İSTANBUL UNIVERSITY PRESS

Anadolu Araştırmaları
Anatolian Research

Anadolu Araştırmaları
Anatolian Research,
ANAR 2025, (33): 180–194

https://doi.org/10.26650/anar.33.1647595
Submitted 26.02.2025
Revision Requested 11.11.2025

Research Article

Open Access

Second Athenian League and Thrace

İlkay Sinan Karaman [1]

[1] Istanbul University, Faculty of Letters, Department of Ancient History, Istanbul, Türkiye

Abstract Information about the Second Athenian League derives mainly from the decree of Aristoteles of 378/7 BC and ancient authors. The league aimed to protect Greek cities from Sparta's aggressive policy. However, the lack of evidence that has survived to the present day makes it impossible for us to paint a complete picture of the period. For this reason, this study aims to provide a broader perspective and question certain generalizations. In this regard, the study will focus on the reasons why cities joined the league and examine how the establishment of the Second Athenian League affected the relationship between Athens and the Odrysian Kingdom, the largest regional power in Thrace. In addition, the situation in Thrace during the 4th century BC, as well as the networks of relations among the city-states, will be described based on evidence from literary sources, epigraphic documents, and modern scholarly discussions.

Keywords Second Athenian League · Decree of Aristoteles · Thrace · Sparta · Odrysian Kingdom

Citation: Karaman, İ. S. (2025). Second Athenian League and Thrace. *Anadolu Araştırmaları–Anatolian Research*, (33), 180-194. https://doi.org/10.26650/anar.33.1647595

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Corresponding author: İlkay Sinan Karaman karamansinanilkay@gmail.com

Introduction

The First Athenian League, founded in 478/7 BC under the leadership of Athens to fight against the Persians, was erased from history in 404 BC with the victory of Sparta and its allies in the Peloponnesian War. However, approximately 100 years after the establishment of the First Athenian League, the Second Athenian League was formed, again on Athens' initiative, for a different reason. While Xenophon's silence on the founding of the league is striking, Diodorus' information is also fragmentary. Fortunately, the Aristotelian decree, published in 1852 and written in the 7th prytany (February-March) of Nausinikos' archonship (378/7 BC), is the most concrete evidence we have, and sheds some light on the period (IG II² 43=RO 22=Syll.³ 147=SdA II 257).

Between lines 7 and 15 of the decree of Aristoteles, the league's purpose was stated as defending the independence of the Greek cities against Sparta's oppression and ensuring the continuity of the King's Peace. Lines 15–25 set out the conditions of membership and provide general information about the alliance's function. It was emphasized that cities had one vote regardless of their size. In lines 25–46, the property rights of the allied cities that joined the League were addressed, and Athens, accepted as the League's leader, was prohibited from acquiring property in allied territories, collecting taxes[1], establishing kleroukhiai and garrisons, and interfering with the cities' laws and administration. Finally, a list of the cities that became league members is provided.

Naturally, many discussions have come with the publication of the decree of Aristoteles. The first of these concerns the function of the document and the purpose of the commitments. It has been suggested that the league was organized in a way to avoid problems created by the Delian League (Bury, 2015; Cargill, 1981; Low, 2008). These precautions were nothing but propaganda and should not be seen in relation to the First Athenian League (Hamilton, 1980). For Seager, the clauses had a dual purpose: they served as propaganda against the oppressive rule of Sparta and, at the same time, functioned as a rejection of Athenian behavior within the context of the First Athenian League (Seager, 1994). Seager's view, which combines the two basic views, is the most consistent among the suggestions mentioned. While the text clearly contains propaganda against Sparta, there is no evidence that Athens exerted imperialist pressure on its allies in the early years of the league's establishment.

Considering that the decree of Aristoteles was intended as propaganda and an invitation to join the league in response to Spartan pressure, the League must already have been established before the decree was written. According to Grote (1899) and Schafer (1885), following Spartan Sphodrias' unsuccessful raid on Piraeus with more than ten thousand soldiers, Athens found itself in need of a defensive alliance and thus established the Second Athenian League. Marshall shares a similar view: after Sphodrias was tried and acquitted in Sparta for his failed attack on Piraeus, Athens invited several cities with which it was already allied to form a confederation (Marshall, 1907). Cawkwell, on the other hand, points out that Athens fortified the Piraeus port and rebuilt its navy in violation of the royal peace, and states that Sphodrias raided the Piraeus port as a result of the aid he provided to Thebes. He places the establishment of the Second Athenian League between Cleombrotos' invasion of Boeotia in 378 BC and Sphodrias' raid on Piraeus, noting that Sparta had violated the king's peace and openly challenged Athens with the Sphodrias episode, which naturally led to the expansion of the league (Cawkwell, 1973). Robert Morstein Kallet-Marx (1985), on the other hand, points out that Cawkwell's approach is largely correct, but states that the chain of events creates a rather tight calendar. For this reason, he suggests that the invitation for the establishment of the league took place in the summer or autumn of 379 BC. It can be argued that the process of Athens recovering and regaining strength (the reconstruction of the destroyed walls, the reestablishment of the fleet, and, presumably, the conclusion of new alliance agreements with various cities) likely resulted in Sphodrias' raid on the port of Piraeus. This raid should be seen as a clear warning message directed

[1] According to Theopompus, the Second Athenian League tax (phoros, obligatory payment) was not abolished; only the term 'tax' was softened and replaced by the term 'contribution' (*syntaxis*) (Theopomp. FGrH 115 F 98). Demosthenes (18.234) also writes that, before military expeditions, commanders visited cities to obtain a certain amount of financing. Aeschines (2.71; 3.94-100) states that the Second Athenian League collected a tax of 60 talents. Cawkwell (1973) argues that this tax was made permanent in 360 BC because the league was constantly at war.

at Athens. For this reason, it seems more logical that the league was established before Sphodrias' attack on Piraeus. However, as there is no document to clarify the situation, it is not possible to give an exact date.

Other points of contention regarding the league are the number of members, the names of cities that cannot be read, and the year in which the league stopped accepting members. The number of cities at the end of the decree of Aristoteles is 58 (*IG* II² 43=*RO* 22=*SdA* II 257=*Syll.*³147). However, Diodorus states that Athens enlisted 70 cities as members of the league (Diod. 15.30.2), and Aeschines enlisted 75 (Aeschin. 2.70). According to Cargill (1981), the number of members included in the league was exaggerated by ancient writers for political purposes, and only the 58 cities mentioned in the inscription actually participated. He also states that the participation of the cities that were members of the league occurred in 375/4 BC at the latest (except Thera and Zakynthos), and that the participation in the league stopped due to the peace between Athens and Sparta after the Battle of Leuctra. (Cargill, 1981). He states that Athens continued to form alliances with other cities outside the league after this date[2].

However, Cawkwell states that the registration of members on the Decree of Aristoteles stopped after 375 BC, although membership itself continued until 373 BC (1981). Like Cargill and Cawkwell, Accame, who believes the inscription was written by a single person, places the city that was the last to join the alliance in the autumn of 375 BC (1941). Fabricius, however, states that the inscription was written by three people and argues that the cities joined the league in 378 BC, 377 BC, and finally in 375 BC (1891). Seager, on the other hand, draws attention to the possibility that ancient writers considered the cities, which were allies of Athens, members, that new members were not added to the list for an unknown reason, but he sees a stronger possibility that the number is lower than that reported by the ancient writers (1994). In addition, he states that the league accepted members by 373 BC at the latest. Marshall (1907) and Sealey (1975) draw attention to the new members added during Timotheos' Thracian expedition and prefer 373 BC as the latest date of registration as a member. Woodhead, on the other hand, questions the membership of Jason of Pherae but still prefers 373 BC (1975). In a previous study, Woodhead dated the registrations of cities in lines 99–110 of the decree to 375 BC, and those in lines 112–130 to 373 BC (1962). The common ground of the authors who assume that the league accepted members until 373 BC is that the decree was not written by a single person but by three different handwritings and was prepared according to geographical locations (Baron, 2006; Burn, 1988). In addition, the fact that Timotheos' expedition took place in 373 BC is an important data point. This view suggests that new members were added to the decree in 378 BC, 375 BC and, 373 BC. We agree with this assessment. As Seager also points out, Diodorus and Aeschines considered cities allied with Athens to be members of the league, and therefore reported a higher number than that recorded in the inscription. In other words, because no distinction was made between which cities were league members and which were Athens' allies, a discrepancy arises with the number of members listed in the inscription.

Finally, the cities of Thera (see also Bradeen and Coleman 1967), Corcyra (see also Fauber 1988; cf. Psoma 2022), and Pherae (see also Woodhead 1957) have been suggested for the sections of the inscription that cannot be fully read or whose names have been erased.

Political Situation of the Period

We now turn to local dynamics in Thrace. The most powerful state in this area at the time of the foundation of the Second Athenian League was undoubtedly the Odrysian Kingdom under Cotys I, who ascended the throne in 384/3 BC. Although there is no evidence for the years between his accension and the beginning of the war for the Thracian Chersonese in 365 BC, the struggle for power between Medokos and Seuthes II was inherited by Hebryzelmis and Cotys I, with Cotys I emerging as the final winner with the support of the Athenian mercenary Iphicrates (Demosth. 23.129–

[2] For example, Amyntas from Macedonia, Cersebleptes, Berisades, and Amadocos from Thrace, Lyppeios from Paionia, and Gralblos from Illyria can be cited (Cargill, 1981).

131)[3]. After assuming power, Cotys I entered into diplomatic relations with the Triballi and the Getae to strengthen his dominance over the scattered tribes in the interior. The best evidence supporting this claim comes from the written objects of Cotys I, unearthed in the Borovo, Rogozen, and Letnitza hoards, as well as in the Branichevo, Agighiol, Moghilinska, and Aleksnadrova tumuli (see also; Hind, 1989; Nikolov, 1986; Ovcharov, 2003; Rehm, 2010).

During the early years of Cotys I, he developed good relations with Athens. Because of these relations, the king became an Athenian citizen (Demosth. 23.118). This reflects the shared interests of Athens and the Odrysian Kingdom in the Propontis around 380 BC. As mentioned in an inscription from the Hebryzelmis period, there were also some commercial partnerships during Cotys I's rule. (IG II² 31; see also Pistiros; IG Bulg V 5557 = SEG 43.486; Bouzek, Domaradzka & Archibald, 1996, 2002, 2007; Domaradzki, Domaradzka, Bouzek & Rostropowicz, 2000). In addition, the constructive activities of Iphicrates, Cotys I's son-in-law, between the two states should not be forgotten.

However, as time progressed, it became clear that the interests of Athens and Cotys came into conflict. The Second Athenian League constituted an obstacle to Cotys' expansionist policy, and this situation eventually drove the two power centers into war in 365 BC over control of the Chersonese. Cotys was later assassinated in 360 BC by two men from Ainos who had been students of Plato. The news of his death was received with great satisfaction in Athens (Demosth. 23.119), and this chain of events has raised debates regarding whether Athens played a role in his assassination (cf. Archibald, 1998; Jordanov, 2004; Tacheva, 2006; Tzvetkova, 2008; Zahrnt, 2015; Wiesner, 1963).

Another remarkable development during this period occurred regarding the Macedonian throne. Around 393/392 BC, Amyntas III, who had fallen out with the Olynthians over a land dispute, was dethroned, and Argaeus briefly took the throne (Diod. 9.92.2–3; 15.19.2–3). Following this development, Amyntas III, who wanted to regain his throne. He asked for help from Iphicrates in 383 BC (Aeschin. 2.28). After Sparta became involved in the incident, the Olynthians were defeated in 379 BC, and Amyntas III regained power (Diod. 15.19.3).

In summary, on the eve of the establishment of the Second Athenian League, the powerful Odrysian Kingdom solved its internal problems and developed good relations with other powers in its vicinity. In addition, the fact that settlements such as Deris, Sale, Zone, Drys, Danuion/Damnion Teichos, Bisanthe, and Serion Teichos, which were not registered in the First Athenian League lists kept from 454 BC, were also not included in the decree also shows that these settlements came under Odrysian rule in less than 100 years.

The situation between Athens and Thrace can be summarized as follows: Athens, which suffered a heavy defeat in the Peloponnesian War with Sparta and its allies in 404 BC, became an ally of the Persians against Sparta in the early years of the 4th century BC and entered the Corinthian War (395-387 BC). In 394 BC, the Persian fleet under the command of Pharnabazos and Konon inflicted a heavy defeat on Sparta in Knidos, and with this victory, many cities of the Aegean and Asia Minor (Kos, Nisyros, Teos, Chios, Mytilene, Ephesos, Erythrae, Samos, and Tenedos) expelled the Spartan garrisons and harmosts. In 389 BC, Athens appointed Thrasyboulos with a mission in Thrace and formed an alliance with the Odrysians after reconciling Medokos and Seuthes II (Diod. 14.94.2; Xen. Hell. 4.8.26; Zahrnt, 2015; Höck, 1891; Archibald, 1998). In the same year, the oligarchy period ended in Byzantion, and democracy, which Athens defended, was reestablished. As a result of these activities, Athens secured the vital grain trade from the straits. However, Athens' cooperation with Euagoras the King of Salamis, who was an enemy of the Persians, caused a rift between Athens and the Persians, and the Persians decided to support Sparta again. While things were going against Athens until this decision, the situation suddenly turned, and Athens was forced to sit at the peace table when the Spartan fleet under the command of Antalcidas entered the Hellespont and threatened Athens' grain route. Thus, the Corinthian War, which began in 395 BC, ended with the signing of the Peace of Antalcidas (King's Peace) in 386 BC[4].

[3] Following this rapprochement, Cotys I married his sister, Iphicrates, and they had a son named Menestheus (Athen. Deipn. 12.42; Nep. Iph. 3). The most plausible date for this marriage is 386 BC, as because Menestheus became a strategos in 356 BC. According to the law, he had to be at least 30 years old to take up this position (Beloch, 1923; Tacheva, 2006).

[4] Since the treaty's terms were determined by the Persian King Artaxerxes II, the treaty is also known as the King's Peace.

According to the terms of the Peace of Antalcidas, Athens relinquished the territories it had acquired in Asia Minor, which were handed back to Persia, while the remaining Greek cities were declared autonomous[5] (Xen. Hell. 5.1.31). As a result, Athens' aspirations to restore its maritime hegemony were once again pushed out of reach, and Sparta began to exert increasing pressure on the Greek cities. After the Treaty of Antalcidas, Athens maintained good relations with Chios, Mytilene, Methymna, Byzantion, and perhaps Rhodes in line with its interests, and established alliances based on the principles of autonomy (Marshall, 1907). These ongoing relations later resulted in the establishment of the Second Athenian League. In addition, as we have mentioned before, it developed good relations first with Hebryzelmis (see IG II² 31) and then with Cotys I (Demosth. 23.118) in order to strengthen its position in Thrace.

Turning our attention to the Thracian Chersonese, it becomes clear that the Persians filled the gap left by the Peace of Antalcidas. Philiscus of Abydos was appointed there by Ariobarzanes, the satrap of Phrygia (Demosth. 23.141; Höck, 1891).

The Second Athenian League was established precisely in this historical context, and the decree of Aristoteles inviting the Greek cities to join the league can be understood in this context. The order in the decree and Diodorus' accounts indicated that Athens, Chios, Mytilene, Methymna, Rhodes, Byzantion, and Thebes were the founding cities (IG II² 43=RO 22=SdA II 257=Syll.3 147; Burn, 1998; Cawkwell, 1973; Diod. 14.28.3). These cities joined the league on different dates. The first treaty was with Chios in 384 BC. In the process, it became a league with the participation of other cities (Bruce, 1965). The treaty with Methymna dates back to 378/7 BC (RO 23). The city of Thebes was the last registered by the first engraver and was one of the founding members of the league after the end of the occupation of the Kadmeia. In other words, the continuing political relations of Athens after the Treaty of Antalcidas led to the emergence of a new league in the process.

The Cities of the Second Athenian League in Thrace

Byzantion, founded by Megarian colonists in the 7th century BC (Plin. Nat. 9.15; Strab. 7.6.2), was one of the founding cities of the league. There are several reasons for this. First of all, it should be noted that only twelve years had passed since the oppressive pro-Spartan oligarchic regime in Byzantion was overthrown, and the anger towards Sparta was still fresh. The Second Athenian League, on the other hand, promises independence and freedom to its members against the oppressive rule of Sparta. In addition, both cities had common interests in the Black Sea grain trade, which was of vital importance for Athens. Byzantion has a strategic position on the maritime road of grain coming from the Black Sea, while this trade was the city's most important source of income. Athens had to obtain the grain from abroad that could not be produced in Attica. Athens was the largest buyer of grain coming from Byzantion. For this reason, there had been a symbiotic relationship between Athens and Byzantion for many years. This common interest caused Byzantion and Athens to act together. When the league was set up and a joint naval force began to operate, the member cities suddenly found themselves under a broader shield that helped protect the grain routes from Spartan pressure and from pirates. Many of them realized that standing together offered a far better chance of defense than trying to handle these threats on their own.

Another Thracian city that joined the league early was Perinthos, a neighbor of Byzantion. In the decree of Aristoteles, its name appears immediately after Byzantion, but it was listed in a different handwriting. Founded by colonists from Samos in the 7th century BC, Perinthos (Zahrnt 2015), like Byzantion, was an important port city in the Propontis and a dominant point of maritime trade in Thrace. Like Byzantion, it was under Spartan pressure at one time. These similar reasons brought Perinthos, like Byzantion, closer to the league, and it became a member of the league around 378/7 BC. In addition, Marshall (1907) emphasizes that its neighbor, Byzantion, also influenced Perinthos' league membership.

[5] However, the islands of Skyros, Imbros, and Lemnos represented a notable exception, as these settlements were crucial to Athens in terms of grain commerce and supply security. The inscription containing the Athenian Grain Law, dated to 374/3 BC (RO 22 = SEG 48.96 = SEG 60.137 = SEG 66.114 = Stroud, 1998), clearly indicates that these islands occupied a central position within Athens' grain-supply network. The decree explicitly required that all imported grain be brought directly to the Athenian market, forbade any re-export, and subjected the entire grain trade to strict public supervision, thereby underscoring the state's effort to secure and regulate the maritime routes essential for provisioning the city (cf. Demosth. 34.37; Lys. 22.8; Arist. Ath. Pol. 51.3).

This view seems reasonable for the two neighboring cities. In addition, other dynamics exist in Perinthos' membership in the league. This is undoubtedly the pressure that the Odrysian Kingdom put on Perinthos. Around 400 BC, Xenophon stopped at Perinthos, traveled 60 stadia from there, and went to the residence of Seuthes II (Xen. Anab. 7.2.17–18). This shows that the current castle of Seuthes II was in an area between Bisanthe and Perinthos (Porozhanov, 2001-2002), and therefore Perinthos was a border city with the Odrysian Kingdom. Pseudo-Aristoteles and Demosthenes inform us about the relations between Perinthos and the Odrysians in later years. Cotys I asked the Perinthians for a loan to establish an army, but when they refused, he attacked the city (Ps.-Arist. 2.1351). According to Demosthenes, the Athenians anchored at Perinthos with the hope of making peace with Cotys I, but Cotys I attacked them before any negotiations occurred (Demosth. 23.165). Although the three data points we have presented do not directly explain the reason for Perinthos' participation in the Second Athenian League. They do shed light on the relationship between Perinthos and the Odrysian Kingdom in the first half of the 4th century BC. It is clear that Perinthos, due to its proximity to the Odrysian Kingdom, felt intense Thracian pressure on it in the first half of the 4th century BC. While all these reasons appear to be the factors that triggered Perinthos' participation in the Second Athenian League, the fact that the league offered a common defense seems to be an attractive reason in terms of security.

The third city in Thrace that joined the league was Maroneia. Founded by colonists from Chios, Maroneia (Ps.-Scymn. 675 ff) was an important port settlement and the largest Hellenic colony in Aegean Thrace. The exact date of Maroneia's joining the league is a mystery, and two views come to the fore. The first of these is related to Peparethos and Skiathos, which appear in the two lines immediately before Maroneia in the decree of Aristoteles. Diodorus (15.30.5) says that after the unsuccessful attack on Histiaea, Chabrias set out for the Cycladic Islands to recruit members, and liberated Peparethos, Skiathos, and some of the islands in the area from the Spartans and made them members of the league. Chabrias' expedition was placed in 377 BC. Considering the consistency between Diodorus' narratives and the order of the cities that were members of the league in the decree of Aristoteles. It can be said that Maroneia also joined the league in 377 BC. This seems to be the common opinion (Porozhanov, 2021; Zahrnt, 2015). According to Baron (2006), 375 BC is the preferred date. This date is determined, according to Diodorus, by Chabrias' intervention, which took place after the tribe of the Triballoi attacked Abdera (Diod. 15.36.4). As clearly indicated in lines 99–105 of the decree of Aristoteles, after saving Abdera, Chabrias continued his activities in Thrace and added several cities, listed below, to the league[6]. However, Maroneia is not one of them. The cities associated with Chabrias' expedition to Abdera and subsequent activities were shown in a geographical block on the left of the decree of Aristoteles, with Maroneia listed on the front side of the stele as one of the league's first members[7].

The reasons for Maroneia joining the alliance can be listed as follows: (a) its desire to increase the city's commercial volume, primarily through wine[8]. (b) Its vulnerability to attacks from Thracian tribes due to its location. (c) Political rivalries reflecting the era. Diodorus reports that Chabrias liberated Peparethos, Skiathos, and several nearby islands from Spartan control. This may indicate that Maroneia was similarly an oligarchic city allied with Sparta. If so, Chabrias' intervention may have resulted in the democratic regime being reestablished and joining the league.

In conclusion, a combination of economic interests, historical and political affiliations, security considerations, and Chabrias' activities were decisive factors in Maroneia's decision to join the Second Athenian League.

In the first rows of the left side of the decree of Aristoteles (lines 100–105 of the decree), five Thracian cities were listed. These were Abdera, Thasos, the Chalcidians of Thrace, Ainos, Samothrace, and Dikaia. These became members of the league in 375 BC as a result of Chabrias' activities (Archibald, 1994; Baron, 2006; Porozhanov, 2021; Woodhead,

[6] The cities in Thrace mentioned are Abdera, Thasos, Ainos, Samothrace, and Dikaia.

[7] Cargill (1981) states that there are insufficient sources to date the front of the stele prior to the Battle of Naxos, and therefore it remains speculative to determine whether Perinthos, Peparethos, Skiathos, Maroneia, and Dion joined the league in 377 BC.

[8] Homer, in the Odyssey, refers to the famous wine of Ismaros (Hom. Od. 9.196–212). The production of wine is also attested by the coin types of Maroneia (May, 1965; Wartenberg, 1992; Psoma, Karadima & Terzopoulou, 2008).

1962; Zahrnt, 2015). However, we only have a narrative about the participation of the Abdera settlement in the league (Diod. 15.36.1-4).

The first settlers from Clazomenai founded a colony at Abdera around 654 BC, but Thracian tribes eventually drove them out. Later, after Persia brought Asia Minor under its control, refugees from Teos arrived and established a new settlement in the region. The Teosians set up a trading colony along the banks of the Nestos River, which soon became a major center of commerce in the Aegean. Its location, however, left it vulnerable to frequent Thracian attacks. According to Diodorus, approximately thirty thousand Triballians, who left their lands due to famine, looted the lands of Abdera and then retreated in a disorderly manner. During this retreat, the Abderans attacked and killed about two thousand of them. However, despite this incident, the looters attacked Abdera again, and the city faced the danger of extinction as the neighboring Thracians, who had previously sided with Abdera, switched sides. At this very moment, Chabrias from Athens came to the aid of Abdera and saved them from extinction (Diod. 15.36.1-4).

Diodorus provides no information about how the Triballians crossed the Odrysian lands and moved south, or about the attitude of the Odrysian Kingdom during this raid. Archibald (1998) states that the Triballians, with the migration wave they initiated, occupied the western part of the Odrysian Kingdom, and that this situation was the biggest problem during the rule of Cotys I. Tacheva (2006) states that the raiding activities of the Triballians took place under the guidance and knowledge of Cotys I, and that the Thracians who initially helped Abdera but later switched sides were those under the command of Spokes, known to us from the coins. Of these two views, Tacheva's view seems more consistent, and the reasons for this can be listed as follows. First, the Odrysian gifts found in Triballian lands show the good relations between the two tribes. Second, it is not expected that the Triballians would have passed through Odrysian lands unannounced while raiding Abdera, or that the Odrysian Kingdom would remain silent in the event of a possible invasion. Finally, it is quite reasonable that Spokes, whom we witness from his coins, changed sides[9]. Given the similarity of coin types of Saratokos and Spokes, it is plausible that Spokes belonged to another branch of the Odrysian dynasty.

In summary, it is not a coincidence that the looters belonging to the Triballian tribe chose Abdera and its surroundings. Before the attack, Abdera was not a member of the Second Athenian League. Cotys I hesitated to confront the Second Athenian League on this issue and directed the Triballians toward Abdera. In addition, the image of Hellenic cities being looted by barbarians seems more acceptable than that of Cotys I attacking the Hellenic cities. However, whether or not Cotys I contributed to the security problem that emerged at Abdera, this resulted in Chabrias' intervention and Abdera's admission to the league, placing it in a different situation from that of Byzantion, Perinthos, and Maroneia.

After Abdera, the name of Thasos appears on the list. Thasos is not far from Abdera, and it is possible that Thasos was Chabrias' second stopover point in Thrace. However, the absence of any narrative of military intervention against the city and the success that Chabrias demonstrated in Abdera indicate that Thasos may have joined the league because of diplomatic initiatives. Although it was a member of the First Athenian League and rebelled against the league in 465 BC, historical ties played an important role in Thasos' participation in the league. Athens' influence on the city is also clearly seen in the fact that the oligarchic governments established in the past could not provide stability[10]. Another possibility is that Thasos did not want to be a rival to Athens due to its superiority at sea, and instead preferred to become a member of the league in order to benefit from the opportunities it offered. In addition to all these factors, another reason that influenced Thasos' participation in the league was its strategic location. The island was located at a point dominating Aegean Thrace and Aegean Pontus, and it also played a key role in regional trade. In addition, the

[9] Even though the numismatic evidence for Saratokos has been lost, coins minted by Spokles — who ruled the same territories and used similar iconography and motifs — are still attested (Manov, 2002; Tacheva, 2006).

[10] Thasos experienced its first oligarchic regime from 411 to 407 BC. After the decisive Battle of Aegospotami in 405 BC, the oligarchy returned, this time under the influence of the Spartan commander Lysander. We do not know exactly when this second oligarchy ended, but Thrasyboulos most likely overthrew it around 390 BC. During this period, Thasos' coinage reflected political changes, with substantial modifications occurring alongside the return of exiles and the oligarchic regime's impact (Picard, 2023; Psoma, 2015).

city was famous for its rich mines, especially gold, marble, and agricultural products (Athenaeus, Deipn. 1.58,13.43–48; Hdt. 6.46–47; Plin. Nat. 14.9.1,14.19.4–22.1,15.24.1, 36.44, 37.121). The economic cooperation offered by the Second Athenian League provided a wide range of marketing opportunities for Thasos. The people of Thasos also wanted to benefit from this advantage.

Another place mentioned in the decree is Thracian Chalcidian, which refers to the area inhabited by the Chalcidians in antiquity (Psoma, 2013; Zahrnt, 1971). The region is made up of three peninsulas: Pallene, Sithonia, and Athos (Psoma, 2013). Because of its location, it served as one of the most important strategic gateways to the Aegean. The area was also rich in timber and mineral resources, which naturally attracted the attention of regional powers over time. As a result, the peninsula became a center of competition among Athens, Sparta, and the Kingdom of Macedonia. In response to this struggle, the cities of Chalcidian united under the leadership of Olynthus and formed a federation (*koinon*). With the establishment of this federation, the Chalcidian cities aimed to organize a common defense against Athenian expansion at sea and Macedonian expansion on land. However, Athens, seeing the newly formed alliance as a threat, intervened in the region in 432 BC (Thuc. I.58–65).

After the Peloponnesian War, Olynthus and its allies regrouped and confronted King Amyntas II of Macedonia in battle. This prompted Sparta to launch a campaign in the region in 382 BC (Diod. 15.19–23). Following a siege that lasted about three years, the Chalcidian League was forced to surrender to Spartan king Agesilaus II (Diod. 15.19.2; 15.23.3). The league, however, later recovered from Spartan control and regained its strength, seeking new allies (Psoma, 2001; Zahrnt, 1971). It is therefore likely that the Chalcidian council (*synedrion*) sent envoys to Athens to join the Second Athenian League. Another possibility is that Chabrias, aware of the situation in Chalcidian, may have personally sailed to the peninsula and persuaded the league to join; however, this seems improbable, as it would have required him to turn back west after sailing east from Thasos. Moreover, this scenario does not match the sequence preserved in the decree of Aristoteles. Although the method of participation is unclear, the Chalcidian League had seen the Second Athenian League as a refuge against Sparta and joined the league around 375 BC (Psoma, 2001; 2011).

It is understood from the decree that Chabrias' next route was the triangle of Ainos, Samothrace, and Dikaia. Ainos, established where the Hebros River flows into the Aegean Sea, is a strategic settlement with a natural harbor and, due to its location, can control the Thracian Pelagos. Being surrounded by the river and the sea provides the city with a natural shelter and enables trade overseas to the inner parts of Thrace. This is also supported by the productivity of the Hebros delta, which is rich in agricultural production. Undoubtedly, Ainos, which wants to confidently market its wealth to a wider network, will want to benefit from the wide trade network offered by the Second Athenian League and the collective security promised by its navy. For this reason, one of the main motivations for Ainos to join the Second Athenian League was the desire for commercial gain.

Another important reason that brought Ainos closer to the Second Athenian League was its need for security. Like many Hellenic cities under Spartan pressure in the early 4th-century BC, Ainos felt this pressure deeply. As seen in many cities during this period, a pro-Spartan administration may have been briefly established. At this point, the Second Athenian League acted as a deterrent against Sparta, offering protection to every Hellenic city. However, Ainos faced another security threat that may have been even more serious than Sparta: the Odrysian Kingdom, which lay on its borders and pursued an expansionist policy, especially under Cotys I. The Odrysians relied on the port of Ainos to bring products from the Thracian interior to the Aegean. Relations between the two powers were sometimes friendly, but tensions frequently arose under kings like Sitalkes and Cotys I, who focused on asserting control over the coast.

The Ainos coins, dated between 382 and 378 BC and featuring unusual war depictions, may provide evidence of this situation (May, 1966). These coins are interpreted as evidence that the Odrysian Kingdom attacked the city, but the attack was unsuccessful (Tacheva, 2006). There is no narrative or other data that conclusively confirm this, but the expansionist policy of Cotys I cannot be ignored (Tacheva, 2006). As a result, Ainos, facing periodic Odrysian pressure that threatened its security, sought to secure itself by joining the Second Athenian League.

After incorporating Ainos into the Second Athenian League, Chabrias' new target was Samothrace. The island had a strategic location on the trade routes, controlling the entrance to the Thracian and the Aegean Seas, and the Hellespont. For this reason, the island, which had always been the target of great powers, joined the Second Athenian League in order to ensure its security against other powers, especially Sparta, and to conduct trade without any problems. Another reason for Samothrace's participation in the league was related to its Kabeiroi mystery cult, and religious tourism constituted an important source of income for the island (Diod. 3.55.7; 4.43.1; 5.47–49; Hdt. 2.51; Strab. 7.8.50; 10.3.19). Being a member of the league meant an increase in the number of religious visitors to Samothrace and also meant security against a possible pirate attack on the sacred site.

The last Thracian city to become a member of the league in 375 BC, thanks to the efforts of Chabrias, was Dikaia. Founded on the shores of Lake Bistonies, it was a smaller settlement than the other Thracian cities that joined the league. To the east of Dikaia lay Abdera, to the west Maroneia, and to the south the islands of Samothrace and Thasos. All these neighboring settlements were members of the Second Athenian League, and this likely played an important role in Dikaia joining. In addition, due to its location near the region inhabited by the Bistones, Dikaia may have been under pressure from the local Thracian tribes, particularly the Bistones. Although no historical records directly attest to such pressure, this explanation remains plausible in light of the Thracian way of life. As seen in the case of Abdera, proximity to Thracian tribes may have influenced Dikaia's decision to join the league. Moreover, the commercial opportunities and the security of trade routes offered by the league were strong incentives for Dikaia to become a member.

Historical sources state that the Athenians commissioned Timotheos to rescue Corcyra from Spartan attack in 373 BC and that Timotheos set sail for Thrace to meet the needs of the expedition. They also mention that he first sailed to Thrace and included many cities in Thrace in the Second Athenian League (Demosth. 49.6; Diod. 15.47.2–3; Xen. Hell. 6.2.12–13). Most modern researchers agree that Timotheos' activities took place in 373 BC and that the cities mentioned in lines 112-130 were those that Timotheos added to the league (Baron, 2006; Cawkwell, 1963; Marshall, 1907; Seager, 1994; Woodhead, 1962). These are: Elaious, Selymbria, Dion, and Neapolis (IG II² 43=*RO* 22=*Syll.*³ 147=*SdA* II 257). It is seen that the cities recorded in the inscription were written in a mixed way compared to the records of 375 BC and earlier, and do not form a geographical block. For this reason, it is not possible to make a priority order in the records of 373 BC.

According to Pseudo-Scymnus, Elaious was a strategic port settlement established by an *oikistes* named Phorbas as an Athenian colony at the tip of Thracian Chersonese (Ps.-Scymn. 696), controlling the entrance to the strait. There was a mutual relationship between Athens and Elaious, which was of key importance for the transportation of grain from the Pontos Euxeinos that Athens needed due to its location. This mutual interest brought the two sides closer to the league. Both sides tried to secure grain trade through the league. Furthermore, interest in the peninsula, which had begun during the time of Miltiades the Elder and Miltiades the Younger, intensified during the period of Pericles[11]. In the first half of the 5th century BC, the peninsula effectively became Athens' backyard, with many Athenian citizens settling there. Although this situation lost its relevance following the Peloponnesian War, the historical partnership established remained a significant factor in Elaious' decision to join the league.

Selymbria, a Megarian colony, is a port city located between Perinthos and Byzantion, both of which were members of the Second Athenian League. Selymbria's relations with these cities and the benefits it gained through the league are among the reasons Selymbria moved closer to it. The southern coast of the city on the Propontis encouraged its

[11]According to Herodotus, a border struggle existed between the Doloncians and the Apsinthians, and the Doloncians consulted the Oracle of Delphi because of this. Following the oracle's instructions, they invited Miltiades the Elder—who had welcomed them hospitably—to their territory to establish a colony in the Chersonese. After repelling the Apsinthians' attack, Miltiades the Elder constructed a defensive wall between Cardia and Pactya. Miltiades the Younger assumed power through intrigue after the death of Miltiades the Elder in the Chersonese. He married Hegesipyle, the daughter of Oloros, and consolidated his authority in the region. Miltiades the Younger, who had established a tyrannical regime in Athens, took part in the Ionian Revolt against Persian rule in 494 BC but returned to Athens after the revolt failed, fearing punishment (Hdt. 6.34–41). According to Plutarch, Pericles campaigned to the Chersonese to assist the Hellenes threatened by Thracian attacks. After rescuing them, he fortified the region and settled approximately one thousand Athenian cleruchs there (Plut. Per. 19.1). Tzvetkova notes that following Pericles' settlement of cleruchs in the Thracian Chersonese, significant changes appeared in the tribute records of the region's cities. Elaious, Limne, and Imbros emerged as new member cities during this phase, while Madytos and Sestos began paying separate tribute. These developments are interpreted as a direct consequence of the dissolution of the Chersonese synteleia and Pericles' settlement policy. Tzvetkova emphasizes that this initiative faced resistance not only from Greek cities but also from neighboring Thracian communities and the Odrysian Kingdom (Tzvetkova, 2008).

commercial development. For this reason, the security at sea and the extensive trade network offered by the Second Athenian League influenced Selymbria's decision to join. In addition, the need to protect the city from attacks by the Thracians, its northern neighbors, further encouraged Selymbria to become a member.

Dion is another Thracian city that was a member of the league. In ancient times, seven cities were named Dion[12], but the one here is on the Acte Peninsula at the foot of Mount Athos. Dion's participation in the First Athenian League is also confirmed by the tribute lists, Thucydides, and other epigraphic and literary sources[13]. It is impossible to state a specific reason why Dion from Thrace is a member of the league. However, if we are to generalize, the reasons that led the city to join the league may have been to ensure security against possible attacks in the region and to obtain commercial benefits.

Another city mentioned in the decree list is Neapolis. There are two settlements with this name in the Thrace region. One is located in the Kavala region of Greece, while the other is located in the Eriklice neighborhood of the Şarköy district of Tekirdağ (Loukopoulou and Laitar, 2014). The Neapolis mentioned in the decree is the settlement in Kavala founded by Thasos colonists. When the settlement was founded, the Thracian Edonian tribe ruled the region. The settlement is located on the Aegean coast and controlled the road to the Pangaion gold mines. For this reason, it is a strategically important location.

Although Neapolis was founded by Thasian colonists, relations between the two cities deteriorated towards the end of the Peloponnesian War. Following the oligarchic coup in Thasos in 410 BC, Thasos distanced itself from Athens and formed an alliance with Sparta (Thuc. 8.64.3; Xen. Hell. 1.1.32). This situation created a rift between Neapolis, which was pro-Athenian, and Thasos. As a result, Thasos, with Spartan support, besieged its colony Neapolis. Neapolis, however, received support from Athens and was saved from this siege. An honorary inscription in Athens praising the people of Neapolis is a contemporary witness to this event (AIO 1176 = IG I³ 101 = OR 187). According to Psoma (2001), this event between Neapolis and Thasos is one of the earliest examples showing that *apoikia* acted independently against their founding cities.

The hostility between Thasos and its colony eventually gave way to peace through a treaty mediated by Paros in 390 BC (SEG 33.524). The treaty also addressed economic and social matters such as the return of exiles, the monetary system, the amphora-sealing system, and the wine trade (Psoma, 2001). Following the peace, relations between Athens and Thasos once again turned in Athens' favor through the mediation of the Athenian strategos Thrasyboulos. Thus, the independent Thasos–Neapolis–Amphipolis triangle, which shared common interests with Athens, was reestablished. In Rhodes' words, this arrangement became the precursor to the principles of "independence (autonomy) and cooperation" that would later define the Second Athenian League (Rhodes, 1985).

Both cities were included in the list of members of the Second Athenian League. However, their roles and relationships within the league differed because of the historical processes outlined above. Neapolis' close partnership and loyal alliance with Athens led to its voluntary entry into the league, whereas Thasos maintained a more cautious relationship.

Another reason that may have prompted Neapolis to join the league was the potential threat of attacks from the Thracian tribes. In his account of the struggle between Athens and Sparta for control of Amphipolis during the Peloponnesian War, Thucydides also recounts the bloody story of the founding of the city (Thuc. 4.102–108). He mentions, for example, the massacre of Athenian colonists who arrived in the region 32 years after the expulsion of Aristagoras of Miletus—considered the leading figure of the Ionian Revolt—by Drabeskos, a member of the Edonian tribe (Thuc. 4.102).

Although Neapolis is not mentioned in this episode, the hostility of the local population toward colonies established in Thrace is evident. Frequent clashes with and plundering by Thracian tribes undermined the security of settlers

[12]Cities with the same name existed in Euboea, Thessaly, Macedonia, and Acte (Hatzopoulos & Psoma, 1998).

[13]ATL, Thucydides, and other epigraphic and literary sources (Hatzopoulos & Psoma, 1998).

living in these colonies. In other words, maintaining close relations with Athens provided protection against Spartan aggression and Thracian tribes' incursions. This may have been one of the reasons why Neapolis drew closer to Athens and eventually joined the Second Athenian League.

Finally, membership in the league also offered Neapolis the opportunity to export commercial goods and products from the Thracian interior to foreign markets. Neapolis' location on the road leading to the Pangaion mines made it an attractive destination for merchants, further increasing the city's commercial activity. Neapolis was able to expand its trading network and safeguard itself from pirate attacks through its participation in the League.

In summary, the main factors that motivated Neapolis' membership in the Second Athenian League can be summarized as follows: (a) the attitude of the oligarchy that had seized power in Thasos with Spartan support, and the resulting conflict between Thasos and Neapolis; (b) Athens' support for Neapolis during this conflict; (c) the need for protection from Thracian attacks; and (d) the league's commercial advantages.

Figure 1

Map of Thrace



Conclusion

It should be noted that the concept of Thrace changed periodically in ancient times. In this study, the area taken as Thrace is planned to include the Chalcidic peninsula and the area between the Strymon and the Hebros Rivers in Greece and today's Thrace in Turkey. It is seen thanks to the decree of Aristoteles that the settlements of Byzantion, Perinthos, Maroneia, Abdera, Thasos, the Chalcidians of Thrace (*koinon*), Ainos, Samothrace, Dikaia, Elaious, Selymbria, Dion, and Neapolis from the Thrace region participated in the Second Athenian League established against the Spartan hegemony in 378 BC. Of the settlements mentioned, Byzantion, Perinthos, and Maroneia, along with Abdera, Thasos, Thracian Chalcidian, Ainos, Samothrace, Dikaia, Elaious, Selymbria, Dion, and Neapolis, became members of the Second Athenian League following its establishment and as a result of the activities of Chabrias and Timotheos between 375 and 373 BC.

Comparing the participation in the Second Athenian League with that in the First Athenian League, founded in 478/7 BC, we can say that the Second Athenian League was quite small in number. There are various reasons for this situation. The first of these is that some cities that were members of the First Athenian League were under the Persian Empire, the Odrysian Kingdom, and Sparta at the time the Second Athenian League was founded. The second reason is that the First Athenian League became the carrier of Athenian imperialism over time, which led some cities to keep their distance from the Second Athenian League.

Although the Second Athenian League emerged as a result of Spartan pressure, it is clear that each city joined the league for different reasons. What makes this study compelling is that it rejects the generalization that all cities joined the league due to Spartan pressure and instead highlights the league dynamics of each city. In this context, the reasons for the cities joining the league can be listed as general and specific reasons. Spartan pressure will take first place among the general reasons. However, the existence of the Odrysian Kingdom, which exerted pressure on the Thracian cities shortly after Cotys came to power, is also one of the fundamental factors that pushed the cities in the region into the league. Finally, another general factor worth mentioning is the extensive trade network offered to the members of the league and the protection provided by the league for this network. At this point, it can be said that joining the league was not only a matter of political protection but also a desire for economic gain. The specific reasons that drove cities to unite appear to be largely the product of local dynamics. In this regard, historical and cultural ties between member cities, conflicts with the founding city (e.g., the war between Neapolis and Thasos), and attacks on cities by certain Thracian tribes (Triballi–Abdera) can be cited. All these external and internal dynamics demonstrate that the participation of cities in the league should not be reduced to a single cause. This study proves this specifically in Thrace and offers a micro-level perspective.

Finally, it is necessary to examine the relationship between the Odrysian Kingdom, the greatest political power in Thrace during the period in question, and Athens and the league. Although the Odrysian Kingdom pursued an expansionist policy during the reign of Cotys I (384/3 BC–360 BC), it did not directly attack the members of the alliance in the years when the alliance was established. In fact, Cotys I being granted Athenian citizenship in the early years of his reign demonstrates that relations between Athens and the Odrysian Kingdom were friendly. However, the establishment of the Second Athenian League undoubtedly disturbed King Cotys I. This was because the league restricted the Odrysian sphere of influence in Thrace and provided refuge to some Hellenic cities that feared the Odrysians. Nevertheless, King Cotys I, who was in the early years of his reign, preferred to consolidate his position in the region rather than directly confront the Second Athenian League.

As time passed, the friendly relations between Athens and the Odrysian Kingdom began to give way to tensions. While the league facilitated the expansion of Athens' influence in the region, it also acted as an obstacle to the expansionist policies of King Cotys I. Ultimately, war broke out between Athens and the Odrysian Kingdom in 365 BC over control of Chersonese. After this date, King Cotys I of the Odrysian Kingdom became one of Athens' greatest enemies. The main factor behind this situation was the establishment of the league, which altered the balance of power in the region. This chain of events culminated in the assassination of Cotys I in 360 BC. Athens welcomed Cotys I's death and rewarded the assassins.

Peer Review Externally peer-reviewed.
Conflict of Interest The author has no conflict of interest to declare.
Grant Support I would like to thank the Turkish Historical Society (TTK) for their financial support.
Acknowledgement I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to my thesis advisor, Prof. Mustafa Hamdi Sayar, for his guidance, expertise, and invaluable support throughout my research. I am also grateful to everyone who contributed to the preparation of this study.

Author Details İlkay Sinan Karaman (PhD Student)
[1] Istanbul University, Faculty of Letters, Department of Ancient History, Istanbul, Türkiye
0009-0006-7073-9419 karamansinanilkay@gmail.com

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