time to time the contingents from the Greek cities, supplying the full levy of each with arms; for they were all eager to join his campaign, hating as they did the heavy hand of Phoenician domination and relishing the prospect at last of freedom.' Diodorus explicitly mentions the levies of Camarina, Gela, Acragas, Selinus, and Himera, thus all the Siceliot cities tributary to the Carthaginians.

appearing as the champion of Siceliot freedom against foreign interference. However, it was now truer than ever, per Hermocrates' statements, that the Siceliots were dependent on Syracuse for their survival. Only now they were dependent to such a degree that Syracuse could exploit them as Athens had progressively exploited the members of the Delian League when their own armies and navies had diminished.[92]

We have established that Dionysius employed the notion of Pan-Sicilianism to justify and pursue his ambitions against Carthage, securing wide Siceliot support in the process. But whereas it can easily be suggested that Pan-Sicilianism was a justification for masked Syracusan imperialism, Diodorus' account demonstrates that the situation was more complex than that as far as Syracusan internal politics were concerned. Syracuse's responsibility and obligation in leading the Siceliots was by now taken for granted by both Siceliots and Syracusans – particularly by the commons – and failure to do so could have severe political consequences. After the fall of Acragas to the Carthaginians in 406, the Syracusans were censured by the Siceliots because 'they elected the kind of leaders through whose fault the whole of Sicily ran the risk of destruction.'[93] In a Syracusan assembly held during the winter of 406/5, a young Dionysius accused the Syracusan generals of 'betraying the cause' to the Carthaginians and of taking bribes to sabotage the effort in Acragas.[94] Dionysius effectively persuaded the multitude to dismiss the Syracusan generals in command and appoint others in their stead, himself included. A little later, Dionysius attributed the continuing inactivity of his colleagues to collaboration with the Carthaginians, prompting the population to dismiss them and elevate Dionysius to the position of general with supreme power (στρατηγὸν αὐτοκράτορα).[95] While the pro-tyrannical Philistus – himself an eyewitness – is most likely the source for these events, there can hardly be any doubt that the democratic government at Syracuse collapsed as a result of its failure to halt the Carthaginian onslaught.[96] After the

[92] Thuc. 1.99.3: 'For this the allies [the members of the Delian League] had themselves to blame; the wish to get off service making most of them arrange to pay their share of the expense in money instead of in ships, and so to avoid having to leave their homes. Thus, while Athens was increasing its navy with the funds which they contributed, a revolt always found them without resources or experience for war.' *Cf*. Thuc. 1.19.
[93] Diod. 13.91.2.
[94] Diod. 13.91.3-4. For Dionysius' rise to power in Syracuse, *cf*. Caven, *Dionysius*, 53-58.
[95] Diod. 13.94.5: 'for the magnitude of the war, they urged, made necessary such a general.'
[96] It should be noted that Sicilian nationalism had already played a role in Syracusan politics and the antagonism between oligarchs and democrats prior to Dionysius' rise. When Hermocrates attempted in 408 to effect a recall to Syracuse from the exile imposed upon him by the democrats, one of his actions to win the commons' support was to collect the unburied bones of the Syracusans who had died at Himera fighting the Carthaginians in the previous

abandonment of Gela and Camarina to the Carthaginians in 405,[97] it was Dionysius' turn to become the target of accusations. His conduct of the war and subsequent peace with Carthage was characterised as an exploitation of the Carthaginian threat to assume the overlordship of the other Siceliot city-states,[98] and caused anger among the Geloans and Camarineans.[99] However, it is apparent that these accusations, whether contemporary or later, have the benefit of hindsight, because while Syracuse did in fact eclipse the other Siceliot cities as a result of the Carthaginian campaigns of 409 and 406-405, the very survival of Syracuse was not guaranteed at the time.[100] What can be concluded from Diodorus' account is that at least in the eyes of the commons, the notion of Pan-Sicilianism and the obligation of Syracuse as the most powerful Siceliot city to defend the Hellenism of Sicily were aspects that truly influenced the internal city-state politics of Syracuse, regardless of whether Dionysius exploited this patriotic feeling to pursue his own goals.

Dionysius ultimately appears to have been successful in the implementation of the Pan-Sicilian policy in the first half of his reign. For the peace of 392,[101] ending Dionysius' Second Carthaginian War, Diodorus states that the clauses were 'like the former',[102] that is those of the Peace of 405, a claim which suggests that Selinus, Acragas, Gela and Camarina remained under Carthaginian control. Diodorus notes the only change was that the Sicels were to be subject to Dionysius.[103] Although some scholars have accepted the treaty at face value,[104] Diodorus must be confused here, because there is no indication that the Greek cities of the southern coast returned to the status of Carthaginian tributaries.[105] While these cities had joined the war against Carthage in

year, bringing them to Syracuse for burial (Diod. 13.75.2-5). In this way, Hermocrates incited public feeling against the Syracusan general Diocles who had left the dead unburied and effected his exile from Syracuse.

[97] On which, see Caven, *Dionysius*, 59-73.

[98] Diod. 13.112.1. *Cf*. Diod. 14.66.4; 68.2. It can be recalled how dealings with foreign powers posed ideological challenges in Greece as well. Lichas, one of the eleven Lacedaemonian commissioners sent to confer with Tissaphernes in 411 was vocal about the previous Lacedaemonian treaties concluded with the Persians, which he argued 'made the Lacedaemonians give to the Greeks instead of liberty a Median master', and rebuked their architects, Chalcideus and Therimenes: Thuc. 8.43.2-4. *Cf*. John O. Hyland, *Persian Interventions: The Achaemenid Empire, Athens & Sparta, 450-386 BCE* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2018), 66-75.

[99] Diod. 13.113.4.

[100] For the military operations of 409 and 406-405, *cf*. Caven, *Dionysius*, 27-79; Dexter Hoyos, *Carthage's Other Wars: Carthaginian Warfare Outside the 'Punic Wars' Against Rome* (Yorkshire; Philadelphia: Pen & Sword Books Ltd, 2019), 55-65.

[101] Diod. 14.96.2-4.

[102] ἦσαν δ' αἱ συνθῆκαι τὰ μὲν ἄλλα παραπλήσιαι ταῖς πρότερον.

[103] In practice only Tauromenium was handed over to Dionysius and its Sicel inhabitants were banished.

[104] Caven, *Dionysius*, 130; Sanders, *Dionysius*, 56.

[105] Thus Stylianou, *Commentary*, 206-207.

397, no Carthaginian general had been active in the southern coast;[106] moreover, we hear of Acragas renouncing its alliance with Dionysius and asserting its independence in 394,[107] while in the peace ending Dionysius' Third Carthaginian War at some point in the 370s,[108] Selinus and Acragas' territory west of river Halycus were Dionysius' to give to the Carthaginians.[109] All this suggests that the proclaimed goal of the 'freedom' of the Siceliot cities from Carthage was achieved by Dionysius, justifying, to an extent, and resuming Syracuse's role as the hegemon of the Siceliots and the guarantor of Siceliot freedom from foreign interference. This Siceliot freedom, however, had little in common with the freedom that the Siceliot cities had enjoyed prior to the Carthaginian expeditions. As demonstrated in the next section, in the aftermath of the Second Carthaginian War, the Siceliot cities can hardly be said to have returned to their pre-Carthaginian invasion status.

[106] As for Himera, Dionysius was active in the north coast, reaching as far as Solus, which suggests Himera also fell under his control. But Himera must have been retaken by the Carthaginians under general Mago in 392, when they marched towards the interior, presumably with the northern coast (Panormus?) as their starting point.
[107] Diod. 14.88.5. This by no means suggests that Acragas joined the Carthaginians.
[108] For discussion of the date, not firmly established, *cf*. Stylianou, *Commentary*, 200-202; Caven, *Dionysius*, 188-190.
[109] Diod. 15.17.5. 'both parties should hold what they previously possessed, the only exception being that the Carthaginians received both the city of the Selinuntians and its territory and that of Acragas as far as the river called Halycus', which implies that the two cities *were previously possessed* by Dionysius.

Figure 1: Map of Sicily with the approximate Syracusan and Carthaginian spheres of influence in the aftermath of the Second Carthaginian War (397-392), a situation which persisted with little alteration until the death of Dionysius the Elder in 367.

3.4 Second Half of Dionysius' Reign (386-367 BC)

The second half of Dionysius' reign, from 386 to his death in 367 is narrated in Diodorus' Book 15. In this period, Dionysius waged the Third and Fourth of his Carthaginian Wars. While Dionysius was at times forced to deal with the Italiot 'issue' and occasionally engaged in Greek affairs, as we describe in the second and third chapters respectively, the Third and Fourth Carthaginian Wars demonstrate both the tyrant's consistent and fixed interest on Sicily, as well as the inability to end the Carthaginian threat for good. Diodorus' narrative for this period diminishes in detail, and leaves aside the mostly patriotic narrative which had permeated the historian's description of the Second Carthaginian War (397-392) and of Dionysius' actions, adopting a more critical stance towards the tyrant, while Carthage is progressively depicted in more favourable

terms as Sanders has noted.[110] However, there is no reason to suggest that the ideology of Pan-Sicilian freedom and the threat posed to it by Carthage had lost its importance and appeal either for the tyrant, or the Siceliot population itself. Since we suggest in the second chapter that Dionysius intervened in Italy only when provoked, we do not adopt Sanders' suggestion that the state of the narrative in this period is the result of the tyrant coming under increasing criticism by Philistus for failing to concentrate his resources on the Carthaginian threat in Sicily,[111] something that we maintain was the primary drive of Dionysius' foreign policy throughout his reign. In the Third Carthaginian War, Carthage still showed itself more than capable of threatening the Siceliots, as demonstrated by Carthaginian cooperation with the Italiot League against Syracuse, a severe defeat inflicted upon Dionysius in Sicily, and the subsequent massive indemnity imposed on the tyrant, along with the loss to the Carthaginians of Selinus and a large chunk of Acragas' territory to the west of river Halycus.[112] Even less information is provided for the Fourth Carthaginian War, but it can be understood as an attempt by Dionysius to rid himself of the Carthaginian war indemnity, or, more significantly, as the last effort of the old tyrant to expel Carthage from Sicily and cement his legacy before his approaching death.

In any case, after the Second Carthaginian War (397-392), and despite the two additional wars fought against Carthage in this period, the Syracusan and Carthaginian spheres of influence had been firmly established, and there was little change in terms of borders with only Selinus and Himera remaining points of contention.[113] The focus for this period should thus shift to the status of the Siceliot cities vis-à-vis Dionysius' *arche*. We may reasonably ask whether the Siceliot cities were ever free in practice after 392, or whether they were reduced to the status of Syracusan dependencies. The evidence pertaining to the status of the Greek cities for this period is scarce, which is not surprising given Diodorus' Syracusan-centered narrative.[114] Moreover, assuming that Diodorus' Sicilian narrative of this period ultimately derives from Philistus, the

[110] Sanders, *Dionysius*, 57.
[111] Sanders, *Dionysius*, 67.
[112] Carthaginian-Italiot cooperation: Diod. 15.15.2-3 (discussed in the next chapter). Dionysius' defeat: Diod. 15.16.3; 17. Harsh terms imposed on Dionysius, including an indemnity of 1,000 talents: 15.17.5. *Cf.* Plato L. 7.333a: 'whereas now, on the contrary, his father [Dionysius the Elder] had contracted to pay tribute to the barbarians.'
[113] Dionysius lost Selinus and the territory of Acragas west of river Halycus in the Third Carthaginian War but regained both in the Fourth Carthaginian War in 368: Diod. 15.17.5.
[114] Sanders, *Dionysius*, 147-148. Sanders notes this applies even for the period preceding the Carthaginian campaigns of 409 and 406-405, and it is the result of Ephorus' and Timaeus' works being primarily based on the account of Syracusan-centered Philistus.

latter had ample reason to stress the legitimacy of Syracusan foreign policy and obscure any Syracusan hostile attitudes vis-à-vis the Siceliot cities, something supported by Pausanias, who noted that 'Philistus has justly received blame for concealing the most horrendous actions of Dionysius, pinning his hopes upon his return to Syracuse from exile.'[115] From Diodorus we hear of a Syracusan mercenary garrison at Messina,[116] and of the presence of Dionysius' partisans (Διονυσίου φρονοῦντας) in the Siceliot cities, whom, on at least one occasion, Acragas and Messina expelled, asserting their independence, though only briefly.[117] Elsewhere, (Pseudo?)Plato alludes that Syracuse used the resources of the smaller cities for its own benefit.[118] Contemporary Syracusans are not shy to admit that Syracuse was the owner of a Siceliot empire, rather than the hegemon of a Siceliot League of independent cities. For example, when Dion wrote to Plato inviting him to tutor Dionysius II, he spoke of the extent of 'the [Syracusan] empire in Italy and Sicily'.[119] The inscriptions concerning the relations between Dionysius the Elder and Athens refer to the former as *archon* of Sicily – not Syracuse – presumably at his request, no mention being made to Syracuse or himself as the representative of a League of Siceliots,[120] which demonstrates parallels with the self-representation of previous Syracusan tyrants such as Gelon and Hieron vis-à-vis mainland Greece.[121]

Dionysius, however, could justify the need for continuous firm control over the Siceliot cities after their official 'liberation' in 392 by arguing that the Carthaginian threat had never subsided, contrary to the Persian threat to Greece, which after the Peace of Callias must have seemed distant. Historians have noted how Athens under Pericles sought new ways to justify the continued existence of the Delian League to its allies, for example by stressing the need to maintain

[115] Paus. 1.13.9 = *FGrHist* 556 T 13a.
[116] Diod. 14.87.2. Though it should be highlighted that Messina was attacked by Rhegium at the time, thus, it cannot be established if the garrison was constantly stationed in the city.
[117] Diod. 14.88.5 (in 394). In the same passage Diodorus states that the two cities renounced their alliance with the tyrant (τῆς τοῦ τυράννου συμμαχίας ἀπέστησαν), which may suggest formal diplomatic relations. For the recapture of Messina: Polyaen. 5.2.18.
[118] Plat. L. 7.351b-c.
[119] 'τήν τε ἀρχὴν τῆς Ἰταλίας καὶ Σικελίας': Plat. L. 7.327e-328a.
[120] *IG* II^2 18, ll. 6-7 (394/3); *IG* II^2 103, ll. 19-20 (369/8); *IG* II^2 105 + *IG* II^2 523, ll. 7-8 (368/7?). *Cf*. Isoc. 4.126 (380): Dionysius the tyrant of Sicily (Διονυσίῳ τῷ Σικελίας τυράννῳ). Isoc. 8.99: [the Spartans] deposed the governments of Italy and Sicily and installed tyrants (ἀνῄρουν δὲ τὰς ἐν Ἰταλίᾳ καὶ Σικελίᾳ πολιτείας καὶ τυράννους καθίστασαν).
[121] Thus, dedications of Gelon and Hieron at Olympia and Delphi for the victories at Himera and Cumae stress the achievements as belonging to the Denomenids and the Syracusans but avoid any mention to the contributions of other Siceliots and Italiots: S. Harrell, "Synchronicity: The Local and the Panhellenic within Sicilian Tyranny," in *Ancient Tyranny*, edited by S. Lewis (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 125-133.

forces to secure long-lasting peace and safety against piracy.[122] Dionysius did not face such dilemmas, since Carthaginian control at least in the western part of Sicily was never eradicated. In 398 Dionysius had urged war against the Carthaginians because 'they were most hostile to all Greeks generally and […] they had designs at every opportunity on the Greeks of Sicily in particular.' The Carthaginians, he continued, 'would not refrain from attacking the Sicilian Greeks, against whom they had been plotting from the earliest time',[123] therefore presenting his offensive as a preemptive strike. Indeed, to contemporary Siceliots, this must have been a valid point, and there was hardly any guarantee that the Carthaginian onslaught of the last decade of the fifth century would not be repeated.[124] It is necessary to also consider that even in times of peace, friction between Dionysius and Carthage led to an extraordinary state of constant alert and vigilance.[125] A divided Greek Sicily would have found it hard to present a constantly united front, ready to react to any sudden Carthaginian attempt of expansion, and the maintenance of a strong Syracuse seems to have been the only viable alternative.

Nevertheless, the nature of Diodorus' extremely abridged material in this period does not shed much light into the nature of Dionysius' policies vis-à-vis the Siceliot cities. Much of the information for this period derives from the literati circles in Athens, consisting of either extreme democrats or oligarchs, who were naturally opposed to tyrannical regimes and, thus, provide a highly idealistic criticism of Dionysius' imperialism, without taking into account the very special circumstances present in Sicily.[126] As far as contemporary Greeks (or rather, Athenians) were concerned, the situation was plain and simple. 'Sicily has been enslaved', wrote Isocrates in 380,[127]

[122] Russell Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 152-153.
[123] Diod. 14.45.2-3.
[124] As late as the 350s, (Pseudo?)Plato warned that if internal strife between the supporters of tyranny and those of democracy continued at Syracuse, there was the danger that 'hardly a trace of the Greek tongue will remain in all Sicily, since it will have been transformed into a province or dependency of Phoenicians.': Plat. L. 8.353e. For discussion on the disputed authorship and date of the eighth epistle, *cf*. Carol Atack, "'I WILL INTERPRET': THE EIGHTH LETTER AS A RESPONSE TO PLATO'S LITERARY METHOD AND POLITICAL THOUGHT," *The Classical Quarterly* 69, no. 2 (2019): 616-635.
[125] The Third Carthaginian War erupted in 383 because Dionysius concluded alliances with cities in the Carthaginian sphere of influence (Diod. 15.15.1). The Fourth Carthaginian War erupted in 368 because Dionysius claimed that the Carthaginians had violated the territory subject to him (Diod. 15.73.1). These activities suggest continuous friction and attempts to secure a more advantageous position even in times of peace.
[126] For a complete account of the antagonism between the Athenian literati and Dionysius and its manifestation in speeches, plays and other forms of discourse, see Sanders, *Dionysius*, 9-40. It should also be stressed, as we discuss in the third chapter, that Athenian criticism on Dionysius thrived particularly at times when Athenian-Syracusan relations were at their lowest.
[127] Isoc. 4.169.

in the aftermath of a failed rapprochement between Dionysius and Athens,[128] and then two decades after the tyrant's death, Isocrates stated that Dionysius had 'conquered all the states in Sicily which were of Hellenic origin.'[129] In 354/3, Plato or one of his associates[130] wrote that Dionysius had 'amalgamated the whole of Sicily into one city-state'[131] and drew unfavorable comparisons between Dionysius' Empire and the Delian League. He argued that after Athens had liberated the Greeks of Asia Minor, it held sway over them for seventy years because it had friends in their governments.[132] On the other hand, Dionysius, 'when he had recovered many great cities of Sicily which had been laid waste by the barbarians, was unable, when he settled them, to establish in each a loyal government composed of true comrades.'[133] The author is correct insofar as the character of the resettled cities was considerably eroded.[134] But this practice did not much differ from the Athenian cleruchies of the fifth century which had substituted disloyal populations with Athenian citizens,[135] nor was it different from the practices of the celebrated tyrants Gelon and Hieron, notorious for their imposed mobility of populations across Sicily.[136] As an alternative to his father's policy, (Pseudo?)Plato urged Dionysius II to repopulate 'the devastated cities of Sicily' and reconstitute a League of independent Siceliot cities under the hegemony of Syracuse and bound by laws and constitutions, which would be capable of expelling the Carthaginians from Sicily.[137] In urging this as a better strategy, the author appears to have ignored the military failure

[128] See third chapter.
[129] Isoc. 5.65 (346 BC).
[130] The authorship of the Seventh Letter has been disputed but even those who doubt its authenticity ascribe it to someone acquainted with Plato's ideas. *Cf*. T. H. Irwin, "Plato: The Intellectual Background," in *The Cambridge Companion to Plato*, edited by Richard Kraut (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), n.4 in 78-79.
[131] Plat. L. 7.332c.
[132] Plat. L. 7.332b-c. The epistle's author was, of course, hypocritical in presenting the Delian League as an alliance between free cities, facilitated by the cultivation of friendships, ignoring the repeated revolts of members who no longer desired to pay tribute when the Persian threat had subsided, even as early as the 440s, in the immediate years after the Peace of Callias, *cf*. Meiggs, *Athenian Empire*, 157-158.
[133] Plat. L. 7.331e.
[134] The inhabitants of Naxos and Catana were either sold as slaves or dispersed in South Italy, while their cities were handed over to the Sicel and Campanian allies of Dionysius respectively: Diod. 14.15.3; 87.1. In 405 the fleeing populations of Gela and Camarina settled at Leontini, only to be forcedly transferred to Syracuse, Leontini subsequently being settled by 10,000 of Dionysius' mercenaries: Diod. 14.15.4; 78.2-3. Messina was resettled after 395 apparently not by its original citizens, but by a disparate group of Italiot and mainland Greeks: Diod. 14.78.5.
[135] For Athenian cleruchies, *cf*. R. Zelnick-Abramovitz, "Settlers and Dispossessed in the Athenian Empire," *Mnemosyne*, Fourth Series, 57, no. 3 (2004): 325-345.
[136] For the use of mercenaries and barbarians as settlers by Gelon, Hieron, and Dionysius I, *cf*. Jason Harris, "The Power of Movement: Mercenary Mobility and Empire Building in Sicily During the Classical Period," in *The Fight for Greek Sicily*, edited by Melanie Jonasch (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2020), 130-153.
[137] Plat. L. 7.332e-333a.

of the Siceliots as individual city-states to halt the catastrophic Carthaginian onslaught between 409 and 405.[138]

In light of the persistence of the Carthaginian threat throughout the fourth century, Dionysius' justification for the tight control exerted upon the Siceliot cities must have seemed reasonable. Dionysius could claim that he could effectively protect the Siceliot populations only by resettling them in or close to Syracuse, and at the same time he could avoid any opposition in the Siceliot cities which could work to Carthage's advantage. Yet, this was something that neither Plato, if he were indeed the epistle's author, nor other Athenian literati would have replicated in their writings, and – it must be remembered – Plato, apart from being a staunch opponent of tyranny, had visited Dionysius' court and had been sold to slavery as a result of a heated verbal exchange with the tyrant in 388.[139]

3.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, it has been demonstrated that the situation in Sicily was very complex to categorize Syracusan foreign policy as outright Pan-Sicilian, as Hermocrates and then Dionysius claimed, or as imperialistic as the critics argued. During the period of Athenian interference in Sicily, only Leontini was annexed by Syracuse and the Athenian arguments concerning the supposed Syracusan imperialist ambitions failed to garner Siceliot support. Syracuse's victory over the Athenians led to its acknowledgment by the other Siceliot city-states as the rightful hegemon of a Siceliot League, which – it was believed – could guarantee the security of Sicily against foreign interventions. Nevertheless, as a League of independent political entities, the Siceliot city-states failed to confront the Carthaginian onslaught of 409 and 406-405 and essentially became objects of contention between Syracuse – where the democracy collapsed as a result of this failure – and Carthage. Under the tyranny of Dionysius the Elder, Syracuse did not forcedly conquer or annex healthy and thriving Greek city-states but reacted to the completely altered political landscape of Sicily, which saw energetic and protracted Carthaginian interference in the island. This interference led to the collapse of Greek cities which had thrived for centuries in the space of

[138] Furthermore, it was becoming apparent by the 350s that the model which (Pseudo?)Plato proposed had failed; in another western region under increasing barbarian pressure, Southern Italy, the Italiot League of independent cities was unsuccessful in repelling the Lucanians, Messapians, and Bruttians, and several Italiot cities were lost in this period: Kathryn Lomas, *Rome and the Western Greeks, 350 BC-AD 200: Conquest and Acculturation in Southern Italy* (London: Routledge, 1993), 36-53.
[139] Sanders, *Dionysius*, 14-15.

a few years. In trying to see beyond the hostile narrative of Diodorus and the Athenian anti-tyrannical circles, we have argued that while Dionysius may have employed the notions of Pan-Sicilianism and the threat posed to it by Carthage as a 'specious pretext', his policy is difficult to be categorized as one of unrelenting imperialism, but as a viable alternative to a changed political landscape and a response to the threat of Carthage. Dionysius did, indeed, exercise firm control over the Siceliot cities, but as the only remaining Greek power of note in Sicily, he could still claim that he was fighting for Greek freedom and representing Pan-Sicilianism and its interests, insofar as this meant that the Siceliots should not be subject to a foreign empire. Finally, Dionysius remained fixed on Sicilian affairs, and as we demonstrate in the next two chapters, his interest in Italy and Greece was considerably limited.

4 Syracusan Imperialism in South Italy

4.1 Introduction

During the fifth and fourth centuries BC, control of the Strait of Messina proved of great significance to Syracuse. For one, the significance was economic, as freedom of passage was essential for Syracusan ships engaged in the export of grain to Greece.[140] Secondly, control of the Strait had important military implications; in describing Syracusan operations against the Athenians for Rhegium's control in 425, Thucydides states that 'the promontory of Rhegium in Italy and Messina in Sicily being so near each other […] it would be impossible for the Athenians to cruise against them and command the strait',[141] implying that control of Rhegium was instrumental for Sicily's security. It is clear that control of the Strait depended on the affiliation of the cities of Rhegium and Messina, and in this context, we can reasonably treat the latter as both a Siceliot and an Italiot city, due to its close proximity and interaction with Rhegium. Diodorus called Rhegium the 'advanced bastion of Italy',[142] and Nicholas Purcell has referred to Rhegium as 'behaving frequently as if it were part of Sicily.'[143] Indeed, in the early fifth century, the tyrant of Rhegium Anaxilas and his sons[144] had vied for control of Messina with the early tyrants of

[140] De Angelis, *Greek Sicily*, 278-279, 295.
[141] Thuc. 4.24.4.
[142] Diod. 14.100.1.
[143] Nicholas Purcell, "South Italy in the Fourth Century B.C.," in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, edited by D. M. Lewis, John Boardman, Simon Hornblower, and M. Ostwald (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 386.
[144] Diod. 11.48.2; 59.4; 76.5; Thuc. 6.4.6.

Syracuse.[145] Furthermore, Anaxilas had interfered in Sicilian affairs when he had cooperated with the Carthaginians to reinstall the overthrown tyrant of Himera, leading to the events of Gelon's famous victory at Himera.[146] Despite these interactions, it was only in the first half of the fourth century that Syracuse, under Dionysius the Elder intervened in South Italy, waging several campaigns and establishing a firm Syracusan presence in the region that lasted for decades. The aim of this chapter is to examine whether Dionysius the Elder's Italian policy was driven by aggressive, unrelenting imperialism or whether there were more complex aspects which influenced his policy, such as external developments and pressure from the other side of the Strait. The chapter begins by providing an overview of the interaction between Sicily and South Italy during the Peloponnesian War, and then proceeds to examine Syracusan imperialism in South Italy during the reign of Dionysius the Elder. This chapter examines the nature of Syracusan interventionism and the development of Syracusan imperialism in South Italy by looking at the extent of Rhegian interventionism in Sicily, the role of Locri in the relationship between Dionysius and Rhegium, the interaction and aims of Dionysius vis-à-vis the Italiot League, and the role of Carthage and the Italic tribes in the confrontation between Dionysius and the Italiot League.

4.2 Democratic Syracuse (431-405 BC)

Before examining Syracusan imperialism in Italy, it is important to stress and describe the close political interaction between Sicily and Italy. In the period of the Peloponnesian War, Rhegium had enjoyed close relations with Syracuse's neighbour, Leontini, since both cities were colonies of Chalcidians. Both Rhegium and Leontini had made an alliance with Athens, one which they had renewed in 433/2 just before the start of the Peloponnesian War.[147] In the war between Syracuse and Leontini, reported by Thucydides as ongoing by 427, the Rhegians had sided with their kinsmen at Leontini.[148] In Italy, territorial differences between Rhegium and its neighbour Locri brought the latter into the side of Syracuse, thus rendering this war a wider Siceliot-Italiot conflict. There is little evidence pertaining to the prior antagonism between Rhegium and Locri, but to judge from Thucydides' statement, who refers to the Locrians' 'hatred of the Rhegians',[149] it must have been long-standing. The threat presented by Rhegium to Syracuse – which is an

[145] De Angelis, *Greek Sicily*, 280.
[146] Hdt. 7.165.
[147] Wick, "Athens' Alliances with Rhegion and Leontinoi," 298-302; Cawkwell, *Thucydides*, 78-79.
[148] Thuc. 3.86.2.
[149] Thuc. 4.24.2.

important aspect of our discussion – was demonstrated in summer 427, when the twenty Athenian ships dispatched to assist the Leontinian side, used Rhegium as their base for their operations in Sicily.[150] In summer 426 the Athenians and the Rhegians forced Messina into submission, thus rendering the Straits hostile to Syracuse and hampering its access to the trade with Greece, particularly concerning the export of Syracusan grain.[151] The next summer, following a Messenian invitation, a joint Syracusan-Locrian fleet helped Messina revolt from the Athenians.[152] Thereafter, Messina actively supported the Syracusan military effort, attacking Naxos, and defeating the Leontinean army.[153] At some point between the Peace of Gela in 424 and 422,[154] a pro-Locrian faction in Messina invited the Locrians who took control of the city and dispatched settlers, although these settlers had been exiled by 422.[155]

When the Athenians embarked on the Sicilian Expedition in 415, they attempted to elicit support and rekindle their alliances in South Italy and the Strait. However, only Thurii welcomed the Athenian fleet wholeheartedly.[156] Rhegium, the long-time Athenian ally, forbade Athenian entrance within the city and only provided a market for the expeditionary force. The Rhegians announced their neutrality and waited for a decision by the rest of the Italiots.[157] Thucydides demonstrates that this came as a shock.[158] This attitude is perhaps connected to 'the long factions by which that town had been torn', a statement by which Thucydides describes the Rhegian internal situation in 425, along with an attested presence of Rhegian exiles at Locri.[159] On the other side of the Strait, Messina denied entrance to the Athenian fleet and a later attempt to have the city betrayed to Athens met with failure.[160] Ultimately, of the Italiot Greeks, only Thurii and Metapontum assisted the Athenians militarily throughout the campaign.[161] In any case, there was no Syracusan retaliation against the Italiots following the defeat of the Athenian expedition.

[150] Thuc. 3.86.5.
[151] Thuc. 3.90.2-4.
[152] Thuc. 4.1.1.
[153] Thuc. 4.25.7-12.
[154] See previous chapter.
[155] Thuc. 5.5.1. A Locrian garrison had also served at Messina in 425: Thuc. 4.25.11.
[156] Diod. 13.3.4.
[157] Thuc. 6.44.2-3.
[158] Thuc. 6.46.2; 79.2.
[159] Thuc. 4.1.3.
[160] Thuc. 6.48; 50.1; 74.1; Plut. *Alc*. 22.1.
[161] Thuc. 7.33.5-6; 35.1; 57.11.

Thurii soon abandoned the Athenians entering the Peloponnesian camp,[162] and in this period, as demonstrated in the previous and next chapters, Syracuse focused its attention on the Chalcidian cities of Sicily and the expedition it had dispatched to Greece under Hermocrates. Following the Sicilian Expedition, the Italiots reappear in the context of the late fifth-century Carthaginian expeditions in Sicily, but Diodorus' account is vague. In 406 Syracuse negotiated alliances with the 'Greeks of Italy', but there is no indication as to which cities were involved;[163] 'Italiot', presumably Locrian, and Messenian forces were present in Sicily during the siege of Acragas in 406,[164] and again in 405.[165] The close association and interaction between the Greeks of Italy and those of Sicily is evident, and for Syracuse in particular, South Italy in the period of the Peloponnesian War was both a source of issues and worry, by virtue of Rhegium's hostility, but also an area whence assistance could be sought, particularly from Locri and Messina. Nevertheless, so long as foreign intervention was avoided, and the delicate balance of power between Rhegium and Locri maintained, the situation remained stable, and Syracuse under its democratic government lacked both the resources and interest to pursue any imperialistic ambitions in Italy during the second half of the fifth century.

[162] Plut. *Mor*. 835d-e.
[163] Diod. 13.81.2. *Cf*. 13.92.5.
[164] Diod. 13.86.4.
[165] Diod. 13.109.1; 109.5; 110.2-5.

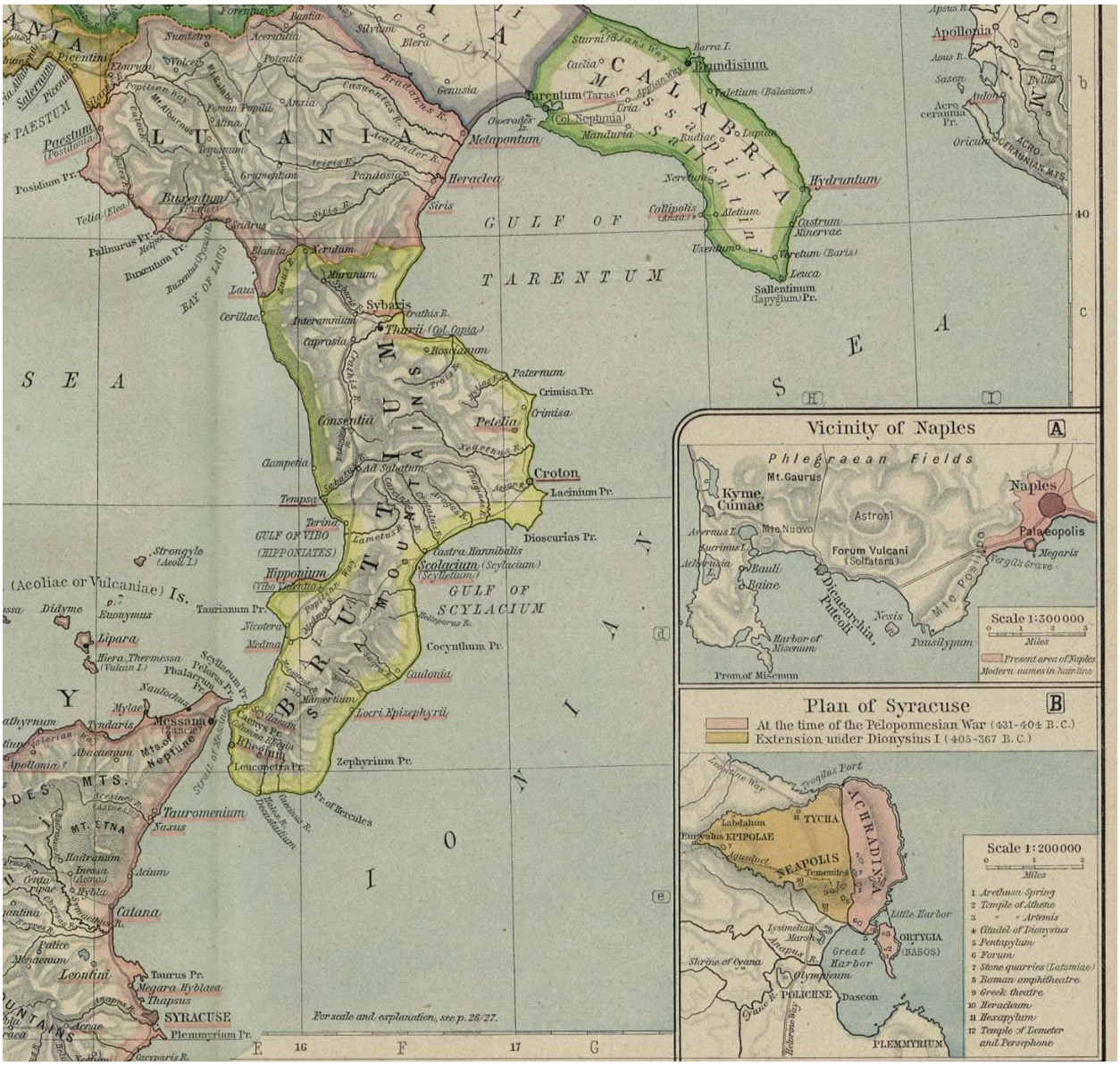

Figure 2. Map of South Italy and the Straits. The narrowest part of the toe of Italy is the point where Dionysius the Elder considered the ideal limit of his influence.

4.3 First Half of Dionysius' Reign (405-387 BC)

It becomes possible to speak of Syracusan imperialism in South Italy during the reign of Dionysius the Elder. It was at this time that the Syracusan empire came into existence and the expansion of Syracuse in Sicily met with considerable resistance from Rhegium. In turn, Dionysius invaded Italy on several occasions and fought with Rhegium and the Italiot League. These events are covered in Diodorus' Book 14 and constitute the first phase of Dionysius' meddling in South

Italy, a period spanning the last decade of the fifth century down to year 387/6. Historians hold that while Diodorus' main sources, Timaeus and Ephorus, both utilised Philistus' account, any material positive to Dionysius would have reached Diodorus only through Ephorus, given Timaeus' hostility vis-à-vis Dionysius.[166] This hostility derives from the personal experiences of Timaeus, which may have a bearing in Diodorus' evidence pertaining to Italy.[167] Judging from what they believe to be a rather balanced and consistent assessment of Dionysius in Book 14, Stylianou and Caven suggest that Diodorus only utilised Ephorus here, although in my opinion the complete discounting of any use of Timaeus for these events is unwarranted.[168] Timaeus would have been well-acquainted with accounts and traditions deriving from his grandfather and father, as well as from other Naxian and Siceliot exiles who abounded in South Italy during Dionysius' reign.[169] As described below, these exiled Siceliots played an active role in the events of Italy pertaining to Dionysius' reign. Furthermore, it will be shown that there are certain defamatory passages where one can notice a Timaean influence, and which obscure the actual motives of Dionysius' interference in Italy, demonstrating an aggressive, expansionist, and unjustified policy on behalf of Dionysius, without taking into account political developments outside Syracuse.

Let us first examine the instances of Rhegian and Messinian interventionism in Sicily. According to Diodorus, Rhegium with or without Messenian assistance intervened in Sicily on three occasions. The first intervention came in 404, when Rhegium and Messina sent a large fleet to assist the most serious revolt of Dionysius' reign, aimed at toppling the only recently established tyrant.[170] It is reasonable to assume that both cities intervened because they considered a Syracuse under a democratic government – and more so one established with their own assistance – less of a threat, and a more reasonable party to deal with. The second intervention took place in 399, again in concert with Messina, and resulted in total failure.[171] The cause was Dionysius' recent capture

[166] Stylianou, *Commentary*, 68. However, it should be pointed out that Ephorus need not have necessarily discounted any material hostile to Dionysius, given his close affiliation with Isocrates, himself at times highly critical of Dionysius as demonstrated in the third chapter. That Plutarch (*Dion* 36.3) criticized Ephorus for overly praising Philistus does not imply that Ephorus did not incorporate any material critical of Dionysius.
[167] See introduction for Timaeus' background.
[168] Stylianou, *Commentary*, 69-78; Caven, *Dionysius*, 2. There can simply be no guarantee that Diodorus elected to completely discard evidence from Timaeus, given the universal scholarly consensus that Diodorus had access to Timaeus' books.
[169] The presence of Siceliot exiles in Rhegium and Croton is well-attested in this period, as I demonstrate below.
[170] For the revolt, *cf*. Caven, *Dionysius*, 80-83. The Straits cities sent a combined fleet of 80 triremes (Diod. 14.8.2).
[171] Diod. 14.40.

of Naxos and Catana,[172] long-time allies of Rhegium, an act which caused alarm among the latter's citizens. While the Rhegians remained initially neutral in Dionysius' Second Carthaginian War, in 394 they were compelled to interfere in Sicily for a third time with another military expedition.[173] Messina was captured and razed by the Carthaginians in 396, and when Dionysius went on the counterattack in 395, one of his first actions was to resettle it. The replacement of the last Siceliot city friendly towards the Rhegians by a re-founded city under the firm control and influence of Dionysius naturally caused alarm at Rhegium.[174] The expedition of 394, like the others, failed to achieve its goals.

Dionysius himself demonstrated eagerness to reach a peaceful settlement. When the embarrassed Rhegians and Messenians sent envoys to offer peace after the debacle of 399, Dionysius agreed, since his focus was set upon the Carthaginian threat which he was preparing to tackle. In fact, Dionysius was willing to pursue a more stable and long-term settlement with Rhegium and Messina, since, according to Diodorus, the tyrant feared the prospect of Rhegium and Messina cooperating with Carthage against him.[175] Thus, before embarking on his Second Carthaginian War (397-392), Dionysius gifted a large tract of territory to Messina, presumably belonging to its desolated neighbour of Naxos, and managed to secure its alliance. With Rhegium, Dionysius attempted to make a marriage connection by asking for a maiden belonging to a prominent Rhegian family.[176] The alliance with Rhegium was apparently so important to Dionysius, that in order to court the Rhegians, he was willing to offer significant territorial concessions at the expense of his Locrian allies.[177] Nevertheless, the Rhegian assembly convened for the matter and voted against the marriage, thus ending the tyrant's hopes for long-term settlement. Dionysius subsequently married the daughter of a prominent Locrian citizen instead, cementing his alliance with Locri.[178]

[172] See previous chapter.
[173] Diod. 14.87.1-3.
[174] Of certain importance was also the fact that Messina was resettled by traditional Rhegian enemies, settlers from Locri and Medma, a Locrian colony.
[175] This happened not long afterwards, see below.
[176] Diod. 14.44.4-5.
[177] Diod. 14.44.4: 'and he promised that he would win for them a large section of neighbouring territory.' This 'neighbouring territory' can hardly have referred to any other city but Locri. This policy of Dionysius may have threatened to alienate Locri, but as I discuss bellow, the Locrians may have entered a phase of decline at the time, and therefore lost their appeal as allies compared to the resurgent Rhegians.
[178] Diod. 14.44.6.

Dionysius himself had every reason to be alarmed by Rhegium's attitude. Ever since the failed revolt of 404, Rhegium had provided shelter to a considerable number of Syracusan exiles, disgruntled with Dionysius' rule.[179] Apparently, these exiles came to exert considerable influence at Rhegium, the most prominent example of this being Heloris, a former friend and advisor to Dionysius.[180] The decision to turn down Dionysius' marriage offer can be largely attributed to the influence exerted by the Syracusan and other Siceliot exiles resident in the city.[181] We may reasonably assume that these exiles, who would have amounted to several thousand Syracusans, Naxians, and Catanians were enfranchised – and thus entitled to vote – in order to enlarge the Rhegian citizen body and its army, to match Dionysius' Syracuse which also pursued such policy.[182] By 394, the situation had worsened considerably. The third Rhegian intervention of 394 was led by none other than Heloris, now elected general, demonstrating the influence of the Syracusan exiles in Rhegian politics. Furthermore, Dionysius' fears of Rhegium's cooperation with Carthage were realised; in 393, Dionysius defeated the Carthaginians in Sicily and within days launched a surprise naval attack against Rhegium which nearly captured the city.[183] D. M. Lewis correctly points out that the historiographic tradition 'has suppressed the fact that she [Rhegium] was effectively acting' with Carthage at the time.[184] Rhegium's escalating hostility had made it abundantly clear that no compromise was possible despite Dionysius' attempts at pacification.

It is clear that Dionysius' attack against Rhegium in 393 only came as a result of Rhegium's threatening activity. On the two former occasions (404 and 399), Dionysius had been unable to respond to Rhegian hostile actions, but the enlargement of the Syracusan fleet in the preceding years combined with a hiatus in hostilities with Carthage, now permitted him to respond

[179] Diod. 14.40.2.
[180] Diod. 14.8.5; 103.5; 20.78.2. By 394 at the latest, Heloris had been elected general by the Rhegians and came to assume a central role in the dissemination of Rhegian and Italiot foreign policy by virtue of his ability and bitter rivalry with the tyrant.
[181] The surviving Naxians and Catanians had also rallied at Rhegium after their cities were captured by Dionysius: Diod. 14.87.1.
[182] The citizens of Leontini had only recently been removed to Syracuse and given citizenship by Dionysius: Diod. 14.15.4.
[183] Diod. 14.90.4-7.
[184] D. M. Lewis, "Sicily, 413-368 B.C." in *The Cambridge Ancient History: Volume VI, the Fourth Century B.C.*, edited by D. M. Lewis, John Boardman, Simon Hornblower, and M. Ostwald (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 145.

in force.[185] It is in the year 393, in the aftermath of Dionysius' attack, that Diodorus places the foundation of the Italiot League, whose explicit aim was to defend against Dionysius and the Lucanians.[186] This statement in itself exaggerates the danger presented by Dionysius, as the League had already existed since at least 417 and the Lucanian threat had preceded Dionysius' interference in Italy.[187] Yet, there is no reason to doubt that League membership was indeed extended around this period to include most Italiot cities.[188] Having recently put an end to the Second Carthaginian War, by 390 Dionysius was already 'intent to annex the Greeks of Italy', but decided to postpone the general war against the Italiot League, and instead follow up with a second attack against Rhegium.[189] Diodorus' statement is at the very least anachronistic, because there is no evidence to suggest that Dionysius did anything but respond to Rhegian interference with his Sicilian policy so far. Nevertheless, some scholars have adopted this position, claiming that 'at this time the tyrant set his sights on control of the straits as well as the toe of South Italy',[190] and that Dionysius 'had wide ambitions in the southern Tyrrhenian [Sea].'[191] Some have gone as far as to describe Dionysius' Sicilian policy as serving his Italian aims. Thus, Shlomo Berger argues that Dionysius captured the Chalcidian cities because his 'aim was to control the [eastern] route to the straits and prepare for the invasion of Italy'.[192] Sanders has suggested that the tyrant's close circle, including the historian Philistus and Dionysius' brother and admiral Leptines, were opposed to Dionysius' 'belligerency' towards the Italiots and Syracusan 'imperialism in Magna Graecia'.[193] By assuming that Diodorus' criticism on Dionysius derives from his direct use of a progressively disgruntled Philistus, Sanders suggests that Dionysius upset his circle by directing his resources to an

[185] I discuss the enlargement of the Syracusan fleet in the next chapter.
[186] Diod. 14.91.1.
[187] Purcell, "South Italy", 386-387. John W. Wonder, "The Italiote League: South Italian Alliances of the Fifth and Fourth Centuries BC," *Classical Antiquity* 31 (2012): 128-151 gives too much credit to Diodorus' objectivity and clarity for this passage.
[188] Caven, *Dionysius*, 133 must reflect Italiot contemporary opinion by stating that the Italiots 'saw in Dionysius a threat to the freedom of Magna Graecia no less serious than that posed by the Lucanians.'
[189] Diod. 14.100.1.
[190] Wonder, "The Italiote League", 142.
[191] Purcell, "South Italy", 387.
[192] Shlomo Berger, "Great and Small Poleis in Sicily: Syracuse and Leontinoi," *Historia: Zeitschrift Für Alte Geschichte* 40, no. 2 (1991), 138.
[193] Sanders, *Dionysius*, 54-57.

aggressive, unnecessary, war in Italy, instead of focusing his energy on eradicating the Carthaginian threat in Sicily.[194]

The above statements overlook the clear danger represented by Rhegium and the fact that the Italiot League, rather than being aggressively assailed by Dionysius, decided to join a local war between the latter and Rhegium. There is no evidence to suggest that Dionysius desired to shift his focus from Sicily to Italy on a permanent basis, had he not been provoked on several occasions by Rhegian interventions which threatened the security of his dominion in Sicily. Here, I suggest that Italy presented such danger to Dionysius, that he was unable to concentrate his efforts on Sicily. In fact, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, in a passage otherwise critical of Dionysius' policy in Italy, states that Dionysius' expedition against Rhegium (of 390) came at the summons of Locri, which was at odds with Rhegium.[195] This is suppressed in Diodorus' account, but it warrants some attention. Locri may have entered a phase of military weakness in this period, which is only indirectly suggested in the narrative.[196] Furthermore, the close association between Dionysius and Locri suggests that the latter was not included among the ranks of the Italiot League, thus leaving the Locrians exposed and isolated in Italy. In these circumstances, it is not implausible that Dionysius of Halicarnassus is correct, and that Dionysius' Italian intervention in 390 came as a result of Locrian weakness. After all, repeated military failures in Sicily might have reasonably prompted a turn of Rhegian focus to Locri, as an alternative means of weakening the tyrant. Dionysius himself could not afford to lose Locri, at the very least because it was from its territory that he received much-needed timber for the Syracusan navy.[197] The suppression of Locrian weakness in Diodorus' account is another detail which can also be attributed to Timaeus' hostility. So far, there is still no evidence of an imperialistic Syracusan policy in Italy, driven by Dionysius' aggression and ambitions, but rather a response to external pressure towards both Sicily and Locri.

[194] Sanders, *Dionysius*, 56, followed by Pownall, "Philistus' View of Tyrants," 64. It is certainly difficult to see how the repeated interventions of Rhegium in Sicily, which risked Dionysius' very position as tyrant, could have escaped the notice of Philistus, a loyal advisor and dependent on Dionysius for his own political survival.

[195] Dion. Hal. 20.7.2.

[196] Despite their alliance with Dionysius, the Locrians do not feature in the narrative of Dionysius' Second Carthaginian War (397-392), despite dispatching forces to Sicily in 406 and 405 to fight against the Carthaginians. More strikingly, there is no mention of the Locrians in the context of the three Rhegian expeditions to Sicily, apparently giving the Rhegians a free hand to operate in Sicily without harassment. *Cf*. Thuc. 4.1.3-4; 24.2; 25.3 for Locrian raids into Rhegian territory in 425, in cooperation with Syracuse.

[197] Diod. 14.42.4. *Cf*. Strabo 6.261. The growth of the Syracusan navy is described in the third chapter, in the context of Syracusan relations with Greece.

Nevertheless, Dionysius' expedition of 390 against Rhegium elicited a general Italiot response, as Croton and other Italiot cities dispatched sixty ships to assist the Rhegians.[198] The energetic Italiot reaction to Dionysius' offensive is not surprising, given the ramifications of a complete Rhegian collapse. Indeed, the Italiots might have felt threatened by the prospect of a permanent Syracusan presence in South Italy, yet Italiot fears should not serve as proof for Dionysius' Italian ambitions. So far, it has been made clear, Dionysius had responded to Rhegian interference in Sicilian affairs and a probable threat towards Locri. With the entrance of the Italiot League in the war, escalation was now inevitable and the Rhegian issue ceased to be a localized affair. The Syracusan exiles also exploited this escalation to the limit;[199] Heloris' position was considerably strengthened too, as he was chosen as general to lead the Italiots against Dionysius.[200] In this widened war, Dionysius had to seek new allies and in winter 390/389 he concluded an alliance with the Lucanians.[201] In employing barbarians against Greeks, Dionysius seemingly brought his Italian policy at odds with his Pan-Hellenic policy in Sicily which we saw in the previous chapter. However, there is grounds to doubt Dionysius' sincerity vis-à-vis the Lucanian alliance. In spring 389, a Thurian expedition against Lucanian territory ended in catastrophic defeat, but Syracuse had no active part in the battle.[202] Dionysius' brother and admiral, Leptines, was sailing in the area with a fleet, but far from assisting his allies, he proceeded to rescue the Thurian fugitives and ransom those captured by the Lucanians. Diodorus then goes as far as to claim that Leptines brokered a peace between the Italiots and Lucanians. The historian is emphatic that all this was done on Leptines' initiative, without Dionysius' consent and to his detriment.

Curiously, Diodorus' account has not been put under scrutiny, despite evidence that Dionysius' policy was precisely in line with Leptines' behaviour.[203] Dionysius demonstrated such reconciliatory spirit when he defeated the Italiot army which attempted to relieve the siege of Caulonia at river Heleporus in summer 389.[204] He released without ransom the more than ten thousand Italiot captives, and presumably aided by the removal of the obstacle of Heloris – who

[198] Diod. 14.100.
[199] If Diodorus (14.103.4) is to be believed, by 389 the majority of the Syracusan exiles had relocated to Croton, the hegemon of the Italiot League and the center of the Italiot League's decision-making.
[200] Diod. 14.103.5.
[201] Diod. 14.100.5.
[202] Diod. 14.101; 102.1-3.
[203] Caven, *Dionysius*, 135; Lewis, "Sicily", 146; Sanders, *Dionysius*, 55; Wonder, "The Italiote League", 144, all accept Dionysius' narrative at face value.
[204] Diod. 14.103.5-6; 104; 105.1-3.

was killed in the battle – concluded peace with certain Italiot cities and 'left them independent'.[205] This act, corroborated also by Polyaenus,[206] demonstrates a consistent reconciliatory policy with that of Leptines, aimed at winning the Italiots' favour and neutralizing them, leaving Rhegium isolated and exposed.[207] What seems to be the case is that Leptines carried out Dionysius' orders, but in the aftermath of a falling out with Dionysius resulting in his exile, the Italiot tradition likely deriving from Timaeus, credited Leptines for the initiative and inferred that it was the cause for his exile.[208] Since there is a tendency in Diodorus to consistently obscure the actual motivations and policy of Dionysius vis-à-vis Italy,[209] such rare positive passages towards Dionysius as the events surrounding Heleporus are extremely important in clarifying the events. Yet, it is still evident that at no point is any negative criticism directed towards Rhegium or the Italiot League. Dionysius' version of the events, which we know existed, has all but vanished from our surviving sources.[210]

[205] Diod. 14.105.4.

[206] Polyaen. 5.3.2.

[207] At this point, the narrative suggests that Diodorus was drawing information from two conflicting accounts, one positive (Ephorus?), and one negative (Timaeus?) towards Dionysius. Diodorus (14.105.4) provides a positive account of Italiot response to Dionysius' actions after Heleporus, stating that 'in return for this he received the approval of those he had favoured and was honoured with gold crowns; and men believed that this would probably be the finest act of his life.' Yet, at the same time he is careless enough to iterate the belief that Leptines' initiative upset Dionysius' plans, for 'Dionysius hoped that, if the Italian Greeks were embroiled in war with the Lucanians, he might appear and easily make himself master of affairs in Italy' (Diod. 14.102.3). From both Leptines' and Dionysius' activities, it is evident that no such policy was pursued. Instead, Dionysius' intentions were restricted to the neutralization of the Rhegian threat.

[208] Diod. 14.102.3. To be sure, Diodorus writes that Leptines was relieved of his command following these events in 389 but makes explicit reference to Leptines' exile only in the year 386/5, thus the exact timing, and therefore the cause, of his exile cannot be firmly established. Historians have noted as a likely reason for the exile of both Leptines and Philistus the unsanctioned proposal of marriage between Leptines' daughter and Philistus, a dynastic move deemed threatening by Dionysius (Plut. *Dion* 11.6; Lewis, "Sicily", 152). Dionysius' fear of Leptines' popularity is noted in an anecdote in Aen. Tact. 10.21-22.

[209] Elsewhere in the narrative, Diodorus' explanation of Dionysius' actions is that the tyrant 'was continuously set upon doing the Locrians favours for the marriage they had agreed to, whereas he studied revenge upon the Rhegians for their affront with respect to the offer of kinship. For on the occasion when he sent ambassadors to them to ask them to grant him in marriage a maiden of their city, the Rhegians replied to the ambassadors by action of the people, we are told, that the only maiden they would agree to his marrying would be the daughter of their public executioner.' (Diod. 14.107.3. *Cf*. Diod. 14.106.1: '[Dionysius] prepared to lay siege to the city [Rhegium] with his army because of the slight he had received in connection with his offer of marriage.' Thus, Dionysius' activities are devoid of any pragmatic considerations and the Rhegian interventions in Sicily as causes of Dionysius' aggression are systematically obscured. Instead, Dionysius acts because he is emotionally charged by Rhegian insults. Although Stylianou, *Commentary*, 77-78 is adamant that the account derives from Ephorus, such defamatory passages are likely candidates to derive from Timaeus.

[210] The tyrant himself is known to have employed Xenarchus, a mime-writer, to satirize Rhegian cowardice (Photius and Suda s.v. Ρηγίνους). We may suppose that the Syracusan propaganda 'mechanism' also criticized Rhegian foreign policy and justified the respective Syracusan one.

Having noted the internal inconsistencies of Diodorus' sources, it nevertheless apparent from Dionysius' subsequent actions that the policy of reconciliation concerned only the Italiot cities north of the isthmus of Catanzaro.[211] Thus, Dionysius pursued friendly relations with cities such as Croton, Thurii, Metapontum, and Elea, but for the cities south of the isthmus, Dionysius' policy was one of aggression. Thus, in 389 he captured and razed Caulonia, in the following year Hipponium, and in about the same period Scylletium.[212] The cities' territories were given to the Locrians, and it is important to note that from the scant evidence we possess, Hipponium had on at least one occasion been at odds with Locri in the past.[213] Rhegium, the city which had provoked Dionysius' interference in Italy, was compelled to accept harsh terms in 389,[214] evidently only aimed to weaken it, as Dionysius captured the city in 387, demolishing it and selling the inhabitants to slavery.[215] Did this latest activity mark a change in policy? While Caulonia, Hipponium, and Scylletium were captured, only Rhegium was directly annexed to Dionysius' Syracusan dominion.[216] The other territories were handed over to strengthen Locri and provide a bulwark against any Italiot or Italic threat from the north. This was a policy of defensive imperialism and Dionysius attempted to provide a long-term solution which would not see any of those cities at the foot of Italy replacing Rhegium as a refuge for Siceliot exiles and a threat to either Locri or Sicily. Again, there is no evidence for Dionysius' intentions to carve a Syracusan empire in Italy. Thus, Dionysius' policy was twofold, albeit limited: firstly, to remove Rhegium as a rallying point for his opponents and their schemes, and secondly to create an extended buffer zone between his Sicilian dominion and the territories of the Italiot League and the Lucanians by razing neighboring cities and attaching their territory to that of Locri, his trusted ally.

4.4 Second Half of Dionysius' Reign (386-367 BC)

If the preceding narrative of Book 14 was unsatisfactory, Book 15 of Diodorus which relates Dionysius' activities from 386 to his death in 367 is considerably more problematic.

[211] Connecting the Gulfs of Hipponium in the west, and of Scylletium in the east: Strabo 6.255; 261.
[212] Caulonia: Diod. 14.106.3; Hipponium: Diod. 14.107.2; Dionys. Hal. 20.7.3. In both cases, the treatment was humane: the inhabitants were removed to Syracuse, enfranchised, and given a five-year tax exemption. This is in marked contrast with the citizens of Rhegium who were sold to slavery, demonstrating the bitter rivalry between that city and Dionysius. Scylletium, which at the time belonged to Croton: Strabo 6.261.
[213] Thuc. 5.5.3 (in 422).
[214] Diod. 14.106.1-3.
[215] Diod. 14.107.4-5; 108; 111; Polyb. 1.6.1; Strabo. 6.258; Arist. *Oec*. 2.1349b.
[216] A house built at Rhegium by Dionysius is mentioned in Pliny *NH* 12.3 and a *paradeisos* in Theophr. *Hist*. *Pl*. 4.5.6.

Dionysius' Italian policy resurfaces in the context of the Third Carthaginian War of 383/2, for which Diodorus leaves aside the mostly patriotic narrative which had permeated his description of the Carthaginian War of 397-392 and adopts a hostile stance depicting Dionysius as the aggressor, while Carthage is described in favourable terms as Sanders has noted.[217] Sanders believes that the limited narrative for these years and the criticism towards Dionysius derive from a disgruntled Philistus – exiled by Dionysius in 386 according to Diodorus,[218] or 384 as proposed by Sanders[219] – with a diminished access to information from Sicily.[220] Caven has counter-argued that Philistus' contacts in Sicily would have kept him informed on Dionysius' affairs,[221] and Stylianou points out that Thucydides who was also exiled, was hardly affected in his access to sources.[222] It should also be noted that if Diodorus is correct in placing Philistus' exile at Thurii, he would have been well-informed of Dionysius' policy towards Italy.[223] Caven suggests that the whole Third Carthaginian War was presented as a continuous narrative by an editor at some point in the manuscript's history and was subsequently lost, leading to the insertion of an epitome covering the whole war under year 383/2.[224] Stylianou has a simpler and preferable explanation, pointing out the lack of consistency throughout Diodorus' work and his severe abbreviations and abridgments on several instances,[225] as well as his failure to 'appreciate the timescale of the account he abbreviated' from Ephorus, who did not organise his account in an annual manner.[226] The only evidence provided by Diodorus is that in 383/2 the Carthaginians concluded an alliance with the Italiots and went to war against Dionysius.[227] Thousands of Carthaginian mercenaries were sent to Italy, but we hear nothing of military operations. Diodorus only notes that the Carthaginians invaded (στρατεύσαντες) Italy in 379/8 and restored the exiles to Hipponium,[228] a hint that the conflict between Carthage and Dionysius continued at least until that year.

[217] Sanders, *Dionysius*, 57.
[218] Diod. 15.7.3.
[219] Sanders, *Dionysius*, 119.
[220] Sanders, *Dionysius*, 46, 57-8.
[221] Caven, *Dionysius*, 186.
[222] Stylianou, *Commentary*, 78-79.
[223] Diod. 15.7.3-4. Plut. *De Exil*. 14.605c places his exile at Epirus.
[224] Caven, *Dionysius*, 188.
[225] Stylianou, *Commentary*, 80. Stylianou, ibid., 80-84 also argues in favour of Ephorus still being the primary source of Diodorus for Book 15.
[226] Stylianou, *Commentary*, 83.
[227] Diod. 15.15.2-3.
[228] Diod. 15.24.1.

All other evidence concerning Italy is undated and derives from a wide array of sources. Dionysius of Halicarnassus states that Dionysius captured Croton, the hegemon of the Italiot League, and held it for twelve years, although its exact status within Dionysius' empire cannot be ascertained.[229] Aelian records a failed naval assault with 300 ships against Thurii.[230] Strabo adds that Dionysius 'undertook also to build a wall across the isthmus when he made war upon the Lucanians.'[231] Dionysius the Elder however is not known to have waged war against the Lucanians, and Strabo must have confused him with Dionysius the Younger.[232] The notoriously unreliable and abridged account of Justin's Epitome of Trogus states that Dionysius stormed Locri before attacking Croton, but 'Locri' here must be a mistake for Rhegium.[233] There is some evidence purporting to Locri, as Cicero mentions that Dionysius plundered the temple of Persephone at Locri,[234] while Plato writes of the subjugation of Locri by Syracuse,[235] and Aristotle blames the 'fall' of Locri to the marriage connection with Dionysius the Elder.[236] Yet, these references are extremely vague and may as well refer to Dionysius the Younger who was active in Italy on several occasions. The only detail which can be established with any certainty is thus the capture of Croton by Dionysius, which would have been a significant hit against the Italiots and the Syracusan exiles who resided in it. Of the peace ending the war between Dionysius and the Italiot League, we know virtually nothing, except for a reference in Polyaenus. He refers to Dionysius sending ambassadors to several Italiot cities including Metapontum to propose conditions of peace, and to the favourable treatment of a Pythagorean philosopher, Euephenus, from Metapontum, which won Dionysius admiration from many Italiot states.[237] With the fall of Croton the Italiot League effectively ceased to exist, and Taras, a long-time ally of Syracuse and

[229] Dion. Hal. 20.7.3. *Cf*. Livy 24.3.8. Thus, in 379/8: Caven, *Dionysius*, 189; Stylianou, *Commentary*, 204. The capture of the sanctuary of Hera at Lacinium close to Croton, the site of a pan-Italiot festival, is also recorded in Athen. 12.541a-b; ps.-Arist. *Mirab. auscult.* 838a.
[230] Aelian *VH* 12.61.
[231] Strabo 6.261.
[232] Dionysius the Younger's war against the Lucanians: Diod. 16.5.2; Just. 21.3.3. Caven, *Dionysius*, 193 overlooks this and considers the construction of the wall the casus belli for the War of 383/2, although from Diodorus' account it is apparent that hostilities between Dionysius and the Italiots began simultaneously with those against Carthage.
[233] Just. 20.5.1.
[234] Cic. *Nat*. *D*. 3.83.
[235] Plat. *Laws* 1.638b.
[236] Aristot. *Pol*. 5.1307a.
[237] Polyaen. 5.2.22.

Sparta replaced it as the hegemon of a reformed Italiot League in the 360s.[238] The only clear aspect of Dionysius' Italian policy from Diodorus and the rest of our sources is that in this second phase of Italian interference, Dionysius was again forced to respond to external developments. The remaining cities of the Italiot League broke the peace of 389/8 to exploit the worsening relations between Carthage and Dionysius and to seek the former's military assistance in recovering Dionysius' Italian dominions, as attested with the re-establishment of Hipponium. The capture of Croton and the expedition against Thurii were, thus, responses to that aggression and did not stem from any aggressive and ambitious policy on Dionysius' behalf. The latter had not suddenly decided to embark on an aggressive campaign to bring South Italy under his control, thus there was no inconsistency with the previous phase of Dionysius' limited interference in South Italy.

4.5 Conclusion

It is perhaps ironic that the Dionysian *arche* survived longer in South Italy than it did in Sicily. While Dionysius the Younger was forced to abandon Syracuse to Dion in 355, Rhegium revolted only in 352 and Locri, the hometown of Dionysius the Younger's mother, was lost in 345.[239] Elsewhere, South Italy was in turmoil. What remained of the cities of the Italiot League was under increasing pressure by the Lucanians, Messapians, and Bruttians, and several of these cities were lost in this period.[240] There can be little doubt that the conflict between Dionysius and the Italiot cities weakened the latter severely, and arguably accelerated their decline and collapse to the various Italic tribes. Nevertheless, the effects of Dionysius' activity in Italy should not mislead us. Dionysius' interventions in Italy came as a result of Rhegian meddling in Sicilian affairs, and subsequently because the Italiot League sided with Carthage in an attempt to remove Dionysius from the Southern toe of Italy. Dionysius' policy can be termed as defensive imperialism, that is aggression to forestall a very realistic, as was demonstrated, threat to his Sicilian *arche*. Dionysius effectively countered and neutralised the Italiot threat and secured, as a result, the Straits of Messina for the rest of his reign. Still, Sicily remained the primary focus of Dionysius as has been pointed out, with three wars of aggression waged against Carthage. At no

[238] Wonder, "The Italiote League", 147.
[239] Purcell, "South Italy", 391.
[240] Lomas, *Rome and the Western Greeks*, 36-53. By 356/5 Terina, Hipponium, and Thurii had been lost to the Bruttians, while Croton was besieged at some point before 317 and saved by Syracusan assistance.

point can it be said that Dionysius put aside his Sicilian priorities to pursue an opportunistic, unnecessary war in Italy.

5 Syracusan Imperialism in Greece

5.1 Introduction

It is demonstrated in this chapter that contemporary Greeks of the period of the Peloponnesian War and of the reign of Dionysius the Elder had developed an assessment of Syracuse as a state of impressive capabilities and resources, eager to actively engage in Aegean affairs. Syracuse was, thus, regarded by contemporary Greeks as either a highly useful potential ally, or a considerable threat that could alter the balance of power in the Aegean. These assessments of Syracusan power and willingness to intervene in Greek affairs appear in historians such as Thucydides and prominent orators of the fourth century, such as Isocrates and Lysias. By virtue of being mainly Athenian, these sources demonstrate an Atheno-centric focus, and Syracuse, as a naval power, is often regarded as powerful, ambitious, and imperialistic as fifth-century Athens. The aim of this chapter is to juxtapose the assessments and expectations of contemporaries for Syracusan intervention in Aegean affairs to the actual level of Syracusan activity. This way, I will answer whether Syracuse had truly ambitious and imperialistic aims in Greece, or whether this was a misguided construct of the Greeks, who exaggerated Syracusan aims and capabilities. It will be demonstrated that the latter is the case, and simultaneously it will be explained why the Greeks continued to exaggerate Syracuse's interest in Greek affairs. To investigate this interference, one can use as a comparison the notorious Persian interventionism of the same period. The vehicles of such interventionism were a) material assistance, provided primarily in the form of money, grain, and ships and b) direct military intervention, primarily in the form of fleets, since Syracuse, being an overseas state, must rely on naval power for interventions abroad. The literary evidence and inscriptions recording diplomatic activity between Syracuse and Athens can tell us both what was expected and what was in fact provided.

5.2 Democratic Syracuse (431-405 BC)

The alliance established between Syracuse and Sparta during the Peloponnesian War naturally alarmed Athens. The threat presented to Athens by Syracuse is a common theme in

Thucydides, who is our main source for contemporary Athenian sentiment. As early as 433,[241] the Corcyraean embassy dispatched to Athens that year highlighted Corcyra's strategic position and ability to bar the passage of naval reinforcements from Sicily to Peloponnesus,[242] and Thucydides cited this as one of the reasons why the Athenians elected to enter into alliance with Corcyra.[243] In winter 416/5, the Egestean envoys warned the Athenians of the danger of the Syracusans 'one day coming with a large force, as Dorians, to the aid of their Dorian brethren, and as colonists, to the aid of the Peloponnesians who had sent them out, and joining these in pulling down the Athenian empire'.[244] In the Athenian debate concerning the merits of the Sicilian Expedition in 415, the threat of Syracuse assumed a prominent role. Alcibiades stated that Athens had cultivated alliances with Sicilian states including Segesta and Leontini 'that they might so annoy our enemies in Sicily as to prevent them from coming over here and attacking us.'[245] Nicias, an opponent of the expedition, was forced to at least concede that the Syracusans and their Siceliot allies might possibly send assistance to Sparta, though an Athenian expedition to Sicily was more likely to provoke such assistance.[246]

How can this contemporary talk of the Syracusan threat be explained and where did it come from? Diodorus states that in 439/8 Syracuse had initiated a naval program for the construction of 100 triremes.[247] The appearance of such fleet, which, if Diodorus is correct in the number, would have placed Syracuse in term of naval strength in the level of Corinth and Corcyra, must have drawn attention amongst the Greeks.[248] Historians have argued that the renewal of the Athenian alliances with Leontini and Rhegium in 433/2, which followed the conclusion of the alliance with Corcyra aimed to limit the possibility of Syracuse intervening in Greece.[249] This diplomatic activity alone confirms that the threat was genuinely felt and was not merely a *topos*

[241] Unless otherwise stated, all dates are in accordance with Thucydides' account in Robert B. Strassler, *Thucydides: A Comprehensive Guide to the Peloponnesian War* (New York: Free Press, 1996).
[242] Thuc. 1.36.2.
[243] Thuc. 1.44.3.
[244] Thuc. 6.6.2.
[245] Thuc. 6.18.1. *Cf*. 6.84.1.
[246] Thuc. 6.11.3.
[247] Diod. 12.30.1. In year 453 Diod. 11.88.5 mentions sixty Syracusan triremes in service against the Etruscans.
[248] Cawkwell, *Thucydides*, 79-80 believes that such fleet was never in fact constructed, since Syracuse could not check the Athenian fleet operating in Sicily. But the construction does not necessarily mean that the whole fleet could be fitted and manned for service. I discuss Syracusan capabilities below. Diodorus (14.42.5) attests to the existence of 110 triremes and 150 ship-sheds at Syracuse by 399.
[249] Wick, "Athens' Alliances with Rhegion and Leontinoi," 298-302; Cawkwell, *Thucydides*, 78-79.

found in Thucydides.[250] Yet, no Syracusan ships appeared in the Ionian or the Aegean Sea to partake in the so-called Archidamian War. One argument put forward is that Syracuse was kept too busy in its war against Leontini and Rhegium.[251] However, Leontini was an inland city which possessed no fleet, and Rhegium could muster a very limited number of ships.[252] Furthermore, we know that hostilities between Syracuse and the Chalcidean cities (Leontini, Naxos, Catana) continued to rage in the period of 412-409, while the Syracusan fleet operated in Greece.[253] Another argument which can be said to have prohibited a Syracusan active intervention in Greek affairs was the Athenian naval presence in Sicily. This presence consisted of twenty ships and spanned only the years from 427 until late summer of 425,[254] when forty additional Athenian ships arrived as reinforcements, too late to have an impact as the Peace of Gela pacified Sicily the next year.[255]

Yet, even outside of that period, Syracuse had evidently not provided any military assistance to the Peloponnesian League. Hermocrates, in his address to the Syracusans that year, criticized this stance, arguing that Syracuse had demonstrated weakness in not assisting its allies.[256] Even assuming the speech to be Thucydides' construct, the Greek historian could have reasonably expected Hermocrates to criticize Syracuse's "loud" absence from the Spartan struggle in Pylos and Sphacteria in 425. These operations would have been of particular interest to the Syracusans, since the forty Athenian ships dispatched to Sicily in winter 426/5 returned midway and assisted Demosthenes in effectively eradicating the Peloponnesian fleet of sixty ships at Pylos, leaving Syracuse completely exposed to the Athenian navy.[257] Further Syracusan indifference for the plight of Sparta is shown from the fact that when the Peace of Gela pacified Sicily in 424, the Syracusans had no objection to include the Athenians in the treaty, though the war in Greece raged.[258] Nor was Spartan permission or consultation sought for that matter. The Syracusans were

[250] In any case, as Westlake, *Essays*, 115 notes, the amount of evidence in Thucydides is enough to suggest that the threat of Syracuse was something that troubled the Athenians for a long time.
[251] Kagan, *The Archidamian War*, 183; Westlake, *Essays*, 115.
[252] Ten ships in 426 (Thuc. 3.88.1) and eight in 425 (Thuc. 4.25.1). Rhegium was furthermore troubled by *stasis*, crippling its military capabilities: Thuc. 4.1.3.
[253] Diod. 13.56.2; Lys. 20.24-25.
[254] Thuc. 3.86.1. For the date, Kagan, *The Archidamian War*, 266.
[255] Thuc. 3.115.4.
[256] Thuc. 6.34.8: 'They are now attacking us in the belief that we shall not resist, having a right to judge us severely because we did not help the Lacedaemonians in crushing them.'
[257] Thuc. 4.13.2.
[258] Thuc. 4.65.

clearly minding their own business and pursuing their own policy. In the aftermath of the collapse of Leontini in 422,[259] renewed Athenian diplomatic activity in Sicily aimed at the creation of a new anti-Syracusan coalition did not induce a Syracusan response.[260] What can be seen is that while the intensity of Sicilian operations fluctuated, the Syracusan policy remained constant. There was no direct Syracusan interference in Greek affairs from 433 to 415.

Just as Athens perceived Syracuse as a threat to its position in Greece, so did Sparta perceive Syracuse as a prospective and highly useful ally. During the Peloponnesian War, Sicily, and Syracuse in particular, had been supplying Sparta with grain.[261] It has been argued that the supply from Sicily was essential and helped enable the Peloponnesian expeditions against Attica.[262] Moreover, as much as the grain was an important material aid, the Spartans also expected more direct assistance. In 431, Sparta asked its Sicilian and Italian allies to dispatch two hundred ships,[263] which provides some measure for the inflated contemporary perceptions of Syracusan capabilities. No such thing materialized, but in the aftermath of the Sicilian Expedition, Nicias was ultimately proved right when he had warned the Athenians that 'you leave many enemies behind you here to go yonder and bring more back with you'.[264] The evidence suggests that it was the Sicilian Expedition that provoked the development of the Syracusan navy, therefore rendering Syracuse a threat to Athens. For example, in 425, the Syracusans and Locrians had jointly manned thirty ships to confront the Athenian and Rhegian fleet in Sicilian waters, an effort which Thucydides suggests was unusual.[265] When Hermocrates had suggested that the whole Syracusan fleet be assembled to confront the Athenian fleet in open waters and prevent its crossing to Sicily

[259] Thuc. 5.4.
[260] Thuc. 5.4.5-6.
[261] Thuc. 3.86.4.
[262] Kagan, *The Archidamian War*, 184; Ugo Fantasia, "Grano Siciliano in Grecia nel V e IV Secolo," *Annali Della Scuola Normale Superiore Di Pisa. Classe Di Lettere E Filosofia*, Serie III, 23, no. 1 (1993): 13; Westlake, *Essays*, 107-8, 116.
[263] Diod. 12.41.1. A large portion of this quota must have been meant primarily for Syracuse and Locri, cities with a traditional naval presence, and to a much lesser degree for allies such as Selinus and Gela. Thuc. 2.7.2 mentions a quota for the construction of five hundred ships by the Sicilian and Italian allies but the figure cannot be correct and is probably corrupted.
[264] Thuc. 6.10.1.
[265] Thuc. 4.25.1. In winter 426/5 the Sicilian allies had sent to Athens for additional help because Syracuse and Locri had been strengthening their navies (Thuc. 3.115.3), that is the thirty ships in operation in 425. In 413/2, Thuc. 8.2.3 states that the Sicilian allies were 'lately forced by events to acquire their navy', and since we know that the Syracusan navy had existed much earlier, Thucydides must be referring to the Syracusans retaining an active fleet for protracted periods of time during this period.

in 415, his advice was declined by the Syracusans.[266] Apparently, the Syracusans lacked both numbers and experience in naval warfare to attempt to challenge the Athenian fleet. However, as the siege of Syracuse progressed, the Syracusans fitted out and manned as many as 60 ships by 413.[267] The forced by circumstances enlargement of the Syracusan fleet and the experience amassed by the Syracusans in these operations appear to have created a false sense of Syracusan capabilities abroad.

According to Thucydides, the Spartans were elated 'by the near prospect of being joined in great force in the spring [of 412] by [their] allies in Sicily, lately forced by events to acquire their navy.'[268] The exact opposite feelings were current in Athens, and Thucydides must reflect contemporary sentiment by stating that the Athenians expected the Syracusan fleet to sail at once to assault the Piraeus.[269] Both lines of thought were proven wrong. The 60-ship strong Syracusan navy of 413 had been fitted out and manned on an extraordinary occasion – that is, to fight within the confines of the Great Harbour and save Syracuse – and it hardly meant that Syracuse was willing or even capable to undertake the costs of maintaining a large fleet overseas.[270] Therefore, despite the massive Syracusan mobilization effort of 415-413, only twenty ships were dispatched to Greece in 412, along with two more from Selinus.[271] In 411, the combined Sicilian contingent constituted about one fifth of the 112-ship Peloponnesian fleet.[272] To be sure, it was not a negligible contribution, considering that the Peloponnesian naval program for 413/2 had called for the construction of 100 ships, of which the Spartans and Thebans were to contribute 25 each, while Corinth a meagre 15.[273] Yet it was a far cry from what had been envisaged in 431

[266] Thuc. 6.34.4.
[267] During the siege of Syracuse, the Syracusans initially fielded 80 (Thuc. 7.22.1, 37.3; Diod. 13.9.2) and then 76 (Thuc. 7.52.1) or 74 (Diod. 13.13.1) ships. These include the Peloponnesian reinforcements of seventeen (Thuc. 6.104.1; Diod. 13.7.7, 8.2) or sixteen ships (Thuc. 7.7.1), arriving in summer 414. Sixteen ships returned from Sicily (Thuc. 8.13). Notwithstanding the casualties of 415-413, the Syracusan number of ships must have grown by virtue of those captured from the Athenians. Diod. 13.19.1 speaks of fifty Athenian ships towed to Syracuse after the Athenian retreat.
[268] Thuc. 8.2.3.
[269] Thuc. 8.1.2.
[270] Something pointed out by Westlake, *Essays*, 181-2. It was not uncommon for Greek city-states to possess a larger fleet of ships than what they could actually fit out and man at any given time. For example, in 429 the Peloponnesians manned forty ships for a surprise attack against Piraeus, which were available in the Megarian port of Nisaea but evidently lacked local crews (Thuc. 2.93.2).
[271] Thuc. 8.26.1. Diodorus (13.34.4, 63.1) mentions an allied force of 35 ships, but this must include the Peloponnesian expeditionary force as well. Xen. *Hell*. 1.2.8 confirms the figure of twenty Syracusan ships and Diod. 13.61.1 states that the 25 triremes which had been sent to the Lacedaemonians have returned to Sicily.
[272] Thuc. 8.79.1.
[273] Thuc. 8.3.2.

and more recently in 412, and evidently not enough to turn the tide of war,[274] despite the fleet's 'impressive record' as Westlake has described it.[275]

Commenting on the operations of 415-413, Kagan wrote that '[t]he Syracusans […] incurred unusual expenses in building, fitting out, and manning warships for, unlike the Athenians, they neither maintained a fleet in peacetime nor received income from subjects adequate to support one'.[276] Indeed, the Syracusan state of the late fifth century still derived its power from the Sicilian hinterland, from agriculture and the limited tribute of the Sicels, meaning that the maintenance of such a fleet would have been counterproductive.[277] We may suppose that in 412 Syracuse paid to fit out the fleet and for some months pay for the crews, but the evidence suggests that thereafter the Syracusan fleet had to rely on the Persian financial assistance given after 412 for the maintenance of the Peloponnesian fleet, which has been described as insufficient and irregular.[278] The cost of maintaining the Syracusan fleet of twenty ships can be estimated at 240 talents per year,[279] and it is certain that this money did not come from Syracuse.[280] Yet, we cannot be sure of Syracusan financial capabilities at this point, because treaties between Greek city-states could arrange for the state demanding the assistance to cover the maintenance of such expeditionary force.[281] In any case, the costs involved in the operation of large expeditionary fleets for protracted periods of time demonstrate how difficult it would have been for a city-state such as Syracuse to embark on such protracted, offensive ventures.

[274] The whole Peloponnesian fleet was lost at the battle of Cyzicus in 410, including the Syracusan ships which were burned by their own crews (Xen. *Hell*. 1.1.18). The Syracusan fleet along with the rest of the Peloponnesian ships was rebuilt only thanks to Persian timber and funding (Xen. *Hell*. 1.1.25).
[275] Westlake, *Essays*, 115.
[276] Kagan, *The Peace of Nicias*, 297. Although the ships were most likely already available and not built during the Sicilian Expedition.
[277] For Syracuse's sources of income, based particularly on the export of staples (grain), *cf*. De Angelis, *Greek Sicily*, 276-279. For early Syracusan expansion in the eastern Sicilian hinterland, *cf*. Sebastiano Tusa, "Cultural and Ethnic Dynamics in Sicily during Greek Colonization," in *Greek Colonization in Local Contexts: Case Studies in Colonial Interactions*, edited by M. Millett, J. Lucas, C. Murray, and S. Owen (Oxford; Philadelphia: Oxbow Books, 2019), 45-48.
[278] Ephraim David, "The Influx of Money into Sparta at the End of the Fifth Century B.C.," *Scripta Classica Israelica* 5 (1979): 31-33; Hyland, *Persian Interventions*, 77-81.
[279] Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire*, 259. Notwithstanding variations, the pay for a trireme's crew was estimated at one talent per month.
[280] Hermocrates and the Syracusan crews consisting of free men were the most vocal of the Peloponnesian allies in their discontent with Tissaphernes' irregular payments in winter 412/1 and summer 411: Thuc. 8.29.2; 78; 84; 85.3.
[281] *Cf*. *IG* I^3 83, ll. 20-24 (= Thuc. 5.47.6-7) for such obligations in the treaty of alliance between Athens and Argos, Elis, and Mantinea (420 BC).

Scholars have argued that the paucity of Syracusan contribution to the Peloponnesian war effort between 412 and 409 was due to civil strife and the threat of Carthage.[282] This does not appear to be the case. There was certainly internal turmoil at Syracuse between oligarchs, to whose ranks Hermocrates belonged, who sought to uphold the status of the hoplite class, and extreme democrats who sought reforms similar to those pushed by Ephialtes in Athens.[283] This antagonism culminated in Hermocrates and his colleagues who had been commanding the Syracusan Aegean squadron until that point, being relieved of their duties, and exiled in autumn 410.[284] In spring 409 the democrats, now well-established at Syracuse, dispatched an additional five ships to reinforce, or replenish, the Aegean squadron.[285] This has two meanings, as firstly it confirms that the democrats were not opposed to the participation of the Syracusan fleet in Aegean operations. Having noted this, the pacification of Syracuse's internal situation brought about by the exile of the oligarchs, did not lead to a marked change in the level of participation in the Peloponnesian war effort. Therefore, civil strife did not influence Syracuse's involvement in Greek affairs. As for the Carthaginian threat, this was nonexistent in 412. The fact that Syracuse did not recall its squadron from the Aegean until after the summer of 409,[286] but actually reinforced it, attests to the fact that a Carthaginian military intervention in Sicily had not been seriously considered.

If neither of those aspects played a role in the Syracusan extent of interference in Greek affairs, then the limited interference must have been a result of a conscious policy of non-intervention. Syracuse simply did not entertain the aims ascribed to it by Athens and Sparta, and the city's limited resources remained focused on maintaining and if possible upgrading Syracuse's status in Sicily.

5.3 First Half of Dionysius' Reign (405-387 BC)

While Diodorus with his noted strengths and weaknesses provides the vast majority of the narrative for Dionysius' activities in the west, he does not offer any direct explanations or

[282] Cawkwell, *Thucydides*, 79; Donald Kagan, *The Fall of the Athenian Empire* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1987), 15.
[283] For the internal politics of Syracuse in this period, *cf*. Caven, *Dionysius*, 24-26.
[284] Xen. *Hell*. 1.1.27-31. Hermocrates and his colleagues were relieved by three generals of the democratic party, Demarchus, son of Epicydes, Myskon, son of Menecrates, and Potamis, son of Gnosis, later supplanted by two more, Eucles, son of Hippon, and Heracleides, son of Aristogenes.
[285] Xen. *Hell*. 1.2.8.
[286] The Syracusans and Selinuntians were present for the battle of Ephesus in summer 409: D. M. Lewis, "Sicily, 413-368 B.C.," in *The Cambridge Ancient History: Volume VI, the Fourth Century B.C.*, edited by D. M. Lewis et al (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 126-127.

motives for Dionysius' activities in Greece. Contemporary evidence from Athenian literati circles and Athenian inscriptions are helpful in establishing contemporary perceptions of Dionysius' capabilities, and aims. However, more can be understood by juxtaposing what role Dionysius was expected to play vis-à-vis Greece and what he ended up doing. Initially, and contrary to Nicias' expectations, who had foreseen a clash between the future – now actualized – empires of Sparta and Syracuse,[287] the friendly relations between the two states had persisted in the aftermath of the Athenian defeat in the Peloponnesian War.[288] Dionysius secured his political position at Syracuse thanks to Spartan assistance and owed much to Sparta for enabling him to pursue his aggressive policy against Carthage. Spartan help was instrumental for at least the initial stages of Dionysius' Second Carthaginian War of 397-392, as the tyrant recruited thousands of mercenaries from the Peloponnese,[289] and received badly needed reinforcements from Sparta and Corinth when he was shut in and besieged at Syracuse in 396/5.[290] Just as Dionysius was escaping his predicament by defeating the Carthaginians that year (395), Sparta was becoming embroiled in the Corinthian War, a conflict which challenged its supreme position in Greece.[291] One would expect Dionysius to jump wholeheartedly into the conflict to assist his ally and repay Sparta for the assistance he himself had received. A marked change had recently occurred in Syracusan capabilities, since under Dionysius, the Syracusan navy had been considerably expanded. Even though by 399 there were 110 available ships for service, Dionysius initiated a massive naval program which aimed to add an additional 200 ships to his fleet.[292] Although the primary reason for the construction and maintenance of such fleet was to challenge Carthage, inadvertently it enabled Dionysius to pursue

[287] In the debate for the Sicilian Expedition, Nicias saw the emergence of a Spartan empire as a threat to a Syracusan empire in Sicily (Thuc. 6.11.3).

[288] Syracuse sought aid in 406 from the Peloponnese, in the aftermath of the fall of Acragas to the Carthaginians, but the Spartans were too occupied with Athens to respond (Diod. 13.92.5). A Spartan diplomatic mission to Syracuse headed by Aristus and establishing friendly relations with Dionysius is recorded in Diod. 14.10.2-3 as early as 404. Another Spartan embassy to Dionysius of unspecified year and headed by the famous Lysander is mentioned in Plut. *Lys*. 2.5.

[289] Spartan permission to recruit mercenaries from Lacedaemon in 398 (Diod. 14.44.2); a thousand mercenaries summoned from Lacedaemon in 396 (Diod. 14.58.1); mercenaries recruited in the Peloponnese during the siege of Syracuse in 396/5 (Diod. 14.62.1); 10,000 mercenaries in Syracusan service by 395, led by Aristotle, a Spartan (Diod. 14.78.1-2).

[290] Dionysius' plea for assistance: Diod. 14.62.1. Thirty ships arrived under Pharacidas, a Spartan admiral (Diod. 14.63.4). The majority of the ships however, as in 414, must have been Corinthian (Diod. 14.75.4-5). For his victorious attack against the Carthaginians in 395, Dionysius mustered 80 ships (Diod. 14.72.1), meaning that the Peloponnesian thirty made up a significant 37.5 percent of his fleet.

[291] For a complete account of the Corinthian War, *cf*. John Buckler, *Aegean Greece in the Fourth Century BC* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2003), 75-180.

[292] Diod. 14.42.5.

a more active Greek policy if he so wished. With the ability to employ two hundred ships simultaneously,[293] Dionysius could choose to complement or even challenge Sparta's dominance in the Aegean, perhaps creating his own 'League' of allied or tributary city-states and realizing his and Syracuse's supposed imperialistic aims in Greece.

Surprisingly, the tyrant not only kept his distance from Sparta for much of the Corinthian War but resumed Syracusan relations with Athens. The famed Athenian admiral Conon went on a mission to Dionysius with the intention, Lysias writes, of securing friendship and alliance with the tyrant and persuading Dionysius to arrange a marriage alliance with Evagoras of Salamis.[294] Friendly relations between Dionysius and Athens are indeed attested in 394/3 in an Athenian decree which honours Dionysius and his brothers.[295] This Athenian diplomatic 'offensive' has correctly been described as an attempt of wooing support from Syracuse.[296] Dionysius was therefore clearly envisaged as someone who, along with Evagoras, could challenge Sparta's naval dominance, if Conon's mission antedates the battle of Cnidus (summer 394), or as someone who could support Athens' naval ascendancy in its aftermath, if it postdates it. Despite the rapprochement, there is no evidence that Conon's optimistic vision for the creation of a triple axis against Sparta was realised, or even that Dionysius provided any assistance to Athens. It is difficult to see what Dionysius hoped to gain, but he appears to have secured Athenian recognition of his unchallenged position in the west, the decree referring to him as 'archon of Sicily'. Other than that, Dionysius treaded carefully. No connection with Evagoras was pursued; news of a possible cooperation between himself and Evagoras, held chiefly responsible for the destruction of the Spartan navy at Cnidus,[297] would have annoyed the Spartans, if not outright threatened them. Nevertheless, the evidence pertaining to Dionysius' relations with Sparta during this period suggest that these relations continued, even if coldness permeated them.[298]

[293] Diod. 14.47.7 mentions a little less than two hundred ships in Syracusan service in 397.
[294] Lys. 19.19-20.
[295] *IG* II^2 18 = *Syll*.^{3} 128. Interestingly, this decree coincides with another of the same year, which bestows honours on Evagoras: *IG* II^2 20.
[296] Buckler, *Aegean Greece*, 139.
[297] According to Isoc. 9.56, Evagoras had supplied most of the ships to enable Conon's victory at Cnidus.
[298] When Dionysius employed six hundred Messenian exiles from Naupactus and Zacynthus to resettle Messina after 395, the Spartans expressed their annoyance and secured from Dionysius their removal from the city (Diod. 14.78.5-6). Moreover, in light of dissidence from his mercenaries, Dionysius arrested their Spartan leader and sent him to Sparta to face trial (Diod. 14.78.1-2).

The desire of Dionysius to abstain from Greek hostilities is demonstrated by Lysias, who states that Conon persuaded the tyrant not to send warships that he had prepared for the Spartans,[299] and indeed, no Syracusan fleet is recorded operating in Greece around this time. Although by 395 Dionysius had taken the upper hand against the Carthaginians, he sent no ships to assist the Spartans who were effectively wiped out from the sea in the battle of Cnidus in the following year, nor in 393 when Conon and Pharnabazus with a Persian fleet ravaged Laconia and captured Cythera.[300] That is despite the fact that Dionysius' position had recovered enough to permit him to man a hundred ships by 393.[301] Dionysius could, perhaps, justify his stance by arguing that he was still at war with Carthage, although the Carthaginian fleet appears to have no longer presented a threat.[302] Yet, the Spartans must have been well aware that help was not forthcoming primarily because of Dionysius' rapprochement with Athens. Before the battle of Cnidus then, Dionysius opted to wait it out, before committing to any particular course of action. After Cnidus, Dionysius could opt to either help save Sparta, as much as Sparta had helped him survive in 396/5, or to pursue his own aggrandizement by salvaging what remained of the collapsing Aegean empire of his ally. Instead, he remained passive. In the first year of the 98th Olympiad (388), following the familiar practice of Sicilian tyrants, Dionysius made a lavish display in the Games, dispatching his brother Thearides with four-horse chariots and rhapsodists.[303] It was on this occasion that Lysias delivered his *Olympiacus* oration, which called attention to the danger represented to Greece by Dionysius due to the number of ships he possessed and equated the tyrant with the Persian King Artaxerxes,[304] who constantly kept his hand in Greek affairs. Evidently, such parallels between Dionysius and Persia were not rare, as Isocrates and Diodorus also utilised them.[305] Sanders suggests that Lysias' assault was driven by the rivalry

[299] Lys. 19.20.
[300] Xen. *Hell*. 4.8.7-8.
[301] Diod. 14.90.4.
[302] No Carthaginian fleet is mentioned in Sicilian waters after 395. According to Diod. 14.95.1, only in 392 did the Carthaginians cross over to Sicily but with 'only a few warships'.
[303] Diod. 14.109.
[304] Lys. 33.5.
[305] Isoc. 4.126 (ca. 380): 'they [the Spartans] are assisting […] Dionysius, the tyrant of Sicily, and the barbarian king who rules over Asia, to extend their dominions far and wide.'; Diod. 15.23.5: 'the greatest rulers of that time, the Persian King and Dionysius the tyrant of Sicily, paid court to the Spartan overlordship and sought alliance with them.'

between pro and anti-Dionysius factions within Athens,[306] the former of course having recently succeeded in securing Athens' rapprochement with the tyrant. We saw in the previous chapters how Athenian literati circles – to which Lysias evidently belonged – traditionally opposed Dionysius' tyranny, and Lysias had an added interest in Sicilian affairs because his father was Syracusan.[307] However, from our evidence it can be concluded that Lysias' attack is not based on Dionysius' actual activities – since the tyrant had religiously avoided any engagement in military activities in Greece – but rather on the Athenian tradition which had previously appeared in Thucydides and saw Syracuse as a potential threat.[308] With Dionysius' recent expansion in Sicily and South Italy, it was logical for contemporary Athenians to again highlight the potential threat to Greek freedom by Sicilian tyrants.

Ultimately, Dionysius' intervention in the Corinthian War came only in 387, the conflict's final year, with the dispatch of twenty ships to the Hellespont. These ships constituted 1/4th of the 80-ship fleet of Spartan admiral Antalcidas, which effectively blockaded the straits and forced Athens to concede to the Peace of Antalcidas.[309] However, by that time the conflict had already been decided, as Persia had openly sided with Sparta and supplied it with a number of ships which alone surpassed that manned by Athens.[310] It appears that Dionysius kept his distance so long as the result hung in the balance, deciding to intervene only when Spartan victory had been assured. With this symbolic contribution, Dionysius could claim that he had a hand in ending hostilities in Greece and could resume his profitable alliance with the victor, Sparta.

5.4 Second Half of Dionysius' Reign (386-367 BC)

The next big conflict that shook Greece, the Theban-Spartan war of 378-362 provided another opportunity for the intervention of outside powers in Greek affairs. Dionysius is mentioned in 375, in the context of Sparta's and Athens' attempts to secure Corcyra. Sparta sent to Dionysius for assistance to secure the island, highlighting that it was in Dionysius' interest that the island not

[306] Sanders, *Dionysius*, 4, 9. Lysias' attack may have well stemmed from the annoyingly ambivalent stance of Dionysius, who stood by as the Greeks weakened themselves, perhaps preparing to step in and fill the void, a fitting message for a Panhellenic festival.
[307] Sanders, *Dionysius*, n. 38, 37.
[308] It is worth mentioning that during the same period, Athens, with far less resources than Syracuse at its disposal was assisting Evagoras of Salamis with ten or twenty ships: Hyland, *Persian Interventions*, 163.
[309] Xen. *Hell*. 5.1.26; 28.
[310] For the rapprochement between Sparta and Persia in 388, *cf*. Hyland, *Persian Interventions*, 164-167.

be controlled by the Athenians.[311] The Corcyraeans asked for Athenian assistance with the argument that the island was in a strategic position for the route 'from Sicily to Peloponnesus', indicating that grain and perhaps reinforcements were expected to flow from the tyrant to the Spartans.[312] In reality, Dionysius demonstrated little interest, dispatching only a token force of ten ships to assist the Spartans in 373, and taking no subsequent action when Corcyra fell under Athenian influence.[313] Yet, even such lukewarm involvement was enough to elicit considerable criticism. A much later passage of Aelius Aristides attributed to Ephorus states 'When Dionysius, […] took it into his head to attack a Greece worn out by its long wars, and besides his long courting of the barbarians whose lands bordered on Greece was now also calling on the King of Persia, and matters had come to the boil, it was two Athenian generals who put a stop to his enterprise, one of them by capturing all the ships that sailed against them from Sicily together with their crews.'[314] In 371 the political landscape changed with the Spartan defeat at Leuctra and in 369 Sparta and Athens concluded an alliance to counter Thebes.[315] This immediately opened the way for a rapprochement between Dionysius and Athens. An Athenian decree of 369/8 put up to discussion a letter sent by Dionysius about 'the Peace' (l. 10) and praised Dionysius and his sons because 'they support the King's Peace, which the Athenians and Spartans and the other Greeks made' (ll. 23-6).[316] Moreover, the decree proposed Athenian citizenship for Dionysius and his sons (ll. 31-3). It is worth noting that as was current Athenian practice for this period and as the decree states, the proposal for citizenship was to be put on vote in secret ballot in the next Assembly and required a minimum of 6,000 votes to be valid.[317] This suggests that Athenian contemporary sentiment for Dionysius must have been positive, in part because of the role he was expected to play in Greek affairs.

Isocrates, one of this period's greatest proponents of Panhellenism, took the opportunity to write a letter to Dionysius, which has survived only partially. It must date to the

[311] Xen. *Hell*. 6.2.4.
[312] Xen. *Hell*. 6.2.9.
[313] Xen. *Hell*. 6.2.33; Diod. 15.47.7. Nine out of the ten ships were captured by the Athenians.
[314] Aelius Aristides, Oration 1. Panathenaic Oration, 1.313 = *Ephori Fragmenta* 141, p. 272.
[315] Xen. *Hell*. 7.1.1-14; Diod. 15.67.1.
[316] *IG* II^2 103 = *Syll*.^{3} 159 = RO 33.
[317] Dem. 59.89-90.

period from after winter 370 to Dionysius' death in 367.[318] Isocrates refers to Dionysius as 'the foremost of our race and the possessor of the greatest power',[319] which render him suitable to 'take responsibility for the affairs in our region'.[320] Isocrates, evidently reflecting Athenian contemporary ideas, envisages Dionysius as a possible guarantor of the King's Peace, possessing the necessary power to enforce the peace on the recalcitrant Thebans. In 369 Dionysius dispatched twenty triremes along with 2,000 Celtic and Iberian mercenaries to help his Spartan and Athenian allies against the Thebans,[321] and another force was dispatched in the following year.[322] These mercenaries were commended for their performance, but they strictly remained in Greece for a period of five months and were insufficient to turn the tide of the conflict. For a comparison, Diodorus criticized Dionysius' arrogance for employing only 130 of ships in his operations against Carthage in 368, suggesting that he possessed far more.[323] Dionysius' death in 367 brought a hiatus in Syracusan involvement in Greece, but did not quite spell its end. In 366, Isocrates' imagined speech of (future king) Archidamus (III) still envisaged Syracusan assistance to Sparta,[324] and indeed, the next year Dionysius II sent twelve ships to Greece.[325] This was again a minimal contribution to the anti-Theban alliance, considering that in 366 the Thebans had voted to construct 100 ships[326] with Persian funding and were active in the Hellespont by 364.[327] This was to be the final Syracusan intervention in Greek affairs as the city soon entered a period of political instability.

5.5 Conclusion

It has been demonstrated that on various occasions from 431 to 425 Syracuse could in theory have assisted its Peloponnesian allies, but ultimately, neither the Athenian fears, nor the Spartan expectations for a significant Syracusan interference in Aegean affairs were ever realised.

[318] Isocrates' reference (*Ad Dionysium* 8) that 'now, when the Lacedaemonians are in such a plight that they are content if they can remain in possession of their own land' suggests a *terminus post quem* of the first Theban expedition into the Peloponnese.
[319] τὸν πρωτεύοντα τοῦ γένους καὶ μεγίστην ἔχοντα δύναμιν.
[320] ἦν ἐπιμεληθῆναί σοι τῶν περὶ τὸν τόπον τὸν ἡμέτερον: Isoc. *Ad Dionysium* 7-8.
[321] Xen. *Hell*. 7.1.20; Diod. 15.70.1.
[322] Xen. *Hell*. 7.1.28.
[323] Diod. 15.73.3.
[324] Isoc. 6.63: 'again, that the tyrant Dionysius, and the king of Egypt, and the various dynasts throughout Asia, each so far as he has the power, would willingly lend us [the Spartans] aid.'
[325] Xen. *Hell*. 7.4.12.
[326] Diod. 15.79.1.
[327] Isoc. 5.53. *Cf*. Buckler, *Aegean Greece*, 338-340.

We can safely conclude that in the course of the Peloponnesian War Syracuse did not opt to pursue an interventionist foreign policy in Greece and fell short of contemporary friendly and hostile expectations. Subsequently, the unprecedented power amassed into the hands of Dionysius in the first half of the fourth century continued the trend of great expectations by the major Greek city-states of Sparta and Athens. These expectations never materialised as Dionysius was primarily concerned with extending his dominions in Sicily and South Italy, as attested by the numerous wars that occupied most of his reign. His participation in Greek affairs fluctuated from periods of passivity to lukewarm interventions in favour of his allies.

In the end, Syracuse under Dionysius did not leave a significant mark in Greek affairs. The evidence suggests that Dionysius' intention was to maintain relations with the major Greek states which would guarantee him the ability to recruit mercenaries and enlist assistance in times of need, and furthermore to ensure no Greek meddling in his Sicilian and Italian endeavors. Apart from that, Dionysius appears to have been unwilling to actively engage in Greek affairs and potentially benefit to the detriment of both Athens and Sparta. This demonstrates that Dionysius' policy was consistent with that of democratic Syracuse in avoiding entanglements in Greece. Nevertheless, as before, contemporary Greeks continued to maintain similar perceptions about Dionysius as they had maintained for Syracuse during the Peloponnesian War, far exaggerating the actual will and ambition of the Syracusans to engage in Greek affairs.

6 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the foreign policy of Syracuse between the second half of the fifth and the first half of the fourth centuries BC, and in particular from the beginning of the Peloponnesian War in 431 BC, to the death of Dionysius the Elder in 367 BC. The study focused on ancient contemporary as well as modern perceptions of Syracuse as an imperialist, expansionist power, sharing many similarities with maritime city-states turned empires, such as Athens and Carthage. In order to ascertain whether Syracuse pursued an imperialistic policy, we looked at activities carried out by Syracuse towards other, usually weaker states, including territorial conquest and annexation, the imposition of administrative mechanisms and tribute, the cessation of the ability of a state to conduct its own foreign policy, and the confiscation of land. Where such activities appeared in the sources, we looked at the wider context, including the role of foreign interventions as catalysts of political change, the responses and

reactions of Syracuse's neighbours, and the ulterior motives and agendas of the available ancient sources.

A researcher looking into Syracuse's foreign policy in the ancient sources is initially confronted with the theme of an ambitious, aggressive, imperialistic, and expansionist Syracuse. The Syracusan democracy and subsequently Dionysius the Elder are depicted as always ready to seize any opportunity to expand Syracuse's territory at the expense of its Greek neighbours, even to interfere and project Syracuse's influence outside Sicily, and the city's power and resources lead to fervent comparisons and parallels with Athens and Persia and their own imperial aspirations. Ultimately, by looking deeper into the evidence and its origins, we have concluded that these themes are often propagated by Athenian authors, who have been influenced either by Athenian sentiments towards Syracuse, or by contemporary debates about Athenian imperialism, and have found in Syracuse a useful candidate for the application of such debates. There are among the sources, also critics of tyranny and specifically Dionysius the Elder, such as Timaeus and Plato, who have naturally denounced and chastised the latter's policies.

To be sure, there can hardly be any doubt that Syracuse was a powerful city-state which, in the period examined, 'exercise[d] its power over others for its own benefit'.[328] Syracuse engaged in the annexation of city-states, sold some populations to slavery and relocated others, resettled cities, confiscated land, and set up garrisons. As has been demonstrated, the city also consistently under both its democratic government and Dionysius utilised the notion of Pan-Sicilianism against the threat of foreign interventions to advance its hegemonic aspirations, just as Athens utilised the Persian threat to advocate the continued existence of the Delian League.

However, as far as Sicily is concerned, the ascendancy of Syracuse was facilitated by the foreign interventions of Athens and Carthage which not only boosted and cemented Syracuse's prestige and role as hegemon of the island, but also greatly weakened the rest of the Siceliot city-states, enabling Syracuse to play that role uninhibited. In a different political context, without these foreign interventions, it is certainly difficult to ascertain to what extent Syracuse would have been able to play such a role, with powerful cities such as Acragas and Selinus still intact. We have argued that while Democratic Syracuse and Dionysius may have employed the notion of Pan-Sicilianism and the threat posed to Siceliot freedom by Athens and Carthage respectively as a 'specious pretext' to serve Syracuse's interests, their policy is difficult to categorise as being one

[328] Finley, "Athenian Empire," 107.

of unrelenting imperialism. The threat of Athens and Carthage was very real, and the Siceliots themselves perceived it as such, recognising Syracuse's crucial role in the defense of Greek Sicily. The emergence of a hegemonic Syracuse was to a large degree a product of external circumstances, a response and reaction to the threat represented by foreign interventions for the survival of an independent Greek enclave in Sicily. Furthermore, the study demonstrated that both Democratic Syracuse and Dionysius remained fixed on Sicilian affairs, allocating most of their resources and waging most of their wars in their immediate neighborhood with the goal of securing Syracuse's position in Sicily.

In contrast, Syracusan interest in Italy and Greece was considerably limited in comparison. Despite the criticism found in Diodorus, or rather Timaeus, in Italy, the campaigns waged by Dionysius were clearly a response to the threat represented by Rhegium and the Italiot League, and their cooperation with Carthage. Dionysius did not intervene in Italy to create an empire, but to secure his Sicilian dominion from the direction of the Straits of Messina, something he accomplished successfully. As for Greece, ultimately, neither the Athenian fears, nor the Spartan expectations reflected in the writings of the Athenian literati for a significant Syracusan interference were ever realised. We can safely conclude that in the course of the Peloponnesian War Syracuse did not opt to pursue an interventionist foreign policy in Greece and fell short of contemporary friendly and hostile expectations. Subsequently, the unprecedented power amassed into the hands of Dionysius in the first half of the fourth century continued the trend of great expectations by the major Greek city-states of Sparta and Athens. These expectations were also never realised as Dionysius was primarily concerned with securing his position in Sicily and South Italy, as attested by the numerous wars that occupied most of his reign. His participation in Greek affairs fluctuated from periods of passivity to lukewarm interventions in favour of his allies.

Ultimately, this study has demonstrated that Syracuse was a typical city-state which to a large extent reacted to external events and pursued a limited and modest foreign policy aimed at preserving the city in light of an increasingly unstable political environment, while occasionally taking advantage of unique opportunities to pursue limited expansion. As a typical city-state, rather than a financial powerhouse such as Athens and Carthage, Syracuse had limited resources, and well-defined, consistent goals, as opposed to the more adventurous imperialistic and at times opportunistic goals ascribed to Syracuse by authors influenced by Classical Athenian imperialism. Thus, Syracuse fell short of the exaggerated expectations of friend and foe alike, concerning the

city’s capabilities and the role which it was envisaged playing in various regions of the Classical world.

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