The Classical Review

<http://journals.cambridge.org/CAR>

Additional services for *The Classical Review*:

Email alerts: [Click here](#)

Subscriptions: [Click here](#)

Commercial reprints: [Click here](#)

Terms of use : [Click here](#)

The Early History of the Delian League

Evelyn Abbott

The Classical Review / Volume 3 / Issue 09 / November 1889, pp 387 - 390

DOI: 10.1017/S0009840X00195885, Published online: 27 October 2009

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0009840X00195885

How to cite this article:

Evelyn Abbott (1889). The Early History of the Delian League. The Classical Review, 3, pp 387-390 doi:10.1017/S0009840X00195885

Request Permissions : [Click here](#)

The Classical Review

NOVEMBER 1889.

THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE DELIAN LEAGUE.

THE latest German writers on Greek History, with some exceptions, seem to accept, either in the whole or in part, the account of the growth of the Delian league given by Kirchhoff in *Hermes* vol. xi. p. 1 ff. As I find myself quite unable to follow them, I venture to review the conclusions at which Kirchhoff arrives.

They are mainly these :

1. That the Aeolians and Ionians of the mainland of Asia Minor did not join the Delian league till after the battle of Eurymedon (465 B.C.).

2. That the Hellespontian allies mentioned by Thucydides (i. 89) were not really members of the Hellenic alliance.

3. That the cities of the Delian league were distributed into districts from the first.

4. That the first φόρος could not have amounted to 460 talents, as Thucydides says.

5. That after his first recall to Sparta Pausanias became ruler of Byzantium ; that Sestos was reconquered by the Persians ; and that both cities were finally won for the Greeks by Cimon.

Let us examine the evidence on which these conclusions rest.

1. a. As to the Aeolians. It is of course stated by Herodotus (ix. 106) that the Lesbians were received into the alliance immediately after the battle of Mycale. Diodorus goes further and asserts that the 'Aeolians,' meaning no doubt the cities of the mainland, were admitted at that time (xi. 37, τοὺς μὲν Ἴωνας καὶ τοὺς Αἰολεῖς συμμάχους ἐποιήσαντο). This, says Kirchhoff, is only the 'local-patriotismus' of the author,

whom Diodorus followed, Ephorus of Cyme, and the statement is 'in direct contradiction' to Herodotus.

There is no 'direct contradiction,' for Herodotus is absolutely silent about the Aeolians of the mainland. Kirchhoff himself admits that the possessions of Lesbos on the mainland would probably follow the lead of Lesbos ; and if so, why should the other cities hold back ? There is no certain proof that the Aeolians of the coast did not come into the alliance at this time, no good reason why they should not, and a slight presumption that they did.

- b. The case of the Ionians of the mainland is different. Kirchhoff grounds his opinion on the fact that in his flight from Greece Themistocles could land at Ephesus. This in his judgment would have been impossible if Ephesus had been an allied town at the time. He has no positive proof stronger than this against the admission of the Ionian cities of the coast into the alliance before Eurymedon.

In answer we may observe : (1) that the proof only touches one city, and that the most Asiatic of Greek cities, the port at which the great inland route from Susa struck the sea ; (2) that the allies were busy at Naxos when Themistocles landed. On the other hand it is quite clear from the language of Herodotus and Thucydides that 'Ionia' really did come into the alliance at the time : οὕτω δὲ τὸ δεύτερον Ἰωνίῃ ἀπὸ Περσέων ἀπέστη says the first, and in the second we read, οἱ δὲ Ἀθηναῖοι καὶ οἱ ἀπ' Ἰωνίας καὶ Ἑλλησπόντου ξύμμαχοι, ἤδη ἀφεστηκότες ἀπὸ βασιλέως, ὑπομείναντες Σηστόν ἐπολιόρκουν. Kirchhoff endeavours to avoid this contra-

diction by assuming that 'Ionia' here means no more than the islands of the coast—in which sense he speaks of an 'Ionian district.' But this is not the common meaning of 'Ionia' and Ionians'; and the account which Herodotus gives of the proceedings after Mycale makes the assumption very improbable. As is well known the question was then raised whether the Greeks should undertake to protect the Ionians in their colonies, or transfer them to the ports of the Medizing cities in the peninsula of Greece. The Spartans wished to transfer them, but the Athenians undertook their defence and carried the day. Are we to suppose that in this discussion it is only the islanders who are meant; only those who were cut off from Asia by sea, at a time when Xerxes had hardly a ship in the Aegean? The cities most in need of protection were Miletus and other cities of the coast which were exposed to the vengeance of the King.

2. Thucydides very plainly tells us (*l. c.*) that the Athenians were aided in besieging Sestos by the *allies from the Hellespont*. Kirchhoff asserts that these could not be members of the Hellenic alliance because, after the departure of the Peloponnesians, the Athenians had no power to receive them. For this assertion he has no authority. The language of Thucydides (*ὑπομεινάρτες*) implies (rather than not) that the Hellespontians were allies before the departure of the Spartans; and, if this were not the case, the Athenians, when they had carried the day about the admission of the Ionians, were probably in a position to admit new members, or thought that they were. (The synod at the Isthmus had ceased to act; the idea that their consent was necessary to the enrolment of allies is preposterous.) Besides in the account of Herodotus, at any rate, Leotychidas sails as far north as the Hellespont, though he takes no part in the siege of Sestos.

3. The attempt to prove that the Delian league was divided into districts from the first has been dealt with by Beloch in *Rheinisches Museum*, xliii. p. 104 ff.

Kirchhoff is in reality reduced to this position: he assumes that an Ionian, an island, and a Hellespontian district were formed at a very early time in the League, not simultaneously but in rapid succession; and that the Ionian district, though distinct from the island district, was entirely composed of islands. For proof he relies on these facts: the little island of Nisyros near Rhodes, which has nothing to do with Ionia, is classed (in

inscriptions after 442) with Ionia, not in the island district. This arrangement, says Kirchhoff, can only be explained by the supposition that Nisyros came over very early, at the same time as Samos, Chios etc., which, as he assumes, at the first formed the Ionian district. But such an argument requires that Euboea, Naxos, and Delos, which were members of the Hellenic confederacy before the Athenians formed a separate confederacy at all, should be classed with Samos and Chios. As a matter of fact they are not, but they formed part of the island district, and therefore, so far as chronology goes, Nisyros could have been placed in either group. Again, Lemnos and Imbros are put among the islands, not in the Hellespontian district, because, says Kirchhoff, the island district was formed before the Hellespontian. This view of course assumes that the Hellespontians were not allies from the first. Yet, as we have seen, the Hellespontians were received immediately after Mycale, and it is difficult to conceive, impossible to prove, that Lemnos and Imbros were received earlier. The Hellespontians were certainly allies before the Athenians formed a separate league. We may also observe that Delos and Samos came into the alliance within a month of each other: both are Ionian islands, yet each is in a different district. The classification into districts then seems to have nothing to do with the date of the accession of the cities included in them. As a matter of fact we do not find these districts established till 442 B.C. What principles prevailed in the classification we are unable to say.

4. Thucydides tells us that the first tribute was 460 talents, and later writers associate this assessment with the name of Aristides who, as we also learn from Thucydides, did fix a scale of tribute. (Thucydides does not precisely say that Aristides fixed the tribute at 460 talents, but that Aristides fixed a scale of tribute, and that the first tribute was assessed at 460 talents; later writers say definitely that the tribute was fixed by Aristides at 460 talents, and this on the face of it is what Thucydides means, though Kirchhoff denies it, and attempts to show that the text of Thucydides is faulty.) Kirchhoff asserts that such a sum is far in excess of any tribute paid before Eurymedon; even if we allow that all the cities which paid in the Peloponnesian war (*i.e.* in the island, Hellespontian, Ionian, exclusive of the cities in the mainland, and Thracian districts) paid from the first, and take the highest payments recorded in the inscriptions between 454 and 425 B.C., we do not get such a

sum. The largest amount which can have been collected from the states included in Kirchhoff's list before Eurymedon is 354 talents; later accessions brought it up to 512 talents, as assessed.

It would be more satisfactory if Kirchhoff had made it clearer how he arrives at the sum of 354 talents, and in any case, if we do not accept his conclusions about the Ionian cities of the coast, his reckoning must be altered. But without going into this we may observe: (1) that the inscriptions from which we derive our knowledge of the payments of the allies do not begin till 454, eleven years after Eurymedon, and (2) that the first *assessed φόρος* of which Thucydides speaks may have included not only the sums paid in money, but also the value of the ships provided by those allies who sent ships and not money. The use of such an assessment would be to provide an equitable scheme for commuting service in ships into payment of money, in order that those who did not wish to send ships could pay on a fixed scale. If this is the meaning of Thucydides, the amount is certainly not too large. Four hundred and sixty talents would about pay for a fleet of sixty ships during eight months of the year (which is what Pericles is said to have put upon the water), or of one hundred and twenty ships during four, or of eighty during six months.

5. The theory of the double conquest of Byzantium and Sestos rests mainly on the story quoted by Plutarch from Ion of Chios. Ion when a young man at Athens had heard Cimon give an account of his division of the spoil from Sestos and Byzantium. Now Sestos was taken in 478 by Xanthippus and Byzantium in the same year (probably) by Pausanias; how then could Cimon have anything to do with the spoil? Moreover Thucydides says of Pausanias after his return to Byzantium that he was driven out—*βία ὑπὸ Ἀθηναίων ἐκπολιορκηθεὶς*, and Plutarch confirms this: *οἱ σύμμαχοι μετὰ τοῦ Κίμωνος ἐξεπολιόρκησαν αὐτόν*. This then, says Kirchhoff, was the siege of Byzantium from which came the spoil in Ion's story; and as Sestos is mentioned in the same breath it must have been captured about the same time.

We are to believe then that Pausanias, of whom Thucydides tells us that he returned to the Hellespont in a single Hermionean vessel, as a private person wishing to take part in the war against Persia, resumed his position as commander of Byzantium, and that by some means he established himself there with a Persian garrison in spite of the presence of a large Athenian force. Here

he remained for some years and meanwhile even Sestos fell back into Persian hands. Then Cimon succeeded in reconquering both.

This account is at variance with Thucydides, who certainly does not convey the impression that Pausanias was in supreme authority on his return to Byzantium. The only words which Kirchhoff can quote on his side are those given above, *ἐκπολιορκηθεὶς βία*, and they seem to mean no more than that Pausanias, though a Spartan and an ally, was forcibly expelled and shut out from the city as an enemy. Plutarch's expression is nearly identical with that of Thucydides; but he substitutes Cimon and the allies for the Athenians. But Plutarch (1) confounds the first and second residence of Pausanias at Byzantium, a blunder which he could have avoided by consulting Thucydides; and (2) puts the story of Ion later than Eurymedon. And neither Thucydides nor Plutarch speaks of any garrison with Pausanias. Moreover Kirchhoff's theory requires that Byzantium was held for Pausanias during his absence at Sparta. By whom was it held? The Persian garrison had been taken captive and sent away. When Dorcis was sent out immediately after the recall of Pausanias, the Athenians and allies were in possession of the place and refused to receive him. How did Pausanias get rid of them? We may allow that he was supplied with money from Persia, and backed by Persian influence. He may have established a party in the place, so that force was needed to turn him out. But this is quite a different thing from being practically tyrant of the city and master of forces to hold it.

The whole theory of the second siege really rests on the flimsy foundation of Ion's story. And with respect to this we observe that Ion merely says that the allies brought many captives to Cimon from Byzantium and Sestos, to be divided between them and the Athenians. Now Cimon was no doubt present at both sieges in 478, and that might serve for the foundation of the story. It is not certain, indeed it is very improbable, that we have the story in a genuine form before us. The Ion may be a Pseudo-Ion; or Plutarch may quote inaccurately. As it is told, the story is too silly to be credible. Were the allies so ignorant of the value of slaves and of ransom that they took clothes before men? Had not Artayctes quite recently offered large sums of money for his own life and his son's? Against the theory built on such a substructure we have the silence of Thucydides who, while

dwelling at unusual length on the fortunes of Pausanias and speaking of his intrigues with Persia, says nothing of his second rule in Byzantium.

For these reasons I think that we are very much where we were in regard to the earlier history of the Delian League. Hero-

dotus and Thucydides are our only sure guides. We contradict them at our peril; and 'combinations' which involve such contradictions require much stronger proof in their favour than they are ever likely to receive.

EVELYN ABBOTT.

GRAMMATICAL GENDER.¹

THE phenomena of grammatical gender belong still to the profoundest mysteries of language. The questionings that arise in the mind of every English-speaking school-boy when he first hears that *mensa* is 'feminine' and *ager* is 'masculine' remain practically unanswered for all his teachers. The German boy who has grown up in the mystery of a 'masculine' *Kopf* and a 'feminine' *Hand* is less liable to ask questions, and is more tolerant of the grammar's dogmatism, but the mystery is only transferred, not explained.

The plain difficulty lies just here. What is meant by the assertion that mere words possess characteristics of sex? What fine-fibred quality inheres in the word *urbs* and the word *fortitudo* that can establish them a claim to femininity, or what is peculiarly masculine in the sound of *ager*? But does not the notion of sex attach rather to the thing denoted by the word than to the word itself? Certainly the names of objects having natural gender usually follow that gender; thus, *la femme* is a commoner case than *das Weib*. We know furthermore that in many cases words of kindred signification are associated together in point of grammatical gender; thus, a group of feminine words for road, path, etc., is formed within the recorded history of the Greek language, so of names for trees in the Latin. It is not however because roads are thought of as possessing feminine characteristics that *καλὸς* is made feminine with *ὁδός*, but solely because the likeness of signification induces an association of the word forms.

In all of the Indo-European languages, so

¹ Heinrich Winckler. *Weiteres zur Sprachgeschichte. Das Grammatische Geschlecht. Formlose Sprachen. Entgegnung.* Pp. 206. Berlin 1889. Ferd. Dummler's Verlagsbuchhandlung.

Karl Brugmann. *Das Nominalgeschlecht in den Indogermanischen Sprachen.* *Teichner's Internationale Zeitschrift der allgemeinen Sprachwissenschaft.* Vol. ix. pp. 100-109.

far back as their history is known to us gender is *grammatical*, i.e. attaches solely to the word-form. This is attested by a great variety of facts, as well as in the consciousness of speakers of living languages. Foxes of both natural genders were among the Greeks called by a name that was grammatically feminine, mice by a masculine name. When the German uses the article *die* in *die Maus*, he does so because it is demanded by the name *Maus*, not by the object denoted thereby.

An examination of the linguistic consciousness of those who speak languages in which grammatical gender is widely applied shows furthermore that the speaker does not in any wise associate the characteristic of sex with the word-forms to which he applies grammatical gender; e.g. to the German folk-consciousness there is nothing woman-like or cow-like in the form and sound of the word *Hand*. The terms 'masculine' and 'feminine' therefore, inasmuch as they apply in their real meaning neither to the denoted objects nor to the denoting names, are to be regarded solely as meaningless symbols serving the convenience of grammatical science. That the two independent systems of descriptive grammar, the Hindoo and the Greek, upon which all the current systems of the world base, should have adopted these terms to mark and denote certain mysterious categories of grammar is undoubtedly due to the approximate correspondence of these classifications of words to the classifications of natural sex; i.e. the relation of the word *θύρα* to the word *λόγος* was described in terms of the relation of the objects denoted by the words *θεός* and *θεά*.

We come now to the question, which is fundamental in all consideration of the subject: viz. Is this approximate correspondence of the gender-classifications to the sex-classifications original or only secondary? The answer is to say, does grammatical gender have it