



GED 06.04.555

## Megathymos son of Athenaios

Μεγάθυμος Ἀθηναίου

<b>ID:</b>	GED 06.04.555	<b>Chronology:</b>	About 167 BC 160 BC	<b>Greek designation/s:</b>	presbeutes
<b>Name:</b>	Megathymos	<b>Place of Origin:</b>	Asia Minor Ionia Teos	<b>Role/s:</b>	envoy
<b>Patronymic:</b>	son of Athenaios				
<b>Ethnic/demotic:</b>	Teian (Τηϊός)				

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### General info

#### Inscriptions

Adak, M., Thonemann, P. (2022) 6

#### Honours

front row seats, perpetual gold crown, praise

#### Keywords

arbitration

### Missions List

#### Teos to Abdera, 167-160 BC

##### Mission date

167 BC 160 BC

##### Greek Designation

presbeutes

##### Recipient

Abdera

##### Sender

Teos

##### Envoy/Colleagues

GED 06.04.272 Amymon, GED 06.04.555 Megathymos



## Honours

front row seats, perpetual gold crown, praise

## Keywords

arbitration

## Commentary

Megathymos son of Athenaios, together with Amymon son of Epikuros, acted as intermediary between Abdera and Rome about a territorial dispute in Thrace. The choice of Teos is not accidental: in 544 (Hdt. I 168) the majority of the Teians escaped the Persian invasion fleeing to Abdera. The territorial dispute involved the city of Abdera against a king of Thrace, Kotys, who had sent to Rome his son and other ambassadors to claim the right of possession on the Abderite *chora*. Kotys is not a rare name amongst the Thracian kings, so this has led the scholars to some debate about his identity. The two main identifications are with Cotys son of Seuthes (an ally of Perseus during the Third Macedonian War and later of the Romans, cfr. e.g. Polyb. 30 18, 1) and with a later Cotys, who intervened in Macedonia, at the beginning of the first c. BC (Diod. Sic. 37, 5a). Those who prefer a lower chronology, following Chiranky 1982, pp. 461-469, rely on a number of inconclusive considerations, such as that Teos in the mid-2nd century BC could not have patrons in Rome, or that the reign of Cotys son of Seuthes could not border on the territory of Abdera, or that the patronage relationship present in this source is historically or linguistically anachronistic for this period (Ager 1996, 496; Eilers 2002, 117-8; Goldbeck 2010, 198 n. 5). At the same time, other scholars have instead emphasised the possibility that this diplomatic situation is best contextualised precisely in the aftermath of the Third Macedonian War (see e.g. Erskine 1994, 49; Marek 1997, 175; Bloy 2012, 194 ff.), following the oldest opinions on this subject. The borders of Thracian kingdoms are in fact always difficult to delineate. The relationship of Roman patronage towards Greek communities was already clearly visible in the first half of the 2nd c. BC; it is not strange that the Greeks therefore also showed attention and curiosity towards the specific Latin vocabulary that characterised this relationship. Moreover, Teos already had considerable prestige at this time, even in Rome, while Abdera was emerging exhausted from the war; this is the ideal context to assume that the Abderites would ask the motherland for help. Furthermore, even though Cotys during the Third Macedonian War was initially an enemy of Rome, it is very clear from how the Romans treated the Thracian hostages (Liv. 45 42, 5 ff.) that the Thracian ruler soon became a valuable ally of Rome in the area, and therefore a more formidable foe in terms of international diplomacy. The discovery of another inscription, Adak, M., Thnnonemann, P. (2022), 1, confirmed this picture very well, as it is perfectly reviewed by the two scholars (pp. 188-94). Megathymos and Amymon were sent by Theos probably to Abdera itself, where they consulted in several *synedriai* to organise the line of defence against Cotys' claims. Later, they were sent to Rome from Abdera to plead their cause. Their efforts to make some anonymous powerful Romans sympathetic to the Abderites' cause is particularly emblematic. Despite the extremely gracious treatment of the two envoys by the city after their mission, nothing is made clear about the outcome of their efforts, so it is unlikely that the Abderites won their case. On the other hand, it is also possible that neither of the two parts received the disputed territory, but that it was incorporated into the province of Macedonia (Adak, Thonemann 2022, 194-5).

## Bibliography

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