

Sharing beyond the *Polis*: Citizenship and Borders in Ancient Federal Greece

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ABSTRACT:

Through the analysis of seven case studies, this article shows how specific forms of supra-poleic citizenship could serve as a tool to project influence and strengthen ties in distant regions and in some cases to effectively dematerialise traditional borders. In light of this, this article proposes not to definitively give up the view of *koina* as continuous territorial units nor to systematically interpret suprapoleic citizenship treaties as a form of expansion of control. It rather suggests a multi-level approach to federal territory and citizenship, moving beyond binary distinctions between ‘complete’ and ‘incomplete’ forms of belonging and control.

KEYWORDS: *koina*; borders; citizenship; Aitolians; Phokians.

1. Beyond the *polis*: Defining the external border of *koina*

The issue of the different types of supra-poleic citizenship framed in federal terms poses the question of how to define and identify the external borders of a *koinon*. Most maps, in fact, betray the assumption that the territory controlled by a *koinon* is taken to be a cohesive, continuous territorial unit under the control of the political communities of the *koinon* and that the latter share internal borders accordingly. This, in turn, implies the notion that the external borders

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of the *koinon* would consist of (more or less imaginary) lines encompassing the territories of the *poleis* “annexed” to the *koinon*.¹

There are, however, two problems with this picture. First, identifying the external borders of the *koinon* is often difficult if not impossible: while on the one hand, *tele* and *merē* represent an important form of territorial organization, closely linked to the concept and perception of hard borders²—a fact that this article does not intend to question—on the other hand, these districts do not always seem to correspond to regional units delimited by hard borders, to such an extent that in certain cases it has been suggested that they should be thought of as networks.³

Second, such an operation is especially complicated once we acknowledge—as suggested by scholarship over the last few decades⁴—that various forms of federal citizenship brought together cities and islands geographically distant from what was imagined as the “original” territory of the *koinon*, to the extent that they appear to represent, for certain federal states, a means of consolidating ties on an Aegean scale that is additional or alternative to other means, such as alliance treaties, *asylia* or proxenies.⁵ These questions, in turn, invite us to reconsider the traditional binary distinction between two types of federal citizenship: the one shared by those communities located in areas contiguous to the “original” territory of the *koinon*, conceived as more complete, and the one acknowledged to communities, *poleis* and/or islandic communities far removed from this “original” territorial core, conceived as more formal, or incomplete. William Mack’s recent proposal to think of certain forms of citizenship as relational (rather than potential) forms of citizenship is particularly interesting in this regard.⁶

On the other hand, if a less dichotomous view of these two forms of citizenship seems more advisable, one cannot help but wonder whether it would not be appropriate to abandon, consistently and perhaps consequently, a dichotomous view of the territory controlled by the *koina*. It is advisable to avoid the risk of taking for granted two kinds of relations (sometimes considered as mutually connected): one between a form of federal citizenship understood as

1 See Funke 2007a; Bearzot 2014, 50; Franchi 2024.

2 Corsten 1999; Funke 2024.

3 Müller, Priol 2025, 237.

4 Giovannini 1971; Gawantka 1975; Marek 1984; Rigsby 1996; Funke 2000; Funke 2007b; Funke 2008; Bearzot 2014, 51.

5 The issue has been studied mainly with reference to the Aitolians; according to Benecke (1934), the Aitolians would have projected themselves into the Aegean Sea following their defeat of the Gauls at Delphi, but more recent studies have shown that this most likely began a few decades later (Grainger 1999, esp. 24; Scholten 2000, esp. 107).

6 Mack 2019. See also Cecchet 2023 and Magnetto 2025, who highlights the complexity and variety of the concrete mechanisms for absorbing new citizens at a micro-institutional administrative level.

complete and a form of control over the territory—a territory given by a continuous space—equally complete (the result of a conquest); another between a form of citizenship understood as incomplete and a form of control of the territory—given by a space that is at times even intermittent—more evanescent and indeed incomplete. This article investigates whether it is possible to avert this risk by adopting a multi-level view of the external borders of the *koine* and the forms of citizenship sometimes connected to them.

2. Phokians and Tenians

The first case is the treaty between the Phokians and the Tenians granting to the temple of Poseidon and Amphitrite on Tenos and to Tenos itself *asylia* and *isopoliteia*. While this is the less documented of the seven cases here considered, it still challenges the validity of dichotomous interpretative categories. The inscription was found in Elateia and is variably dated to the early or late third BCE (*IG IX 1*, 97):⁷

[— — — τὰν ὑ]πάρχουσαν Τηνίαις — — —]
 —H[— — — δ]εδόχθαι τῶι κοινῶι Φωκέων τ[ὸ] ἱε-
 ρὸν τοῦ [Πο]τειδᾶνος καὶ τὰς Ἀμφιτρίτας
 5 ἐν Τήνῳι καὶ τὰν νᾶσον ἄσυλα εἶμεν, κα[ὶ]
 ἐν τὰν κατασκευὰν τοῦ ναοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπὶ
 μὲν τ[ο]ῦ παρόντος [δ]όμεν πέντε μ[ν]ᾶς, ὅσ-
 τερον δέ, γενομένων Φωκεῦσι τῶν πραγμάτων[ν]

7 Friedrich Hiller von Gärtringen (*IG XII 5*, p. XV), followed by Étienne (1990, 93-5), Zachos, Dimakis (2006, 877) and Knäpper (2018, 148-49), dated this decree to 278-261 BCE. Kent Rigsby (1997, no. 53), however, notes that various states not listed in the Amphiktyony are recorded at Delphi, and line 6 might mean “decoration” (cf. Paris 1887, 332-37, no. 9, p. 335; 1892, 245-47, no. 57) instead of “building”, or it may allude to the new building dated to ca. 200 BCE. Paul Roesch (1982, 359-64) commented the decree might have originated in the latter part of the third century as the figure of the phokarch (22) was established only after 228 BCE. In the early 220s, Delphi paid tribute to a Tenian, Diaitos, the descendant of Thestias, with ancestral proxeny: however, Diaitos could be both the son of our *theoros* or his progenitor, thus it is of no help in dating the edict. In a register of sales of land (*IG XII 5*, 872, l. 109, ca. 300 BCE) we encounter *Diaitos Poseidonion Thestiades*, whom Hiller von Gärtringen believed could be the progenitor of the *theoros* in our edict; yet the date of the catalogue is uncertain, as it is the connection between the two documents. Regarding the period of conflict with the Phokians, there are numerous possibilities (Rigsby 1997, 156 with discussion). Sara Saba (2020, no. 69) notes that the only chronological clue in the text is the apparent independence of the *koinon* of the Phokians: for this reason, she argues that the decree should be dated to a period when they were not subject to the Aitolians (cf. Scholten 2000, esp. 174-76). Discussion in Loddo 2026, n. 25.

- καὶ τοῦ πολέμου κατὰ λόγον, ἀποστεῖλαι
- 10 καταξίως τῶν θεῶν καὶ τὰς ὑπαρχούσας
οἰκειότατος ποτὶ Τηνίους. ἐπαινέσαι δὲ καὶ
τὴν πόλιν Τηνίων, ὅτι τοῦ τε ἱεροῦ τὰν ἐπιμέ-
λειαν ποιεῖνται καὶ τὰν ποτὶ Φωκεῖς οἰκειότα-
τα ἀνανεοῦνται, καὶ εἶμεν Τηγίοις ἰσοπολι-
- 15 τεῖαν πᾶσι δεδομένην ἐμ Φωκεῦσι. δόμεν
δὲ καὶ Θεστία Διαιτῶν τῶι θεαρωῖ μ[ν]ᾶν, καὶ ἐ[πὶ]
ξένια καλεσάντων αὐτὸν τοῖ φ[ω]κάρχει. ἀν[α]-
γράψαι δὲ καὶ ἐν στάλας τρεῖς τὸ ψάφισμα, κ[αὶ]
ἀναθέμεν τὰν μὲν ἐν τῶι ἱερῶι τὰς [Ἀ]θήνας
- 20 ἐν Κράναις, τὰν δὲ ἐν ταῖ ἀγοραῖ ἐν Ἐλατεί[αι],
τὰν δὲ ἐν Δελφοῖς τὸ δὲ ἀνά[λ]ωμα δόμεν τ[οῦς]
φωκάρχας, καὶ τοὺς ἀρ[τ]ιστῆρας θέσθα[ι].

It was decided by the *koinon* of the Phokians (δεδοχθαι τῶι κοινῶι Φωκέων) that the temple of Poseidon and Amphitrite on Tenos and the island itself are to be inviolate, and for the construction of the god's temple the *koinon* shall give 5 mnas for the present, and later, once the Phokians have the means, the *koinon* shall send an amount proportionate to the war-indemnity as befits the gods and the relationship which exists between the Phokians and the Tenians. Praise the city of the Tenians for undertaking the guardianship of the temple and renewing their relationship with the Phokians, and let the Tenians enjoy the same *isopoliteia* that has been given to everyone in Phokis. Give a mna to Thestias, the son of Diaitas, the envoy, and let the *phokarchai* invite him to a state banquet. Inscribe this decree on three stelai, and erect one in the temple of Athena Kranaia, the second in the agora at Elateia, the third at Delphi. Let the *phokarchai* pay the expenses and let the *artistères* see to the installation. (transl. by McInerney 2015)

Numerous points in this inscription are relevant here. The first one is the grant of ἰσοπολιτεία mentioned at ll. 11-15 (esp. 14-15: ἰσοπολιτεῖαν). There is no consensus among scholars as to what kind of citizenship the term ἰσοπολιτεία indicates here, and various readings have been suggested. According to the influential definition by Emil Szántó, this would be the concession of a “potential” citizenship.⁸ An inscription dating to the fourth century BCE (*IG* II² 70) seems to confirm that this “potential” citizenship had been framed (also)⁹ on a

8 Szántó 1892, 74. On the meaning of *isopoliteia*, its analysis in scholarship, the extent to which it has concrete implications and the necessity to distinguish isopolity from *isopoliteia*, see Müller 2023b. Recent contributions with discussion of previous literature are also Lasagni 2017, 84-86; Rzepka 2017; Müller, Priol 2025.

9 *IG* IX 1. 1 as example of the granting of *isopoliteia* on a local level among the Phokians (Antikyra decree's granting *politeia* to a citizen of Ambryssos; one cannot exclude, however, that Ambryssos was not member of the *koinon* at that time: Loddo 2026, n. 33).

federal level by the Phokians.¹⁰ Wilfried Gawantka includes this grant of citizenship in his list without discussing it.¹¹ Jeremy McInerney suggests that the *isopoliteia* mentioned in the treaty is the same *isopoliteia* granted on a federal level to all the Phokians and translates accordingly:¹² the clause εἶμεν Τηγίους ἰσοπολι-/τεῖαν πᾶσι δεδομένην ἐμ Φωκεῦσι would imply that all the Phokians had the right of *isopoliteia* and that this treaty extends it to the Tenians. José Pascual González had formulated a similar interpretation, distinguishing between the two cases, the Phokians and the Tenians, and suggesting that the latter, unlike the former, are guaranteed *isopoliteia* but not *sympoliteia*.¹³ Sara Saba challenges this perspective: εἶμεν Τηγίους ἰσοπολι-/τεῖαν πᾶσι δεδομένην ἐμ Φωκεῦσι indicates that the Phokians conceded *isopoliteia* to all Tenians in Phokis and therefore translates: “to the Tenians (shall be given) *isopoliteia*, given to all those (the Tenians) who are among the Phokians” since “the clause that includes *isopoliteia* implies then that this grant was to be available to Tenians in Phokis only, which is unusual: here *isopoliteia* probably does not refer to the institution, but only indicates that those Tenians who lived in Phokis had equality of rights”.¹⁴ Admittedly, Saba’s interpretation might be confirmed by the fact that the stele is to be affixed in the temple of Athena Kraniaia, in the *agora* at Elateia and at Delphi (ll. 19-21). Having said that, Laura Loddo’s recent proposal “Let the Tenians, all of them, have the *isopoliteia* that is given among the Phokians”¹⁵ seems more in line with the relevance that in this very inscription is given to τὰν ποτὶ Φωκεῖς οἰκειότατα.

Be that as it may, the rest of the inscription makes it clear that the Phokians wanted, at this stage, to forge a link with the Tenians in Tenos, and not only with the Tenians in Phokis. In fact, it is stated that: 1) the temple of Poseidon and Amphitrite on Tenos and the island itself are to be inviolate; 2) the *koinon* of the Phokians shall give 5 mnas for the construction of the god’s temple; and 3) the *koinon* shall later send an amount proportionate to the war-indemnity (τοῦ πολέμου κατὰ λόγον) and befitting the gods and the nature of the relationship between the Phokians and the Tenians.

It could be argued that the agreement here is meant to protect the Tenians from the Phokians and to provide a compensation for a past damage (ll. 8-9). However, the relationship between Phokians and Tenians is emphasized twice (ll. 10-11 and 13-14), and precisely in the lines referring to the *isopoliteia*. Beyond a concern for the Tenians in Phokis and possibly in Tenos, a link is here

10 In this regard, see Beck 1997, 115; Guagliumi 2004, 36-37; Osborne 2013, 135-36; Brown Ferrario 2014; Loddo 2026. More generally, Rousset 2024, 51.

11 Gawantka 1975, no. 6.

12 McInerney 2015, 219-20.

13 Pascual González 2006, 329, 331, 333; 2007, 175-77.

14 2020, 235 n. 43 and 236. See already Étienne 1990, 94.

15 Loddo 2026, n. 6.

established between Phokians and Tenians, and it is established by the *koinon* (δε-δόχθαι τῷ κοινῷ Φωκέων). We can conclude that some influential circles at the head of the Phokian *koinon* at that stage were trying here to expand their influence in the Aegean Sea, and to do so they used various tools, among which that of *isopoliteia*.

3. Aitolians and Akarnanians

The second case study here considered is the well-known agreement between Aitolians and Akarnanians in an inscription from Thermon (*IG IX 1³1, 3A*)¹⁶ which redefines the borders between the states and describes the terms of a military agreement. Various scholars have noted that this decree is unique because it mentions the award of some kind of *politeia*, commonly assumed to be an *isopoliteia*, between two federal states.

- Συνθήκα καὶ συμμαχία
Αἰτωλοῖς καὶ Ἀκαρνάνοις
Ἀγαθὰί τύχαι. συνθήκα Αἰτωλοῖς καὶ Ακαρνάνοις ὁμόλογος· εἰρήναν
- 4 εἶμεν καὶ φιλίαν ποτ' ἀλλήλους, φίλους ἐόντας καὶ συμμάχους ἅμα-
τα τὸμ πάντα χρόνον, ὅρια ἔχοντας τὰς χώρας τὸν Ἀχελῷον ποταμ-
ὸν ἄχρι εἰς θάλασσαν. τὰ μὲν ποτ' ἁὼ τοῦ Ἀχελῷου ποταμοῦ Αἰτωλῶν εἶμεν, τὰ δὲ
ποθ' ἐσπέραν Ἀκαρνάνων πλὴν τοῦ Πραντὸς καὶ τὰς Δεμφίδος. ταύτας δὲ Ἀκαρνάν-
- 8 ες οὐκ ἀντιπιοῦνται. ὑπὲρ δὲ τὸν τερμόνων τοῦ Πραντὸς, εἰ μέγ κα Στράτιοι καὶ Ἀγραῖ-
οι συγχωρέωντι αὐτοὶ ποτ' αὐτοὺς, τοῦτο κύριον ἔστω· εἰ δὲ μή, Ἀκαρνάνες καὶ Αἰτωλοὶ
τερμαζάντο τὰμ Πραντίδα χώραν, αἰρεθέντας (!) ἑκατέρων δέκα πλὴν Στρατίων καὶ Ἀγρα(ί)-
ων· καθὼς δέ κα τερμάζοντι, τέλειον ἔστω. εἶμεν δὲ καὶ ἐπιγαμίαν ποτ' ἀλλήλους καὶ γ-
- 12 ἄς ἔγκτησιν τῷ τε Αἰτωλῷ ἐν Ἀκαρνανίαι καὶ τῷ Ἀκαρνάνῃ ἐν Αἰτωλῳ καὶ πολίταν εἶμε-
ν τὸν Αἰτωλὸν ἐν Ἀκαρνανίαι καὶ τὸν Ἀκαρνᾶνα ἐν (Α)ἰτωλῳ ἴσσοι καὶ ὅμοιοι. ἀναγραψάν-
τω δὲ ταῦτα ἐν στάλαις χαλκείαις ἐπ' Ἀκτίῳ μὲν οἱ ἄρχοντες τῶν Ἀκαρνάνων, ἐν δὲ Θέρμ-
ῳ τοὶ ἄρχοντες τῶν Αἰτωλῶν, ἐν Ὀλυμπίαι δὲ καὶ ἐν Δελφοῖς καὶ ἐν Δω[δ]ώναι κοινᾷ ἐκάτ-
- 16 εροι (...)

Treaty and Alliance between the Aitolians and the Akarnanians.

To good Fortune. The treaty was signed in agreement by Aitolians and Akarnanians. (They establish) peace and friendship with one another, that they shall be friends and allies for the whole time, (that) the river Acheloos shall mark the

16 Literature is enormous; here some selected, recent contributions: Cabanes 1979, 184-86; Antonetti 1987, 101; Funke 1991, 174-93; Domingo-Forasté 1988, 121-23; Ager 1996, no. 33; Schoch, Wacker 1996, 125-27; Dany 1999, 77-81, 85; Freitag 2007, 50-52; Lasagni 2019, 106-7.

boundary between their territories down to the sea. To the east of the river Acheoos the land shall belong to the Aitolians, to the west to the Akarnanians with the exception of Pras and Demphis. The Akarnanians shall not lay claim on those. As far as the limits of Pras are concerned, if the *Stratioi* and the *Agraioi* can agree on them, their decision shall stand. If they cannot agree, Akarnanians and Aitolians shall establish the boundaries by choosing 10 men each, with the exception of *Stratioi* and *Agraioi*. How they will determine them (the territorial limits), that shall be definite. They shall have right to intermarriage with one another and an Aitolian shall have the right to own land in Akarnania and an Akarnanian in Aitolia, an Aitolian shall be citizen on equal footing in Akarnania and an Akarnanian in Aitolia. The officials of the Akarnanians shall see to it that these decisions are inscribed on a bronze stele in Aktion, those of the Aitolians in Thermon, both in Olympia, Delphi, and Dodona. (...) (transl. by Saba 2020, slightly modified)

After the detailed fixing of border issues, *epigamy* and *enketēsis* between Aitolians and Akarnanians are established and it is decided that *πολίταν εἶμεν τὸν Αἰτωλὸν ἐν Ἀκαρνανίᾳ καὶ τὸν Ἀκαρνᾶνα ἐν Ἀἰτωλίᾳ ἴσογ καὶ ὅμοιον*, “an Aitolian shall be citizen on equal footing in Akarnania and an Akarnanian in Aitolia”.

The inscription is usually dated to the late 260s and the 250s BCE,¹⁷ when Akarnania provided Aitolia with a buffer zone shielding it from the risk of Epeiros allowing eventual Makedonian assaults.¹⁸ The decisions addressed in the text are to be inscribed by the Akarnanians on a bronze stele in Aktion, by the Aitolians in Thermon, and by both in Olympia, Delphi, and Dodona.

I agree with Saba that the citizenship in this inscription cannot be interpreted “as a stepping stone toward an Aitolian annexation”.¹⁹ I also find Gawantka’s observations convincing when he argues that the grant of (*iso?*)*politeia* and the recognition of *epigamy* and *enketēsis* here must have served to reinforce hotly contested borders, which is the opposite of an annexation.²⁰ Thus, the treaty between Aitolians and Akarnanians establishes an alliance and a common *politeia* while also redefining in detail the borders between them. It almost seems as if clarifying these borders were a precondition to the alliance and common citizenship. The two territories are contiguous, but it is not the logic of expansion that is at stake here, rather, an agreement and a *symmachia* (ll. 1-2: *συνθήκα καὶ συμμαχία*

17 More precisely 263-262 according to Klaffenbach 1955, 49-51, Schoch 1997, 76 and Scholten 2000, 253-56.

18 Scholten 2000, Appendix B, esp. 253-56; cf. Dany 1999, 70-80 and Grainger 1999, 117-22 dating the text to 271-270 BCE; see also Scharff 2023, 181-82. Dany interprets the alliance as an effort of the Akarnanians to establish its recently acquired autonomy or a pact stemming from the assistance of Alexander II, who subsequently sought his revenge by “partitioning” Akarnania with Aitolia (on this partition see, most recently, Pascual González 2017b, 33-34, with bibliography and discussion).

19 Saba 2020, 178.

20 Gawantka 1975, 146-49. See also Müller, Priol 2025, 231.

/ Αἰτωλοῖς καὶ Ἀκαρνάνοις). It is precisely this combination—division and alliance—that sheds light on the dynamics at play here. Even though the treaty sanctions division and goes in the opposite direction of annexation, it should be recognised that it first and foremost establishes an alliance that adds to a series of alliances entered into by the Aitolians at this stage, clearly connected to their rise.²¹ Not only that. It is worth acknowledging, with Sara Saba, that the common *politeia* here is “a means to create a shared foundation of interests and to bring together both abstract (potential citizenship within the *koinon*) and more concrete participation of their members in each other’s territory”²². This shared interest over a common territory must have played a role when the Aitolians conquered and annexed this part of Akarnania, ca. 250 BCE.²³ A situation in which citizenship is shared but the borders still precisely demarcated can evolve into a situation where borders are removed, and shared citizenship is activated at a different level and connected to different practices.

4. Aitolians and Trikkaians

A limestone stele from ancient Kalydon reads: Αἰτωλῶν τὸ κοινὸν Τρικκαίων τῇ πόλει ἔ(δ)ωκαν πολιτείαν (*IG IX 1².1, 136; StV III 542*, the edition followed here), relations between the Aitolians and the Thessalian city of Triikka are addressed in this text:

- Ἄγα[θ]ῆι τ[ύ]χηι. Αἰτωλῶν τὸ κοι-
 νὸν Τρικκαίων τῇ πόλει ἔ(δ)ω-
 καν (!) πολιτείαν, ἀτέλειαν, ἀσυ-
 4 λίαν, ἀσφάλειαν καὶ αὐτοῖς
 καὶ χρήμασιν καὶ κατὰ γῆν καὶ
 κατὰ θάλατταν καὶ πολέμου
 καὶ εἰρήνης. ἔδωκαν δὲ καὶ Τρικ-
 8 καῖοι Αἰτωλοῖς κατὰ ταυτά.
 βουλάρχούντων Φρίχου, Με-
 νοίτα, Δορκίνα, Σκορπίωνος, Κοι-
 σέα, Ἀρχεδάμου, γραμμα-
 12 τέος Παυσίου.

21 See, e.g., Polyb. 4.53.8. Cf. Gawantka 1975; Marek 1984; Rigsby 1996; Funke 2000; Funke 2007b; Funke 2008; Scharff 2023, 181-82; Scharff forthcoming (stressing the “the league’s resilience of alliance”).

22 Saba 2020, 178 n. 37. See also Lasagni 2017, 84.

23 Recent discussion in Pascual González 2017a.

With good fortune. The league of the Aetolians granted to the city of Trikka citizenship, freedom from taxes, inviolability and security for themselves and their property, by land and by sea, both in war and in peacetime. Trikka made a grant to the Aetolians on the same terms. The *boularchoi* were Phrikos, Menoitias, Dorkinas, Skorpion, Koiseas and Archedamos; the secretary was Pausias.
(transl. https://www.attalus.org/docs/other/inscr_46.html)

For a long time, it was maintained that this document established Trikka's membership to the Aitolian league. The chronology of the inscription is crucial in this respect, given that Trikka and Hestaiotis more generally are known to have joined the Aitolian *koinon* in 229 BCE or shortly afterwards.²⁴ Yet, there is no agreement on the date of the inscription. From a paleographical standpoint, the inscription has been dated between 238-230 BCE by Günther Klaffenbach (ad l.), while Hatto H. Schmitt (ad l.) dates it after 206 BCE; Robert Flacelière and John Grainger, instead, maintain that the decree was inscribed in the last third of the third BCE, following a period when Trikka had temporarily abandoned the *koinon*.²⁵ After all, as Saba rightly stresses, Thessaly did not remain under Aitolian control for long and the same might have happened with the region of Trikka, in Hestaiotis, which was not historically Aitolian.²⁶ Thus, the establishment of a *politeia* referred to in this inscription would belong to a series of moves by the (or by some) Aitolians to create a strong connection with a city, Trikka, which had already previously belonged to the Aitolian League.²⁷ To put it with Kostas Buraselis, a common *politeia* here "ideally served the cases of cities and other communities far away from Aetolia, which could thus be linked with it to mutual benefit".²⁸ While (*iso*)*politeia* is not a steppingstone to *sympoliteia*, here it appears employed in an attempt to build, preserve, or reactivate a relation between two political entities. The attempt seems to have been successful: a passage in Livy referring to events of the mid-first century BCE (39.25.1-3) attests that over the centuries the status of Trikka remained uncertain, and it was occasionally considered Aitolian. In accounting of a confrontation between Romans, Thessalians, Atamanians, and Philip, Livy questions whether Trikka had always been Aitolian or it had been overtaken by the Thessalians. It seems, then, that the grant of the sort of *politeia* mentioned in the inscription contributed to the progressive development of an increasingly Aitolian identity.

24 Liv. 39. 25. 3-5 (esp. 3); see Flacelière 254; Fine 133; Scholten 2000, 165-70, esp. 166; *contra*, Grainger 1999, 239-40. The most recent discussion is Saba 2000, no. 44.

25 Flacelière 1937, 254; Grainger 1999, 381.

26 Saba 2020, 190.

27 *StV* III 542 esp. p. 281 and Flacelière 1937, 254.

28 2003, 44-45.

5. Aitolians and Chians

One further document supporting the need of reviewing the traditional understanding of the external borders of a *koinon* is a decree by the Chians surviving in four different fragments found in Delphi (FD III 3.214, ll. 1-17 = *Choix* pp. 151-156 no. 77, ll. 1-17, followed here). Here the Chians thank the Aitolians for granting them a vote in the Amphiktyony.²⁹ It is precisely the reference to the seat granted to the Chians in the Amphiktyony that makes it possible to date the inscription to the mid-third century BCE

- [ἔδο]ξεν τῇ [βουλῇ καὶ τῷ δήμ]ωι· πολεμάρχω[ν ἐπιμήνιος ... 8-10...
 ... Φιλίστου κα[ὶ] ἐξεταστῶ]ν ἐπιμήνιος Αἰαντίδης[ς ...c.8... εἶπαν]·
 [ἐ]πειδὴ τὸ κοινὸν [τῶν Αἰτωλῶ]ν διὰ τε τὴν οἰκειότητα κα[ὶ] φίλιαν τὴν
 ὑπάρχουσιν διὰ προγ[όνων τῶ]ι δήμωι πρὸς Αἰτωλοὺς, πρότερον μὲν πο]-
 5 λιτείαν ἡμῖν ἐψηφίσατο[ο καὶ] ἀπηγόρευσε πᾶσιν μὴ ἄγειν τὰ τῶ[ν Χίων]
 μηδαμόθεν ὀρμωμένοι[ς, εἰ] δὲ μή, ὑποδίκους εἶναι ἐν τοῖς συνέ[δροις]
 ὥς τὰ κοινὰ βλάπτοντας τ[ὰ] τῶν Αἰτωλῶν, ἐφ' οἷς ὁ δῆμος ἀποδεξ[άμενος]
 οἰκείως τὰν εὐνοίαν αὐτῶ[ν] ἐψηφίσατο πολίτας τε εἶναι τοὺς Αἰτ[ωλοὺς]
 καὶ μετέχειν πάντων ὧ[ν] καὶ Χῖοι μετέχουσιν, ἔγνω δὲ καὶ ἔ[φοδον]
 10 αὐτοῖς ὑπάρχειν πρώτοι[ς] ἐπὶ τε τὴν βουλὴν καὶ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν[ν, καὶ]
 παρακαλεῖσθαι αὐτοὺς εἰ[ς] προεδρίαν ἐμ πᾶσι τοῖς ἀγῶσιν οἷς ἂ[ν ἡ πόλις]
 [π]οιῇ, καὶ νῦν δὲ οἱ θεωροὶ καὶ οἱ πρέσβεις παραγενόμενοι ἀνήν[γειλ]-
 [αν] τῷ δήμωι τὴν τε ἄλλην εὐνοίαν ἣν εἶχε τὸ κοινὸν τῶν Αἰτωλῶν [πρὸς τῇ]-
 ν πόλιν, πᾶσαν προθυμίαν ἐνδεικνύμενον εἰς τὸ συντελεῖσθαι [ῥᾶ]
 15 οἱ πρέ[σ]βεις ἡξίωσαν, καὶ [δ]ιότι δεδώκασιν τῷ δήμωι ψῆφον ἱεροναμ[ονικήν]
 εἰς το[ύς] Ἀμφικτύονας, [ἀ]κόλουθα διαπραττόμενοι τοῖς προϋπάρχουσιν αὐτ[ο]-
 [οῖς οἰκ[εῖ]οις καὶ φιλανθρώποις πρὸς τὴν πόλιν·

It was decreed by the *boulē* and the demos; the *epimēnios* of the *polemarchoi* [Name missing] son of Philistos and the *epimēnios* of the *exetastai* Aiantides (...) put forward the motion: since the league of the Aitolians, because of the familiarity and friendship of the *dēmos* toward the Aitolians from the time of the ancestors, first voted (to grant) us citizenship and prohibited attacking the properties of the Chians to everybody, no matter where they sailed from, otherwise they would have been indicted and brought in front of the *synedrion* as if they had damaged Aitolian property, for these reasons the *dēmos*, after accepting their benevolence, decreed that the Aitolians shall be (our) citizens and partake in anything in which the Chians do. It was also decided to grant them priority access to the *boulē* and the *ekklesia* and to give them proedria in all festivals the *polis* celebrates. Now the returning *theōroi* and ambassadors report to the *dēmos* another (proof of) benevolence that the *koinon* had toward the city by revealing great zeal in taking to

completion all the things that the ambassadors requested, and because they have granted the *demos* a hieromnamic vote in the Amphyctyony, thereby acting according to the preexisting familiarity and benevolence toward the polis (...) (transl. by Saba 2020)

Particularly relevant here is that this decree attests the concession of *isopoliteia* or something similar on the part of the Aitolians (ll. 4-5), see esp. ll. 8-9: “since the league of the Aitolians first voted (to grant) the Chians citizenship, the Chians vote to grant the Aitolians citizenship”, *πολίτας τε εἶναι τοὺς Αἰτωλοὺς* καὶ μετέχειν πάντων ὧ[v] καὶ Χῖοι μετέχουσιν.³⁰

As Robert M. Errington pointed out, by the mid-third BCE Chios had already been an ally of the Aitolians for some time (ll. 3-4: *διὰ τε τὴν οἰκειότητα καὶ φιλίαν τὴν ὑπάρχουσαν διὰ προγόνων τῶι δήμῳ πρὸς Αἰτωλοὺς*).³¹ Chios’ strategic location and its harbor put the Chians in the position to deal as equals with the Aitolians. We cannot rule out that the *koinon* also supported private initiatives, as Scholten points out. The point, however, is that here, in our specific case, the *koinon* takes a leading role, as expressly stated at lines 3 and 13. Lines 5-6 also secure the Chians from attacks. The solution, then, was a win-win: granting security to the Chians, and to the Aitolians control of a strategic hub. As in the case of the Phokian *koinon* and the Tenians, here too the concession of some kind of citizenship works to strengthen an alliance with the ultimate consequence of shifting and dematerializing the external borders of the *koinon*; granting federal citizenship may become a tool used by federal states to control specific zones in (or overlooking) the Aegean Sea.³² The case of (V)axos seems to further confirm this dynamic.

6. Aitolians and (V)axians

A small fragment of a stele found in a private house at (V)axos, close to Mount Ida, Crete, bears an inscription (*IG IX 1² 1,193 = SV III 585*) referring to a *syngeneia* and an *isopoliteia* which had been established between the Aitolian League and the Kretan city of (V)axos. The text dates to the end of the third or beginning of the second century BCE:

[- - - - -]
 .συγγεν[ει- - -]

30 Flacelière 1937, 228-33; Scholten 2000, 110-14, who maintains that here full citizenship is given (vs. Saba 2020, 189).

31 Errington 2006, esp. 142-47.

32 On federalism as a tool to control the Aegean Sea and stabilise contact zones with reference to the Nesiotic League, see Gallo 2009, 337-38 and Buraselis 2015, 363; discussion in Biagetti forthcoming.

- .ταδε συ . [- - -]
 .ται Αιτωλ[- - - Αιτ-]
 ωλίαν ἴσοπ[ολιτ- - -]
 5 .τι κοινα δ[- - -]
 ροις τοῖς θεο[- - -]
 βοαθεῖν των[- - -]
 κατὰ δύναμ[ιν - - -]
 χόντων δὲ ο [- - -]
 10 τὰ ὀψώνια τετ[- - -]
 τας τὰ ὀψώνια [- - -]
 ΝΟ[. c. 6 .]ΟΑ[- - -]
 [- - - - - - -]

The connection between (V)axos and the Aitolians is attested in other sources too.³³ Two inscriptions deserve particular attention, *Syll.*³ 622A and B. Usually dated to the last quarter of the third century on a paleographical basis, they belong to the so-called dossier of Epikles. The (V)axians dispatch a letter to the Aitolians advocating for Epikles, the son of a (V)axian who came to Cyprus as a mercenary³⁴. Following the death of his (V)axian father, Epikles had been sold and brought to Amphissa, where he eventually succeeded in purchasing his freedom. Epikles and his children, then, while living in Amphissa, were still citizen of (V)axos, and their protection had to be guaranteed. The last lines of *Syll.*³ 622B are revealing in this regard:

So you'd do well to make sure that if anyone tries to harm them, they'll be opposed by you collectively as well as individually, and that their federal citizenship (*koinopoliteia*) will be transcribed in writing for all time.

The Aitolians responded with a decree which unfortunately only survives in fragmentary form (622A). In this decree it is established that the letter sent by the *kosmoi* and the city of the (V)axians to the *koinon* of the Aitolians concerning Epikles, a (V)axian residing in Amphissa, be exhibited in Delphi and in

33 However, this connection should not be overestimated. As Sara Saba rightly observes, in the past scholars have tried to see connections where there were none. She points to two key examples, *i.e.* two inscriptions discovered in Aitolia, *IG IX* 1².1, 6, dated to 300-250 BCE, and *IG IX* 1².1, 99, dated post-170 BCE, attesting to two Aitolian officials, a *boularchos* and a *strategos*, whose *ethnika* are, respectively, (*IG IX* 1².1, 6, l. 11) *φαξ(ῆ)ου* and (*IG IX* 1².1, 99, l. 2) *Ῥαξίου*. Many scholars believed that these origins were Cretan (see *e.g.* Guarducci, ad *IC II.v* 18A), but it has been proven that Axos in Ozolian Lokris is what is being referred to (Lerat 1952, I, 18-20; Larsen 1968, 204-5; Funke 1995, 73). Discussion in Saba 2020, no. 45.

34 See Müller 2023b, 179-80.

Thermos by the secretary Philon. A transcription, moreover, had to be granted to Epikles, and it was the legal assembly which should take care of the transcription.³⁵ If Bousquet is right to link these inscriptions to the letter *FD* III 3, 117, we would have further evidence regarding a favorable reply to the (V)axians with regard to the grant of citizenship under discussion here on the part of the Aitolians, as argued by Bousquet (followed by Saba)³⁶, or on the part of Amphissa as suggested by others.³⁷ The text confirms that someone was bestowed *π]ολιτείαν* and ensures they would remain unharmed throughout their visit. It has been suggested that *isopoliteia* (*IG* IX 1².1, 193), *koinopoliteia* (*Syll.*³ 622B) and *politeia* (*FD* III 3, 117) refer to the same type of citizenship from different perspectives (Aitolian, (V)axian, and Amphissaian).³⁸ Be that as it may, here it should be stressed that the recognition of this kind of *politeia* gave Epikles important rights in Aitolia and therefore Amphissa, at that time controlled by the Aitolians.³⁹ The *isopoliteia* agreement provides concrete protection for individual citizens while also fostering diplomatic relations between the communities to which they belonged.⁴⁰ What's more, through the grant of "federal" citizenship the Aitolians seem, once again, to be pushing their external borders well into the Aegean Sea.

7. Aitolians and Herakleians

The next relevant document is an inscription on a limestone block found near the Treasury of the Athenians at Delphi, where it still is today.⁴¹ This inscription was reedited and published by Funke⁴² after a new collation of the squeeze in Berlin, and it reads as follows:

[στρα]ταγέοντος τῶν [Αἰ]τωλῶν Ἀρκί[σωνος τὸ δεύ]-
[τερ]ον ἔδοξε τοῖς Αἰτωλοῖς· ἐπειδὴ Ἡρ[ακ]λειῶται
[ψά]φισμα καὶ πρ[έ]σβ[εις] ἀποστεύαντες Μ[ε]νεκράτ[η]
[καὶ — — — τ]ὰν [συ]γγένειαν ἀνενεώσαντο καὶ τὰ]

35 See Larsen 1968, 205.

36 Bousquet 1960, 163; Saba 2020, 192.

37 Müller 2023b, 18.

38 Discussion in Müller 2023b, 182 (and Müller, Priol 2025, 229). See Szántó 1892, 81; Velissaropoulos-Karakostas 2011, I, 300; Lasagni 2017, 103-5.

39 Funke 2024, 208 with further bibliography.

40 On the complex relationship between individual *isopoliteia* concessions, political community concessions, and the protection of individuals, see Müller 2023b, 173-74.

41 Inv. no. 56 = 1078. *Ed. pr.* Pomtow, *Klio* 18, 1923, no. 220 [*SEG* 2.257]; *IG* IX 1². 1, 173; *FD* III 3.144.

42 2000, 506-9.

- 5 [ὕπαρ]χον[τ]α πα[ρ]ὰ τὰς πόλιος αὐτῶν φιλόφθωπα ποτὶ τοῖς
 [Αἰτωλοὺς ἐπαύξη]σαν· δεδόχθαι τοῖς Αἰτωλοῖς· πολί-
 [τας] εἶμεν τοὺς Ἡρα[κ]λειώτας τῶν Αἰτωλῶν, ἐπεὶ τυγχάνον-
 [τι εὖ]γους τῷ [κ]οινῷ[ι, κ]αί, εἴ τις ἀποστέλληται πρεσβεία
 [π]οτὶ [β]ασιλ[έ]α [Π]τολ[ε]μαίων, διαλέγεσθαι ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν κατὰ
 10 [τ]ὰς δοθ[ε]ν[τας ἐν]τ[ολ]ὰς παρὰ τὰς πόλιος τῶν Ἡρακλειωτῶν,
 [ὅ]πως βουλ[ή]σεται [αι πολυ]ώρησαι, περὶ ὧν οἴονται δεῖν οἱ Ἡρακλει-
 ὦται [τὸν βασιλ[έ]α] ἑαυτῶν πολυωρεῖν ὡς ὄντων ἀποίκων
 [τῷ]ν Αἰτωλῶν, [κα]ὶ [τα]ῦτα ποιῶν εὐχαριστήσῃ τοῖς Αἰτω-
 λοῖς· ἀναγ[ρά]ψαι δὲ κ[α]ὶ τὸ ψάφισμα ἐν Δελφοῖς ἐν τῷ
 15 ἱερῷ τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος

When Arkison was *strategos* of the Aitolians for the [second time], it was decreed by the Aitolians: since the Herakleians, after sending a decree and the ambassadors Menekrates and ... reminded of the kinship (συ]γγένειαν) and increased the existing benefactions to the Aitolians on the part of their city (τὰ) [ὕπαρ]χον[τ]α πα[ρ]ὰ τὰς πόλιος αὐτῶν φιλόφθωπα ποτὶ τοῖς [Αἰτωλοὺς]; be it enacted by the Aitolians that the Herakleians are to be citizens of the Aitolians, δεδόχθαι τοῖς Αἰτωλοῖς· πολί[τας] εἶμεν τοὺς Ἡρα[κ]λειώτας τῶν Αἰτωλῶν, since they happen to be benevolent to the *koinon* and, if an embassy is sent to king Ptolemaios, the embassy should tell about those things according to the instructions given by the city of the Herakleians, so that he is willing to take care of those issues about which the Herakleians think he should care, because they are a colony of the Aitolians (ὡς ὄντων ἀποίκων [τῷ]ν Αἰτωλῶν). Acting thus, he shall please the Aitolians. The decree shall be engraved in Delphi in the sanctuary of Apollo. (transl. by Saba 2020)

Which Herakleia is referred to here? As has been remarked, a carving discovered in Herakleia at Mt. Latmos attests that this city dispatched a delegation to Zeuxis. It also refers to a man called Menekrates who took part in it. This evidence would strengthen the identification of the Herakleia in the inscription from Delphi with the Herakleia located at Mt. Latmos.⁴³ Additionally, this association would help in defining the date of the Delphic inscription, since the document from Herakleia at Mt. Latmos is dated to the 190s BCE.

The decree mentions an embassy dispatched by the Herakleians to the Aitolians to reaffirm *syngeneia* and other unnamed “benefactions”. The Aitolians responded to this delegation with the one-sided concession of a certain type of citizenship to the Herakleians.⁴⁴ Saba rightly observes that “in this document the *koinon* of the Aitolians does not use potential citizenship to connect itself to a distant city. Rather it is a diplomatic response to advance an articulated

43 Robert 1978, 478; Funke 2000, 506-9.

44 Saba 2020, 185-86 (quotation from 186).

diplomatic intervention and presence in the area”. In responding to a request, the Aitolians who take charge of it on behalf of the *koínon* end up controlling not just a city, but an entire area. They resort to granting a kind of undefined citizenship to facilitate this control and to project themselves beyond the continental borders.

8. Aitolians, Keians and Naupaktians

The last case we will consider is maybe the most challenging one. In an inscription concerning Naupaktians, Aitolians and Keans, recovered in fragmentary form at Karthaia, on Keos (*IG* XII 5.532 + *IG* XII 5, Add. p. 321; [*StV* III 508, III]), we can read ἐψηφισμένοι εἰσὶν Ναυπάκτιοι/ πολιτείαν εἶναι Κείοις καὶ γῆς καὶ οἰκίας ἔγκτησιν and δεδόχθαι Κείων τῇ βουλῇ καὶ τῷ δήμῳ εἶναι Αἰτωλοῖς πολιτείαν ἐν Κέῳ καὶ γῆς καὶ οἰκίας ἔγκτησιν. Here is the full extant text:

- Ἡρακλείδης εἶπεν· ἔδοξεν τῇ βουλῇ καὶ τῷ δήμῳ· ἐπειδὴ ἀναγγέλλουσιν οἱ πρέ-
σβεις οἱ ἀποσταλέντες εἰς Ναύπακτον καὶ πρὸς τοὺς συνέδρους τῶν Αἰτωλῶν
πᾶσαν εὖνοιαν καὶ φιλοτιμίαν ἐνδεδεῖσθαι Ναυπακτίους καὶ τοὺς συνέδρους
4 τοὺς Αἰτωλῶν πρὸς τὰς πόλεις τὰς Κείων, καὶ ἐψηφισμένοι εἰσὶν Ναυπάκτιοι
πολιτείαν εἶναι Κείοις καὶ γῆς καὶ οἰκίας ἔγκτησιν, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων μετέχει Κεί-
ους ὥνπερ καὶ Ναυπάκτιοι μετέχουσιν, δεδόχθαι Κείων τῇ βουλῇ καὶ τῷ δήμῳ
εἶναι Αἰτωλοῖς πολιτείαν ἐν Κέῳ καὶ γῆς καὶ οἰκίας ἔγκτησιν, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων
8 μετέχειν αὐτοὺς πάντων ὧν περ καὶ Κεῖοι μετέχουσιν ... δειν-
οις τοὺς [ἄρ]χοντα[ς τοὺς] ἐπι. - - - - προ - - - -
Αἰτω - - -
εἰς Κέῳ - - (text by Schmitt, *StV* III 508, III)

Herakleides put forward the motion: it was decided by the *boulē* and the *demos*. Since the ambassadors who have been sent to Naupaktos and the *synedrion* of the Aitolians report that the Naupaktians and the *synedrioi* of the Aitolians have shown all their benevolence and respect for the cities of the Keans, and the Naupaktians have voted citizenship and right to own land and house for Keans, and that the Keans shall partake in anything else in which the Naupaktians do, it has been decreed by the *boulē* and the *demos* of the Keans that the Aitolians shall have citizenship in Keos and right to own land and house, and that they shall partake in anything else in which the Keans do (...) (transl. by Saba 2020)

The activity of the Aitolian *stratēgos* mentioned in the document can be dated to 222/3 BCE. The inscription contains the Kean concession of some kind of citizenship to Naupaktos and Aitolia, along with *epigamia* and *enktesis*, in reciproca- tion for the grant of citizenship that Naupaktos had awarded to Keos. Two more texts contain the responses to Keos: *StV* III 508, II, the Naupaktian response (*IG*

XII 5, 527), and *StV* III 508, I (= *IG* XII 5, 526 (+ Add. p. 319), the Aitolian one, to which the Keans' response must be added (*IG* XII 5, 539). In short, the city of Naupaktos grants citizenship to Keos, and Keos responds by granting citizenship to the *koinon* of the Aitolians, to which Naupaktos belongs.⁴⁵

So far, the scholarly debate has focused on whether the granting of citizenship to the Keians imply both local (Naupaktian) and federal citizenship, or only "potential" local citizenship. Most of the scholars have chosen the first option, pointing out that the procedure attested in this decree (*StV* III 508, III) shows that the *poleis* members of a *koinon* could not make independent decisions about citizenship grants (of any kind, I dare to suggest) and that such grants had to be ratified by the federal organs.⁴⁶ Saba notes that ὥς Αἰτω/λῶν ὄντων τῶν Κείων (*StV* III 508 I, l. 4), usually read by some as a technical-legal formula attributing to the Keans the legal status of Aitolians, which, it has been argued, they would have gained automatically through Naupaktos's grant, follows a line in which the Keans are framed as foreigners, ll. 2-3.⁴⁷ For this reason, she follows Schmitt and maintains that here it is *isopoliteia* to be at stake.⁴⁸ Christel Müller and Émeline Priol stress another crucial point: "There is a certain asymmetry here and one must assume that the Naupaktians had to have their decree validated by the *koinon*, since the operation resulted in all Keians becoming Aetolian citizens".⁴⁹ However, we can imagine that this asymmetry was not fully perceived as such, not only because Naupaktos was considered the mother city of Keos, but also because Naupaktos is a Lokrian town with a notoriously hybrid identity. Enlarged over the centuries by a pan-Lokrian colonial reinforcement first and later by a Messenian settlement promoted by the Athenians, Naupaktos was part of the Ozolian *koinon*, founded at the latest at the beginning of the fourth BCE. It is the first of the Lokrian cities to be annexed to the Aitolian *koinon*, probably after 338 BCE. At the time of the Karthaia inscription, then, Naupaktos had been Aitolian for about a century. Its favorable geographic position on the coast of Lokris, facing the Peloponnese, made it a strategically important centre. It indeed grew to serve as the harbor from which many naval enterprises of the Aitolians took off even before the annexation, just like Oiantheia, only a few miles further east.⁵⁰ It appears, then, that although the

45 Cf. Szántó 1892, 84-86; Larsen 1968, 203-4; Gauthier 1972, esp. 255-56; Funke 1997, esp. 167, and, more recently, Saba 2020, no. 41; Müller, Priol 2025, 232-33.

46 Larsen 1968, 204; Gauthier 1972, 256; Funke 2015, 103-5; see also Funke 2024, 180. On dual citizenship see the seminal articles by Marta Sordi (1983, 185-93; 1994, esp. 4-5; 1997) and the overview offered by Bearzot 2014, 36-41.

47 *StV* III 508, III, l. 4; see also Müller, Priol 2025, 232: "the granting of the local *politeia*, which includes the federal *politeia*, so to speak, by extension".

48 Schmitt, *ad loc.*

49 Müller, Priol 2025, 233.

50 Freitag 1999, 67-94; Franchi forthcoming.

agreement with Keos required ratification by the *koinon*, Naupaktos' autonomy must have been somewhat greater than that of the other Aitolian cities.

The asymmetry highlighted by Müller and Priol has important implications when considering inter-state (and inter-federal) relations. The Keans benefitted from this agreement: after the Ptolemies' retreat from their Aegean outposts, many Aegean islands either sought external assistance or tried to establish their own defense systems.⁵¹ It is not by chance that at this time the cities of Keos reestablished their island federation.⁵² What is more, through agreements like this one, the Keans protect themselves from future attacks by Aitolian pirates. Interestingly, both Aitolians and Naupaktians had to gain from such an arrangement. As has been noted, around the time when this document was engraved, there were many Aitolians operating in the area, most probably as private citizens:⁵³ to put it with Scholten, these were people with personal financial stakes, which, over time, also benefitted the *koinon*. The formalization of these ties through the recognition of *politeia*, *epigamia* and *enktesis* in the case of Naupaktos challenges the idea of an external border of the *koinon* of the Aitolians even more than in the cases previously examined. It may be worth investigating whether a need was felt to establish a connection stronger than an alliance while remaining at a level which is different from the sympolitical one.

9. Some preliminary conclusions

The cases presented here allow us to put forward a hypothesis, albeit cautiously. In the Hellenistic age, the conviction developed in certain important circles in some Greek *koina* (e.g. the Aitolians; perhaps also the Phokians?) that, in order to be successful in the new political scenarios, they could not cling solely on the old idea of territorial expansion and to inter-state alliances. They sought a middle ground, developing various forms of territorial control, with more or less material and more or less stable borders. On the one hand, therefore, *koina* preserved and indeed optimized and systematised the organization of member cities on the mainland into *telē* or *merē*, which provided a basic framework for taxation, representation and forms of connection between local and federal levels. On the other hand, certain prominent circles creatively reinvented the granting of citizenship as an instrument to establish and consolidate political relationships with political communities more or less distant from the continental territory, and certainly not contiguous to it. It seems reasonable to assume that those who signed those treaties in the name of their *koinon* did not limit themselves to the formation of alliances: they also generally reinforced these

51 See Biagetti forthcoming. More generally, Funke 2008, 266-67.

52 Saba 2020, 180-81.

53 Reger, Risser 1991; Reger 1994.

alliances and enhanced shared beliefs in *syngeneia* bonds by granting a sort of citizenship. This citizenship, probably less potential than is believed, could come with the granting of *enktesis* and epigamy. By resorting to these instruments, *koina* such as that of the Aitolians managed to multiply their external borders: on the one hand, regional borders continued to mark the beginning and end of contiguous territories and to shift as these territories expanded (as it happened in central Greece); on the other hand, more distant, immaterial borders were projected further away, in territories across the Aegean Sea, far removed from the “original” core of the *koinon*, ultimately granting the *koina* a positionality which allowed them to deal with the Hellenistic kings on equal terms.