

POLITICS IN THE AETOLIAN *KOINON* AT THE COMING OF ROME

POLÍTICA EN EL KOINON ETOLIO A LA LLEGADA DE ROMA

Giorgos MITROPOULOS*

Institute of Historical Research, National Hellenic Research Foundation

ABSTRACT: This paper aims to give an overview of the development of the relations between the Aetolian *Koinon* and Rome through the epigraphic testimonies. Emphasis will be placed especially in the period after the Roman-Seleucid War, that is, after 188 BC, since this period remains relatively unknown concerning the internal and «international» politics of the Aetolian *Koinon*. Moreover, the end of the Roman-Seleucid War and the Treaty of Apameia had severe consequences for the *Koinon* and established more firmly the impact of the Roman *res publica* over the Greek East. Therefore, it would be interesting to examine the way the Aetolian *Koinon* was affected by the coming of the Roman power, as it is reflected in the inscriptions.

KEYWORDS: Aetolian *Koinon*, 2nd century B.C., Roman Republic, magistracies, Hellenistic epigraphy, diplomacy.

RESUMEN: El objetivo de este artículo es ofrecer una visión general del desarrollo de las relaciones entre el *koinon* etolio y Roma a través de los testimonios epigráficos. Se hará especial hincapié en el período posterior a la guerra contra Antíoco, es decir, después del 188 a. C., ya que este período sigue siendo relativamente desconocido en lo que respecta a la política doméstica e «internacional» del *koinon* etolio. Además, el final de la guerra contra Antíoco y el Tratado de Apamea tuvieron graves consecuencias para el *koinon* y consolidaron el impacto de la *res publica* romana sobre el Oriente griego. Por lo tanto, sería interesante examinar cómo afectó al *koinon* etolio la llegada del poder romano, tal como se refleja en las inscripciones.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Koinon* etolio, siglo II a. C., República romana, magistraturas, epigrafía helenística, diplomacia.

* **Correspondence to:** Giorgos Mitropoulos, Institute of Historical Research, National Hellenic Research Foundation | National and Kapodistrian University of Athens – g.mitro@hotmail.com – <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-1590-9367>.

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This paper aims to give an overview of the development of the relations between the Aetolian *Koinon* and Rome using numerous epigraphic testimonies as references. Emphasis will be placed especially in the period after the Roman-Seleucid War, that is, after 188 BC, since this period remains relatively unknown concerning the internal and «international» politics of the Aetolian *Koinon*¹. Moreover, the end of the Roman-Seleucid War and the Treaty of Apameia had severe consequences for the *Koinon* and established more firmly the impact of the Roman *res publica* on the Greek East (Mitropoulos 2019, 84-87). Therefore, it would be interesting to examine the way the Aetolian *Koinon* was affected by the coming of the Roman power, as it is reflected in the inscriptions. However, the relevant epigraphic evidence is scarce, especially for the period under consideration². In this way, the analysis following below should be seen merely as part of a greater puzzle. Indeed, researchers are based mostly on literary sources, especially Polybios and Livy to reconstruct the history of the Aetolian *Koinon* and its relations with Rome. A brief historical overview of the *Koinon* will follow, before moving on to examine the epigraphic testimonies attesting both to its political development and the Aetolian-Roman relations.

According to Strabo, the Aetolian League spanned the mountainous area of Central Greece, which was delimited by the Corinthian Gulf to the south, the Acheloos river to the west, Mount Parnassos to the east and the tribes of the Perrhaebi, Athamanes and Aenianes to the north³. In this way, most of the territory initially covered by the Aetolian *Koinon* was mountainous and isolated from the rest of the Greek world⁴.

The Aetolians were initially organized into an *ethnos* (Larsen 1968, xvi, 79), consisting of three distinct ones: the Ἀποδοτοί, Ὀφιονεῖς and the Εὐρυτάνες⁵. Their first collective appearance in the literary sources is attested in the Iliad of Homer, who stated that the Aetolians inhabited the area between the mouth of the river Euenos and the modern lagoon of Missolonghi and located their ancestral centres in the region of Pleuron and Kalydon, settlements which, however, are not included in the later narrative of Thucydides⁶.

From the beginning of the 4th c. BC, the *ethnos* of the Aetolians was steadily developed and by the end of the same century it was formed into a *Koinon* with institutions and magistracies. The main institution of the *Koinon* was the Assembly (*synodos*), which was convened every autumn in the sanctuary of Thermos and Polybios calls these meetings «ἡ τῶν Θερμικῶν σύνοδος», «the assembly of the Thermika» (Polyb. 18.48.5). In this assembly, the annual league offices were filled and important political decisions were made, for example on matters around peace and war⁷. A second Assembly also existed, the «Panaetolika», and more assemblies could be convened when necessary.

¹ Cf. also now Mitropoulos 2019. I wish to thank Andoni Llamazares Martín for his kind invitation to the conference and the anonymous reviewers for their comments on the draft.

² It is perhaps indicative that the recent publication of the inscriptions from the Archaeological Museum of Agrinion does not include Aetolian decrees securely dated after 200 BC, *Collezioni epigrafiche della Grecia occidentale 2.1*, nn. 2-3 (n. 2: last quarter of 3rd c. BC, n. 3: 2nd half of 3rd c. BC).

³ Str. 10.2.1, cf. in general Scholten 2000, 10-12, 14 with n. 54, Freitag, Funke & Moustakis 2004, 379.

⁴ Diod. 18.24.2, 25.1, Ephor. *Fr.* 122 = Str. 10.3.2-5, 9.3.12, cf. Larsen 1968, 78ff, Bommeljé 1987, 16,

Bommeljé & Vroom 1995, 79, Hansen 1996, 122, Beck 1997, 44, 46. For the geography of the Aetolian landscape, Woodhouse 1897 is still useful, see also Nerantzis 2001.

⁵ Thuc. 3.94.5, cf. Larsen 1968, 79, Bommeljé 1987, 15, Nerantzis 2001, esp. 203-225, Scholten 2003, 67, Freitag, Funke & Moustakis 2004, 379.

⁶ Hom., *Il.* B. 638-644, Thuc. 3.94.3-98.4, cf. Scholten 2003, 66-67, Freitag, Funke & Moustakis 2004, 379.

⁷ Funke 2015, 108-109, who provides a very useful overview of the Aetolian *Koinon*'s structure and administration.

The federal council (*synedrion* or *boula*) served as a smaller Aetolian assembly⁸. However, the territorial expansion of the *Koinon* augmented both the size and the importance of the council for the League's administration. Indeed, it figures as a decision-making body from the end of the third century BC onwards⁹. The *synedrion* convened more regularly than the assembly and all member-states of the *Koinon* were represented according to demographic and economic criteria (see Just. *Epit.* 33.2.8).

The three highest magistrates of the Aetolian *Koinon* were the general (*strategos*), the leader of the cavalry (*hipparchos*) and the secretary (*grammateus*). The epigraphic and literary sources seem to indicate that there were no limitations in the election of an individual as *strategos*, since some persons were generals up to five times¹⁰. The prominent families of the *Koinon's* cities provided many politicians who took up the most significant offices and constituted the «political elite» of the League. These persons must have been often members of the *apokletoi*, a body that formed the «core government of the Aitolian League» (Funke 2015, 112-113).

Among the top magistracies, the *boularchoi* should also be mentioned¹¹. As Lasagni argues on the basis of epigraphic evidence, this office was among the supreme ones of the Aetolian *Koinon*, since the *boularchos* could assist the *strategos* in his executive functions, sometimes acting in his place in a complementary way (e.g. in case of absence). However, the *boularchoi* mentioned in the federal documents should be distinguished from the *boularchoi* attested in civic inscriptions. These were not representatives of the local communities within the central government, but officials nominated at the central level to administrate the integrated territories of the «Greater Aetolia»¹².

Indeed, from the mid-290s onwards the Aetolians controlled the sanctuary of Delphi, expanding further than the traditional eastern limit of the Aetolian territory¹³. Steadily, the *Koinon* expanded further to the east, incorporating Herakleia Trachis and West Lokris, Aenis, East Lokris, Phokis, Lamian Malis, western Phthiotic Achaia and Dolopia to the north. The Aetolians expanded further to the west, in southern and eastern Akarnania, and in 229 they succeeded even in temporarily incorporating large parts of Thessaly into «Greater Aetolia», thus making the Aetolian *Koinon* unquestionably the dominant power in mainland Greece against the Antigonid kingdom¹⁴.

The *Koinon* was in the apogee of its territorial expansion in the 230s and 220s and then again in the period from 196 to 189 BC. Except from its territories in mainland Greece outlined above, the Aetolians exercised influence in the Peloponnese, parts of the Aegean and even the coast of Asia Minor by utilizing treaties of *isopoliteia* and *asylia* as instruments for creating bonds with

⁸ For the Aetolian *Koinon's* council and its various names, see *IG IX*, 1² 1, s.v. *boula*, *bouleutai*, *synedrion*, *synedros*. See also Larsen 1968, 198-200, Grainger 1999, 176-177, Scholten 2003, 27, Funke 2015, 110 for the *synedrion* and its tasks. On the terms used by Greeks to describe the institutions and actions of Greek federal states, see Rzepka 2017.

⁹ Funke 2015, 116-117.

¹⁰ See the list of generals of the Aetolian *Koinon* in *IG IX*, 1² 1, xlix-lii, cf. Grainger 2000, 69-73.

¹¹ Miranda 2004, Lasagni 2012 (focusing exclusively on Aetolia).

¹² Lasagni 2012, 188-200.

¹³ See Scholten 2000, 18-20, 24, 44f., 47-49, 51-56, 61, 70, 72f., 90, 154f., 165-170, 240-244, 247, 250f., cf. Larsen 1968, 314. Strabo's distinction between Old and *Epiktetos* («Acquired») Aetolia: 10.2.3, 2.22. However, Strabo based his narrative on heterogeneous sources, resulting in contradictions and anachronisms regarding the Aetolian western limit (8.2.3 *contra* 10.2.1), see Funke 1997, 181f., Freitag, Funke & Moustakis 2004, 379.

¹⁴ On the expansion of the Aetolian *Koinon*, see indicatively Grainger 1999, Scholten 2000, Tsangari 2007, 22-36, Mackil 2013, 91-128, 359-361.

sanctuaries and communities¹⁵. Therefore, it is clear that the Aetolian *Koinon* constituted an important power in the Hellenistic world by the end of the 3rd c. BC.

However, the arrival of a new player in the political scene of the Hellenistic world, the Roman *res publica*, changed the Aetolian politics radically. The Aetolian *Koinon* was the first Hellenistic state to ally with Rome against another one, the Antigonid kingdom of the king Philip V. A series of negotiations started, leading to the treaty of alliance of controversial dating (autumn 212 or 211 BC). The Roman-Aetolian treaty is attested both in literary and epigraphic sources¹⁶. More specifically, an inscription found in Thyrrheion in Akarnania, though partly fragmentary, preserves most of it (*IG IX*, 1² 2, 241 = *StV III*, 536, cf. now *Collezioni epigrafiche della Grecia occidentale* 2.2, n. 1) and it is well-studied, so I will not discuss it extensively. I will merely analyze here the main terms of the alliance, since it constitutes the first epigraphic text documenting a treaty between the Roman *res publica* and a Greek Hellenistic state. The two parties described the terms of the alliance and invited other states to join them in the forthcoming war against the Antigonids. Aetolians and Romans agreed on the division of conquests and the portable spoils: the Aetolians would control any city they conquered and the Romans the moveable booty. Any city taken by Rome would belong to the Aetolians and the moveable booty to the Romans (ll. 4-10: εἰ δὲ τινὲς καὶ τοῦτων τῶν ἐθνῶν οἱ Ῥωμαῖοι πόλεις κατὰ κράτος λάβωντι, ταύτας τὰς πόλεις καὶ τὰς

[χ]ώρας ἔνεκεν τοῦ δάμου τῶν Ῥωμαίων τῶι δάμωι τῶι τῶν Αἰτωλῶν ἔχειν ἐξέστω· [ὁ] δὲ καὶ παρὲξ τῆς πόλιος καὶ τῆς χώρας Ῥωμαῖοι λάβωντι, Ῥωμαῖοι ἐχόντωσαν). Any cities jointly taken by Rome and Aetolia would go to the Aetolians, with the moveable booty being shared (ll. 10-15: εἰ δὲ τινὰς καταυτᾶν τᾶμ πολίων Ῥωμαῖοι καὶ Αἰτωλοὶ κοινᾶι λάβωντι, ταύτας τὰς πόλεις καὶ τὰς χώ[ρα]ς ἔνεκεν τοῦ δάμου <τῶν Ῥωμαίων> Αἰτωλοῖς ἔχειν ἐξέ[σ]τω· ὁ δὲ καὶ παρὲξ τῆς πόλιος λάβωντι, κοινᾶ[ι] [ἀ]μφοτέρ[ω]ν ἔστω). Cities that came over voluntarily to Rome during Roman military operations against them would probably become *amici* of Rome, but could join the Aetolian *Koinon* (ll. 15-23). Cities that surrendered voluntarily during common Roman and Aetolian operations could also become members of the Aetolian League. Moreover, according to Livy, the Romans were to provide at least 25 warships (Liv. 26.24.10), while the Aetolians their land forces.

In this way, the road laid open for the beginning of hostilities that would mark the so-called «First Macedonian War». The terms of the treaty referring to Aetolian capture and subsequent control of cities demonstrate their ambition: the Aetolians sought to expand the *Koinon* northwards and westwards, incorporating parts of Thessaly and Akarnania, valuable to the *Koinon*, but lost to the Antigonid king Philip V in the previous years¹⁷. Therefore, this inscription recording the first Aetolian-Roman alliance marks an important step in our discussion on politics and epigraphy in the Aetolian *Koinon*. It is also interesting that according to Livy, there was a northern limit concerning possible Aetolian territorial gains at the island of Corcyra. This seems plausible, since Rome had interests in the region of the southern Adriatic. However, no such limit is attested in the epigraphic text¹⁸.

¹⁵ See Funke 2008 for the expansion of Aetolian influence in the Aegean.

¹⁶ For a collection of the literary sources and modern discussions of the alliance, see the comments of Schmitt, *Stv III*, n. 536 (= *SEG* 13, 382), see also Liv. 26.24.8-13. Modern researchers date the treaty in autumn 211, see Grainger 1999, 306, 308-309, Eckstein

2008, 88. See also indicatively Grainger 1999, 307-310, Eckstein 2008, 88-89 for a discussion of its contents.

¹⁷ Grainger 1999, 310, Eckstein 2008, 88-89.

¹⁸ Liv. 26.24.11, cf. Gruen 1984, 378, Eckstein 2008, 89, n. 43. On the Aetolian strategic aims, see Polyb. 9.30.8-9.

The epigraphic text of the treaty demonstrates the impressive lack of interest in territorial gains on the part of the Romans¹⁹. All conquests are explicitly stated to be ascribed to the Aetolians. Indeed, the Romans showed a continuous lack of interest in territorial benefits until the final conquest of Greece in 146 BC. In this way, the terms of the treaty of 211 seemed very profitable to the Aetolians, since they could easily expand the territory of their *Koinon*, while Rome was content merely with the movable booty.

The Aetolians, then, allied with Rome against the Antigonids in the so-called First Macedonian War (214-205 BC), but they were forced to agree to a peace treaty with the Macedonian king Philip V in 206 after his successful invasions of the Aetolian heartland. Romans and Aetolians allied again in the Second Macedonian War (200-197 BC) and the role of the Aetolian cavalry under the leadership of Eupolemos was decisive in the battle of Cynoscephalae against Philip (197 BC)²⁰. However, after the end of the war the Aetolian relations with the Roman power deteriorated, since the Aetolians did not receive the territories they expected, as for example the Phthiotic Achaëa to the east²¹. As a result, the Aetolians allied with the Seleucid king Antiochos the Great against the Romans and invited him to Greece. However, in the course of the Roman-Seleucid War (192-189 BC), the Aetolians were defeated by a large Roman army under the leadership of the *consul* Marcus Fulvius Nobilior. The defeat and the harsh terms the Romans imposed brought about great changes in the Aetolian *Koinon*, which was reduced in size and had to align its foreign policy with the Roman, having the same enemies as the Romans²².

Our sources for the turbulent period of the League's history following the Roman-Seleucid War are problematic and often vague. The researcher relies mainly on the literary sources, the Roman historian Livy and the Achaean historian and politician Polybios. These authors maintained a mainly hostile attitude towards the Aetolians, since they originated from states whose relationship with the Aetolians was often tense and antagonistic. Still, the researcher relies almost exclusively on these authors for information about the history of the Aetolian League after 188. However, some—indeed very few—epigraphic testimonies might help us understand better this turbulent period.

After the end of the Roman-Seleucid War, two factions were formed in the Aetolian *Koinon*, conventionally termed in modern research as «pro-Roman» and «anti-Roman» factions²³. Therefore, it is interesting that, according to the epigraphic evidence, the *strategoï* elected for the years 191-188 (a period roughly coinciding with the Roman-Seleucid War), 184-180 and 177-173 were the same and almost all of them appear to have shared anti-Roman attitudes according to the literary sources:

191-188: Archedamos – Nikandros – Eupolemos – Archedamos

184-180: Nikandros – Proxenos – Archedamos – Thoas – Pantaleon

177-173: Nikandros – Eupolemos – Archedamos – Pantaleon – Thoas²⁴

¹⁹ Gruen 1984, 378, Eckstein 2008, 89.

²⁰ Polyb. 18.21.5, 22.4-6, Liv. 33.4.6, 7.13.

²¹ Polyb. 18.34.1, 34.7, 36-37, 38.3-39.2.

²² The great territorial losses of the *Koinon* are described in Polyb. 21.32.13-14, Liv. 38.11.9, cf. Larsen 1968, 439-441, Gruen 1984, 479, Bommeljé & Vroom 1995, 74. On the gradual weakening and the civil strifes within the League after the Roman-Seleucid War, see Mitropoulos 2019.

²³ Thus, Deininger 1971, criticised by Gruen 1984, II, 504, n. 108. See also Bommeljé & Vroom 1995, 74f., Hansen 1996, 106-113. Briscoe 1967, Deininger 1971, Champion 2007 and other researchers employ similar characterisations to describe opposing factions in Greek city-states and *Koina* in this period.

²⁴ Based on *IG IX, I, LI-LII*, cf. Walbank 1979, 78, 316. On the anti-Roman stance of these individuals, see Mitropoulos 2019.

We may interpret the successions of the generals as an indication that the politicians who championed a more aggressive stance against Rome prevailed in the political scene, perhaps as a reaction to the defeat in the Roman-Seleucid War and the harsh and derogatory terms imposed on the Aetolians. After all, it was important for the Greek city-states and the *Koina* to promote an image of power in the Hellenistic period²⁵. The fact that the *Koinon* was administered by experienced war-leaders, such as Thoas and Eupolemos would have aided in the promotion of an image of a still competent League after its defeat. It cannot be proved that these men were elected because of their political stance, but such a conclusion is at least plausible.

However, it would have been unwise to think that the Aetolian *Koinon* remained unaffected by the consequences of its territorial losses. One of the gravest consequences of the defeat by the Romans was the Aetolian loss of control of the city of Delphi and the Amphictyony²⁶. Indeed, the Amphictyonic council was reorganized to adapt to the new political circumstances until the middle of the decade of 180 BC. A catalogue of the year 178 demonstrates that the Aetolians still possessed six *hieromnemes* at the Amphictyonic council, but they represented smaller *ethne*: Two out of six *hieromnemes* represented the Aenianes, two the Locrians, one the Dorians and another one the city of Herakleia (*Syll.*³ 636). However, a closer look at the epigraphic text discloses a seemingly strange contrast: no one of the six *hieromnemes* originated from the community he was supposed to represent. For example, the *hieromnemes* of the Aenianes, Lochagos and Nikias descended from the Aetolian cities of Kallipolis (l. 12: Λοχάγω Ἀγήτα Καλλιπολίτη) and Kalydon respectively (ll. 12-13: Νικίαι Ἀλεξάνδρου Καλυδωνίωι), while the two Lokrian representatives originated from Pholas and Trichonos in Aetolia²⁷. The fact that the six *hieromnemes* came probably from Aetolian cities might suggest that the Aetolians sought to control the *Koinon* more firmly and appear as a coherent group. However, it is clear that the Aetolian League tended to dissolve, since the Roman interests were served better by its separation to smaller *ethne-Koina*, such as those of the Aenianes, the Locrians and the Dorians, already attested in this inscription²⁸. Indeed, about ten years later, the Romans will achieve their aim and the Aetolian *Koinon* will be disintegrated.

As happened with many other Hellenistic states, the fate of the weakened and divided Aetolian *Koinon* was eventually determined after the end of the Third Macedonian War and the battle of Pydna (168 BC, cf. Liv. 45.31.1-3). The decisive victory of Aemilius Paulus over the Macedonian king Perseus brought about the prevalence of the pro-Roman party in the Aetolian League under the leadership of Lyciscus²⁹. However, the Romans sought to neutralize completely the Aetolians, who had proved to be recalcitrant towards their authority. Following Roman intervention, the *Koinon* was delimited in its initial, «ethnic» nucleus.

²⁵ Eckstein 2006, 96f.

²⁶ Two letters of Roman officials to the city of Delphi confirm the autonomy of the city and the expulsion of the Aetolian «settlers», as well as the confiscation of their lands, *Syll.*³ 611-612 (189 BC), cf. Daux 1936, 259-266, Flacelière 1937, 360.

²⁷ Grainger 1999, 508. Lochagos: Grainger 2000, 216: s.v. Lochagos (4). Nikias: Grainger 2000, 249: s.v. Nikias (13).

²⁸ In this sense, it is useful to consult the analysis of Scholten 2000, 240-252 on the increase of the votes of the Aetolian *Koinon* in the Amphictyonic council

through the absorption of territories. For example, the Aetolians absorbed the vote of the «Maliens» of Trachinian Herakleia already in 279/278 (ibid., 240-241). Similarly, in 272 the votes of the Aenianes and the Metropolitan Dorians disappeared to the benefit of the Aetolian votes (ibid., 241-242). Therefore, since the Aetolian expansion brought about the increase of their votes in the Amphictyonic council, it seems plausible to suggest that the fall of Aetolian domination in the same territories can be equally reflected on the same epigraphic documents.

²⁹ Grainger 1999, 536-539, Mitropoulos 2019, 97-100.

Along the same lines, the Romans promoted the creation of smaller and independent *Koina* in mainland Greece at the expense of the Aetolian *Koinon*, such as the Aenianes, the Dorians, the Oetaeans and Ozolian Locrians³⁰. The new states surrounded the already limited Aetolian League, thus ensuring its more complete control and preventing possible actions against the Roman interests in Greece. Therefore, the secession of these *Koina*, once parts of the Aetolian *Koinon*, should be interpreted as the consequence of a Roman *Realpolitik* which implemented successfully the concept of «divide and conquer». Moreover, many inhabitants of these *Koina* must have felt that the Aetolian League had failed to manage effectively the socio-economic hardships that deteriorated after the end of the Roman-Seleucid War and prevent the bloody internal strifes that followed. In this way, an independent course away from the Aetolian *Koinon* must have been welcomed by a great part of the inhabitants.

A few years after the battle of Pydna (ca. 165 BC) is dated an inscription in which a certain Kassandros from Alexandria Troas was honoured by many Greek cities, as well as by the distinct *Koina* of the Aetolians, Dorians, Aenianes, Oitaeans and Ozolian Locrians (*Syll.*³ 653 = *I. Alexandria Troas* 5). For example, the *Koinon* of the Aenianes honoured Kassandros with a golden wreath and a bronze statue (*Syll.*³ 653A, ll. 10-13 and 33 respectively). Therefore, these *Koina* must have become independent shortly before 165 in order to be organized the federal bodies necessary to decide the bestowal of honours to individuals. Indeed, some researchers have put forward the year 166 on the basis of an inscription that refers to an «*agonothetes* of the Locrians»³¹. This date also accords with the Aetolian decrees that bestowed the honour of *proxenia* to some Aenianes from Hypata, the last of which is dated in the years 169-167 (*IG IX*, 1² 1, 71c, ll. 9-16). Therefore, the epigraphic testimonies seem to confirm that the formation of the new *Koina* must have occurred shortly after the battle of Pydna, which constitutes an important turning point in the turbulent history of the Aetolian League.

The independence of these *Koina* marked a new era in the political history of this region of Hellenistic Greece, since numerous inscriptions indicate that they were politically active during the Roman late Republican and imperial period, publishing numerous decrees under the leadership of eponymous archons such as the *aeiarches* (αἰνιάρχης) for the *Koinon* of the Aenianes³². The *Koina* of central Greece, created or revived after 168 operated as autonomous states speedily after the battle of Pydna. Therefore, one could support that the long standing and steady participation and interaction of the citizens of these newly-formed *Koina* with the Aetolian *Koinon* constituted an important pre-stage of political organization³³. When these states became independent, their citizens were already experienced in the *modus operandi* of a *Koinon*. Ironically, the independence of these *Koina* occurred in a period when Roman sovereignty was imposed over Greece, restricting significantly any action that could be opposing or interpreted as opposing Roman interests.

³⁰ Daux 1936, 327, Larsen 1968, 478 with n. 1, Bommeljé & Vroom 1995, 75, Mitropoulos 2019, 98 with n. 121.

³¹ *SGDI* II 1851, cf. Daux 1936, 327, Rousset 2015, 228. On the *agonothetes* as eponymous magistrate in the Aetolian *Koinon*, see Sherk 1990, 259-260.

³² For example, *IG IX* 2, 6a, l. 1. On the *Koinon* of the Aenianes in the Roman period, see Bouchon 2008, 2015.

³³ Of course, most of these *Koina* pre-existed and were revived, see Mitropoulos 2019, 98 with n. 122.

Still, their active participation in the wider Aetolian League must have contributed to the smooth recovery of their political independence. Moreover, if there had been a distinct *telos* in some regions, such as in Locris and Akarnania, as Funke 2015, 95-96, 115 has argued, that is, a political subdivision that functioned within the Aetolian *Koinon* with separate local officials and institutions, then the rapid (re-)organization of these *Koina* as independent political formations after 168 can be understood better. On a different view on the Aetolian τέλη, see Corsten 1999, 133-159.

I will conclude the paper with a comment on the information the Aetolian decrees of *proxenia* and *politeia* provide us for the course of the League after the Second Macedonian War. The bestowal of *proxenia* and *politeia* (citizenship) from the Aetolian *Koinon* to foreign citizens was a usual political practice. However, these epigraphic testimonies can also be interpreted as attempts of the *Koinon*, under the guidance of its magistrates, to exercise influence and create bonds with prominent men of important communities in a difficult period. For example, it has been argued that the bestowal of *politeia* and *proxenia* to citizens of Achaean cities (Patrae and Dyme) and of Aetolian cities on the coast of the Corinthian Gulf, such as Kalydon and Proschion, might indicate the economic difficulties the *Koinon* faced after the Second Macedonian War³⁴. The first inscription runs as follows: στραταγέοντος Φαινέα Ἀρσινοέος τὸ β' προξενίαν Αἰτωλοὶ ἔδωκαν καὶ πολιτείαν κατὰ τὸν νόμον [...] | Ἀγα[θί]αι Νικάνορος Καλυδωνίῳι. [...] καὶ τοῖς υἱοῖς Λύκοι, Σιμίᾳ Προσχίῳι[ς]. «When Phaeneas from Arsinoe was general for the second time (192/191 BC, on the eve of the Roman-Seleucid War), the Aetolians bestowed *proxenia* and *politeia* according to the law to Agathias, son of Nikanor from *Kalydon*, and his sons, Lykos and Simias from *Proschion*». The second inscription is dated on 185/184 BC on the basis of the third generalship of Alexandros of Kalydon and, according to the epigraphic text, the Aetolian League bestowed *proxenia* to two citizens of Patrae. This action could be interpreted as an Aetolian attempt to form a network with two presumably important Achaeans a few years after the end of the Roman-Seleucid War and its grave consequences.

It is also interesting to note that the Aetolian honourific decree for Damon of Dyme, dated in 165/164, borrows verbatim two expressions from the decree in honour of the Attalid king Eumenes II of Pergamon, dated in 182. More specifically, it is stated that Damon «has made many and great achievements of mighty works» (πολλὰς καὶ μεγάλας ἀποδείξε[ις] [πεποίηται] and also that he «did not neglect any care and ambition» ([σπουδᾶς καὶ] φιλοτιμίας οὐθὲν ἐνλείπων)³⁵. In this way, the secretary of the *Koinon* in 165/164 must have been inspired from an honourific model praising the Attalid king, to honour a prominent citizen of Dyme in a difficult political circumstance for the Aetolian League after the battle of Pydna and the organization of independent *Koina* (Antonetti 1994, 135). We get the impression of an Aetolian *Koinon* in search of creating networks with a prominent citizen and even being inspired from a previous, royal model to praise him.

Through the examination of the selected epigraphic texts, we are able to overview the history of the Aetolian *Koinon* at the coming of Rome from the first alliance between the two states in 211 BC to the steady disintegration of the *Koinon* after the Roman-Seleucid War and the Third Macedonian War. The inscriptions constitute valuable testimonies for the political changes that occurred in the League and the choices it made in this turbulent period, without the intermediation of biased authors such as Polybios and Livy. For example, thanks to the inscriptions examined, we know that the Amphictyonic council was reorganized after the Roman-Seleucid War, since

³⁴ *IG IX*, 1² 1, 31 and 32 respectively, cf. Antonetti 1994, 134-135, Grainger 1999, 505-506 with more examples of Aetolian bestowals of *proxenia* in this period. See also Funke 2015, 104 with n. 48 on the fact that the Aetolian League awarded *proxenia* to citizens of Aetolian member-states as well.

³⁵ Compare *FD III* 3, 240, ll. 3-4 and l. 5 respectively with Antonetti 1994, ll. 9-10. These phrases are also attested in *FD III* 3, 383 (180/179 or 179/178 BC), *FD III* 2, 94 (undated), *FD III* 1, 458 (dated in

150-100 BC). Among these inscriptions, only *FD III* 3, 383 is roughly contemporary, but in this case the expressions are utilized in different parts of the text (l. 4 and 26), while in our examples the phrases are directly connected. Moreover, the issuing bodies in our cases are the Aetolians, while in the other cases the city of Delphi (*FD III* 1, 458; 3, 383) and the archons of Delphi together with the city of Athens (*FD III* 2, 94). Therefore, the argument for an Aetolian borrowing of an honourific expression is strengthened.

the Aetolian votes were distributed to smaller *ethne*, but most of their representatives originated from Aetolian cities. This was a prelude to the final dissolution of the Aetolian League only a few years later, when smaller *Koina* were created or revived in the territories of the once «Greater Aetolia». The epigraphic evidence indicates that the Aetolian League sought to cope with the unsuccessful results of the Second Macedonian War and afterwards, the Roman-Seleucid War through the bestowal of *politeia* and *proxenia* to prominent citizens, but its fate was sealed after the battle of Pydna. The Aetolian *Koinon* was disintegrated gradually until its final dissolution during the first century BC.

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