



# Making Regional Identity: The Koinon of Athena Ilias, a religious association of Greek Cities, from Troad to the Bosporus

William Pillot

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PARION STUDIES III

# Propontis ve Çevre Kùltùrleri Propontis and Surrounding Cultures

Yayına Hazırlayan  
VEDAT KELEŞ



Parion Studies III

**Propontis ve Çevre Kùltürleri**  
**Propontis and Surrounding Cultures**

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Parion Studies III

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Yayına Hazırlayan

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YAYINLARI



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# Önsöz

*İğne ile kuyu kazanlara...*

Uygarlıklar beşiği olarak bilinen Anadolu'nun kültürel zincirinin en önemli halkalarından birini oluşturan Çanakkale'nin kuzeyine lokalize edilen Parion Antik Kenti, Marmara Denizi'nin (= Propontis) güneyinde yer alan önemli liman kentlerinden biridir. Parion Antik Kentinde 1997 yılında yüzey araştırmaları ile başlayan ilk çalışmalar Parion Güney Nekropolisi'nde (= Tavşandere Nekropolisi) 2005 yılında gerçekleştirilen kazılar ile sürekli bilimsel bir araştırmaya dönüşmüş, arkeoloji, epigrafi, antropoloji, sanat tarihi, mimari ve kültür varlıklarını koruma gibi farklı disiplinlerden bilim insanlarının katılımı ile de interdisipliner bir kazı hüviyetine ulaşmıştır.

Parion kazıları bu süre zarfında altyapı anlamında da büyük aşama kaydetmiş, T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Kültür Varlıkları ve Müzeler Genel Müdürlüğü, Türk Tarih Kurumu ve 2008 yılından beri Parion Kazılarının resmi sponsorluğunu yapan İÇDAŞ A.Ş.'nin sağlamış olduğu imkânlar ile kompleks bir bilimsel çalışma halini almıştır. Bu vesile ile Bakanlığımıza, Türk Tarih Kurumu'na, Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi Rektörlüğü'ne ve İÇDAŞ A.Ş.'ye burada bir kere daha sonsuz teşekkür ediyoruz.

Parion kazılarının önem verdiği alanlardan biri de bilimsel yayın çalışmalarıdır. Parion Studies serisinin üçüncü kitabı olarak yayınlanacak olan "Parion Studies III: Propontis ve Çevre Kültürleri" adlı yayın da bu anlayışın bir ürünüdür. Antik dönemde Propontis adıyla bilinen bölge ve çevresindeki kültürleri çalışan yerli ve yabancı çok değerli bilim insanlarının çalışmalarını içeren bu yayının, bölge ile ilgili çalışmaların bir araya toplandığı ilk yayın olmasının yanında, bölge çalışmalarına katkı sağlayacak önemli bir başvuru kitabı olacağını düşünüyoruz.

Bu vesile ile bu önemli yayının ortaya çıkmasında bilimsel makaleleri ile destek veren yerli ve yabancı bilim insanlarına bir kere daha teşekkür ediyoruz. Yayında desteklerini gördüğümüz öğrencilerimiz ve kazı heyet üyelerimiz, Ahmet Levent KESKİN, Sadık TUĞRUL ve Selman TAMYÜREK'e, kitabın basımını gerçekleştiren başta sayın Ahmet BORATAV olmak üzere tüm Ege Yayınları çalışanlarına ve Parion kazıları özelinde bölgede bir çok kazıya büyük destek veren, kültürel değerlerimizin korunması ve gelecek kuşaklara aktarılmasında örnek bir duyarlılık gösteren ve bu önemli kitabın basımını finanse eden Parion kazıları resmi sponsoru İÇDAŞ Ailesine başta Sayın Tarık YEGÜL, Fuat Erkan TEKİN, Zeynep ASLAN, Suat KARATAŞ, Nuri DUBLEN ve Şerif MUTLU olmak üzere tüm çalışanlarına burada bir kere daha en içten şükranlarımızı sunarız.

Prof. Dr. Vedat KELEŞ  
Editör - Parion Kazıları Başkanı



# Making Regional Identity: The *Koinon* of Athena Ilias, A Religious Association of Greek Cities, from Troad to the Bosphorus

William PILLOT\*

**Abstract:** The *koinon* of Athena Ilias is a religious association of Greek cities gathered around the sanctuary of Athena Ilias in Ilion (Troy). It offers a good case study of how can live a religious supra-civic association binding together different cities of different regions and origins, from the Troad to the Bosphorus. This civic sanctuary has a federal and regional dimension. It belongs to the city of Ilion, but the festival of the Panathenaia is administrated by all the cities of the *koinon* of Athena Ilias. This religious supra-civic association is mainly known by numismatic and epigraphic material. The study of the nature, the organization, the ethnic and the geographic composition of this *koinon* gives us precious information about how politics and religion are closely linked in the ancient Greek world. It also gives a concrete example of how blossoms the regional identity of Greek cities of the Straits in Antiquity, from the Hellespontos to the Bosphorus, including the Troad and the Propontis.

**Keywords:** Federalism, Ilion, *koinon*, Regional Identity, Troad

## Introduction

The religious associations of the ancient Greek world are most often studied within the civic or infra-civic scope, as they are considered to be part of the life, organisation and identity of the ancient Greek city-State<sup>1</sup>. The ancient Greek world however knows religious associations the functioning of which goes beyond the level of the city as they gather several cities around the worship of a common deity, shrine or joint ceremonies. The sanctuary of Athena Ilias, belonging to the territory of the Greek city of Ilion in the Troad, provides an example of that. It has been seldom studied and is less well-known than such celebrated cases as the sanctuary of Poseidon Helikonios, centre of the *koinon* of the Ionians from Asia, or the sanctuary of Apollo Pythios in Delphi, the heart of the Pylaeo-Delphic Amphictyony. The existence of these supra-civic religious associations makes it possible to put in perspective the institutions that the religious factor generates, by changing the scope of analysis on a varying scale. This multi-scaled approach allows one to reconsider certain preconceived ideas about the nature and structure of religious associations in the Ancient Greek world. But for that purpose the real nature of these supra-civic *koina* should be agreed on first. They are often described as artefacts that are primarily political or 'ethnic'. It was indeed mainly from the angle of ethnicity that modern historians first came to be interested in these *koina*, which they considered as more or less institutionalized political signals of ethnic solidarity supposed to find their expression '*beyond the polis*', to make use of the title of the book by Catherine Morgan published in 2003<sup>2</sup>. Morgan takes an interest in *ethne* in so far as they are identity-minded and are the cornerstones of supra-civic *koina*. The definition of these *ethne* is generally based on the premise

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<sup>1</sup> Two collective books provide a synthetic account of this kind of civic and infra-civic approach for the last two decades: Belayche – Mimouni 2003; Fröhlich – Hamon 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Morgan 2003.

that they were in existence prior to the emergence of cities (and indeed that is how ancient authors depict them) and were at the origin of most *koina* in the ancient world, which are therefore always interpreted to be 'leagues', in the political sense, or 'confederations', or even 'federal States'. In Thomas Corsten's opinion, that theoretical pattern provides an acute insight into the history of the whole of northern Greece. It involves, as suggests the telling title of his book, *Vom Stamm zum Bund*, a slow and teleological drift from the ethnic group to the federal State<sup>3</sup>. Thus, to quote one last recent book title going in the same direction, *Kult-Politik-Ethnos* would form a triad whose terms are inextricably linked<sup>4</sup>. In a paper devoted to the contrastive study of the *koinon* of Athena Ilias and the *koinon* of the Ionians considered through the lens of ethnicity, I have recently had the opportunity of deconstructing that theoretical edifice which relies on too political an assessment of the term *koinon* and the reality it denotes<sup>5</sup>. My objective was then to show that the ethnic factor is not necessarily basic in the constitution of *koina* of the amphictyonic type. To continue one step further that critical appraisal carried out from the case study of the *koinon* of Athena Ilias, I would now like to focus on the essentially religious dimension of that supra-civic association, by enquiring into its nature, the way it operates and how it is composed.

### The Religious Nature of The *Koinon*

Although the *koinon* of Athena Ilias offers an interesting observation laboratory for the study of supra-civic associations, it remained mostly unheeded in the research work devoted to these questions. There are three reasons at least explaining this phenomenon. First its rather small dimension. The *koinon* of Athena Ilias never played a prominent role in the 'great history' of the ancient Greek world, unlike its prestigious counterparts, the *koinon* of the Ionians and the Pylaeo-Delphic Amphictyony. Secondly, a probable consequence of its marginal importance, the *koinon* of Athena Ilias is absent from the literary sources. The Graeco-Roman historiographical tradition never mentions it. It happens to be documented exclusively through internal sources that it produced by itself: epigraphic inscriptions and numismatic emissions<sup>6</sup>. This no doubt is enough to explain why few modern research workers chose to grapple with the subject. But it seems to us a third reason may be put forward. Because the *koinon* of Athena Ilias incorporates no ethnic criterion whatsoever, it was so to speak kept under the radar of a modern historiography that was too focused on 'ethnicity'<sup>7</sup>. Therefore it was perhaps also because the *koinon* of Athena Ilias did not fit in with the way of approaching problems favoured by most modern authors that it was so little studied by those very researchers interested in *koina*. Whether it was an oversight on their part or deliberate ignorance, what we should make of it is that there is a danger of a methodological inconsistency arising when one discards what does not fit in with the line of reasoning one wishes to propound.

But as far as we are concerned, on what basis are we advocating the religious interpretation of the term *koinon* as it is used in the case study we are conducting? What should be emphasized first is that the term in itself has no clear-cut meaning boundary. It refers to associations and groups of very different types and scales, infra- and supra-civic, of the private or public kind, of a formal or informal nature<sup>8</sup>. Moreover, politics and religion are intertwined to such a degree in the ancient Greek world that it does not always turn out to be possible, or relevant, to distinguish the two from each other. This has long been a known fact where cities

<sup>3</sup> Corsten 1999.

<sup>4</sup> Freitag – Funke – Haake 2006. See also Mackil 2014.

<sup>5</sup> Pillot 2017.

<sup>6</sup> For a detailed critical presentation of the epigraphic and numismatic sources relating to the *koinon* of Athena Ilias, cf. lastly Knoepfler 2010; Lefèvre – Pillot 2015; Ellis Evans 2016; Pillot 2016; Ellis Evans 2019. Frisch 1975 still is the reference compilation for the inscriptions of Ilios in general and those of the *koinon* of Athena Ilias in particular. New inscriptions related to the *koinon* published after Frisch 1975 are listed in Lefèvre – Pillot 2015. To refer to the corpus of Frisch 1975 we follow the usual abbreviation: *I.Ilios*, followed by the number of the inscription in question.

<sup>7</sup> It is surely significant that the most important recent book dealing with this *koinon*, Ellis Evans 2019, follows the paths of "regional studies" and not "ethnicity studies". This important work was published after the Propontis symposium and I could unfortunately not discuss and take into account all of its convincing conclusions in this present article.

<sup>8</sup> Tréheux 1987; Mackil 2013.



are concerned, at least since the pioneering work of François de Polignac<sup>9</sup>. As regards supra-civic associations however, the ‘political’ reading, which is not always examined, is often adopted implicitly owing to the fact that ‘*koinon*’ is automatically translated by ‘confederation’, the traditional translation in such cases as, for example, the Boeotian, Acarnanian or Lycian confederations, which are always considered to be of an essentially political nature<sup>10</sup>. And yet originally what happens in each case is that people group together on religious grounds, around a common shrine. Certain authors as a result are sometimes tempted to assimilate some of these *koina*, when they carry little political weight (from the standpoint of ‘great history’ at any rate) to groupings of the amphictyonic type, an interpretation which in turn can give rise to other reservations<sup>11</sup>.

In order to study the religious nature of the ‘*koinon* of Athena Ilias’, a modern appellation that needs testing, the official wording used has first to be taken into account. It is well-attested in the epigraphic sources supplied by the *koinon* itself, which are to be found in the documents issued by the institution and evince its basically religious nature. Thus as early as the first series of decrees issued by the *koinon*, the wording is unequivocal: αἱ πόλεις αἱ κοινονοῦσ[αι τοῦ] | ἱεροῦ καὶ τῆς πανηγύρεως<sup>12</sup>, “the cities that jointly administer the sanctuary and the *panegyris*”; or, in its brief form: τὸ κοινὸν τῶν πόλεων<sup>13</sup>, “the association of the cities”, without further qualification. So the wording used to name it does make the *koinon* of Athena Ilias an association the activity of which has to do exclusively with the realm of religion.

In the same way, the criteria for membership of this *koinon* all strictly pertain to the religious sphere. The member cities indeed have as their sole obligation to make a regular contribution which consists of sending out *theores* (quintessentially religious envoys), who are in charge of bringing along the *aparchai* (first fruits) and the *hiera* (victims, here cows) for sacrifices<sup>14</sup>. The cities that fail to send along their contribution to the sacrifices are given a fine and are liable to exclusion from the *koinon*, as is evidenced by a list of fines concerning, among others, Myrlea and Chalcedon<sup>15</sup>. The honours granted by the *koinon* have to do with religious matters in a very large majority of cases. So the *agoranomos* Agathes of Ilion is honoured for organising, using his own funds, a *taurobolia* on the occasion of the Great Panathenaia celebrated by the *koinon*<sup>16</sup>. Lastly, the revenues of the *koinon* also derive from the sphere of religion, starting with the sacred lands of the goddess Athena Ilias, which are the source of various revenues that enable the *koinon* to finance its activities. From the Attalids to the *Iulii* the euergetic donors from abroad made no mistake about it and made every effort to protect precisely those sacred lands so as to draw to themselves the benefactions of the *koinon*<sup>17</sup>.

That is not to say however that there is no political component to the *koinon*, as is especially shown by the issues the *koinon* was faced with. Such was the case with the purport of the embassy financed by the *koinon* of Athena Ilias to Antigonos Monophthalmos: ὁ[πὲρ] | τῆς ἐλευθερίας καὶ αὐτονομίας τῶν πόλεων τῶν κοινονοῦσ[ῶν τοῦ] | ἱεροῦ καὶ τῆς πανηγύρεως<sup>18</sup>, “about the freedom and autonomy of the cities that jointly administer the sanctuary and the *panegyris*”. *Eleutheria* and *autonomia* are preeminently political subjects, constitutive features of the ideal of any Greek city-State. We should not therefore go to the other extreme and deny this religious association any political dimension. We are indeed dealing with a *koinon* that is fundamentally religious in nature, but has a political dimension that cannot be denied, which justifies using to refer to it the term ‘confederation’ and not only ‘association’. Neither dimension should be overlooked.

<sup>9</sup> Polignac 1984.

<sup>10</sup> Mackil 2014.

<sup>11</sup> See on the subject the important clarification of Lefèvre 2016.

<sup>12</sup> *I.Ilion* 1, l. 25-26.

<sup>13</sup> *I.Ilion* 1, l. 17 (decree I), and again l. 32 (decree II).

<sup>14</sup> *I.Ilion* 5 and 6 (fragments of lists of fines set up by the *agonothetai* of the *koinon*). The *aparchai* are mentioned in *I.Ilion* 10, l. 38-39, with reference to how old the practice is, cf. on this question Lefèvre – Pillot 2015, 10-12.

<sup>15</sup> *I.Ilion* 5.

<sup>16</sup> *I.Ilion* 12.

<sup>17</sup> *I.Ilion* 42 (Attalus II or III), *I.Ilion* 71 (the censor L. Iulius Caesar).

<sup>18</sup> *I.Ilion* 1, l. 24-26.



Mention is made of this embassy from the *koinon* to Antigonos Monophtalmos within a series of six decrees engraved at Ilion in honour of Malousios of Gargara, *synedros* of the *koinon*, who is honoured for the money he lavishly contributed, on several occasions, to this supra-civic association<sup>19</sup>. This series of decrees constitutes the oldest evidence of the existence of the *koinon* of Athena Ilias, and makes it possible to investigate the origin of the association<sup>20</sup>. It may not be uninteresting at this point to take up that question and look at it through the lens of the religious nature of the *koinon* and of its political dimension.

The first engraved decree teaches us that the first of the embassies financed by Malousios was sent to an Antigonos who, being cited with no further indication, of title or ethnic, can only be the Diadochus Antigonos Monophtalmos. In another decree mentioning another embassy, that same Antigonos is later called *basileus*<sup>21</sup>. This leads us to place the decrees before and after the Diadochus took the title of king, that is around 306<sup>22</sup>. This is consistent with what we know of the geopolitical situation of the Troad and the Hellespont at that time. Following the peace agreement of 311, Antigonos indeed rules over Asia Minor and the islands. Lysimachus for his part occupies Thrace and Chersonese, just across from the Troad<sup>23</sup>. But as early as 311 the Troad is under Antigonid domination. That fact is attested by a letter addressed by Antigonos to the city of Skepsis<sup>24</sup>. The last clause in the treaty of 311 proclaims the right of cities to become autonomous. This clause, far from being a demonstration of sympathy towards the Greek cities, enables in fact each of the Diadochi to find a *casus belli* whenever he wishes. The one who happens to make most use of that argument is Antigonos, who probably is the instigator of the clause. The same strong commitment to the freedom of cities is precisely to be found in the letter sent by the Diadochus to Skepsis. He has used it as a ploy before, in 315, in the proclamation of Tyre, when, opposing Cassander, he also proclaimed himself *epimeletes* of the king. Antigonos seems to have addressed model letters to all of the cities under his rule but the only epigraphic copy preserved is that of Skepsis. It provides the clarification that the cities are requested to federate and take a collective oath. It is strange that one copy only should have been preserved. This suggests that it was only possible to implement this policy, which was originally conceived of as panhellenic, in territories under Antigonid rule, namely Asia Minor and not Greece itself, then brought to heel by Cassander. This prompts one to consider that the *koinon* of Athena Ilias was created by Antigonos Monophtalmos. More generally it is a known fact that Antigonos' diplomatic activity towards Greek cities was intense, especially towards confederations<sup>25</sup>. The most famous example, albeit one of the most controversial, is that of the Confederation of the *Nesiotai* which is assumed to have been founded earlier on by Antigonos, in 315 -314, to support Delos and Imbros, which had taken part in the rebellion against Athens, then in allegiance with Cassander. Some however place the creation of the *koinon* of the *Nesiotai* in 308, which makes it a Ptolemaic initiative. But Édouard Will and Andrew Billows have decided on the Antigonid initiative, and I will go along with their view<sup>26</sup>. Yet there is nothing against supposing that the *koinon* of Athena Ilias existed previously, as it does appear to have become organised enough to send out an embassy to Antigonos in 306. Moreover the first engraved decree mentions that the tax exemption to Malousios must be granted *καθάπερ δέδοται*, "in the way it is given", a set phrase usual in honorary decrees, which presupposes the existence of precise legal clauses made available for reference<sup>27</sup>. The turn of the phrase indicates that the *koinon* has been in existence for a sufficient length of time, at the date of the decree, to have a sort of jurisprudence to rely on, on the matter of tax exemption granted on an honorary basis. It seems to

<sup>19</sup> *I.Ilion* 1.

<sup>20</sup> I here summarise the elements of a demonstration I presented in a more detailed fashion in Pillot 2016. On this question, see also Landucci Gattinoni 2005 and Lasagni 2016.

<sup>21</sup> *I.Ilion* 1, l. 24.

<sup>22</sup> This interpretation rests on the premise that the decrees were engraved in chronological order, which seems in principle logical, but raises some problems in the sequencing of the six decrees which compose the inscription. Cf. Frisch 1975, 6-7, and Verkinderen 1987.

<sup>23</sup> Will 1979, Vol. I, 63.

<sup>24</sup> *OGIS* 5 (= Welles 1934, n°1).

<sup>25</sup> Billows 1990.

<sup>26</sup> Will 1979, Vol. I, 56-58.

<sup>27</sup> *I.Ilion* n° 1, l. 18. Cf. Robert 1966, 24.

us quite possible to consider that the *koinon* was created while Alexander himself was alive, after the Macedonian wrote his letter to the Ilians<sup>28</sup>. In which case, provided it is accepted that the decrees were not engraved in chronological order, the βασιλεύς of line 24 could refer to Alexander instead of Antigonos<sup>29</sup>. In this respect that could resolve the contradiction between literary and epigraphic sources. As a matter of fact no literary source mentions any special relationship between Antigonos and Ilion whereas the honours bestowed on that city and its sanctuary are related by a large number of authors<sup>30</sup>. The series of decrees for Malousios testifies to an important building activity in Ilion, with various buildings for the sanctuary and *panegyris* (l. 4-5) and a theatre (l. 9-10) being erected, and is well in keeping with the promises once made by Alexander after his visit to the sanctuary of Athena Ilias. Thus Antigonos may well have received the embassies of the young *koinon*, which previously had requested Alexander's intervention<sup>31</sup>. Whether or not there was any immediate follow-up to Alexander's visit to Ilion, it marks therefore a decisive turning-point in the history of the sanctuary of Athena Ilias. The Conqueror's death, in Ilion as elsewhere, no doubt prevented his projects from being carried out. But his successors, who characteristically vied with each other in imitation of Alexander, were eager to favour the city and sanctuary that the Conqueror honoured in dazzling fashion. From this point of view, Ilion and the sanctuary of Athena Ilias are remarkably suited for a case study of reciprocal evergetic relations and exchanges of honours established between cities, sanctuaries and sovereigns in the Hellenistic period<sup>32</sup>. The existence of the *koinon* of Athena Ilias is attested down to the second century A.D.: it maintained good relations with the Seleucids, the Attalids, then the Romans<sup>33</sup>. There is no trace of it after the second century.

We can now put forward the following interpretation, based on our review of the background against which the supra-civic association emerged: a prestigious sanctuary enjoying a reputation and recording an attendance proportionate to the region made up of the whole of the Troad plus maybe part of Propontis (hence the presence of Myrlea and Chalcedon), served as the foundation for a religious association which was at the start informal, and was perhaps in existence as early as the Achaemenid dominion over Asia Minor. Evidence of that could be the fact that Xerxes himself thought very highly of the sanctuary of Athena Ilias, since he offered an exceptional sacrifice (to our knowledge, truly without equivalent) of one thousand cows, when he passed through the region on the eve of the invasion of European Greece in 480<sup>34</sup>. The importance of the Trojan War in the forming of regional identity in the Troad undoubtedly accounts for the growth of the sanctuary of Athena Ilias and its shared management between Ilion, the proprietor of the sanctuary, and the neighbouring cities that also frequent it and participate (*koinonousai*) in its sacrifices and *panegyris*. The form that the *koinon* took through the action of Antigonos Monophthalmos, in the peculiar diplomatic surroundings we have just summed up, reflects what was politically at stake in the rivalry between the Diadochi, and what attempts were made to have Greek cities unite their efforts. It remains that the crucible in which were initially cast the local identities and solidarities at the root of the supra-civic association is of a fundamentally religious nature<sup>35</sup>. What makes it possible for the *koinon* of Athena Ilias to emerge as the sources present it to us, are the

<sup>28</sup> Strabo 13. 1. 26.

<sup>29</sup> Verkinderen 1987, 259-60. It is true that, with Antigonos as with the other Diadochi, it is customary to adjoin the royal title to the name of the monarch, so it was βασιλεύς Ἀντίγονος that is to be expected, whereas βασιλεύς used alone can perfectly refer to Alexander. But as Antigonos is the first of the Diadochi to take the title of king in 306 (cf. Müller 1973), it can be supposed that the draftsmen of the decree, if it was voted at the very moment when Antigonos took the title of king, did not find it useful to mention the king's name.

<sup>30</sup> About Alexander's visit to Ilion, cf. Courtieu 2008, 123-158, and (with a different interpretation) Pillot 2016, 135-45 (sources, bibliography and commentary).

<sup>31</sup> The connection made by Verkinderen 1987, 261 between the embassy described by Arrian 1.12.1 and that of decree II for Malousios seems to me very weak however.

<sup>32</sup> On the subject, see the collection of testimonies concerning the benefactions from the Hellenistic monarchs to cities and sanctuaries made up by Bringmann and Steuben 1995, and its synthetic account: Bringmann 2000. The sources documenting the honours granted by cities to monarchs are collected in Kotsidu 2000. Logically it turns out that Ilion occupies a significant position in both collections: Bringmann – Steuben 1995, n° 249 (*I.Ilion* n° 41) et n° 250 (*I.Ilion* n° 42) ; Kotsidu 2000, n° 205 (*I.Ilion* n° 122), n° 206 (*I.Ilion* n° 31), n° 208-209 (*I.Ilion* n° 35-36), n° 210-211 (*I.Ilion* n° 38-39), n° 212 (*I.Ilion* n° 32) et n° 213 (*I.Ilion* n° 121).

<sup>33</sup> Pillot 2016, 145-58.

<sup>34</sup> Herodotus 7. 43.

<sup>35</sup> That tallies with the general pattern proposed by Strabo to explain the origin of an amphictyony.

religious bounds and the joint attendance in one sanctuary which is fundamental in the regional identity of the neighbouring cities. The epigraphic and literary sources naturally insist on the politic history of the region, making kings and kingdoms seem to be the only ones able to create *koina* and confederations, but we must not forget that Greek cities did not need kings to join themselves in federalist or religious associations. What we have here is a supra-civic dynamism impulsed by religious bounds between neighbouring Greek cities. That leads us now to address the question of the composition of this association.

## The Regional Identity of The *Koinon*

The *koinon* of Athena Ilias is composed of twelve member-cities attested by epigraphy, mainly in the Troad. Those are, from north to south, Parion, Lampsakos, Abydos, Dardanos, Rhoiteion, Ilion, Skepsis, Alexandria, Assos and Gargara, to which must be added two cities outside the Troad: Myrlea and Chalcedon (Fig. 1). The list of twelve cities calls for several remarks that will allow comparison with the *koinon* of the Ionians. Firstly, as regards ethnic diversity, it is worth noting from the start that the confederation of Athena Ilias is no “Aeolian *koinon*”<sup>36</sup>. It is on the contrary a heterogeneous set with no ethnic unity. Beside Aeolian cities (Ilion, Skepsis, Assos, Gargara) are to be found Ionian cities (Myrlea, Parion, Lampsakos, Abydos) and Dorian cities (Chalcedon, Rhoiteion). We also find political diversity regarding the *politeia* of the different member-cities : some are democracies, as Ilion, others are oligarchy or (in some periods at least) tyrannies<sup>37</sup>. Nor is the *koinon* of Athena Ilias, from the point of view of regional unity, a “league of the Troad” (as it is nevertheless sometime called in modern historiography). There are two reasons for that. First, some cities in the Troad do not belong to it (in the current state of our sources at least), like Kebren, which is fully integrated into the life of the region. And conversely, some cities from outside the Troad do belong to it, like Myrlea and Chalcedon. The *koinon* of Athena Ilias therefore is not exclusively centred on the Troad; it seems on the contrary to open onto the region of the Straits as a whole, as far as the Bosphorus. As with the Delphic Amphictyony it was probably accessibility more than geographical proximity that counted. The Straits are a route that is widely used by navigators. A “regional culture” blossoms there, and Chalcedon’s membership of the *koinon* may be considered to be strongly indicative of its existence<sup>38</sup>. There is no evidence that all of the twelve cities belonged to the *koinon* during the whole period it existed. But nothing excludes the possibility that the list may at times have included more than twelve cities. In the imperial period a “*koinon* of the nine cities” is mentioned in an inscription – which happened to be issued by the city of Ilion, not by the confederation itself<sup>39</sup>:

Λικίννιον Πρόκλ[ον]  
 4     [Θ]εμίσωνα, τὸν φιλ-  
       [όπατ]ριν καὶ προστάτην κ[αὶ]  
       κόσμον τοῦ συνεδρί-  
       [ου] τῶν ἐννέα δήμων  
 8     [καὶ] εὐεργέτην τοῦ δήμου  
       [ἀρετ]ῆς ἕνεκεν καὶ ε[ὐ]-  
       [νοίας τῆ]ς εἰς τὴν πόλ[ιν].

“The assembly and the people honour Licinius Proculus Themison, devoted to his homeland, an eminent member and the pride of the synedrion of the nine cities, benefactor of the people, for his merit and his commitment to the city.”

<sup>36</sup> Chapot, 1904, 457 describes it as a “*koinon* of Aeolian cities of the Troad or Hellespont”, which has the advantage of not restricting it to the Troad only, but gives it an ethnic foundation which is unjustified.

<sup>37</sup> The attachment of Ilion to its democratic constitution is underlined in the famous “law against tyranny and oligarchy” of ca. 281 BCE, *I. Ilion* n° 25, on which cf. especially, in an abundant bibliography, Maffi 2005, 137-161, and Teegarden 2014, 173-215.

<sup>38</sup> On this “regional culture” see Dana 2011. The regional identity of this area is explored in Dana and Prêteux 2016.

<sup>39</sup> *I. Ilion* n° 107.

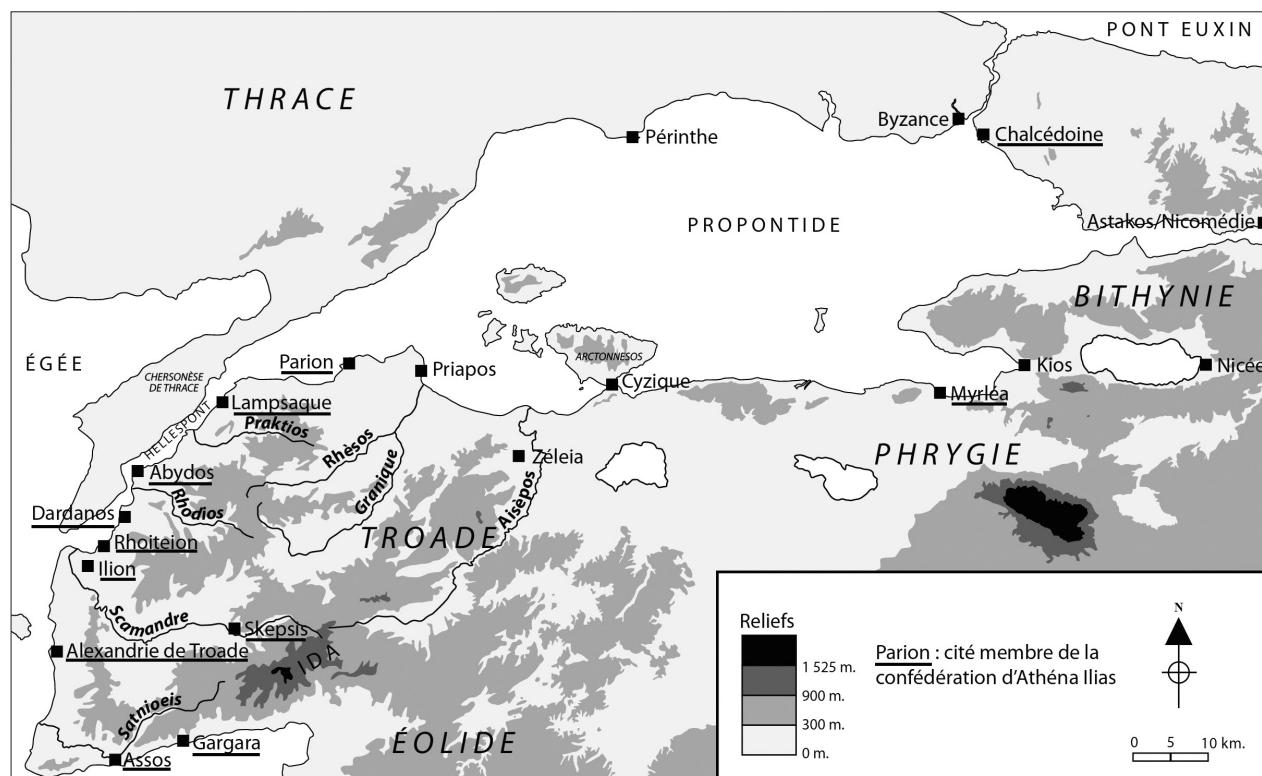


Fig. 1 Map of the member-cities of the *koinon* of Athena Ilias attested by epigraphic evidence (W. Pillot).

This unique testimony is not enough to assert that the *koinon* could never have included more than nine members, since among all the inscriptions known in the confederation, mention is found of twelve cities attested as members. It indicates anyhow that what may have changed was that it maybe was not always the same nine cities. If a *numerus clausus* is to be considered, twelve appears to be more appropriate than nine<sup>40</sup>; it turns out to be the number of member-cities in both the *koinon* of the Ionians and the Pylaeo-Delphic Amphictyony<sup>41</sup>. This appellation from the imperial period confirms in any case our observations on the nature, origin and composition of the *koinon*: no mention is made of any ethnic or geographical criterion. As was already the case in the decrees honouring Malousios of Gargara, all that is required is taking part in the religious life of the sanctuary. The financial penalties imposed on the member-cities that failed to contribute a fee or failed to send out a religious embassy on the occasion of the Panathenaia are a proof a contrario that participating in the life of the sanctuary is the sole requirement to be met for membership of the *koinon*, as we have shown previously.

## Conclusion

We can thus emphasize the fact, as a conclusion, that the *koinon* of Athena Ilias has to be considered as a supracivic association of a fundamentally religious nature, endowed at a later stage of its development with a political dimension. This *koinon* enables the member-cities to share between themselves, in an efficient and peaceful way, the benefits from a celebrated sanctuary, a place where the Trojan War is remembered and supposed to have occurred, which contributes to defining and highlighting their civic and regional identity. This regional identity is essentially a religious (Athena Ilias), mythical (“Trojan”) and geographic (“Asiatic”) one, without any explicit expression of ethnic criterion. It is therefore virtually open to the two shores of the Straits and one would not be surprised to discover in the future some new epigraphic evidence of city-members of the *koinon* from the western shore of the Hellespontos or the Bosphorus.

<sup>40</sup> Seven cities only appear in the regulation (*symphonon*) for organising the *panegyris* of Athena Ilias, dated 77 BCE (*I.Ilion* n° 10): Ilios, Dardanos, Skepsis, Assos, Alexandria Troas, Abydos, Lampsakos. But here again, that does not allow one to claim that at that date the association was composed of seven cities only. In an extraordinary meeting concerning only indebted cities, not all member-cities had to attend. Ilios is however always represented in all epigraphic evidence of the *koinon*.

<sup>41</sup> Lefèvre 2016, 5-6.



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