

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

This dissertation is not thesis-driven and is ill-suited to conclusions in any traditional sense of the word. If pushed to offer a set of conclusions, however, this dissertation can defensibly be said to have made some progress in sketching the broad outlines of what may be called the regional (tetradic) Thessalian pantheon. This pantheon has been reconstructed by appealing to the region's calendar(s) and its extensive epigraphic corpus. Numismatic, literary and archaeological evidence has been adduced in support when available. On the basis of this evidence, the following divinities can claim certain membership in this pantheon: Athena as Itonia; Themis, aspect unclear; Apollo as Kerdoios, Leschanorios and with unclear aspect; Hermes, aspect unclear; Ennodia; Artemis as Throsia; Zeus as Aphrios, Homoloios, Thaulios and Eleutherios; Dionysus as Karpios; Poseidon as Petraios and Hippodromios. The following divinities have a less certain claim to this pantheon: Artemis as Agagulaia; Apollo as Phyllios; Dionysus as Thuios.

That a geographical region as large as tetradic Thessaly can be said to have been the site of a relatively coherent set of deities is an observation which may have considerable implications for the future study of *ethnos* and/or *koinon* religion. Prior studies of *ethnos* religion have tended to focus on a unitary religious center, often styled as a capitol. The present study suggests that such a picture, if not entirely false, certainly oversimplifies the evidence, at least in the case of Thessaly. While there does seem to have been an upper tier of sanctuaries which housed cults of special relevance to the *ethnos* or *koinon* as a whole, e.g. Athena Itonia at Philia, Zeus Eleutherios at Larisa, perhaps Apollo Leschaios/Leschanorios at Deipnias, there were a relatively large number of potentially polycentric cults including, significantly, Athena Itonia

herself, attested throughout the region, which must have been as vital to the day-to-day religion of the *ethnos* or *koinon* as the cults situated in the “capitol” sanctuaries.

The series of individual case studies of the cults dedicated to the members of this pantheon has yielded fruit from time to time. I have attempted to consider the full range of available evidence and to keep interpretations of this evidence situated in a historical context. It will always be alluring to try to move beyond the individual cases and glimpse some broader patterns of development. In this case, however, the quest for meta-conclusions seems doomed to banality. Nevertheless, I present table 15 which may be of some use in uncovering both what was expected and what was slightly less so:

Table 15  
Chronological Distribution and Geographic Provenance of Inscriptions Discussed in  
Chapters 4-5<sup>1</sup>

<b>Findspot</b>	<b>VI- IVa</b>	<b>IIIa</b>	<b>IIa</b>	<b>Ia</b>	<b>I- IIIp</b>	<b>Undated</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Larisa</b>	DK1; E11, E22	AK1 (3), 2; E15; ZT8	AI2; ZE2-6; AK1 (4); AT2-3; E12-14	ZE8, 15; DK2-3	DK6	ZE11-14, 16; AK1 (1); ZH3	<b>36</b>
<b>Pherai</b>	E3, 7, 9 (=T5)	ZT3	E1-2, 4- 6, 8			ZT4-7	<b>14</b>
<b>Atrax</b>	T2	AT1; ZH1	AT4; ZH2; ZT9				<b>6</b>
<b>Pharsalos</b>	ZT1-2						<b>2</b>
<b>Pagasai</b>	E10 (?)		E10 (?)				<b>1</b>
<b>Skotussa</b>			AK3				<b>1</b>
<b>Metropolis</b>						ZH4	<b>1</b>

<sup>1</sup> NB: I have attempted to accommodate the great variety of methods for dating inscriptions observed in this dissertation, e.g., 196a, post 196a, IIa, aet. Hell., etc., by adhering to the following basic principles: Inscriptions belonging to a range of dates which spans two centuries, e.g., III-IIa, are placed in the later century; Inscriptions dated to a cusp, e.g., 200a, are placed in the following century, e.g., IIa; Those inscriptions dated aet. Hell., vel sim., are placed in IIa; Those inscriptions dated to a broader chronological range, e.g., post 196a, are placed in the “Undated” column; ZE12-16, i.e., the Eleutheria victor lists which do not mention Zeus Eleutherios or the Eleutheria, are included; The inscriptions listed in Table 5.1.1 collectively as AK1 are here listed individually—e.g., AK1 (3) under Larisa, IIIa, means that three inscriptions listed in Table 5.1.1 were dated to IIIa.

Table 15 (Continued)

<b>Gomphi</b>				DK5			<b>1</b>
<b>Mikro-Keserli</b>				DK4			<b>1</b>
<b>Philia</b>			AI1				<b>1</b>
<b>Tetradic Thessaly Total</b>	<b>9 + 1?</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>26 + 1?</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Phalanna</b>	T1	E19		AK6			<b>3</b>
<b>Gonnoi</b>		E20	T7				<b>2</b>
<b>Pythion</b>				E21			<b>1</b>
<b>Chyretiai</b>			AK5 (?)				<b>1</b>
<b>Perrhaebia Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1 + 1?</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Phthiotic Thebes</b>		E16-18; T6					<b>4</b>
<b>Achaia Phthiotis Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>“Magnesia”</b>	T3-4						<b>2</b>
<b>Magnesia Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Delphi</b>			ZE1, 7				<b>2</b>
<b>Thepiai</b>					ZE9		<b>1</b>

Table 15 (Continued)

<b>Megara</b>						ZE10	<b>1</b>
<b>Ambracia</b>			AK4 = AK1 (1)				<b>1</b>
<b>Dodona</b>						T8	<b>1</b>
<b>Extra- Thessalian Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Total Inscriptions by Century</b>	<b>12 + 1?</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>28 + 2?</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>83</b>

The archaeological, numismatic and literary evidence is more resistant to such crude formalization and has not been included. Since the samples involved are so small—the 76 inscriptions from tetradic and perioikic Thessaly discussed in this chapter pale in comparison to the now over 4,000 inscriptions recovered from the region—only the most provisional conclusions can be drawn. The geographic range of the epigraphic evidence is not surprising. Larisa produced nearly half of the epigraphic evidence discussed in this dissertation (35 of 82 total), well over half of all the inscriptions considered from tetradic Thessaly (35 of 63 total). Pherai is a distant, but significant, second. These were the two most affluent and politically dominant cities of Thessaly in the Classical and Hellenistic periods. Atrax' prominence, as discussed in the introduction to chapter 5, is anomalous.

There is more evidence for the cults discussed in chapters 4-5 in the second century BCE than in any other century. It is tempting, but not necessary, to connect this profusion with the political stability inaugurated by the new *koinon*.

The vast majority of the cults discussed in chapters 4-5 are attested both before and after the 196a watershed, however. Prominent exceptions include: Zeus Eleutherios, whose cult was not inaugurated until early IIa; Poseidon Petraios, who is unattested epigraphically in Thessaly; Athena Itonia, whose cult is epigraphically attested only in IIa, but whose sanctuary at Philia is known to have been in use since the Geometric period; Themis, who is unattested in tetradic Thessaly following Flamininus' settlement, but present in perioikic Perrhaebia at this time. The overall, regional impression of the cults discussed in chapters 4-5 is one of continual presence in the Thessalian landscape from the Classical through the Hellenistic period.

Continuity of function is, however, another matter. Unfortunately, the evidence at hand is inadequate to approach this problem from a regional perspective. In the case of Larisa, whose elect status cannot be considered representative of Thessaly as a whole, one may point to the following phenomena observed in the course of this dissertation: the apparent continuity of function of the sanctuary of Apollo Kerdoios between the third and second centuries BCE; the expansion of the program of the Eleutheria and the festival's concurrent attraction of increasingly diverse competitors between the second and first centuries BCE; the possible reorganization of the cult of Demeter Phylaka and Dionysus Karpios in the first century BCE and its potential connection with the imperial cult in the first century CE; the renewal of the Stena, likely in the Augustan era, following a period when the festival had ceased to be observed.

In lieu of formal conclusions, however, it may be useful to sketch further avenues of inquiry. I offer the following geographical groupings which inevitably reflect the interests and idiosyncracies of the project as a whole:

1) Tetradic Thessaly. If this dissertation has succeeded in identifying specifically Thessalian cults, it remains to fill out the rest of the picture, from both the panhellenic and the local perspective.

2) Perioikic Thessaly. The cults of perioikic Thessaly have been discussed in this dissertation only when they could be aligned with cults of tetradic Thessaly. This was most striking in the cases of Themis and Ennodia, where all three major perioikic regions have produced evidence for these two cults. Is this evidence for an organic, cultic koine shared by tetradic and perioikic Thessaly or was it a forced or perhaps voluntary method of assimilation between the two regions? If the latter, in which direction did influence run? Further research on the cults of perioikic Thessaly may shed some light on this complex of issues.

3) Thessaly and Boiotia. The fairly numerous connections between the cults of Boiotia and Thessaly observed in this dissertation, especially in the case of Athena Itonia and Zeus Homoloios, but including also Zeus Eleutherios and Themis, warrant further study. Again, is the coincidence of these cults evidence for a common substratum of religious practice uniting the two regions or the product of conscious manipulation for a still to be identified purposes?

4) Thessaly and Macedon. Potential cultic connections between these two regions have been observed in the case of Ennodia, Zeus Thaulios and Themis Ichnaia. It would be useful to consider this evidence against the broader evidentiary backdrop of Thessalian and Macedonian relations which were extensive throughout antiquity.