Chapter 8
Further Key Issues Regarding the Achaean Sympolity

8.1 A Spatial Decision Model Analysis Between Aratus and Antigonus III Doson

In Chaps. 1 through 5, we have observed that many of the decisions of the main political figures who shaped the Achaean Sympolity’s policies and grand strategies, such as alliances, war and peace, were based on a trade-off between an array of possible outcomes. In practical terms, this means that the Achaean policymakers tried to weigh the pros and cons and consequences of each policy before taking their decisions. In many cases, the decisions to be taken by either the federal policymakers or the pan-Achaean Assembly or both were not easy. The more complex the case was, the less predictable the outcome.

Thus, in some cases, the Achaean policymakers took prudent decisions, such as, (i) not to punish the city-states of Dyme, Tretaia and Pherae severely when, during the Social War of 220–217, they decided to retaliate against the Achaean government and not contribute to the federal budget after the federal government failed to protect them from the Aetolians, and (ii) to accept new poleis into the Sympolity by proposing voluntary membership to their political leaders, e.g. the tyrants Lydiades of Megalopolis and Aristomachus of Argos. In retrospect, these choices proved to be astute since, had the Achaeans chosen to incorporate these strong city-states by force, this may have been a very costly procedure, leading to severe losses in financial means, human resources and military equipment. However, in other cases, the Achaean policymakers took unwise (even catastrophic) decisions such as Diaeus and Critolaus declaring war against Rome in 147/146.

In Fig. 8.1, we provide another characteristic case. Under a spatial decision model analysis, it presents the strategic choices open to Aratus and Antigonus III Doson regarding a radical turn in their foreign policy by forming an alliance between the Achaean Sympolity and the Kingdom of Macedon, which had been, until then, a traditional foil to the Sympolity’s grand strategy. Antigonus had understood Aratus’ fear that a strong Sparta, allied with the Aetolian Sympolity, might turn against the
Kingdom of Macedon in the future. Thus, he considered accepting the ‘deal’ that Aratus proposed. This deal can be described in the stylised spatial decision model in Fig. 8.1. We assume a two-dimensional policy space. On the horizontal axis, we measure the degree of Macedonian hegemony over the Achaean Sympolity. On the vertical axis, we draw the degree of independence of the Achaean city-states from Sparta’s hegemonic ambitions. Aratus and Antigonus are assumed to entertain Euclidian preferences over the two dimensions, so that utility increases the closer the actual settlement is to a player’s ideal point. Points C and M, respectively, show those ideal points. Aratus prefers independence for the Sympolity with a low degree of Macedonian domination in compensation for military aid against Sparta. Antigonus, on the other hand, prefers a high degree of Macedonian hegemony over the Achaean Sympolity as compensation for providing that military aid against Sparta.

S = Status quo
C = Ideal point of Aratus
M = Ideal point of Antigonus III ⇒
Range of acceptable new international settlements = [AB]

The status quo before the Battle of Sellasia of 222 is shown by point S in the graph. It represents a low degree of security for the Achaean Sympolity because of Sparta’s military success and dominance, and a low degree of Macedonian hegemony. We draw the indifference curves of C and M that pass through S and form the lens SABS’ defined by the intersection of the indifference curves. Both players are better off with settlements represented by points inside the lens for they yield higher utility than the status quo. The points on segment AB on the straight-line CM represent Pareto improvements for both players. Any point on AB beats the status quo and is acceptable to both players, Aratus is thought as offering Antigonus Doson
a deal represented by a point $P \in [AB]$, although at this level of generality we cannot say which point on the AB will prevail.

As a final comment, based on the findings of 2.3 and 4.3, it can be argued that this deal between Aratus and Antigonus Doson, as analysed above, led to a short-term period of benefit in the Sympolity’s favour (with Sparta’s defeat in 222) but a longer period of benefit for Macedon (her partial dominance over the Sympolity from 222 to 197).

### 8.2 Was the Achaean Sympolity a Federation or a Confederacy? A Constitutional Economics Approach

In our Preface and at various points throughout the text, either directly or indirectly, the issue was addressed as to whether the Achaean Sympolity and the other states with similar institutions of Ancient Greek political history were federations or confederations. For us, and perhaps a large number of our readers who may not be involved in issues of Ancient Greek political history, that issue may not be particularly essential. More interesting is discovering what the Achaean Sympolity can offer us today as possible ideas and policy proposals to improve the democratic state institutions of modern societies. On the other hand, some might demand at least an attempt at assigning a particular integration of the Sympolity into a specific state/constitutional scheme to clarify the criteria whereby the functions of its institutions are described.

However, as we explained in detail in our Preface, this is not at all easy for two main reasons: first, because the information that has survived from ancient sources is not completely clear regarding the institutional framework of the Achaean ‘constitution’ while on some occasions, those sources even contradict one another. Even ancient inscriptions that have been discovered referring to this issue are insufficient. Up to this point, we believe that we have made a substantial effort to synthesise existing information in a coherent and scientifically and academically acceptable manner. Second, as Mackil (2013) has observed, although each of the city-states was very much like the others in terms of political and economic organisation, in certain cases, there did exist significant differences between them. A comparison between the Achaean and Aetolian Sympolities on the one hand and the Boeotian $Koinon$ on the other, for instance, reveals a host of significant differences in the state organisation. Throughout our work, to avoid labelling the case we are dealing with here incorrectly concerning how it functioned, we used the safe ancient term, *sympolity*. We could have used the similar term *Koinon* and did so with regard to Boeotia. Only in cases where a practice of the Sympolity was clearly typologically correlated to the term *federation* did we use that term.

This issue of proper typological interpretation regarding a federalist structure is timeless: even today, the difference between a confederation and a federation is not always clear. For instance, Switzerland, Germany and Austria today are federations,
just as are Russia and India. However, they each differ considerably from one another not only in geographical size but in a host of other issues of political and economic organisation. The USA and Canada are also federations, as is Mexico, Argentina and Brazil on the American continents, Belgium and Bosnia-Herzegovina in Europe, South Africa, Australia, Pakistan and Nigeria etc. Historical confederations include that of the Iroquois in North America, founded around 1142, the Old Swiss Confederation of 1291, the New England Confederation of 1643–1684, the 16 German states of the Confederation of the Rhine formed by Napoleon I in 1806 and lasting until 1813 and the states of the American South whose secession from the USA led to the Civil War of 1861–1865 etc. Some such alliances began as confederations and then evolved into federations, e.g. the Old Swiss Confederation and the USA, which latter, in 1776 was originally a confederation and only became a federation in 1787 with the ratification of the US Constitution.

Table 8.1, based on the views of theorists of federalism among whom are Davis (1978), Elazar (1982, 1987), King (1982) and Burgess (2000), presents the basic differences between a federal and confederate state. The main difference is that in a confederate state, the central authority is not as powerful and the final word in taking decisions rests with the member states; in a federal state, the central authority has the right to enforce decisions on all its members. So, of the two, which was the Achaean Sympolity?

| Type of government          | Confederacy                                                                 | Federation                                                                 |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sovereignty                 | The central government is accountable to the member states who continue to hold significant power | The central government has the strongest power with which the member states must comply |
| Central government          | Not a particularly strong body, appointed by the member states               | A powerful body which takes decisions that the member states must follow    |
| Sovereignty and federal government | A loose alliance of states. The member states strongly affect the decisions of the federal government | Decision-making competence shared between central government and regions and/or member states |
| Responsibilities and powers of the central government | Focus mainly on foreign policy, defence and security, but on other issues, the power of the confederacy’s government to enforce its will is restricted | Has the power to demand member states adopt not only foreign policy, defence and security, but economic and judicial policy as well etc. |

Table 8.1 The basic differences between the federation and confederation models

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| Basic responsibilities–functions (M): Mandatory (O): Optional | Confederacy | Federation |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| National defence (M)                                        | National Defence (M) |
| International cooperation (M)                               | International cooperation (M) |
| International commerce (M)                                 | International commerce (M) |
| Common currency (O)                                         | Common currency (M) |
| Harmonised legislation (O)                                  | Harmonised legislation (O) |
| Taxation at the federal level (O, M)                        | Taxation at the federal level (M) |

*With the rest of the states at the federal level *
To be precise, it must be assumed from the outset that, in the absence of prioritising one argument over another, although it is legitimate, requires very cautious handling. Based on the in-depth analysis of the material concerning the Sympolity in the previous chapters, one can argue that its institutions gave a very satisfactory degree of freedom of action to its member states: each maintained its own army and currency, its federal Assembly, Council, government board and courts. Moreover, each city-state was free to follow its own customs, cults and athletic events. One might assume then that the Sympolity was a confederacy.

Freeman ([1893], 2013, p. 260–261) presents the institutions of the Achaean Sympolity in comparison with those of the USA and, although each city-state was obliged to conform to certain rules (not to undertake unilateral action such as initiating military action or sending embassies to third countries without the approval of the central authority), his view is that the freedom of the city-states to act on their own was not as restricted as it is in the USA. The Sympolity offered its member states a fair amount of leeway. On the other hand, the Achaean Sympolity disposed of federal armed forces, which was the main reason for its establishment in the first place. On certain occasions, some city-states such as Dyme, Pherae and Tritaia or Megalopolis mobilised on their own to defend their territory from an imminent threat but, in principle, the defence of a city-state or a region was undertaken by the federal armed forces.

Major decisions were taken either in the two pan-Achaean assemblies or by the federal government policymakers themselves. These governed matters of foreign policy, defence and security, the adoption of common legislative constitutional initiatives and common weights and measures, the key issue of a common monetary policy, common taxation practices, ensuring a politico-economic/institutional set-up favourable to interstate commercial transactions as well as other common practices, binding on all member city-states. Similarly, the decisions of the federal courts were binding on all member city-states. Moreover, the fact that the Sympolity was divided into three or five regional units which each had its own political, economic and military administrators is suggestive of institutional elements one encounters mostly in an organised federation. Furthermore, Mackil (2013) states that local and regional law did not overlap with federal law. Every judge or magistrate was aware of his responsibilities and to what degree he had the jurisdiction to exercise them so that they did not overlap or conflict with the federal level. The bottom line that emerges from our analysis is that the central government of the Sympolity took decisions vis-à-vis all the member city-states. If, for instance, a region, say, the Syntelia of Patras, disagreed with a decision of the Sympolity, the latter was not obliged to recall its decision.

Before deciding on the correct typological classification of the Achaean Sympolity, we turn to two important historical facts. The first again relates to Aratus’ decision to appeal to the Kingdom of Macedon for military aid. In order not to appear as the mastermind of this radical turn in foreign affairs policy he was proposing, and aware that certain city-states such as Argos and Megalopolis had strong pro-Macedonian elements, behind the scenes, he arranged to make it appear as if the local government policymakers of Megalopolis initiated the appeal for
Macedonian military aid against Sparta (Pol. 2.55.2–4). The apparent inability of the Sympolity to defend Megalopolis allowed the city-state’s leaders to turn to Antigonus, who eventually agreed to support the city militarily. Several questions arise regarding this matter.

Since Megalopolis was a member of the Sympolity, did the city-state’s leaders inform the relevant bodies of the federal government of their intention as they were obligated to do? As mentioned above, Larsen (1968, p. xviii) writes on this point that the Megalopolitans did not act without first obtaining permission from the Sympolity’s leadership. In fact, it was only then that the Megalopolitans sent their embassy to King Antigonus. Larsen believes that their request was thus legitimate. That is because even under federal authority, each city-state did maintain a minimum critical level of autonomy in decision-making. On this issue, Polybius (2.50) writes:

These arguments seemed to Antigonus to have been put by Aratus with equal sincerity and ability: and after listening to them, he eagerly took the first necessary step by writing a letter to the people of Megalopolis with an offer of assistance, on condition that such a measure should receive the consent of the Achaeans. . . He regarded it also as eminently favourable to his policy, that the people of Megalopolis were so eager to use the Achaean league as the channel of communication with Antigonus. . . Accordingly when Megalopolitan envoys appeared in the national council, and showed the royal despatch, and further declared the general friendly disposition of the king, and added an appeal to the congress to secure the king’s alliance without delay; and when also the sense of the meeting was clearly shown to be in favour of taking this course, Aratus rose, and, after setting forth the king’s zeal, and complimenting the meeting upon their readiness to act in the matter . . .

Kralli (2017, p. 225) provides the above passage of Polybius (2.50.6) on this, but she interprets it wrong when she writes that the Megalopolitans had decided to approach Antigonus anyway, without first asking Achaean permission, i.e. effectively breaking away from the Sympolity. By one measure, they would have had a fair excuse for this, given that the Achaeans had not offered them much protection against Cleomenes III. This point is crucial since it puts the degree of federalism of the Achaean state to the test: if the Megalopolitans believed that there would have been no serious consequences in not requesting permission from the Achaeans to conduct diplomacy with the Kingdom of Macedon directly, it could mean that here we are talking about a confederate state. But the fact that the Megalopolitans considered it a prerequisite to apply for the federal authorities’ consent is proof that we are talking here about a practice that is associated only with true federal states.

The second historical incident that provides a further ‘test’ of the nature of federalism of the Achaean Sympolity occurred in 197 after Philopoemen had returned from Crete and King Philip V of Macedon had already been defeated at the Battle of Cynoscephalae. The Sympolity had cut off diplomatic relations with Macedon and had established an alliance with Rome. Argos and some other city-states refused to accept this decision and retained a pro-Macedonian stance, without, however, suffering any censure or penalties by the Sympolity. Some might argue that this demonstrates that the Sympolity was not really a federation but, rather, a confederacy. Had it been the former, they claim why did not the Achaeans censure
Argos? One response to that argument, perhaps a simplistic one, is elemental: the Achaean Sympolity was a democracy! That there should be differences of opinion among the dozens of city-states of which it was comprised, and especially on such a critical issue where one wrong move could have had serious consequences in the future, must be considered as completely normal. The only issue here is the lack of clarity on the part of the central government in dealing with a member city-state when there was a divergence in views.

From our standpoint, as we have elaborated it, in general, up to this point, the problem was not so much the reshuffling of relations between the city-states within the context of the diplomatic relations of the time as the latter adapted according to shifts in the balance of power. It was rather whether or not the means of enforcing the Sympolity’s wishes existed in the first place in cases where a member city-state’s position ran counter to the government’s decisions on critical issues such as foreign policy, or a city-state wished to pursue a semi-independent policy or even to withdraw from the Sympolity outright.

Our view here is the Sympolity’s leaders had foreseen such situations and put in place protocols for dealing with them. Simply put, we argue that the Achaeans were prepared to impose sanctions on Argos. That they did not, in our view, is not an indication that the Sympolity was not a true federation. Given the particularly confusing circumstances in the Peloponnesus at the time, perhaps the Sympolity did not have the means (military or otherwise) to impose its ‘rules of the game’ on a member city-state. Texier (1975, p. 66) provides support to this view, arguing that Argos had acted as she did because she had assumed the role of the undeniable leader of all radical socio-economic tendencies in the Peloponnesus (as elucidated in Chap. 5), as an alternative to the conservatism of the Achaean Sympolity.

Accordingly, Argos’ revolt against the Sympolity and her ability to negotiate alliances with Sparta and Macedon was not an act that the Achaeans would normally have accepted, constituting an act of ‘rebellion’ by the city, an ‘unconstitutional’ derogation that at the time, for unspecified reasons, the Achaeans were not in a position to deal with effectively. Texier’s view indicates that even in 197, 25 years after Sellasia, at a time when many radical socio-economic ideas had been emphatically invalidated, a trace of such sentiments lingered in the citizens of certain city-states. The environment of constant warfare, the looting and pillaging of cities, atrocities against their inhabitants, the constant parade of foreign troops, confusion as to how to manage the situation we speculate would have created an ideological mosaic, an explosive mixture whose manifestation was impossible to predict. All this could not have failed to have been considered by the Sympolity’s leaders before they made any decision to punish a member for apostasy. Table 8.2 provides further support to the ‘federalist’ nature of the Achaean state’s institutions.

By taking into account all the above analyses, we argue that the Achaean Sympolity was a unique state phenomenon that we would characterise as a ‘mixture’ of federation and confederacy. However, it appears to us that the term ‘federation’ is more accurate in interpreting the actions of the Sympolity and the way its political and economic institutions functioned.
As far as we know, this is the first time this view appears in the bibliography. This typological determination of the Achaean and other sympolities of Greek antiquity is, we believe, significant in that it allows researchers examining political and economic institutions to compare politico-economic phenomena of the past with those of today.

### 8.3 The Achaean Sympolity and the US Constitution

From 1776 when the War of Independence began that led to the creation of the American federal state with the Constitution of 1787, the USA exhibited remarkable growth and rise in power and was responsible for a series of events whose outcome defined global developments in the course of history: her Civil War of 1861–1865, her participation in the two World Wars of the twentieth century, her role as defender of the ‘free world’ and her system of a free market economy and political liberalism arrayed against the Soviet threat during the Cold War, exemplified by the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, the creation of a mono-polar world as the sole superpower after the Soviet Union’s collapse, a role currently being challenged by forces now emerging in the twenty-first century.

The USA, however, did not evolve into a superpower only because of a series of historical events and coincidences that created the conditions for her rise. It was as much a consequence of her political and economic system, which, to many political philosophers and institutional economists, remains the object of admiration and study.\(^1\) However, it is not very well-known that the Founding Fathers of the American Nation, John Adams, John Madison, Thomas Jefferson, etc., were deeply influenced by the political texts of the Ancient Greek writers (Plato, Aristotle, Plutarch, Polybius and others) in fashioning the final version of the US Constitution.

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1. For the USA’s political system and its tools for transparency in the form of *checks and balances*, see, among others, the pioneering study by Buchanan and Tullock (1962).

### Table 8.2 A principal set of federal institutional conditions practised in the Achaean state

| Basic federal principles |
|--------------------------|
| Central executive government implementing federal policies |
| Joint activities regarding the implementation of federal public policy between city-states due to regional organisation |
| Common foreign and security policy and common armed forces |
| Double citizenship at both the city-state and the federation level (*Isopoliteia*) |
| Full economic rights throughout all the member city-states |
| A common legal system (local laws and courts did not conflict with federal laws) |
| Federal budget |
| Common currency. The overall federal monetary policy was the outcome of cooperation between the Achaean member states through monetary union |
in 1787. On a general level, the Greek political systems of antiquity had preoccupied the Founding Fathers at length. In their *Letters From a Pennsylvanian Farmer*, John Adams and John Dickinson discussed the political organisation of Sparta. They had studied the Persian Wars, read Plutarch’s biography of Pericles and examined the Delian League and the other Greek alliances. Adams, Hamilton, Dickinson and others had delved into the history and nature of the Athenian Democracy (Richard 2009, p. 31–32, 47, 79–84).

The Founding Fathers such as Hamilton and Madison expressed a particular interest in the federalism of Ancient Greece, focussing on the Achaean Sympolity (Freeman [1893], 2013; Chinard 1940; Gummere 1962; Davis 1978; Millican 1990; Bederman 2008; Richard 2009; Lehmann 2015). Champion (2013, p. 120) argues that the evolution of political theory in the USA, crystallised in the *Federalist Papers* (Nos. 16, 18, 19, 34, 38, 40, 44, 51, 63, 70), led the authors of the constitution to exhaustive discussions on the writings of Polybius. One of those documents of 1787, No. 30, *A Defense of the Constitutions of Government of the United States of America*, records that the future president, John Adams, discussing the extent of Polybius’ influence on the Founding Fathers, stated that he should be declared an ‘honorary’ Father of the American Constitution (Momigliano 1987, p. 77). Thomas Jefferson, fearing that the under-development constitution was granting too much power to the central authority, suggested to Adams and the other committee members that they read about and be inspired by the ancient federations, offering each a copy of Polybius’ *Histories*. In another letter, Dickinson wrote regarding the success of the Achaean Sympolity as an ‘antidote’ to monarchical and aristocratical arrangements:

...The reason is plain. [Since] the energy of the government pervaded all the parts in things relating to the whole, it counteracted for the common welfare and designs hatched by selfishness in separate councils. (Richard 2009, p. 95)

Dickinson continues (*Letter of Fabius*, 58):

How degrading would be the thought to a citizen of United America that the people of these states, with institutions beyond comparison preferable to those of the Achaean League,3 and so vast a superiority in other respects, should not have wisdom and virtue enough to manage their affairs with as much as prudence and affection for one another as these ancients did. (Richard 2009, p. 95)

On the contrary, Madison in his *Federalist Papers* No. 18, No. 19 and No. 20 examined certain celebrated confederations of the past and present and asserted that everyone had failed through a lack of central power. Maddison wrote:

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2 The authors we cite here provide altogether an extensive analysis of the discussions of the Founding Fathers regarding the federal organisation in Ancient Greece. The purpose of our analysis to this point is not to retrieve all this evidence. This goes beyond the scope of our analysis. Thus, here we chose to retrieve some characteristic aspects of the research that are related to this discussion.

3 The Achaean Sympolity.
It appears that the cities had all the same laws and customs, the same weights and measures, and the same money. But how far this effect proceeded from the authority of the Federal Council, is left in uncertainty. It is said only, that the cities were in a manner compelled to receive the same laws and usages. When Lacedaemon was brought into the league by Philopoemen, it was attended with an abolition of the institutions and laws of Lycurgus, and an adoption of those of the Achaeans. The Amphictyonic confederacies of which she had been a member, left her in the full exercise of her government and her legislation. This circumstance alone proves a very material difference in the genius of the two systems...[T] here was infinitely more of moderation and justice in the administration of its government, and less of violence and sedition in the people, than were to be found in any of the cities exercising singly all the prerogatives of sovereignty. The Abbe Mably, in his observations on Greece, says that the popular government, which was so tempestuous elsewhere, caused no disorders in the members of the Achaean republic, because it was there tempered by the general authority and laws of the confederacy.4

James Monroe, another Founding Father on the floor of the *Virginia Ratifying Convention* observed that:

The Achaean League had more analogy to ours... They [the city-states] were all democratic and firmly united. What was the effect? The most perfect harmony and friendship subsisted between them and they were very active in guarding their liberties...this league was founded on democratical principles, and, from the wisdom of its structure, continued a far greater length of time than any other. Its members, like our states, by their confederation, retained their individual sovereignty, and enjoyed a perfect equality. (Bederman 2008: p. 126)

In the end, the Founding Fathers rejected direct democracy, believing it would lead to the supremacy of the more populous lower social classes or chaotic disarray. Similar arguments were later used by conservative supporters of authoritarianism against even representative democracy. Preferring to follow the Roman model, the Founding Fathers chose to call their new state a ‘republic’ rather than ‘democracy’ with reference to the Roman state of the Hellenistic period. Moreover, Richard (2009, p. 96) argues that this is also related to the fact that in the end, the small decentralised cluster of democracies of mainland Greece failed to repel the centralised powers of the Kingdoms of Macedon and Rome. It was for this reason that the Fathers finally decided that their new state should be characterised by a certain degree of centralised power. The fact that later democracies after the USA also did not adopt institutions such as direct democracy or national congresses is why Freeman ([1893], 2013, p. 253), comparing the USA with the Achaean Sympolity, argued that the latter was the most perfected development of the federal principle which the world has ever seen.

With the above analysis in mind, we believe that the political systems and economic organisation of Greek antiquity continue to be of interest, as much from a historical perspective and the knowledge one may distil from delving into the relevant original sources, as is the possibility that by studying them, we may glean new ideas and policy proposals for the societies of today.

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4He compared the Achaean Sympolity with the amphictyonies organisation.
The Achaean Sympolity and the European Union: An Interactive Comparison

The analysis that follows is a comparison of the political and economic institutions of the Achaean Sympolity and those of the European Union through a series of very specific and rigorous intertemporal criteria that have characterised federal states over time. We believe that if the EU finally proceeds in the future with more steps towards political integration, it is likely to take the form of a federation. As stated in our Preface, this, after all, was the intention of the Fathers of Europe, Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman, Konrad Adenauer, Alcide de Gasperi, Walter Hallstein, Paul-Henri Spaak, Altiero Spinelli and others. Such a comparison, aside from the element of originality, rests on the notion that conclusions drawn from past successful state models might offer solutions and proposals on critical issues related to policy management for modern governments, in general, but, more specifically, mainly for the EU’s integration policy on which we focus here.

We consider it essential for a comparison of the Achaean Sympolity with the EU to cover several very specific federal criteria relating to the institutional organisation: (a) the number of members participating in each of the two entities, (b) the existence of institutional bodies for political decision-making (e.g. a federal legislative body), (c) the Sympolity’s administrative bodies (e.g. strategoi, etc.), (d) the nature of common foreign and security policies, (e) the existence or not of a common currency, (f) the financing of the federal budget, e.g. for extraordinary expenses in wartime, or related to the contributions and financial burdens undertaken by the member city-states etc., (g) with the existence or not of a federal judiciary, and (h) with the level of isopoliteia, or the possibility of a citizen from elsewhere within a federation retaining his political rights throughout it. These criteria, proposed by McInerney (2013) and in some of our own academic publications, characterise the federal states over time. Accordingly, we believe we avoid the trap of historical anachronism if we compare an ancient study with a modern one, within the context of a very rigorous framework of specific intertemporal criteria. Table 8.3 examines the two cases.

Beginning with the first criterion regarding the number of members, on a purely ‘technical level’, comparing the two is rather pointless as the Sympolity at one time had somewhere of 103 members, each with a relatively small population numbering in the thousands, or, at most, tens of thousands, while the post-Brexit EU comprises 27 members. The first column assumes Brussels as the EU’s ‘capital’. In a future, federalist structure, the EU would have to have a true capital, and we suggest that Brussels holds the most promise, given that most of the EU’s institutional bodies and related services are currently clustered there. Coupled with that, Brussels is

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5(Kyriazis and Economou 2015; Economou and Kyriazis 2015a, b, c, 2016a, b, c, 2018, 2019a, b; Economou et al. 2015).

6If we exclude the big city-states such as Argos, Corinth, Megalopolis, Sicyon etc. These possibly were habited by several tens of thousands of people.
Table 8.3 Comparative analysis of the Achaean Sympolity’s institutional structure relative to that of the EU

| State                        | Main political institutions                                                                 | Isopoliteia regime | Common foreign and security policy | Federal coinage usage | Federal budget | Federal courts |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Achaean federation (Sympolity) | Local city-state citizen assemblies  
Federal citizen assemblies (Ecclesial/Synodos and Synkletos)  
Strategos (Head of the state)  
Grammateus and 10 Damiourgoi/Synarchontes  
Hypostrategos, nauarchos and ipparchos | ▼                  | ▼                                  | ▼                     | ▼              | ▼ (Federal courts) |
| Capital Aegion 107 member city-states | European Parliament  
Council of the European Union  
European Commission  
European Court of Auditors | –                  | Not effective                      | ▼ (very low, only 1% of the EU GDP as a total) | ▼              | Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) (in Luxembourg)  
European Court of Human Rights (in Strasbourg) |

Explanation: ▼: Institution in force
Source: Our own processing, based on the data in the above analysis
considered a ‘neutral’ centre, without associations that Belgium herself might be inclined to manipulate. The Greek sympolities had first addressed this issue. The Aetolians, for instance, had their capital in Thermion, in the very centre of the sympolity and thus considered neutral by all members (Economou et al. 2015). Consequently, decisions taken there were trusted to be fair and even-handed (as much as possible) vis-à-vis all the member city-states. We addressed this issue in 1.1 and at other points of the book. Modern cases of establishing a more ‘neutral’ federal capital include Washington in the USA and Brazilia in Brazil which replaced São Paolof and became the capital of the country in 1960.

The issue of the dynamic integration of new members has been addressed at various points in our analysis. In our view, the number of members is a significant indicator of the accessibility and success of a federation, but it cannot be considered the only factor. Large size is not necessarily proof of the possible success of a federal state. For example, both in antiquity and in modern times, there did exist successful small democratic federations in terms of political and economic organisation such as the states of Magnetes in eastern Thessaly, Arcadia, the Acmarians, the Aegean Islands, the Chalcidians, the Locrians etc., alongside the large sympolities of Achaea, Aetolia and the Koinon of Boeotia, just as today there are several small successful federations such as Switzerland, Austria, Belgium and Uruguay which are considered more prosperous than other much larger federations such as Russia, India and Pakistan.

However, the main issue is to determine the ‘optimal size’ for a federation at which the addition of a new member will not reduce the overall prosperity and the smooth functioning of the state. The reasoning we develop here resembles somewhat the concept of Marginal Product in Microeconomic Theory where, from a certain point on, the addition of new workers does not increase but, rather, reduces the marginal product of a factory, resulting in diminishing returns. In this light, is there, let us say, an ‘optimal point’ whereby incorporating new members is no longer a viable proposition for a federal state? In the case of the Achaean Sympolity, from the time the inclusion of new members was no longer consensual but an imposition, it became a detriment. Although on the surface the incorporation of the large territories of Elis, Messenia and Laconia/Sparta strengthened the Sympolity, based on the criteria of the power of a state, as was analysed in the Eqs. 1–11 in 4.2, that expansion ironically sped the demise of the Sympolity as it led to the dynamic, violent intervention of Rome in the Peloponnesus, resulting in the Sympolity’s dissolution.

What can the historical progression of the Sympolity teach today’s EU? One initial response is that the more the EU expands by enlisting new members, the more it risks its cohesion unravelling. During the first decade of the twenty-first century, after the dramatic expansion of the EU to the east in 2004 with the integration of ten new members, an impressive, bold and, we imagine, an unlikely to be repeated

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7 This is an interesting issue which we are determined to explore further, analysing a broad spectrum of federations from antiquity to the present.
number of simultaneous new memberships, there seemed to be an urge to keep adding to the roster. In 2007, Romania and Bulgaria joined, and in 2013, Croatia. Despite the British ‘Brexit’ from 2016 on, the plan even foresees that by 2025, the western Balkan nations of Albania, Northern Macedonia, Montenegro and possibly Serbia will have joined as well.\(^8\) What characterises membership in European Union (former European Economic Community) is that it is voluntary, just as membership in the Achaean Sympolity was until 191. For instance, in 1973, Ireland’s membership was supported by an overwhelming majority of 83.1%, Denmark’s, by a still very respectable 63.3%, while the Norwegians rejected membership by a majority of 53.3%. Moreover, referenda to approve membership were held in all ten candidate countries during the 2004 enlargement.\(^9\)

In earlier years, pent-up enthusiasm for enlargement spoke of Turkey joining, even Ukraine and perhaps Georgia. Are these last even thinkable now as we enter a new decade? The neo-Ottomanist aggression towards her neighbours backed by the distorted way in which they are handling the recent refugee problem and the issue of human rights (among others) of T. Erdogan’s Turkey has dimmed that prospect drastically. In continuing to remain a candidate for membership in the EU, Turkey’s candidacy undermines its design, especially given that Turkish values seem to be diverging dangerously from those of Europe. As far as Ukraine is concerned, this is a very complicated case, especially after the Crimean crisis and the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation in 2014 and the dynamic re-emergence of Russia in the region. As far as the other European countries that could become members are concerned, aside from Norway, mentioned above, Switzerland, Iceland and Lichtenstein have all elected not to join. The United Kingdom voted to exit the Union on 23 June 2016, a long process that took almost 4 years to complete (21 January 2020).

What would happen if the EU attempted to ‘force’ the situation and somehow integrate, say, Turkey and Ukraine, into its fold? Very likely, doing so would put its cohesion at risk given Turkey’s current disdain for much of Europe’s value system or norms of behaviour; moreover, Turkey’s population of 83.2 million (in 2019) would result in a dramatic shift in the balance of power within the institutional organs of the EU, at all levels. Even further, because of the Treaty of Schengen, Turkey could ‘flood’ Europe with illegal immigrants or Turks where today more than 3 million live as German citizens, obviously influencing the politics of their adopted country. A sudden influx of new immigrants could alter the German and the rest of the EU member states’ social landscape considerably. As far as Ukraine is concerned, membership in either NATO or the EU would put relations between Russia and the western alliances, already on edge, at grave risk. The EU’s cohesion is already being tested further by other factors besides Brexit, such as immigration, with the Visegrád Group countries (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) and the rest of the EU member states refusing to accept any more immigrants. There are

\(^8\)On this, see Grieveson et al. (2018) among others.

\(^9\)Regarding the referenda related to the EU and its direct democracy context, see: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Referendums_related_to_the_European_Union](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Referendums_related_to_the_European_Union), which is highly informative.
no set rules for establishing the optimum level of membership in a federation. The EU’s could study the example of the Achaean Sympolity as we have explored it here to avoid actions of expansion policies that may at first glance seem promising, however, along the way, turn out to be dangerously deceptive.

As for the second column, referring to the political institutions of the Sympolity, based on our analysis so far, one can claim that the Sympolity had managed to achieve an effective combination of direct and indirect democracy, both in terms of federal organisation, as well as in terms of regional administration. Concerning the frequency of the citizens’ direct and democratic expression of their will, in the Greek federations, the federal Assembly was obligatory and institutionalised—at least twice annually in the Achaean and Aetolian Sympolities—something which is not so for the EU, where, in the sense presented here, there are no established ‘union-wide’ referenda on an annual basis. In the USA, such annual referenda exist at the state/regional-level only and refer to issues exclusive to that state (e.g. the Propositions of California, South Dakota, Texas etc.). One such famous case was California’s Proposition 13 on taxation.10

Despite the influence exercised by wealthy oligarchic circles on decision-making, what was even more significant was that in the consciousness of the Sympolity’s citizens, by one way or the other, and to one extent or the other, a conviction had been imbedded that they were masters of themselves and their fate. When average citizens see that their actions have an impact on forming political developments, they become more responsible, better as people and more effective as members of society, as argued by Manville and Ober (2003, p. 65–66) in their A Company of Citizens. The development of a federal consciousness made the Achaeans want what B. Weingast (1997) characterised as a desire to ‘defend the system’, contributing vastly to ensuring long life and prosperity in a federation.

In today’s EU, the European Commission tables legislation for approval by the European Council and the European Parliament. Before the Commission proposes any citizens’ initiatives, it first evaluates the economic, social and environmental impacts that they might have. It advises interested parties such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs), local authorities and representatives of industry and the citizenry, etc. In the event the European Council and the European Parliament cannot agree on amendments, the European Commission’s decision can be blocked. That the Parliament acts as a checks and balances mechanism corroborates transparency and a democratic decision-making philosophy.11 However, the principal initiator of legislation, as well as the administrating governing machine, is the Commission,

10 In June 1978, California’s citizens voted for the first time on a taxation issue, Proposition 13 (People’s Initiative to Limit Property Taxation). The proposition concerned a reduction (or non-increase) of taxation matched by a corresponding reduction of the provision of public goods. On 6 June 1978, the proposition was approved by California voters with an almost two-thirds’ majority. This led to a reduction in property wealth (housing, businesses and farms etc.) of about 57%. For a more detailed analysis of Proposition 13, see Economou, Kyriazis and Metaxas (2017) and the references we provide therein.

11 http://europa.eu/eu-law/decision-making/procedures/index_en.htm
whose members, including its president, are appointed and not elected, as is the president of the European Council as well. That suggests, to some extent, democratic deficit because the European Parliament has only limited powers. More and more, the citizens of Europe are beginning to believe that decisions affecting their lives are taken not by themselves but by an elite and ‘distant bureaucracy in Brussels’.

Concerning the third column, the issue of isopoliteia, it was devised in the Greek federations and features in modern ones as well, such as the USA and India. However, it does not feature in the EU. For example, if a Swedish citizen of the EU were to move to Italy and choose to remain there indefinitely, he does not automatically acquire the right to vote in the next Italian national elections. As we have already stated, a citizen of ancient Sicyon that moved to Corinth, both city-states being members of the Achaean Sympolity, could vote in his newly adopted city-state. Of course, European citizens who remain in another member country for an extended period do have the right to participate in local elections, but voting in national elections is of substantially more significant political importance.

Regarding the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), in our preceding analysis, we argued that the main reason for the Ancient Greeks to form federations was for common defence against external enemies. That is something they shared with all the federations that followed, including the old Swiss (1300–1798), the United Provinces (1581–1795) and the USA. The members of Greek federal states had grasped that the best insurance for an effective level of security was provided by banding together in some form of federation. The Achaean Sympolity, because of its effective CFSP, succeeded not only in warding off the expansionary ambitions of Macedon in southern Greece, the powerful Sparta of Cleomenes III, the Aetolian Sympolity for a time, as well as secessionist tendencies from within, but also managed to unite all of the Peloponnesus under its leadership. Perhaps if the Achaean federations had succeeded in doing that before 191, it might have been able to maintain its independence better and avoid its dissolution by Rome in 146.

There is no doubt then that effective CFSP is a prerequisite for a successful federation; until today, however, and despite the efforts of important intergovernmental conferences such as Maastricht in 1992, Amsterdam in 1997 and Lisbon in 2007, where steps were taken in furthering political integration, several more significant steps are needed for the EU to achieve an effective CFSP. There are different national interests, especially among the EU’s more powerful members, that create distortions along that path. The divergence between member states regarding a series of occasions such as the two Gulf Wars (1991, 2003), the war in Bosnia in 1995 and Serbia in 1999, as well as, more recently, events in Ukraine (2013–2014), in Syria (2011–) and in Libya (2014–) reveals wide rifts on many issues, objectively unavoidable, given it is not always easy for so many nations to agree on such critical issues as CFSP.

In any event, when the European Economic Community was first formed in 1957, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) already existed as a defence alliance

12See Economou and Kyriazis (2019a, b).
against the looming threat of the Soviet Union. This means that the defence of post-
WWII Europe was very much based on the US forces in Europe backed by their
hegemonic role in world politics (Keohane 1984). According to Ikenberry (1989)
and Lundestad (2003), the US hegemony in Europe was largely ‘an empire by
invitation’ whose main purpose was to use its dominant position to guarantee an
orderly and peaceful international system, based on economic cooperation and
international trade exchanges, a situation similar to what Great Britain did in the
nineteenth century. Thus, Europeans’ efforts to create an efficient pan-European
defence organisation, such as the so-called European Defense Community (EDC) in
1952 or the Western European Union (WEU) in 1954 scaled down due to the US
key presence in Europe through NATO.

The road to a ‘United States of Europe’ of the twenty-first century, if it is ever
achieved, is one of history’s grandest experiments as the EU is composed of nations
made up of peoples with a wide variety of historical peculiarities, differences and
cultural norms. As a former Minister of Defence of Belgium, Mark Eyskens, in
1991, famously said, ‘Europe is an economic giant, a political dwarf and a military
worm’. However, since then, and mainly since the Treaty of Maastricht that created
the EU in 1992, significant steps have been taken in the direction of the EU’s
politicomilitary integration such as the establishment of the so-called Eurocorps,
the EU Battlegroups, Organisation Conjointe de Coopération en matière
d’Armement (OCCAR) and the European Defence Agency (EDA), with the last
two organisations related to energising the EU’s defence industry.13 A recent
‘upgrade’ agreement, the so-called Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO),
signed in December 2017, expanded cooperation among member states on issues of
the defence industry and European security.14

The fifth column presents the data on the circulation of money in the Sympolity.
In 7.2, we listed some parameters such as the existence of a mechanism for
protection from counterfeiting, restricting the number of mints, both at the local
and the federal level, homogeneity in federal currency and policy mechanisms aimed
at forestalling inflationary pressures. The Achaeans applied a parallel system for
issuing currency whereby all coins of all city-states could circulate throughout the
Sympolity; however, some of the stronger city-states (in terms of economics,
military strength and demographics) could also use local coins, although only in
performing local commercial and financial transactions. This meant that locally
made coins with local (and not federal) insignia could only be used locally (such
as the coin of Fig. 7.10) while the locally made coins with federal insignia (such as
that of Fig. 7.11) could be used anywhere within the borders of the Sympolity and
exchanged freely or used as payment in any city-state.

13For issues related to the CFSP and the European defence industry see, among others, Hartley
(2003, 2008), Metaxas and Economou (2012), Kollias (2008) and Kollias and Paleaologou (2016)
and references therein.
14https://www.eda.europa.eu/what-we-do/our-current-priorities/permanent-structured-cooperation,
https://www.iiss.org/blogs/research-paper/2019/05/pESCO
As far as the EU is concerned, as of 1999, the European Monetary Union (EMU) came into existence. Therefore, in parallel to EMU, the monetary system of the Achaean Sympolity resembles what we can call in today’s terms, a monetary union since the Achaean federal currency had to be of the same weights and standards in every city-state. Furthermore, the quantity of money issued in each city-state was not decided arbitrarily but was part of the wider federal monetary policy. However, it must be said that how some particular issues, such as inflation, were addressed is not known as there are no relevant sources. For this reason, we have only offered a few cases.

The next criterion refers to the issue of the budget. In 7.3, we examined how the public revenue and expenses of the Sympolity were formed. We hypothesised that, given the nature of power politics in the ancient federations, defence expenditures at that time probably reached the highest portion of the annual budget. The balance served the rest of the Sympolity’s needs. In the EU today, the ‘federal’ budget comes to about 1% of the Gross Domestic Product of the member nations, which seems very small, and of which only half is destined for an integrated policy in support of member states in terms of a broad redistributive umbrella of social cohesion policies according to its members’ needs. It is obvious that the weaker a federation’s economic cohesion policies are, the weaker its legitimacy in the eyes of its citizens.

In the view of Weingast (1997) and de Figuereido and Weingast (2005), a federation must dispose of the means to improve the individual and collective well-being of its citizens in economic and social terms. Only then will its citizens be prepared to ‘defend’ it. If it cannot serve those two very basic criteria, it will come apart, frequently with onerous consequences for its citizens—a drastic plunge in living standards, erosion of political and economic freedoms, bloody internecine conflict (e.g. the fall of the Soviet Union, dissolution of Yugoslavia). When those criteria are met, their prestige is enhanced and endures (USA, Canada, Switzerland, Germany, India, etc.). When a federation fails to heed society’s concerns, however, legitimacy in the eyes of its citizens begins to recede as has been happening recently in the European Union with the rise of Euroscepticism.

Therefore, fairer economic management and distribution of the wealth generated within a federation increase its coherence which constitutes a higher ideal in a democratic state (Arist. Pol. 1264a, 36–37). Our analysis has shown that until 191, the integration of new members into the Sympolity was voluntary. The exceptions of the city-states of Laconia, Messene and Elis, however, were (probably) integrated violently, for geopolitical reasons. It is almost certain that if geopolitical concerns had not been such a priority for the Sympolity’s leadership at that time, those territories that were absorbed in 191, probably without their full consent, might have progressively decided to join freely and voluntarily, aware of the more effective level of security and prosperity doing so would provide. Borrowing the concept of marginal utility from Microeconomic Theory, we can say that in the case, for example, of three cities, A, B and C, the usefulness of participating in a federal

15http://ec.europa.eu/budget/annual/index_en.cfm?year=2017
structure is higher than not participating. This can be expressed mathematically with the following simple preference relationships:

\[
\begin{align*}
U_A &> U_F \\
U_B &> U_F \\
U_C &> U_F,
\end{align*}
\]

where \( U_F \) expresses non-participation in a federal structure. Moreover,

\[
U_A + U_B + U_C > 3U_F
\]

constituting the total marginal utility derived from participation in the federation for the three cities, respectively, which is higher than from non-participation.

In closing on this issue, we offer another brief interpretation of our own, based on the above argument, focussing on the Achaean Sympolity: as we have said, its establishment, as well as that of the other Greek federations, was based on the primary issue of a common defence and security policy. As the union proved itself substantive and successful, new institutions were developed that further secured and improved cooperation on a broader range of issues (e.g. economics) to the benefit of all. That provided further incentive to make cooperation permanent, evolving into a true federation. This process could be simulated with a repetitive positive-sum game since, in general, it appears that all parties involved (or at least most) ‘win’ making the prospect of dissolving the cooperation increasingly distant, for three main reasons.

First, the investment in time and money, or sunk cost, the sum of all the necessary expenditures made to create the Sympolity would be lost because if it were ever decided to reconstitute it, that would require additional expenditures to restore all the institutional bodies. Second, because of path dependency. As cooperation evolved between city-states, proving mutually beneficial, gradually, a state of what is called path dependency developed where the ethos and values that grew out of the new status quo, as time passed, evolved into a permanent socio-economic environment. Returning to the previous state, of being an individual city-state, became increasingly unlikely as the citizens adopted, became used to and accepted that new environment, making it a part of their permanent daily lives. They were hardly likely any longer to replace it with what, practically speaking, would be a new political experiment. Based on this argument, avoiding the loss of sunk cost, the new set of social values with the passage of time, if accepted by the society, tend to become permanent (path dependency).

Third, it appears that the Achaean Sympolity exhibited a fair amount of leeway in matters related to the social and political aspects of the economic measures that it chose to apply. In the event a city-state, during special or extraordinary situations (such as catastrophes due to war), was unable to meet its tax obligations to the federal government, it would be punished but, for the good of the Sympolity, the city-state could receive the privilege of ateleia, i.e. absolved from paying taxes for
that year or for even more than one year. This was the case in Dyme, Tirtaia and Pherae in 219, and in Messene in 183/182, as referred to in 7.6.

This resembles the current situation of global and extremely deadly Coronavirus pandemic. To face the crisis in the EU, on 13 March 2020, the President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen declared that ‘We will do whatever is necessary to support the Europeans and the European economy’. On 10 March 2020, between European Council Members, as well as the ECB President Christine Lagarde, the Eurogroup President and the High Representative, agreed to take immediate measures to respond to the extraordinary human and economic crisis caused by the Coronavirus. For that purpose, at the time of writing ECB President Christine Lagarde announced a ‘Pandemic’ Asset Purchase Program, an extraordinary bond purchase programme worth €750 billion in order to help insulate the region’s economy from the likely coronavirus-led recession. This has to do with the so-called quantitative easing (QE) policies. She further declared that ‘Extraordinary times require extraordinary action’.16 This declaration is a true federal supranational policy and falls under the general rationale with which the Achaean policymakers were taking decisions under extraordinary times, as the historical examples we mentioned above prove.

However, it remains to be seen in the near future if and how these measures will be put into practice with tangible results in favour of the deadly Coronavirus tested Europe.17 For example, the pandemic is very severe in Italy and Spain. Until 30 April 2020, 10,779 people died in Italy and 7340 in Spain. At the time of writing, Italy is grateful for the disinfection plants and military health personnel sent by Russia in recent days, in contrast to the meagre response from other EU Member States. In a wider sense, such a situation belongs again to a ‘federal’ obligation; the less help Italians receive from other EU countries, the greater the feeling of lack of practical solidarity on the part of the EU to them, and vice versa.

The last column in Table 8.3 refers to the issue of the existence of a federal court system responsible for adjudicating civil and criminal cases for each of the member city-states. Although there are no extensive references regarding the administration of justice; however, in 6.3, we offered evidence that attested to its existence, confirmed by Larsen (1971) and Mackil (2013), who have dealt exclusively with the issue of ancient Greek federalism. There was no special court of human rights as there is in the European Union today. On a more general level, the reasoning of

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16 https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/13/business/europe-germany-coronavirus.html
   https://euobserver.com/coronavirus/147731
   https://www.consilium.europa.eu/el/press/press-releases/2020/03/16/statement-on-covid-19-economic-policy-response/
   https://www.cnbc.com/2020/03/19/ecb-launches-new-820-billion-coronavirus-package.html

About how QE is implemented in practice, see, among others, the recent works of our own Kyriazis and Economou (2017) and Papadamou et al. (2018) whereas, more generally, for the unconventional measures by the ECB, see Kyriazis and Economou (2019) and Papadamou et al. (2020).

17 See in detail: https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/
ancient Greek thought focussed on the well-being of society as a whole rather than on the personal rights of individual citizens. However, we have referred to a few cases of the protection of property rights, which, after all, in a wider sense, are related to and should be considered a human right. In any event, the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) does not serve to defend property rights per se except insofar as European law has been violated, as, e.g. in matters of taxation. Human (and property) rights violations are adjudicated by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in Strasbourg, an institution of the Council of Europe, not of the EU.

In conclusion, we believe that the lessons learned from how the Achaean Sympolity also functioned of relevance to the current situation in the European Union. In our opinion, the EU needs something more than a President of the European Council. It demands a ‘leader’ with institutionally enshrined competences, as well as credible federal military forces and a unified (as far as possible) foreign policy to be seen as a would-be pan-European federation in the future and something more than ‘an economic giant, a political dwarf and a military worm’.

If the European experiment forges ahead towards political integration, what form would it take? How feasible is the creation of a unified political entity through the EU members’ integration policy into a single federal scheme? What messages can the Ancient Greek federations convey in this respect through their political and historical institutions? In closing, the main ideas and institutional proposals for the further integration of EU, stemming from the examination of the Achaean Sympolity can be summarised as follows:

- A harmonious relationship between direct and indirect democracy with institutionalised use of referenda of a binding nature, both at the member state and federal level, initiated by the citizens.
- The introduction of the institution of isopoliteia. This is directly related to the further political integration of the EU into a federal structure.
- A combination of a strong central authority under democratic governance in the form of a strategos (or President of the EU, for our purposes) flanked by a democratically elected supreme council of executive power as a European Government.
- A more equitable distribution of income between the member states aiming at ‘pervasive prosperity’ in economic terms throughout the European Union.
- The creation of a joint pan-European defence force under a mixed command staff.
- The implementation of more coherent and efficient management of the immigration crisis.

Regarding the first issue, first of all, as is apparent from our analysis, the Achaean Sympolity and, by extension, the other ancient Greek federations as well, had succeeded in cultivating a harmonious relationship between direct and indirect democracy. Balancing this relationship is, in our view, a primary issue for modern democracies. Into today’s terms, this relationship can be translated through the institutions of citizen initiatives, referenda, recall procedures and e-democracy techniques. The first has a collective orientation and addresses the ability of citizens, through collective action, to demand the adoption of a new measure or commitment.
by the state. This entails that citizens, whether at the federal, state/regional or local level, can go out and gather signatures on a petition regarding an issue that concerns the community as a whole directly, and when a sufficient number have been amassed to meet the minimum required, they can demand a referendum to be conducted on that issue. Some federations today such as Switzerland, or states of federations, e.g. Swiss cantons, American states and German Lander, incorporate this feature.

In Europe, such *initiatives*, as mentioned above, are not binding. With the Treaty of Lisbon of 2007, the EU decided to carry out such *initiatives* which, however, do not possess the crucial element of being binding on the member states in which they are carried out. Still, *Regulation (EU) No 1095/2010[2]* No 211/2011 of the European Parliament and of the European Council of 16 February 2011 concerning *citizen initiatives*,

foresees that the European Commission will accept them if the proposal carries at least 1 million signatures from at least seven member states. However, we believe that more active participatory, direct democracy through the EU’s institutions, such as the election of its president by the Union-wide electorate rather than his appointment, is a key solution to the democratic deficit which has become particularly pressing in recent years. The institution of the *recall* of an elected state official, for example, in cases of corruption, etc., is also relevant. This is applied in more and more American states, in the Swiss cantons, in Bavaria in Germany and in Canada’s British Columbia.

*Recall* means that citizens can petition for the resignation of elected officials, whether they are members of a local council or school board, even if they are mayors, governors, parliament or congress members if they are deemed to be beneath their expectations (for incompetence, corruption etc.). The process begins with a *citizen initiative*, as described above. If enough signatures are gathered, usually 8–10% of the electorate that voted in the previous election, then a vote is called, and if the official loses, he or she forfeits the seat. This process works as a deterrent as well, since elected representatives, in principle, will take their constituents’ preferences more seriously and will behave more cautiously. Many studies, most of them econometric,

reveal that countries that apply elements of direct democracy in decision-making display higher results in terms of economic development than democracies that do not. Elsewhere (Economou and Kyriazis 2019b), we have argued that for a democratic regime to flourish it demands a sound economy, offering its citizens prosperity and reason to support the ‘system’.

Regarding the issue of *e-democracy*, the idea of using technology to bring back direct democracy is simply not ‘something too good to be true’. That is, it is not impossible. After all, the use of the Internet for electronic voting on policy issues is already a reality in an extensive number of countries, such as Switzerland in many

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18. [http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/legislative-framework/c.europe.eu/citizens-initiative/files/guide-eci-el.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/legislative-framework/c.europe.eu/citizens-initiative/files/guide-eci-el.pdf)
19. [http://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/recall-of-stateofficials.aspx#History](http://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/recall-of-stateofficials.aspx#History)
20. See, among others, Feld and Savioz (1997), Blume et al. (2009), Feld et al. (2010), Blume and Voigt (2012) and Matsusaka (2005a, b, 2010).
iterations. *E-democracy* is technically feasible through using high tech. Many studies attest to this, including those of Moreno-Jimenez and Polasek (2003), Traunmüller (2004), Hilbert (2009), Spirakis et al. (2010), Achieng and Ruhode (2013) and Kerikmae (2014) among others, who claim that the electronic voting process will improve the quality of democracy.21

Regarding the introduction of *isopoliteia*, we consider this of paramount importance for the political integration of Europe. Achieving it in the form of the right of any EU citizen to vote in the elections of the member state in which they live, even if temporarily, is an essential step towards political unification. Regarding the key issue for the further legitimation of the EU in the eyes of its citizens, this concerns its institutional leadership (President, European Commission) which, based on the Ancient Greek model, we suggest should not be appointed as they are today, but should be elected directly by the citizens of the EU at large. That would serve to lend the EU the high degree of legitimacy it lacks. By the findings of our essay, it can be assured with a high degree of certainty that the more the political institutions of a democracy enable citizens to participate actively in decision-making, the more citizens become more conscientious, the better they are informed about the issues they need to decide and vote on, believe ‘more in the system’, and in the end, generally take better and more mature decisions when they vote.22 The issue of a gradual development of a federal consciousness by Europeans themselves was analysed by Monnet (1951, p. 523) during the first steps of the process towards the unification of Europe:

One essential issue is to retain a few constant principles that have guided us from the outset: to create gradually in the Europeans the consciousness a greater common interest served by common democratic institutions to which necessary competence is delegated, this is the dynamic which has never ceased to function.

Of course, in representative democracies, it is difficult to motivate citizens effectively in mass democracy to become informed, because according to Achen and Bartels (2017, p. 187, 198, 199) the cost of becoming informed (in terms of time and effort devoted to this) outweighs the benefit of better information in decision-making. We believe that this very important issue raised by Achen and Bartels (2017) can be ameliorated with the implementation of direct democracy techniques in decision-making in practice, such as *citizen initiatives*, referenda, the *recall* procedure and e-democracy techniques.23 Citizens tended to be informatively myopic. On the other hand, becoming informed on the issues permits a change in the

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21However, further analysis at this point on direct democracy techniques for today is beyond the scope of our present work.
22For such an argumentation regarding direct democracy at the city-state level in Classical Athens, see again Manvile and Ober (2003) and Bitros et al. (2020).
23For the feasibility of implementing in practice direct democracy procedures in our modern societies, see in detail the proposals in the seminal works of Barber (2003), the important contribution of Ober (2017) regarding the conceptual definitions of democracy and our own in Bitros et al. (2020).
policy outcome and leads to better decisions by citizens (including economic issues). Linked to this is the issue of deciding on the ‘common good’. As Tirole (2017, p. 12) writes:

The problem of limited (or ‘asymmetric’) information is everywhere at the heart of our institutional structures and our political choices and at the heart of the economies of the common good.

Regarding the issue of a more equitable distribution of income between the members of a federation, which we include as our third condition, this relates to the many economic and internationalised parameters affecting the system of cooperation of the EU’s members. Many scholars have proven that inequality regarding income distribution may critically affect political stability and growth and may destabilise democratic governance (see among others, Alesina and Rodrik 1994; Alesina and Perotti 1996; Perroti 1996). Alesina and Perroti (1996, p. 1214) characteristically write:

A large group of impoverished citizens, facing a small and very rich group of well-off individuals is likely to become dissatisfied with the existing socio-economic status quo and demand radical changes, so that mass violence and illegal seizure of power are more likely than, when income distribution is more equitable.

This is confirmed by the ancient Greek example of the Achaean and the other federations and is something that EU leaders should take great care in addressing as a critical asymmetry has been developing in recent years in terms of the diffusion of prosperity, especially between the north (Germany, Denmark, Finland etc.) and the south (Greece, Spain, Portugal etc.). This issue is beyond the scope of our analysis here, but by including it, we imply that if a ‘fair’ distribution of wealth and prosperity among the members is not achievable in some way, then the Union’s future is uncertain. Of course, such a view could spark a great deal of debate about what is meant by ‘fair distribution of wealth’ and this is not the purpose of this research. But this idea, which, to a lesser or greater extent, could also be described as ‘equitable distribution of income’ is also related to the so-called Gini coefficient, which measures the income or wealth distribution of a nation’s residents, and is the most commonly used measurement of inequality and has long studied by scholars in economics.

The Gini coefficient is a leading indicator that is used to measure income inequality. The Gini coefficient may range from 0, corresponding to perfect equality (in other words, income is equally distributed among every individual in a given society) to 100, corresponding to perfect inequality (in other words, when all of the income is received by a single person); thus, a lower Gini coefficient reflects a more egalitarian distribution of income. According to data retrieved from Eurostat, in 2017 (see Fig. 8.2), the Gini coefficient for the (pre-Brexit) EU-28 was 30.7%. The highest income disparities among the EU Member States (with a Gini coefficient of at least 35.0%—as shown by the darkest grey shade in Fig. 8.2) were recorded in

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24 Equitable does not mean equal distribution of income.
Bulgaria and Lithuania. A second group of countries, with a Gini coefficient above the (pre-Brexit) EU-28 average (in the range of 31.0–34.5%) comprised Estonia, Italy, Romania, the United Kingdom, Greece, Portugal, Spain and Latvia. At the other end of the range, income was more evenly distributed in Slovakia, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Finland and Belgium, as well as Iceland and Norway, where the

Fig. 8.2 Gini coefficient results for the EU-27 countries for 2017. Source: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Map_19_1_1.png
Gini coefficient was 26.0% or less. Figure 8.2 proves that income inequalities are real within EU-27 countries.25

Regarding the issue of creation of a joint pan-European defence force under a mixed command staff, as it has already explained in detail, this is strongly related to the so-called Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and its parameters as already analysed in this session. For CFSP to be achieved and materialised in the future requires the necessary political will for further political integration by both the EU policymakers and the people themselves.

Relative to CFSP is the issue of implementation of more coherent and effective immigration crisis management. The crisis arose in the wake of the war in Syria starting in 2011 and was also linked to the migration waves that have been observed in recent years from the states of North Africa and the Middle East to European territories. In recent years, the EU has made efforts to resolve the issue of migration and refugees. It has enacted laws, adopted and implemented immigration policy programmes, signed transnational agreements and set up support organisations. The main objectives of European refugee and immigration policies are to ensure equality and respect for the rights of immigrants and refugees. It aims to provide easy access to international protection procedures while working with immigrants to seek legal aid in European regions and to combat illegal immigration with mechanisms such as Frontex.

When the EU realised the magnitude of the migration problem in March 2016, it came to an agreement with Turkey to halt daily refugee flows. Turkey has undertaken to contain successive daily flows of migrants within its territory while the EU undertook to support Turkey financially and promised to discuss EU accession. However, it appears that this common EU immigration policy is not very effective since migration waves from Turkey and Libya continue to occur while the first-host countries (mainly Greece but also Cyprus, Italy, Malta and Spain) have been onerously burdened with the issue of granting asylum or temporary accommodation to refugees on their territory, while the Visegrád Group and the rest of the EU member states refuse to accept any more immigrants. This creates a significant asymmetry regarding the fair sharing of burdens among the EU-27.

In 6.2, we refer to the epoikoi and synekoi where any Achaean city-state (such as Dyme) could sell citizen/political rights to prospective candidates of third countries. The purchase of political rights by these people meant the automatic acquisition of citizenship in the Sympolity as well, and, by extension, all the perquisites that entailed (e.g. free movement, right to vote and to stand for election, civil rights etc.). What is important here is that the Sympolity (like today’s EU) did not impose on any member city-state to accept as residents new citizens from third countries. On the other hand, if a member city-state opened its gates, e.g. seeking to enlarge its workforce, it had the right to do so freely.

Thus, based on the above, we believe that perhaps the best way to improve the immigration management policies in the EU-27 is to develop a more coherent

25Data for Iceland, Switzerland and Turkey are for 2016.
system of sharing the burdens of immigration between member states more ‘symmetrically’. This means that (i) the external borders of the EU should be more properly secured through further enhancing mechanisms such as Frontex; (ii) existing immigrants should be distributed more equally in each EU member state, which means that they are distributed according to each member state’s income and population power. We believe that such a proposal will be fairer and better both for the member states that are currently facing the problem of migration more severely (such as Greece, Cyprus, Italy, Spain and Malta) and for the living conditions and quality of life of the migrants themselves. Failure to manage migration flows from the Middle East, Asia and Africa more fairly may create shocks and disrupt cohesion among EU member states.