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The Sphinx and the She-Wolf: Some Remarks on Aetolian Politics after the Antiochian War

Summary: This article aims to examine the turbulent course of the Aetolian League in the confused years after the Antiochian War (191–188) up until 160/159, when its leader at the time, Lykiskos, passed away. Military defeats, political developments and economic problems will be studied together in order to form an accurate interpretation of the internal strife inside the Koinon. In addition, the factor of Rome also needs to be taken into consideration, as the new power seems to have adopted a cautious stance, intervening in the League’s internal politics only when it was considered necessary. Prominent (and relatively neglected in the modern literature) Aetolians of this era, like Thoas and Lykiskos, as well as their crucial political roles, are also analysed.

Keywords: Aetolian League, Hellenistic Greece, Roman Republic, politics, debt crisis, civil war, Thoas, Lykiskos

Studying the history of the Aetolian Koinon after the Antiochian War (191–188), when the Aetolians allied with the Seleucid king Antiochos III against the Roman Republic, often resembles wandering through the mountains of Aetolia itself: the road is rough and steep. Sometimes the mist covers large parts of the path and the wanderer cannot be sure what comes next. Respectively, the researcher must examine the few, very fragmentary and uneven ancient sources carefully in order to follow the path as accurately as possible. Indeed, in order to understand the confused events in Aetolia after 188, it is necessary to study mainly Polybius and Livy, who usually followed the Polybian text. However, at the same time, one

1 All dates are B.C.

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must bear in mind that both Polybius and Livy, despite shedding unique light on the history of the Koina, maintained a hostile stance towards the Aetolians. Polybius was a prominent official of the Achaean League, while Livy was a member of the Roman nobility. Both wrote their histories when the relationship between their states and the Aetolians was hostile or, at least, tense. Still, the researcher relies almost exclusively on these authors for information about the course followed by the Aetolian League after 188.

Despite important contributions by modern scholarship on the Aetolian Koinon, mystery still shrouds a great part of its development. Its ‘later’ phase in particular – that after the end of the Antiochian War and the Treaty of Apameia (188) – has either not been treated thoroughly or has been examined mainly from the standpoint of Roman imperialism as a short stage of Aetolian development, lacking an in-depth analysis.

Here, the emphasis will not be placed upon the debt problem and the nature of the Aetolian factions (on which sources are severely lacking), but rather upon the political processes inside the Aetolian Koinon after the war against Rome, as well as Rome’s stance towards the League. In the first part, the ‘structural characteristics’ as well as the political evolution of the Koinon between the end of the Second Macedonian War and the Antiochian War will be briefly studied (197–

2 Larsen 1968, xiii; Sacks 1975, 92; Scholten 2000, 4–6 with n. 12 on p. 4; id. 2003, 65 f. Bommeljé – Vroom 1995, 81: “For Aetolia […] the written sources do not tell the full story”. Unfortunately, no Aetolian source describing the events has been preserved (though such sources did exist, Scholten 2000, 5 f., n. 15). As Rigsby 1996, 17, put it: “If Polybius had been an Aetolian, we might today be assessing the difficult question of the ‘popularity of the Aetolian Empire’”. The tradition of the hostile treatment of Aetolians by the ancient writers had already begun by the time of Thucydides and his Athenian contemporaries: see Thuc. 1.5.2–3 and Aristoph. Equ. 74–79; cf. Funke 1985, 10 f.; Scholten 2000, 1 f.; id. 2003, 67. For a list of Polybius’ accusations against Aetolians: Sacks 1975, 92. However, Sacks adopts a different view regarding the historian’s treatment of the Aetolians, challenged – successfully in my view – by Mendels 1984–1986. A recent discussion reconciling the two views has been attempted by Champion 2007b.

3 Indicatively, Funke 1985; id. 1997; id. 2015; Bommeljé – Doorn 1987; id. 1991; Antonetti 1990; Scholten 2000. The works of Grainger 1999; id. 2000; id. 2002 present problems. Except for works on specific areas – e.g. Thermon (Papapostolou 2014), Kallion (Rousset – Laroche 2006) and Kalydon (Dietz – Stavropoulou-Gatsi 2011), the archaeological research in the territory covered by the Aetolian Koinon still has many gaps to fill; see Bommeljé – Vroom 1995, 68; Freitag – Funke – Moustakis 2004, 379.

4 Bommeljé – Vroom 1995, 67 f. An exception is the unpublished PhD thesis of Hansen 1996, which is still useful, but difficult to access. Characteristically, a case study of Roman policy in Epirus and Acarnania has existed since the mid-20th century (Oost 1954), although a corresponding monograph on the Aetolian League, especially after the Antiochian War, remains a desideratum.

5 E.g. Derow 1989; Eckstein 2008, 334; Rosenstein 2012, 195–198, 222.
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188). Following this, the problems of the Koinon after its military defeat will be assessed. Lastly, in the third and fourth part of the paper, the opposing factions and the Aetolian civil wars up until the death of Lykiskos (160/159) will be thoroughly analysed. In this way, the present paper hopes to assist the interpretation of a complex phase of the League’s political reactions after major military defeats and territorial losses. In an era when many Hellenistic states were anticipating huge socio-economic internal problems as well as the constant Roman pressure, one might wonder how the Aetolians reacted to the unprecedented crisis. One might also query whether the Romans interfered in Aetolian matters after 188 and, if so, whether their pressures were direct and stifling or whether Rome acted only when necessary.6

A Turbulent Era

A few words on the ‘structural characteristics’ of the Aetolian Koinon need to be said in order to understand how the League functioned and why it malfunctioned after the war against Rome. The Aetolians’ early way of life was, inevitably, a response to the land’s physical environment.7 Indeed, most of the territory initially covered by the Aetolian Koinon was mountainous and isolated from the rest of the Greek world.8 Partly as a result of these geographical constraints, the

6 Similar questions can be found in Hansen’s PhD thesis 1996, 106. Though his treatment constitutes an ambitious attempt to combine contemporary Aetolian political feelings with their socio-economic problems, he, like other researchers, does not analyse the subject in depth. Especially in the case of Aetolia, many studies fail to draw sufficient connections between the pro-Roman/anti-Roman feelings and the debt problem and economic crisis after 188: indicatively, Gruen 1984b, 503 f., 515; Bommeljé – Vroom 1995, 74 f.; Tsangari 2007, 34; Rosenstein 2012, 213. Gruen 1976, 36, rejects the view of a pro-Roman and a pro-Macedonian faction in Aetolia after 189 but does not propose any alternative interpretation. The main problem is, of course, the lack of sufficient ancient sources, beyond Polybius and Livy, which are laconic, problematic or even biased: indicatively Mendels 1982, 106–110; Scholten 2000, 4–6; id. 2003, 66.

7 For Aetolia’s physical environment as a factor in the development of the inhabitants’ socio-political structures, as well as the Aetolians’ peculiar way of life, see Bommeljé 1987, 16; Bommeljé – Doorn 1991. The physical environment appears as a factor of differentiation among Leagues in Buraselis 2013, 173.

8 Diod. 18.24.2, 25.1; Ephor. Fr. 122 = Str. 10.3.2–5, 9.3.12; cf. Larsen 1968, 78 f.; Bommeljé 1987, 16; Bommeljé – Vroom 1995, 79; Hansen 1996, 122; Beck 1997, 44, 46. For the geography of the Aetolian landscape, Woodhouse 1897 is still useful, Nerantzis 2001. Geology: Deylius 1987, 32–34. Geomorphology: id. 1987, 34–36. According to Homer, the Aetolians inhabited the area between the mouth of the river Euenos and the modern lagoon of Missolonghi and their ancestral centres were Pleuron and Kalydon (II. B.638–644; cf. Scholten 2003, 66 f.), settlements which are not
Aetolians had, since the Classical era, been raiding richer adjoining areas. As the Koinon steadily expanded, it gained in strength (together with its highly militarised elite) both strategically and financially. Indeed, the social and economic structure of the Aetolian Koinon itself was based on the smooth continuation of this prosperous way of life. This will be more evident in the following analysis, as the system of plundering collapsed, especially after the Antiochian War.

After the end of the Second Macedonian War (200–197), at least two great ‘factions’ evolved in the Aetolian League, which are often conventionally named ‘anti-Roman’ and ‘pro-Roman’. Though such designations aid modern scholar-
ship, these factions are still described as completely distinct, steady and almost unchangeable, sometimes in a ‘black-and-white’ manner. The dynamics of politics, which are influenced decisively by current circumstances and the personal relationships between the leading citizens, are not always taken into consideration in the case of the Aetolian League.\textsuperscript{12} Important personalities of this era do not seem to have maintained a steady political stance. Phaeneas, who is often characterised as a ‘pro-Roman’, was treated harshly by the consul Glabrio and the Romans during and after the Antiochian War (see below, n. 22), as if he had been an ‘anti-Roman’. Thus, at least the adoption of a friendlier attitude (or the attribution of such an attitude) to the Romans did not necessarily mean that he was to be handled in a similar fashion by the Romans themselves. In addition, as I shall further analyse in the latter part of the paper, the ‘pro-Roman’ Lykiskos appears to have been abandoned by his protectors in the end. Lastly, the radical ‘anti-Roman’ Thoas seems to have adopted a more moderate political stance after his captivity in Rome. Therefore, when applying established terms, one should keep in mind that particular political circumstances, of which we do not always have a complete account, had determined and influenced the politicians’ attitudes as well as the character of the individual parties.

A characteristic example of the changing nature of Aetolian politics as well as of the already serious social tensions within the Aetolian Koinon is the election of Scopas\textsuperscript{13} and Dorimachos as nomographoi in 205/204 in order to solve the enormous debt problem arising from the continuous wars (most notably Philip V’s raids in 218 and 207/206) and the excessive Aetolian lifestyle,\textsuperscript{14} which affected the Koinon’s internal cohesion. What is important here is that this attempt to find solutions to the serious internal disturbances through the political mechanisms of the League itself failed. Alexander Isios,\textsuperscript{15} probably a representative of the rich view of a divided ‘oligarchy’ is in general right, but it constitutes just a part of the whole story (Grainger 1999, 504 f., 512 f., 538).

\textsuperscript{12} Scholten 2000, 15, n. 60, rightly points out the scholars’ tendency to view the Aetolian polity “as a monolithic entity”.

\textsuperscript{13} The famous Scopas led the army which sacked Dion and Dodona in 219: Pol. 4.62, 67.3. He was general in 220/219, 212/211 and 205/204, see Grainger 2000, 298 f., s. v. ‘Skopas II (3)’.

\textsuperscript{14} Pol. 13.1–1a; cf. Hansen 1996, 101. The luxurious life, which Polybius regards as a cause of the debts, is also mentioned in Agatharchides, FGrH 86, F6 = Ath. 12.527b–c; cf. Rostovtzeff 1941, 611; Walbank 1967, 413; Scholten 2000, 103–105. The continuous wars must have affected mainly the common citizens, who resorted to plundering (or loans when the first solution was not possible) to make a profit. The defeats inflicted by Philip in the previous years (e. g. sack of Thermon in 218 and 207/206) surely also played a decisive role in the eruption of social tensions.

\textsuperscript{15} Pol. 13.1a. The nomographoi probably proposed a cancellation or a lessening of debts, which provoked the strong opposition of the richer Aetolians, or at least some of the creditors; see
Aetolian creditors, reacted fiercely. As a result, Scopas was forced to leave and settle at the court of the Ptolemies.  

After this brief example of personal opposition among prominent Aetolian men (Scopas against Alexander Isios), I will examine the political state of affairs in Aetolia during the turbulent years of the Antiochian War. Among the leading members of the so-called ‘anti-Roman’ faction and a warm supporter of the alliance with the Seleucid king Antiochus III was Thoas. Together with his brother

Briscoe 1967, 7; Walbank 1967, 413. In addition, it is possible that, after the Aetolians’ truce with Philip V (just one year earlier, in 206), the indebted Scopas and Dorimachos (“indebted”: Pol. 13.1.3; cf. Hansen 1996, 102, who also added that their homesteads in Trichonion were presumably raided by Philip V in 218 and 207/206), who had strongly supported the war against the king, had lost a considerable part of their influence. Mendels 1982, 100 f. and Hansen 1996, 101–102 downplay the role of Alexander Isios, but still an opposition of at least some rich men with their supporters remains the most probable interpretation, cf. Hansen 1996, 102 f., 115, n. 14; Scholten 2000, 231, n. 10. An inscription set up by the city of Pleuron in honour of a rich benefactor who discharged part of the public debt is often connected with the debt problem and the nomographoi: IG IX2 70; cf. Hansen 1996, 103 f., contra Mendels 1982, 100, n. 63 and, differently, Scholten 2000, 146, n. 57. One may suppose that the rich Aetolian party, which fought the nomographoi, sought to solve the debt problem partly through the traditional system of benefactions, but more evidence is lacking. A severe economic crisis had already struck Aetolia in the late 220s: Scholten 2000, 190, 283 f.

For the wealth of Alexander Isios, see Pol. 21.26.9 (“the richest man in Greece”, transl. W. R. Paton), 14; cf. Walbank 1967, 413. His arrogant attitude when he was held hostage in 189 by the Epirotes is striking (Pol. 21.26.9, 11, 13–17). His identification with Alexander of Kalydon, who served three times as a general, has been rejected: Walbank 1967, 554; Deininger 1971, 61, n. 15. Thus, it is not known whether he owned land or was a creditor. If the latter is true, it certainly helps us to understand his opposition to Scopas’ reforms; see O’Neil 1984–1986, 46. On the possible places of origin of Alexander Isios, see Walbank 1967, 554 and id. 1979, 120.

Scopas led a great mercenary army there: Pol. 13.2.1, 3–5; cf. Walbank 1967, 414 f. In 200/199 Scopas returned to Aetolia and recruited more than six thousand Aetolians on behalf of Ptolemy V Epiphanes: Pol. 15.25.16; Liv. 31.43.5–7. Characteristically, he would have recruited more soldiers had the Aetolian general not intervened, Griffith 1984, 121, 258; Hansen 1996, 104. Many of these willing Aetolians perhaps originated from indebted families and thus enthusiastically welcomed the call of the failed nomographos and his promise of future gains. Perhaps it is not a coincidence that Scopas’ return coincided with the Aetolians’ rapprochement with the Romans against Philip during the Second Macedonian War. It seems that the political circumstances encouraged his quick return.

One of the most prominent Aetolians, general in 203/202, 194/193, 181/180 and 173/172. Walbank 1979, 110; Paschidis 2008, 338. The proud tradition of using ancient, glorious names is evident; Thoas was the king of the Aetolians in the Trojan War: Hom. Il., B.638, Δ.527–529, H.168, N.216–218, O.281–283; Paus. 5.3.6, 10.38.5. I also note that the names of the leading Aetolian men seem to refer vividly to the warlike tradition and self-identification of the elite, e. g. Eupolemos, Nikandros, Ippolochos, Lochagos. Cf. Antonetti 2000, esp. 174, where she also observes the frequency of Aetolian compound names, in which the first part of the name is “Nike”-Victory.
Dikaiarchos, Nikandros and Damokritos were the leading members of the ‘anti-Roman’ faction, which was keen to engage in a war against Rome, investing in the disillusionment of the Aetolians after the Second Macedonian War.

However, despite the initial enthusiasm of the Aetolians, their participation in the Antiochian War was not as active as Antiochos expected. Indeed, the election of the moderate Aetolian Phaeneas as strategos in 192 reveals the power of the moderate anti-Romans, the pro-Romans and the Aetolians who wished only for peace. Before the Battle of Thermopylae (191), the Aetolian response to the call of the (designated general) Antiochos was insufficient. Indeed, the Aetolians were not capable of waging large-scale military operations for a long time. They also proved to be unprepared for the Roman invasion of Greece (191). Perhaps they did not expect such a forceful reaction on the part of the Romans. A characteristic of the Aetolian mentality (and weakness) as well as of their knowl-

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18 Both brothers originated from Trichonion, a city which produced many leading men of the League, see O’Neil 1984–1986, 45 f. Deininger 1971, 68, n. 1, provides a bibliography for the two brothers. For Trichonion, see now Stavropoulou-Gatsi 2011, 20–33.

19 Also from Trichonion, general in 190/189, 184/183 and 177/176, with a multifaceted political activity, Deininger 1971, 69, n. 7; Walbank 1979, 131.

20 From Kalydon, general in 200/199 and 193/192; see Deininger 1971, 69, n. 9. From Kalydon originated Alexamenos as well, general in 197/196, who held the same political stances. It is evident that cities like Trichonion and Kalydon provided the majority of the leading men who opposed Rome. Of course, from the same cities originated many Aetolian strategoi (27 and 16 respectively out of 104 known for the period 280–141); see Grainger 2000, 48–50 with pl. 1 on p. 49; cf. O’Neil 1984–1986, 45–49. Indeed, it is not a coincidence that these areas were the most fertile in the Aetolian territories, see Str. 10.2.3; cf. O’Neil 1984–1986, 49; Bommeljé 1987, 16; Bommeljé – Doorn 1991, 83. For the ‘anti-Roman’ party, see also Deininger 1971, 68 f.

21 The Aetolians felt that the Romans did not reward them with enough territories for their contribution to the Second Macedonian War. On their disappointment and the reasons behind the growing hostility between the former Aetolian and Roman allies, see Pol. 18.38.6–7, 39.1–2, 45.1; cf. Briscoe 1967, 4; Walbank 1967, 617 f.; Deininger 1971, 59; Eckstein 2008, 288 f. with n. 60, 320, 322.

22 Phaeneas has been treated unevenly and perhaps unfairly by some researchers (on these, see the remarks of Deininger 1971 below), who treat him mainly as strongly pro-Roman and compliant. As the incident of Glabrio, when the consul threatened Phaeneas that he would capture him (Pol. 20.10.6–9; Liv. 36.28.5–6), and the confiscation of Phaeneas’ land in Delphi after the Antiochian War (see below, n. 40) reveal, Phaeneas simply believed that a policy of peace and cooperation with the Romans was the most beneficial for the Aetolian Koinon, see the notes in Deininger 1971, 74 n. 41, 75, 100, n. 6 and 101 with, n. 16; Grainger 2002, 194.

23 At a conference in Lamia, 192/191: Liv. 35.43.7–9, 45.9.

24 Liv. 36.15.3–5, 16.3; Diod. 29.3; cf. Deininger 1971, 96 f.; Gruen 1984b, 462; Bommeljé – Vroom 1995, 73. Perhaps one reason was the fact that the Aetolians sustained the heavy burden of providing Antiochos’ army with supplies during his campaign in Greece: Liv. 35.44.7.
edge of the Roman power is that they never anticipated confronting the legions in open battle.\textsuperscript{25} Polybius’ description of the fear among Aetolians after they were informed of Antiochos’ defeat in Magnesia vividly captures the weakness of the Aetolians in fighting alone against both Rome and Philip.\textsuperscript{26}

## Aetolia in New Contexts

Already in a meeting between the general Phaeneas and the consul Glabrio, after the fall of the Aetolian city Heraclea (191), the consul had asked for the surrender of persons who constituted a threat to Rome. The Aetolians in question were Dikaiarchos, Menestratos and the king of the Athamanes, Amynandros.\textsuperscript{27} In addition, during the negotiations between the Romans and the Aetolians for a peace treaty (189), the Athenian mediator and emissary\textsuperscript{28} in the Senate spoke in favour of the Aetolians, accusing some of the leading members of the ‘anti-Roman’ faction as being responsible for the war. These were Thoas, his brother Dikaiarchos, Menestas and Damokritos.\textsuperscript{29} Lastly, in the Treaty of Apameia, the Romans demanded from Antiochos the surrender of Thoas and the rest of the Aetolians, who had occupied public offices in the League and taken refuge at his court.\textsuperscript{30} Thus, the Romans tried to capture the leading members of the opposing party in order to ensure that no hostilities would arise again within this stubborn and quarrelsome League. Indeed, it is known that Thoas was transferred to Rome as a prisoner. However, the Aetolians Nikandros and Pantaleon later managed to secure his return to Aetolia.\textsuperscript{31}

\textsuperscript{25} An important factor would have been the persistence of Phaeneas’ faction in pursuing peace and avoiding battles; see Walbank 1979, 77.
\textsuperscript{26} Pol. 21.25.8–9 and Liv. 38.3.6. Antiochos’ defeat automatically cancelled all the benefits acquired from the campaigns of the Aetolian general Nikandros on the northern borders of the Koinon (190/189): Pol. 21.25.3–7; Liv. 38.3.3–6.
\textsuperscript{27} Pol. 20.10.4–5; Liv. 36.28.3.
\textsuperscript{28} The Athenian envoy is named “Damon” in Polybius (21.31.6), but “Leon” in Livy (38.10.4).
\textsuperscript{29} Pol. 21.31.13; Liv. 38.10.6.
\textsuperscript{30} Pol. 21.43.11; Diod. 29.10 (who speaks of Thoas and twenty more men, who would be chosen as hostages by the Romans); cf. Walbank 1979, 108–111. During Phaeneas’ meetings with Glabrio, it was also demanded that no Aetolian mercenary should serve again under Antiochos’ commands “either on his own account or by public decree” (Pol. 20.10.4, transl. W. R. Paton). Afterwards, in the Treaty of Apameia, Antiochos was forced not to hire any mercenary west of the Taurus Mountains (Pol. 20.10.4); cf. Griffith 1984, 165; Hansen 1996, 75f. All these measures were obviously severe blows to the smooth operation of the Koinon, see also below, pp. 85–87.
\textsuperscript{31} Pol. 28.4.11; Diod. 29.31. Thoas was general again in 181/180: Grainger 2000, 321, s. v. ‘Thoas’.
The defeat by the Roman legions and the harsh terms of the treaty with the Senate left the Aetolians with deep wounds. It was the second great humiliation after the end of the Second Macedonian War, when the Aetolians did not receive from their Roman allies the rewards (mainly fertile territories) they expected. Still, the Aetolian anti-Roman faction seems to have remained cohesive and powerful, as one may deduce from the generals’ successions. Nevertheless, the image of a still combative League would be false. Aetolian losses disrupted the socio-economic structure of the League as well as the political balance of power.

The amount of available cultivated land, which was already limited, was further decreased. This meant starvation for the cities and poverty for the persecuted farmers or land owners. Many would have been forced to borrow from the

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32 Pol. 21.32.2–14; Liv. 38.11; cf. Larsen 1968, 439–441; Deininger 1971, 107; Walbank 1979, 128–136; Gruen 1984b, 479; Bommeljé – Vroom, 1995 74.
33 Pol. 18.34.1, 34.7, 36–37, 38.3–39.2. See above, n. 21.
34 Indeed, almost all generals mentioned below belonged to the Aetolian anti-Roman faction: 191–188: Archedamos – Nikandros – Eupolemos – Archedamos; 184–180: Nikandros – Proxenos – Archedamos – Thoas – Pantaleon; 177–173: Nikandros – Eupolemos – Archedamos – Pantaleon – Thoas; see IG IX, I, LI–LII; cf. Walbank 1979, 78, 316.
35 For the vital necessity of promoting an image of power in this era, see Eckstein 2006, 96 f. However, his statement is misleading that fifteen years after the defeat, “the Aetolian League functioned perfectly well on its own” (Eckstein 2008, 334). Tsangari 2007, 34, also mistakenly speaks of a “longue période de paix” in Aetolia after the Antiochian War.
36 The great territorial losses of the Aetolian League are described in Pol. 21.32.13–14 and Liv. 38.11.9. The island of Cephalenia (a base of Aetolian pirates) was occupied shortly afterwards by the Romans (Pol. 21.32b; Liv. 38.28.5–30.1). The loss of areas which were also used as bases for raids was of crucial importance, Pol. 5.100.7; cf. Bommeljé – Vroom 1995, 80; Hansen 1996, 74 f.
37 The internal conflicts that erupted in Aetolia were certainly not a new phenomenon in the Hellenistic world. For example, in Boeotia, defeats and economic crises had paralysed the League (Pol. 20.4–7.2; 22.4.1–16); cf. Walbank 1979, 66–74, 179–181. The situation in Rhodes was similar: Walbank 1979, 303, 352; cf. Fuks 1966, 439–441; Shipley 2000, 379 f. In addition, violent conflicts took place in Thessaly and Perrhaebia (Liv. 42.5.7–8, 13.9). A great part of the Greek mainland suffered from unrest, which favoured the smoother Roman intervention through embassies and arbitrations; see Gruen 1984a, 106, but 1984b, 504; Champion 2007a, esp. 270; Eckstein 2008, 352–356, 359.
38 When the fertile areas were lost (see above, nn. 32 and 36), presumably an overcrowding of former landowners and poor farmers was created in the remaining territories. Even if one supposes that many farmers remained in their lands after the treaty, the result for the League would have been a steady demographic and economic decline. Pasture must also have been affected; see Hansen 1996, 126.
richer Aetolians, exacerbating the already severe debt problem. Not only small-scale farmers were in debt, but also influential people with some wealth. At the same time, the Aetolians, who depended on raids and plundering for their living, were now inactive. At least some of the mercenaries and pirates, who constituted the Aetolian military diaspora outside the Koinon, presumably returned home after the end of the war. Therefore, the disbandment of the Aetolians would have caused social overcrowding. It is also possible that many Aetolians would have been expelled from the lost lands and would have found shelter afterwards in the remaining cities of the League. Furthermore, apart from the private debts, a public debt also existed. The Romans took with them great hoards of booty and also demanded an equally great compensation. In this way, the League’s treasury became bankrupt. The woeful economic situation disrupted the

39 Polybius’ remarks in 36.175, 7 on the demographic and economic decline of Greece are also valid in Aetolia’s case. However, for Aetolia it was not the ῥαθυμία that Polybius regarded as the cause of the problems, but self-preservation. The lack of land meant a decline in production and therefore famine. At the same time, the huge discrepancies in wealth were exacerbated. In general, the most relevant analyses are those of Rostovtzeff 1941, 615–617, 625; Gruen 1976, 35; Walbank 1979, 680f.

40 Loans were granted to common and prominent men, when the ‘politics of plunder’ were not possible or when enemies invaded Aetolia, in order to ensure their survival or even to continue their luxurious lifestyle: rightly, Gruen 1976, 35; Hansen 1996, 102, 124. Even influential people suffered. For example, in an inscription from Delphi (Syll’610, l. 8), it is reported that Phaeneas’ land in that area was confiscated shortly after 191. In the same inscription almost all leading members of the Aetolian Koinon are mentioned: Chalepos, Pantaleon, and Alexamenos, all of whom were deprived of their lands. For the confiscation of Aetolian properties in Delphi by Glabrio, see Daux 1936, 225–233; Larsen 1938, 284–286; Walbank 1940, 209; Rostovtzeff 1941, 614f.; Sherk 1969, 24, 221–224; Deininger 1971, 103, n. 1; Hammond – Walbank 1988, 455; Hansen 1996, 73f.; Jacquemin – Mulliez – Rougemont 2012, n. 144, 258–264. Such rare testimonies offer us a glimpse of the blows and shocks that struck the League’s leading men after the Roman victory. Many Aetolian owners or large-scale farmers would have joined the people who sought a redistribution of land and relief from their problems.

41 Gruen 1976, 35. See also n. 30 (for the Roman prohibition on Aetolian mercenaries serving Antiochos) and n. 36.

42 Bommeljé – Doorn 1991, 86f.; Hansen 1996, 74–76.

43 Cf. n. 38 above and Hansen 1996, 74.

44 Liv. 37.46.3; 39.5.11–17; cf. Hansen 1996, 70f.

45 Pol. 21.32.8–9; Liv. 38.11.8; cf. Rostovtzeff 1941, 616f.; Gruen 1976, 35; Tsangari 2007, 33f., 254f. It is very likely that the wealthier Aetolians would have had to make generous contributions to these indemnities, Hansen 1996, 70.

46 Ath. 12.527b–c; Diod. 29.33; cf. Bommeljé – Vroom 1995, 81. We can only imagine the extent of the plundering and destruction of Aetolian lands and cities by the Roman and Macedonian forces; see Hansen 1996, 71f.
smooth operation of the state institutions, e.g. the courts. All these things caused internal chaos. The end of the peculiar Aetolian way of life meant the gradual end of the Koinon.

`Ἀπὸ τῆς ἑσπέρας νέφη`: the Threat from the West

In a society which was based on war on a large scale, it is evident that certain parties and communities (see n. 20) had enormous influence on the Aetolian Koinon. Personal ambitions and potential collaborations played an important role, especially in turbulent times. However, as will be further analysed below, it was precisely the many different interests as well as the inability to make compromises which drove the League towards a gradual collapse.

At the same time, Rome played its hand well. Its power was being increasingly accepted by the Greek states, many of which believed that only friendly or at least peaceful relations with the Romans could strengthen their interests. The Romans themselves maintained good relations with certain parties within the elites of the cities and the Koina. In addition, the upper social classes in Greece were well aware of Rome’s superiority. As will be discussed below, espe-
cially after the Antiochian War, a new generation of political elites emerged, more closely attached to Rome and in a more powerful political position. A characteristic example is Charops the Younger from Epirus, who grew up almost ‘Romanised’.\(^{53}\) Especially in Aetolia, the confiscations\(^{54}\) and the transferrals of anti-Roman leaders to Italy\(^{55}\) must have decimated and impoverished the ‘old’, mostly anti-Roman, Aetolian elite.\(^{56}\) Still, the anti-Roman faction maintained a certain political influence.\(^{57}\)

Undoubtedly, many Aetolians suffered and became impoverished as a result of the continuous wars, regarding the Romans as the cause of their suffering. On the other hand, the great territorial losses and the majesty of the unstoppable Roman forces would surely have persuaded others that only a friendly attitude towards the Senate could benefit Aetolia. For the latter, the “clouds from the West”\(^{58}\) might possibly develop into a beneficial rain.

At the same time, one should keep in mind that the Aetolian ‘chieftains’ maintained supporters from the lower social classes and influenced them.\(^{59}\) Though sufficient clues do not exist, it is possible to suppose that, in a relatively ‘archaic’ society like the Aetolian one, the rich land-owners (e.g. Alexander Isios) and the chieftains\(^{60}\) maintained wide networks of supporters. However, in the turbulent Aetolian society, after 188, when war was no longer a functional way of life and the debt problems dealt severe blows to farmers and former warriors alike, a new elite emerged. This elite was not dependent on glorious origins or military successes, but exploited the circumstances after the Antiochian War in order to win

\(^{53}\) Pol. 27.15.4–5.

\(^{54}\) See above, n. 40.

\(^{55}\) For example, Liv. 37.3.8, cf. above, n. 30. The anti-Roman general Damokritos was captured during the fall of Heraclea, was transported to Italy and eventually killed himself in Rome (Liv. 37.46.4–5); cf. Deininger 1971, 98.

\(^{56}\) Cf. Deininger 1971, 108.

\(^{57}\) See above, n. 34.

\(^{58}\) ἀπὸ τῆς ἑσπέρας νέφη: This famous quote appears for the first time in the prophetic speech of the Aetolian Agelaos (217); see Pol. 5.104.10; cf. Deininger 1971, 25–29.

\(^{59}\) Polybius’ attribution of a passive attitude to the Aetolian masses misinterprets the reality, cf. Sacks 1975, 96.

\(^{60}\) E.g. Pol. 4.3.11 and also Scopas’ appeal for the mobilisation of thousands of Aetolians, see n. 16. The fine Aetolian elite cavalry must have been composed of, and maintained by, the “chieftains” who had their bases on the fertile land of western Aetolia, suitable for the raising of horses; see n. 20; Hom. II. Ε. 116–117; Pol. 18.22.5; Liv. 33.7.13; Strab. 8.8.8.1. It is not coincidental that the ἵππαρχος was the second most important office within the Koinon; see Scholten 2000, 26; id. 2003, 74. The ‘archaic’ structure of Aetolian society, which promoted war and rich military leaders, is once again evident.
popular support. These politicians invested mainly in cooperation with Rome as a means of advancing themselves in the riotous political scene.

This must have happened in the case of Lykiskos. Unfortunately, Polybius, who treats him in a hostile manner, does not offer much information, nor does any other ancient source. The historian was opposed to Lykiskos’ policies as well as those of the Achaean Callicrates, that is, wholesale support of Roman interests. At the same time, Rome was willing to support the new political men, especially in the case of Aetolia, which presented quite a rich record of resistance and indiscipline. Indeed, after Callicrates’ famous speech in Rome (180), the Senate exhorted Greek political figures to imitate his willingness to serve Rome’s interests. These events surely favoured the further rise of the pro-Roman faction in Aetolia; Lykiskos was elected general in 178/177. Despite the fact that a series of anti-Roman generals followed, the conflicts within the Aetolian Koinon became much sharper.

Unfortunately, the sources are extremely vague on the nature of the unrest in the League. The Aetolians were divided into at least two factions, if Livy is to be trusted. Possibly, the first conflicts arose between rich and indebted Aetolians (with aristocrats also among the latter). However, the political element in the conflicts gradually became more intense, as perhaps a great number of indebted Aetolians, former mercenaries and old supporters of Thoas’ faction would have sided with Perseus, who appeared as the new threat to Rome. Indeed, the anti-Roman faction desired economic reforms as well as deliverance from Rome.

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61 Cf. Rostovtzeff 1941, 610, who speaks of “unscrupulous politicians”, following the Polybian interpretation, see n. 63.
62 Deininger 1971, 146; Gruen 1976, 47; cf. Champion 2007a, 262, n. 15. Champion 2007a, 260–265, esp. 261f., emphasises the Greek political tactic of appealing to the conservative values of the Roman elite.
63 Polybius’ criticism: 32.4.1, 3; cf. Briscoe 1967, 14 f.; Walbank 1979, 263, 316; Champion 2004, 202 (unfortunately briefly). Gruen 1976, 53, n. 81, contends that one of Polybius’ sources could have been Aetolian exiles in Italy, victims of Lykiskos’ prosecutions. For Polybius’ attitude towards Lykiskos, together with Callicrates and Charops, see Pol. 27.15.14 and 30.13.11. However, see Briscoe’s cautious remarks (1967, 18) on the different domestic policies of these leading pro-Romans.
64 Briscoe 1967, 14 f.; Gruen 1976, 47; Derow 1989, 301; Eckstein 2008, 367; Rosenstein 2012, 222.
65 Pol. 24.8.8–9.15.
66 Pol. 24.10.6–7; cf. Oost 1954, 68 f.; Walbank 1979, 262f.
67 And then in 172 with Roman aid, see below, n. 89, cf. Briscoe 1967, 15; Walbank 1979, 316.
68 See above, n. 34.
69 Liv. 41.25.2, 6; 42.5.11.
70 Asheri 1969, 65 ff., 91 ff.; Mendels 1978, 61; Tsangari 2007, 34.
71 Liv. 42.5.6; cf. Mendels 1978, 72f.
may assume that they were opposed by a number of Phaeneas’ supporters, the Aetolians who maintained a pro-Roman stance and many men from the upper classes, who wished the continuation of the existing socio-economic status quo.

There are reports of a failed attempt at debt remission before 174, which worsened the situation even more and was perhaps the cause of the outbreak of the civil war. As long as the unbearable debt problem could not be solved through a political compromise, anarchy prevailed in the Koinon. As will be demonstrated, the ‘traditional’ anti-Roman party gradually established ties with Perseus. On the other hand, the equally powerful faction of Lykiskos would have persuaded many that close collaboration with Rome was the only way out for Aetolia’s problems. Judging from the generals’ succession, the anti-Roman faction must have controlled the government for long periods, but met with violent reactions from its political opponents. At the same time, the continuous strengthening of Perseus undoubtedly contributed to the polarisation of the civil war in Aetolia.

Blood in the Mountains

Despite the high tensions, there were attempts among the factions to bring about a peaceful solution. Both parties invited Perseus to act as arbitrator and asked him for a garrison that could guarantee peace in the area (175/174?). These actions

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72 Diod. 29.33; cf. Mendels 1978, 60 f.; Hansen 1996, 107.
73 Thus, Hansen 1996, 107.
74 Liv. 42.5.7; Diod. 29.33.
75 Pol. 30.11.3–6.
76 General successions: see n. 34. In 184 Perseus made the famous trip to Delphi: Liv. 41.22.5–8, 23.13–15; 42.42.1–3; cf. Walbank 1979, 206 f. Later, Eumenes maintained during his speech in the Senate (172) that in this way Perseus wished to attract the lower classes: Liv. 42.13.8; cf. Mendels 1978, 62 f., but Walbank 1979, 276. On Gruen’s view, see n. 6.
77 Unfortunately, the vagueness of the sources on the exact composition of the factions in the Koinon does not permit us to place important events in the Aetolian context. For example, Perseus’ measures in favour of the indebted perhaps were used in the propaganda of the anti-Roman Aetolians, regardless of the king’s real intentions; see Hansen 1996, 107. For Perseus’ measures: Pol. 25.3.1–4; cf. Gruen 1976, 30; Mendels 1978, 56 f.
77 Liv. 42.12.7, 42.4; App. Mac. 11.1, 7; cf. Deininger 1971, 147 f.; Mendels 1978, 60; Gruen 1984a, 106; Gruen 1984b, 404, 503; Hansen 1996, 107. Perseus’ intervention cannot be dated accurately. Surely it can be placed before 172, perhaps in 175/174, see Hansen 1996, 106, 118, n. 35; cf. Mendels 1978, 59, n. 28; Gruen 1984b, 404 (“mid-170s”). The Romans accused Perseus of his actions
clearly show the Aetolian inability to find a peaceful way of stopping the conflicts on their own. In the end, not even the Macedonian garrison could stabilise the area, possibly because of the tense situation following the failure of the debt remission (see above, n. 72). Thus, the Aetolians sought the aid of another great Mediterranean power, Rome.\textsuperscript{78} However, what one would nowadays describe as a ‘war crime’ took place and made the situation even worse.

Eupolemos, a member of the Aetolian elite, who twice served as general (189/188, 176/175) and was the hero of the battles at Cynos Cephalai against the Antigonids (197) and Ambracia against the Romans (189), slaughtered at Hypate 80 prominent Aetolians who were attached to his political opponent Proxenos and whom he had promised a safe return from the exile imposed on them for unknown reasons (174).\textsuperscript{79} During the peace negotiations which followed at Delphi, in the presence of a Roman embassy,\textsuperscript{80} Proxenos was poisoned under suspicious circumstances.\textsuperscript{81} As the conflicts continued, the Aetolians asked again for Roman arbitration. The first actions were unsuccessful; A senatorial embassy under C. Valerius Laevinus, the son of the Roman who had negotiated the first Aetolian-Roman treaty (212/211), travelled to Delphi for discussions with the Aetolian parties. He was unable to achieve anything and the ambassadors later

\textsuperscript{78} Liv. 41.25.1–2.

\textsuperscript{79} Liv. 41.25.1–6; cf. Deininger 1971, 149–152; Walbank 1979, 434; Hansen 1996, 108. The date could be 176/175, if one accepts that the massacre took place when Eupolemos was general, not when Livy places it. When the consul Q. Marcius discusses with Perseus (Liv. 42.40.7, October 171), he accuses him of supporting the masses in Aetolia as well as soldiers who murdered prominent citizens. Is he referring to the massacre at Hypate, other, later massacres or is it merely Roman propaganda? Indeed, the Romans tended to accuse Perseus (e. g. Liv. 42.40.7), but it seems that they or at least Livy favoured Proxenos (Liv. 41.25.6). Whether one supposes that the Macedonian garrison was sent before the massacre or afterwards, perhaps there was a kind of collaboration between the king and the anti-Roman faction, as would become more evident in the Third Macedonian War, see below, nn. 92 and 109. On Eupolemos’ transportation to Rome as a pro-Macedonian (171), see n. 95.

\textsuperscript{80} Liv. 41.25.5–6.

\textsuperscript{81} Liv. 41.25.6; cf. Grainger 1999, 513, 516 f. Livy’s vagueness regarding these events complicates the situation for the researcher. It is not even known what the opinions of Eupolemos and Proxenos were on the debt issue.
reported to the Senate that the madness of the Aetolians and their leaders could not be handled.  

In the next year, as Livy states, when the debt crisis still constituted the main problem of the Koinon, a new embassy, led by M. Claudius Marcellus, arrived (173). A mutual exchange of hostages was finally decided upon, again in Delphi, and hostilities ceased for a while. The careful Roman handling of the situation is very characteristic, as they did not wish to give open support to any faction. Indeed, it seems that their elegant tactics succeeded; despite the massacre in Hypate, the anti-Roman faction could not prevail and the continuous internal troubles forced the Aetolians to turn, after Macedonia, to Rome for mediation.

It is also characteristic that at the same time as Marcellus’ embassy, the arbitrator Appius Claudius was hastily sent by the anxious Senate to regulate the debt crisis in Thessaly and Perrhaebia through economic reforms. Perhaps the different Roman stance in the Aetolian case should be interpreted as an instance of the Senate’s ‘Realpolitik’. While the Thessalians were to be kept steady and untroubled, Rome wanted the Aetolian Koinon to be in a state of ‘controlled unrest’ due to an agreement that was entirely a result of their intervention, so that it would not become strong and side with Perseus. The open support of a particular faction or the application of a lasting solution in Aetolia would be dangerous as the possibility of war against Perseus was already high. Instead, a temporary measure would force the majority of the Aetolians to continue to seek the Roman presence and arbitration.

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82 The ambassadors’ reports: Liv. 41.274; cf. 42.2.2 (most probably the same embassy; alternatively the one mentioned in Livy 41.22.3, which went to Macedonia); cf. Gruen 1976, 36; id. 1984a, 164 f., 236; Mendels 1978, 60.
83 Liv. 42.5.7, 10; cf. Hansen 1996, 107. This embassy was sent perhaps as a senatorial reaction to the ambassadors’ reports from Aetolia and Thessaly (Liv. 42.4.5). Hammond – Walbank 1988, 497, believe that these ambassadors were sent by the pro-Roman parties in these areas.
84 Liv. 42.5.10–12; cf. Mendels 1978, 60 f.; Gruen 1984b, 504 f.
85 Gruen 1976, 36; Hansen 1996, 108.
86 Liv. 42.5.8–10; cf. Larsen 1968, 283; Deininger 1971, 150; Mendels 1978, 61 f.; id. 1982, 105; Hansen 1996, 108 f.; Grainger 1999, 518. Hansen 1996, 108, regards Appius as a member of Marcellus’ embassy, but this does not follow the Livian text. Some regard Claudius’ measures as proof that the Romans did not always support the civic elites; see Champion 2007a, 262, n. 15, with bibliography. However, once again, the information on the debt crisis in Thessaly is fragmentary. Grainger 1999, 518 f., suggests that the crisis in Aetolia had already been solved by the Aetolians themselves, but there is no evidence for this.
87 It is remarkable that the hostages were kept in Corinth, that is, in Achaean territory, controlled by the then enemies of the Aetolians and friends of the Roman power (Liv. 42.5.12). Hansen 1996, 109, based on Livy 42.5.11, believes that Marcellus’ reason for not applying in Aetolia the same measures as those that had been applied in Thessaly, was the hatred among the factions. This
Indeed, in 172, when war against Perseus was imminent, Rome’s actions were more clear-cut. After an Aetolian request in the Senate, a delegation under Quintus Marcius Philippus and Aulus Attilius Serranus travelled through Aetolia accompanied by soldiers. Lykiskos was appointed as general in the presence of these soldiers at the Aetolian assembly. Therefore, he enjoyed strong support from his followers, but the Roman pressure was a crucial factor in his rise as well. It is evident that on the eve of the Third Macedonian War, the Romans wished to control the situation in Aetolia by ensuring the occupation of the League’s highest office by one reliable man. The death of Proxenos and the continuous turmoil may have also persuaded them that the situation in Aetolia called for a more decisive intervention. At the same time, the Boeotian League, many of whose cities supported Macedonia, was dissolved due to the same delegation’s actions.

When the war broke out, Lykiskos sided openly with Rome, in contrast to Nikandros, who paid with his life for his opposition, and Archedamos, who fol-

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88 Liv. 42.25.14. Were the Aetolian ambassadors on the side of the pro-Roman party?
89 Liv. 42.38.2; cf. Deininger 1971, 152; Grainger 1999, 522f.; Tsangari 2007, 34 f. Gruen 1976, 36 f.; 1984b, 506 and Hansen 1996, 109 do not accept the view that the Romans influenced Lykiskos’ election. Indeed, he had been general once before and had many supporters, but in this crucial period, it would be naïve to regard the ambassadors’ presence (accompanied by soldiers) at the assembly as a pure coincidence. Livy’s previous passage (42.37) describes the ambassadors’ actions in Greece in the light of the forthcoming war. This embassy aimed to convince many different states to join the Roman cause. Therefore, discreet or not, their presence sent certain messages and must have given a further boost to Lykiskos. The Romans used to intervene in the internal affairs of other states, when certain politicians appealed for it – see Burton 2011, 233 – especially in the second century B.C.: see Champion 2007a. Already in 173 Marcellus had ended the social unrest (see n. 83). Having a seemingly unified Aetolian Koinon on the Roman side was an additional weapon on the eve of the war, both propaganda-wise and in practical terms. This must not lead us to believe that everything was calculated and surely one should not be led to conclusions knowing what happened later. However, in this case, Rome was preparing for the war in many different ways. Still, a unified stance on the part of the Aetolians was not possible; see n. 93.
90 The (artificial) peace as well as the election of Lykiskos reflect the rising popularity and power of the pro-Roman party. One could also suppose that the holding of the Aetolian hostages in Corinth was also a guarantee for the ‘proper’ behaviour of the Aetolians in the elections.
91 Pol. 271.3, 2.7, 10; cf. Walbank 1979, 290–294; Kallet-Marx 1995, 77 f.; Grainger 1999, 521; Shipley 2000, 381. Pro-Macedonian feeling: Pol. 275.3–4; cf. Walbank 1979, 207 f., 290–294.
lowed Perseus even after Pydna. Therefore, the division between the Aetolians was retained. Political leaders and soldiers allied in part both with Rome and with Macedonia. Characteristically, after Perseus’ victory in the cavalry battle at Callinicus (spring 171), the Aetolian leaders proved to be the perfect scapegoats. The Romans took the opportunity, following Lykiskos’ accusations, to transport Nikandros, Eupolemos (Proxenos’ old enemy) and more as hostages to Rome, but, as Lykiskos later remarked, their supporters remained in Aetolia. This harsh measure led to the election of Proandros, an anti-Roman politician, as general in September 171. The Aetolian choice is interpreted as a vote of resentment against the unfair treatment by the Romans. Thus, the Romans grew more worried about the Aetolians’ future stance in the war.

In 170/169 emissaries of the consul A. Hostilius Mancinus went on a tour of Thebes and the Peloponnese, exhorting everyone to maintain their support of Rome. In addition, they made it obvious that they knew exactly which Peloponnesians were on their side or not, thus causing confusion and unrest.

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92 On Nikandros, see n. 95. Archedamos: Liv. 44.43.6; Plut. Aemilius Paulus 23.3.
93 Pro-Roman: Liv. 42.55.9. In favour of Perseus: 42.51.9; cf. Grainger 1999, 523.
94 Liv. 42.60.8–9; cf. Grainger 1999, 523 f. The ancient writers point out that this victory triggered an outburst of pro-Macedonian feeling, especially on the part of the common people: Pol. 27.9.1–6; Liv. 42.63.1–2; cf. Deininger 1971, 159–164; Walbank 1979, 307; Shipley 2000, 380 f. Gruen 1976 and Mendels 1978 reject the connection between the people and Perseus, cf. Champion 2007a, 262, n. 15. Hansen 1996, 109 f., does not discern any pro-Macedonian feeling in the Aetolian scapegoats and believes that the Romans simply accepted Lykiskos’ accusations of them being responsible for the defeat. Nevertheless, Lykiskos’ interests were identical with the Romans’ at that time, i.e. the League had to be ‘purged’ of its most prominent generals, who were (at least in the past) anti-Roman.
95 Pol. 27.15.14; 28.4.6–7 (Lykiskos), 6.7; Liv. 42.60.9; App. Mac. 12; cf. Deininger 1971, 168–170; Gruen 1976, 37; Walbank 1979, 315 f.; Paschidis 2008, 341. The Roman exercise of power terrified and corrected the Epirete Kephals (Pol. 27.15.14–16). Nikandros’ fate was promoted as an example to be avoided to the Achaeans as well (Pol. 28.6.7). Grainger 2000, 245, s.v. ‘Nikandros (6)’, wrongly dates the hostages’ transfer to Rome to 167.
96 Anti-Roman: Pol. 28.4.3–4; cf. O’Neil 1984–1986, 48 (relative of Archedamos?); Grainger 1999, 525; id. 2000, 289 s.v. ‘Proandros (2)’. Of course, this series of events is correct, if one accepts that the hostages’ transfer took place between the battle and the Thermika. On the other hand, it is true that the characterisation of Proandros as anti-Roman serves Polybius’ negative depiction of Lykiskos as still facing strong opposition. However, the Roman demand for hostages in the following year proves their suspiciousness of the Aetolian leadership at a time when Perseus seemed to be winning the war; see n. 100 and the discussion in Grainger 1999, 524 f.
97 At the same time, many Greek cities were complaining about the Roman army’s greed, while the Molossi allied with Perseus, Grainger 1999, 524 f.
98 Pol. 28.3.1–3.
99 Pol. 28.3.3–9.
Immediately afterwards, they participated actively in the assembly at Thermon, in which they demanded hostages from the Aetolians. Then, Lykiskos urged the Romans to transfer as hostages Archedamos and Pantaleon, who were supporters of Nikandros and Eupolemos and the leaders of the anti-Roman party. In his response, Pantaleon accused Lykiskos of servility and then turned upon Thoas. After reminding the Aetolians of his harmful role in the Antiochian War and reproaching him for ingratitude, he urged the Aetolians not to let Thoas defend himself, but stone him to death.

Thoas’ stoning is a remarkable event in both the history of the Aetolian League and that of Aetolian-Roman relations. The Romans and Lykiskos desired his extermination because of his past relationship with Antiochos. He was the main supporter of the Seleucid king (in the betrayal of the Roman amicitia) and the last great political figure of the ‘old’ anti-Roman elite in Aetolia after the neutralisation of Nikandros and Eupolemos. The Romans perhaps felt insecure while he was still alive and enjoyed considerable prestige (he was general for

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100 Pol. 28.3.10–4.2.
101 Pol. 28.4.5–8; cf. Walbank 1979, 332. As after the battle at Callinicus (Pol. 27.15.14), Lykiskos’ charges were again successful. Pantaleon originated from Pleuron and was elected general in 186/185, 180/179 and 174/173; Deininger 1971, 99 f. with n. 4; Walbank 1979, 78.
102 Thoas returned to Aetolia from his captivity as a hostage thanks to Pantaleon and Nikandros’ mediation (Pol. 28.4.11); cf. Deininger 1971, 108, 152, 171; Walbank 1979, 332. Perhaps the Romans released him as a demonstration of goodwill, see Diod. 29.31, where the Roman propaganda regards Thoas’ liberation as an example of their moderation. However, Thoas perhaps still constituted a potential threat. He was general after his capture, in 181/180 and in 173/172 (see Grainger 2000, 321, s.v. ‘Thoas’), an indication that he maintained his influence.
103 Pol. 28.4.9–12; cf. Deininger 1971, 170–172; Gruen 1976, 37 f.; Grainger 1999, 525 f. Livy (43.175–6) does not mention the incident. Thoas’ stoning and Proxenos’ poisoning (see above, n. 81) have not been treated with the proper attention by modern researchers. A characteristic example of this is Hansen’s (1996, 111) conclusion that the Thoas incident “casts little light on the precise reasons behind the obvious discord that still gripped Aetolia”. Derow 1989, 313, does not even name him, Grainger 2000, 321, does not mention the incident, while Hansen 1996 does the same for Proxenos.
104 One may remember Philotas’ and Olympias’ stoning in Hellenistic Macedonia, according to some ancient writers. Pausanias narrates (9.7.2) that Olympias was stoned by a popular assembly, consisting perhaps of Cassander’s soldiers: see Carney 2006, 82 with n. 94. Indeed, the cases of Thoas and Olympias share many similarities; both were once political figures with great standing, many supporters and were potentially dangerous even after their military defeats and loss of political authority. On stoning in antiquity, usually a penalty imposed by the mob, see Hirzel 1967; Rosivach 1987 in Classical Athens, cf. Pease 1907.
105 For the Roman view of Aetolia as a treacherous ally that violated the Roman amicitia, see Franko 1995, 167–169, 171 f., recent discussions in Eckstein 2008, 322 f., 334, 348 with n. 20; Burton 2011, 269–278.
a fourth time in 173/172) in the new war against another prominent Hellenistic king. Indeed, after his death, the Roman ambassadors confined themselves to a brief rebuke and left the assembly satisfied, without insisting on the surrender of hostages. In addition, Thoas could not have been useful to the anti-Romans any more. It seems that after his release, he had adopted a more moderate stance, displeasing the radicals. Thus, Pantaleon (obviously with the agreement of the rest) saved himself from Roman wrath by targeting an old, expendable politician.

Thoas was the ideal scapegoat and was successfully utilised as a means of appeasing the Romans at that particular time. His violent execution by the Aetolians is perhaps a symbol of the stoning of the old Aetolian League by its inhabitants. Thoas was literally sacrificed on the altar of Roman propitiation. All the wrong choices of the Aetolians were embodied in his person, especially the collaboration with Antiochos. The more distant anti-Roman Aetolian past was purged to the benefit of the Aetolian present. Thus, the Romans, without demanding his or anybody’s death, sent a powerful message of allegiance. Still, the ‘purge’ was only superficial, as the internal conflicts within the Koinon continued.

A few months later, Perseus attempted by an impressive descent through the mountains to occupy Stratos by surprise, aided by the pro-Macedonian Aetolians under Archedamos. If Perseus had seized the validissima urbs Aetoliae and Lykiskos’ birthplace, the pro-Roman party would have been dealt a severe blow.

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106 Pol. 28.4.13. Afterwards, they moved on to Acarnania, where a distinction between the pro-Romans and the pro-Macedonians was more evident. However, they did not press the matter, perhaps because they desired a stable Acarnania next to Aetolia; Pol. 28.5; Liv. 43.17.6–9.

107 Thus, Gruen 1984b, 456, n. 109; Grainger 1999, 526; Paschidis 2008, 338; cf. Hansen 1996, 110. Gruen 1976, 37 f., characterises him, perhaps unfairly, as a “chameleon”. The possibility of an initial agreement between the Senate and Thoas, which led to his release in exchange for a more moderate stance, cannot be excluded. This interpretation concurs with Diodorus’ narrative (29.31, see above, n. 102), regardless of the new circumstances during the Third Macedonian War. Still, I find it difficult to believe that Thoas was then a member of the pro-Roman faction, as e.g. Hansen 1996, 110 and Paschidis 2008, 338, maintain. If one supposes that Thoas was a pro-Roman, the Roman delegation would have been outraged.

108 Pol. 28.4.13; Liv. 43.17.5. Later, the constant disturbances in Aetolia, evidence that the Romans still could not completely control the situation there, encouraged Eumenes to negotiate with Perseus: Pol. 29.7.5.

109 Liv. 43.21.6–22. Archedamos must have informed the king about the events in the assembly and encouraged him to take advantage of the unrest. In any case, the power of the anti-Roman party is evident, despite the transferral of its leaders to Rome and the leading position of Lykiskos. At least Archedamos had not yet been transferred to Rome, thus he had to act quickly.

110 Validissima urbs Aetoliae: Liv. 43.21.6. Deininger 1971, 172; Walbank 1979, 316.
and perhaps more Aetolians, or even the neighbouring Acarnanians, would have sided with the king. However, natural obstacles as well as the reinforcements sent by Lykiskos and the Roman commander in Ambracia forced Perseus to retreat.¹¹¹ Livy’s narrative is interesting: when Archedamos left the city to meet Perseus, the prominent citizens sided with Rome. Deinarchos, the chief of the Aetolian cavalry, who was supposed to support the king, followed their example.¹¹² Indeed, the prominent men of Stratos, fellow countrymen of Lykiskos, were perhaps not so willing to support Archedamos. By choosing Rome and changing the course of the king’s expedition, they retained the status quo and perhaps gained more benefits in doing so.¹¹³

The failure of Perseus’ campaign determined the fate of the anti-Roman faction. Archedamos withdrew to Aperantia and followed Perseus during his retreat after Pydna.¹¹⁴ Despite the sources’ silence, more persecutions of Aetolians suspected of pro-Macedonian sympathies must have followed. From then on, the League’s government was presumably controlled by the pro-Roman faction.¹¹⁵

Many Greeks, both experienced political men and ordinary people, realised that a new era had dawned only after Pydna.¹¹⁶ Everywhere, the pro-Roman parties predominated.¹¹⁷ Undoubtedly, many Aetolians joined Lykiskos when the battle’s victor was known. Pro-Roman Greeks rushed to Macedonia to honour Aemilius Paulus; from the Aetolians Lykiskos and Tisippos were present.¹¹⁸ The fall of the Antigonids led to Roman cruelty, as the Romans could regulate the post-war political scene in every state unchallenged. Indeed, the pro-Roman parties prevailed in the political scene by exterminating or sending their political opponents to Rome.¹¹⁹

¹¹¹ Liv. 43.22.1–10; cf. Gruen 1976, 38; Grainger 1999, 527 f.
¹¹² Liv. 43.22.3–4.
¹¹³ It cannot have been pure coincidence that in 169/168 Agelochos from Stratos was elected general (IG IX 1, LII). Grainger 2000, 83, s. v. ‘Agelochos (4)’: 169/168 or 168/167, cf. Grainger 1999, 528.
¹¹⁴ Aperantia: Liv. 43.22.10–11. After Pydna: see n. 92.
¹¹⁵ Grainger 1999, 528.
¹¹⁶ Derow 1979, 4 f. For the end of the Third Macedonian War as a landmark in the show of obedience to Roman commands, see Buraselis 2005, 20 (cf. 21–27 on the Roman treatment of Rhodes, Pergamon and Antiochus IV Epiphanes in the same era); Eckstein 2008, 341. Only then does Polybius speak of absolute Roman sovereignty in Greece: Pol. 3.4.2–3; cf. 1.1.5 and 6.2.3.
¹¹⁷ Pol. 30.13.2.
¹¹⁸ Pol. 30.13.4. From the Achaeans it was Callicrates who went to congratulate Aemilius Paulus and from Epirus it was Charops (cf. n. 63 above), Pol. 30.13.3–4; cf. Walbank 1979, 435 f. Tisippos: general in 163/162 and perhaps in 156/155; Walbank 1979, 436.
¹¹⁹ Pol. 30.13.1–2, 5–6; Liv. 45.31.3, 7–9; cf. Walbank 1979, 158, 436; Eckstein 2008, 380 f.
The Aetolians became aware of the new situation in the most painful way; Paulus’ victory gave Lykiskos the chance to get rid of every potential threat. He surrounded the meeting area of the Aetolians at Arsinoe and, aided by Roman troops, massacred 550 prominent men. Simultaneously, he exiled others and confiscated their properties. At the same time, the Romans restricted the Koinon almost to the area initially occupied by the Aetolian ethnos, though it still controlled Naupactus. In addition, the Romans promoted the creation of new, independent, small leagues at the expense of the now ‘surrounded’ Aetolian one: the Leagues of Aininanes, Dorieis, Oitaieis and Lokroi. Most of these had previously existed and were masterfully revived as rivals and safeguards against undesirable Aetolian actions. The clouds from the West had turned into a storm of destructive ferocity in Aetolia.

A delegation representing the Aetolians slaughtered by Lykiskos at Arsinoe protested to Paulus in 167. However, Paulus did not revoke the deportations, nor did he punish the murderers, except A. Baebius, who provided Lykiskos with Roman soldiers for the massacre. Obviously, the new regime in the Koinon

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120 Pol. 30.11.5; Liv. 45.28.6–7; cf. Deininger 1971, 192f.; Walbank 1979, 433f.; Hansen 1996, 111; Grainger 1999, 529, 535; Shipley 2000, 381. Hansen and Grainger believe that another slaughter took place at Arsinoe and that the massacre of the federal council with Roman support happened afterwards and elsewhere. Indeed, the identification of the Polybian account of events (Arsinoe) with the Livian text (massacre of 550 Aetolians) as the same event is not clear.

121 Syll. 1.653; cf. Daux 1936, 327; Larsen 1938, 301; id. 1968, 478 with n. 1; Bommeljé – Vroom 1995, 75. The strategic cities of Pleuron and Heracleia Trachinia seem to have been given around that time to the Achaeans (Paus. 7.11.3, 14.1); cf. Bommeljé – Vroom 1995, 75. Walbank 1979, 85, maintains that Aperantia was handed back to Aetolia after Pydna. If this is true, was it an act of goodwill and support of Lykiskos on the part of the Romans?

122 A fourth-century Koinon in eastern Ozolian Lokris: Scholten 2000, 64 with n. 18. On the Leagues of the Lokrians, now Daverio Rocchi 2015. A Koinon of the Dorians as a sub-unit of the Aetolian League in a late 3rd c. inscription, Scholten 2000, 64 with n 19, Koinon only after 166: Rousset 2015, 222–225. A League or at least communal organisation of the Oitaians in the Classical Era and after 166: id. 2015, 226f. and 228f. respectively. Rousset does not comment sufficiently upon the reasons behind the (re)appearance of these Koina, but merely speaks of liberation from Aetolian domination (224, 228, 230).

123 As in Epirus, where Paulus destroyed dozens of cities, most of them inhabited by the disobedient Molossians; see Pol. 30.15; Liv. 45.34.1–6; App. III. 2.9; Plut. Aemilius Paulus 29.1–3; Plin. nat. 4.10.39; cf. Hammond 1967, 628f., 634f.; Walbank 1979, 438f.; Bommeljé – Vroom 1995, 81; Shipley 2000, 381. Molossian leaders in favour of Perseus: Pol. 27.16.1–2. Scullard 1973, 213f., detects here a harsher turn in Roman policy, associating it with the influence of the less moderate plebeian senators.

124 Liv. 45.28.6–7; cf. Walbank 1979, 433.

125 Liv. 45.31.1–2; cf. Gruen 1976, 38; Grainger 1999, 529f. According to Livy, Paulus was more interested in finding out who was pro-Roman or pro-Macedonian.
was fully compatible with Roman interests. Nevertheless, Paulus did not wish to promote the image of direct, brutal Roman intervention in the politics of other Greek states.\textsuperscript{126}

The following years are shrouded in mystery. It seems that Lykiskos had to deal with severe problems on his way to stabilising his rule in Aetolia, as the internal strife continued unabated.\textsuperscript{127} He carried on with the persecutions by drawing up a list of his remaining opponents, who would later be transported to Rome.\textsuperscript{128} His violent actions must have had the opposite effect by turning many Aetolians against him. Despite the fact that the pro-Roman faction was in power, a great part of the League did not acknowledge it.\textsuperscript{129} Especially the old elite, whose members had been massacred at Arsinoe, must have grouped together many supporters. As long as Lykiskos could not consolidate his rule, his opponents maintained their opposition. It is characteristic that there is no mention of another Roman intervention in favour of Lykiskos. One is left with the impression that Rome 'abandoned' the faithful Aetolian. But the Romans had perhaps understood his shortcomings and after the way these were exposed in the bloodshed at Arsinoe, they presumably wanted to save face. After all, Aetolia was not a priority any more.\textsuperscript{130}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{126} Indeed, the Roman officer perhaps did not have orders to aid Lykiskos. Still, Paulus' action could only serve the interests of propaganda. The officer, whether following orders or not, surely knew that his choice would lead to Lykiskos' further rise. Paulus also executed the anti-Roman Aetolian Andronikos, obeying the Senate's orders and persuaded by Lykiskos' suggestion (Liv. 45.31.15); cf. Walbank 1979, 437, cf. 78. Some researchers believe that Archedamos is the name's correct reading, see Deininger 1971, 195, n. 18. In any case, it is interesting that, according to Livy, Andronikos followed his father's example in taking arms against Rome; political beliefs were inherited over generations.
\item \textsuperscript{127} Pol. 30.11.5–6. A similar situation occurred in Charops' Epirus: Pol. 30.12.
\item \textsuperscript{128} Similar lists were compiled by other pro-Roman Greek politicians as well (Pol. 30.13.4–5; Liv. 45.31.9). Paulus' personal displeasure with Callicrates and Lykiskos' accusations: Pol. 30.13.11; for Walbank's doubts see 1979, 437.
\item \textsuperscript{129} Pol. 30.11.5; cf. Walbank 1979, 434.
\item \textsuperscript{130} On the 'neutral' Roman stance, see also Gruen 1976, 38 f. It is not wrong to suppose that Rome was not so interested in Aetolia after Pydna, as the nobles enjoyed fewer opportunities for winning personal glory there; cf. Scullard 1973, 228. After all, a still divided and declining Aetolian \textit{Koinon} posed no danger to the post-war Roman \textit{status quo} in Greece. The 'abandonment' of Lykiskos by the Roman leadership was possibly a factor which led to his death, cf. below, n. 131. On Rome's withdrawal of support from the pro-Roman leaders, see Gruen 1984b, 518 f. Lykiskos might have opposed some Roman interests later on, but only assumptions are possible, as further evidence is lacking.
\end{itemize}
According to Polybius, after Lykiskos’ violent but ‘glorious’ death (160/159, ἄναιρεθέντος δὲ τούτου, κατεστρέψε τὸν βίον)\(^{131}\), the situation in Aetolia calmed down.\(^{132}\) One could reasonably doubt the historian’s testimony, since he was an enemy of Lykiskos, Callicrates and other Greeks sharing the same beliefs, but the deaths of more pro-Roman leaders perhaps indicate the fierce opposition to these violent attempts at establishing personal regimes.\(^{133}\) Despite the continuous executions and transferrals of anti-Roman leaders to Italy, the enduring unrest as well as Lykiskos’ violent death reveal the presence of an active anti-Lykiskos (though not necessarily anti-Roman) faction in the Aetolian Koinon.\(^{134}\)

\(^{131}\) Pol. 32.4; cf. Walbank 1979, 521f. ‘Εὐθανασία’ (Pol. 32.4.3; “fine death”, transl. W. R. Paton. One could also translate this word as “honourable”). Gruen 1984b, 519 and Grainger 1999, 535 speak merely of “assassination”. Is it possible that he was forced by his opponents to commit suicide? Unless, of course, Polybius is being ironic, but this does not seem to me to be the case here. Lykiskos’ death is the only thing about Lykiskos that Polybius praises. His vocabulary is quite strange (see Garland 1985, 164; Van Hooff 1990, 140f. for the usual terms), but the beginning of the passage is compressed, Walbank 1979, 521f. The interpretation of Lykiskos’ death as suicide is reinforced if one looks at the other case in which Polybius employed the word euthanasia; Cleomenes wished to escape his house arrest, seeking for a noble death (Pol. 5.38.9–10). Indeed, he preferred to commit suicide rather than be captured (5.39). Likewise, Ios. ant. lud. 9.75. As far as I know, Lykiskos’ death has nowhere been interpreted as an act of suicide. On honour and suicide, see also the remarks in Walcot 1986.

\(^{132}\) Pol. 32.4.1, 5.1; cf. Grainger 1999, 535. However, Bommeljé – Vroom 1995, 75f., n. 12 maintain that Polybius’ passage serves “a moralistic purpose” rather than the historical truth.

\(^{133}\) Pol. 32.5.2–4; cf. Gruen 1984b, 518f.

\(^{134}\) It has been suggested that even in the Achaean War (146), the Roman intervention secured the neutrality of the Aetolians (Pol. 38.13.9); cf. Walbank 1979, 688, 708. Unfortunately, the Roman reaction after Lykiskos’ death is unknown. In 156/155 Tisippos, Lykiskos’ associate, was elected general (IG IX², p. LII). Perhaps there were no major changes regarding the League’s internal politics and Rome was satisfied with the post-Lykiskos status quo. Rome still intervened in the East in the following years, when necessary; Scullard 1973, 229–231. On the other hand, we should not fall into Polybius’ trap and ‘demonise’ Lykiskos’ faction; cf. rightly Champion 2004, 210–212 on Polybius’ hidden motives behind the language of demagoguery. A preference for peace and the benefits of co-operation appealed to a part of Aetolian society, which suffered so much. Slaughters were carried out by others (e.g. at Hypate, cf. n. 79, above) and the ‘anti-Romans’ had their hands steeped in blood as well, e. g. in Thoas’ case. On a view of Lykiskos’ government and ‘successors’, see Grainger 1999, 535–539 contra Gruen 1984b, 519. The latter states that after his death his enemies prevailed. Such a view follows the Polybian text (see n. 131), but creates more questions.
Conclusions: the Collapsing Sphinx and Rome’s ‘Realpolitik’

Though the Aetolian sphinx continues to pose a difficult riddle, as many events in the League’s history after the Antiochian War are confused (e.g. the series of events in 176–174,\(^{135}\) one or two great massacres after Pydna?) and the stances of significant historical figures on the debt problem remain completely unknown (e.g. that of Eupolemos, Proxenos, Lykiskos),\(^{136}\) some clues can lead to certain conclusions. One is led to believe that the factions were formed as a result of many factors and could change from time to time, even from territory to territory. Thoas’ stoning and the shifting of opinions during the siege of Stratos are telling examples. A combination of complex economic, social and political factors caused divisions amongst the Aetolians. The question of siding with Rome or with Perseus further intensified the discord. Indeed, the Koinon’s story after the Antiochian War is a tale of dead-ends. Though it tried,\(^{137}\) it never succeeded in accomplishing consensual compromises, as its special advantages evolved into unresolved problems. When the Aetolian way of life was disrupted by the internal tensions and the Roman pressure, the League started to gradually destabilise. The rock, upon which sat the Aetolian sphinx of the Athenian hymn proved to be highly unstable.

Any reconstruction of the complex socio-political situation within the League requires caution, avoidance of generalisations and a careful interpretation of the sources, which are fragmentary and often biased. The view of a clash between ‘the wealthy’ and ‘the poor’, the first being ‘pro-Roman’ while the latter ‘pro-Macedonian’, is indeed anachronistic.\(^{138}\) Nevertheless, the overall picture leads to the assumption that the conflicts in Aetolia were centered on the indebted (among them once wealthy citizens) and the creditors. Later, the political events and

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\(^{135}\) Specifically: the failed attempt at debt remission (before 174), the establishment of a Macedonian garrison (175?) and the slaughter at Hypate (176 or 174?). See nn. 72, 77, 79 respectively.

\(^{136}\) Cf. Hansen 1996, 109, 112. On pp. 112f, he states that the relationship between the debt problem and the political or socio-economic issues is unknown, but the debt problem must have continued after the Third Macedonian War.

\(^{137}\) After the failure of direct discussions, the Aetolians used every possible means available to them, by asking for the arbitration of Macedonia as well as of Rome. Nevertheless, the hatred among the different factions was deep, the socio-economic and political problems complex and unsolvable and the fight for rule merciless. The violent deaths of Thoas and Lykiskos exemplify these points.

\(^{138}\) Gruen 1976. Champion 2007a, 262, n. 15 (with bibliography), rightly states that support for or hostility against Rome did not necessarily follow ‘class’ divisions. The same is true on the debt problem, cf. n. 40 above.
especially the aggravation of the relationship between the Senate and Perseus forced many Aetolians to side either with Rome or Macedonia, while also keeping an eye on the possible benefits one could acquire from the dominance of the victor. Our evidence points to the prevalence of a stronger political element in the conflicts, which functioned independently of the debt crisis. However, a complete detachment of the socio-economic problems from the political situation would be incorrect.

The stance of Rome is remarkable: cautious, patient, and acting in a calculated way. The Senate played its cards masterfully by wisely preferring not to support openly any faction for a long time. It revealed its intentions more clearly just before the war against Perseus, through the presence of the *legati* during Lykiskos’ election. Even when Rome was unquestionably the most powerful state in the Mediterranean world, Paulus punished the Roman official who had aided Lykiskos in the massacre at Arsinoe because he had intervened harshly. In this way, Rome was not only an empire by invitation, but also an empire of elegant ‘Realpolitik’ that knew how to make intelligent use of the principle of ‘divide and rule’.

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