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Section 2 Work in Progress

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From Phocis to Aetolia: Ethnicity and Federalism in Greek Antiquity (PhD Dissertation)

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Aims of the project

From Phocis to Aetolia: Ethnicity and Federalism in Greek Antiquity investigates the complex relationship between ethnicity and federalism in ancient Greece.¹ The concepts of ethnicity and federalism in antiquity have been popular among scholars in the last few decades. The Ethnic Turn in ancient Greek studies emerged in the 1980s, with a significant increase in scholarship focused on this concept in ancient Greece since Jonathan Hall's landmark volume *Ethnic Identity in Greek Antiquity* was published in 1997.² The other major concept covered in this thesis – federalism in Greek antiquity – has a long academic history, with the earliest study dating to Edward Freeman's volume from 1863.³ In the last decade, multiple new volumes have emerged, dealing with federalism in Greek antiquity and expanding our knowledge and grasp of this political concept in the ancient Greek world.⁴ In

¹ This thesis was supervised by Maria Pretzler, Mark Humphries (2018-2020), and Stephen Harrison (2020-2023). The viva for the thesis took place in November 2022, with a committee consisting of Louise Miskell (chair, Swansea University), Ersin Hussein (internal examiner, Swansea University), and Andrew Erskine (external examiner, The University of Edinburgh).

² For an overview of key scholarship with ethnicity appearing in the title until 2015, see Vlassopoulos (2015) 2 n. 9. To this we can also add Figueira and Soares (2020), Gruen (2020), and Fabre-Serries. et al. eds. (2021). See also Hall (2002).

³ Feeman (1863).

⁴ For some of the volumes on federalism in Greek antiquity in the last decade, see Funke and Haake. eds. (2013), Mackil (2013), Beck and Funke. eds. (2015), and Blome (2020). Beck. et al. eds. (2019) provides a series of case studies on ethnicity and federalism in various Greek regions.

this thesis, I build upon the current scholarship and aim for this study to be the next step in ethnic and federal studies in ancient Greece.

Federal systems played an important part in the political development of ancient Greece and were, in the Classical period, often organised in states with a shared regional ethnic identity, which (sometimes) could be altered according to political needs. In the Hellenistic period, two such regional federal states became influential powers on the Hellenic mainland and, to some extent, rival the influence of Antigonid Macedonia: the Aetolians and the Achaeans. Both of these *koina* expanded far beyond their traditional ethnic regions. From Phocis to Aetolia investigates federal developments from the sixth century to the third century BCE, with an emphasis on four regions:

1. Phocis sets up the thesis, highlighting the significance of sub-regional groups in this region from the traditional date of the First Sacred War in the sixth century to the end of the Third Sacred War (346 BCE). The Phocians were not an influential group, except during the Third Sacred War, yet they provide an intriguing case study for federal development in the Classical period.
2. Boeotia continues the study as the best-documented federal state in Greek antiquity; like the Phocian chapter, it covers the Archaic period to the end of the Third Sacred War. As a region, Boeotia consisted of influential poleis and subregional identity groups, making it an intriguing study for this project.
3. Arcadia provides an example of a region where the inhabitants had a strong regional identity but only briefly unified into a regional federal state in the fourth century. This region contained strong sub-regional and polis-ethnic groups; some of these, such as the Mainalians and Parrhasians, developed sub-regional federations in the fifth century,⁵ which attests to the importance of local identity within this region. Arcadia is examined from the Archaic period to the Battle of Mantinea (362 BCE), which led to the end of the Arcadian Federation.
4. Aetolia concludes the thesis as a region that developed from a confederate system in the fifth century to a federal state based on the region's identity in the fourth century. In the Hellenistic period, the Aetolian Federation expanded beyond its traditional ethnic territory and became a leading power on the Hellenic mainland, with several other regional identity groups as members. The period covered in this chapter reaches from the late Archaic period to the end of the Social War (217 BCE).

⁵ Nielsen (2002), 278 (Nielsen here refers to these states as sub-ethnic federations).

These chapters investigate the historical development of ethnicity and federalism in these regions using a narrative rather than a thematic approach. A narrative approach was chosen to effectively convey the developing story of federalism and ethnicity within these four important regions.

Several methodological approaches from extant scholarship on ethnicity and federalism in the ancient world are applied. Additionally, a series of approaches developed for understanding ethnicity and federalism in the modern world are also employed, including McKay's ethnic matrix,⁶ Scandinavian approaches to uses of the past,⁷ and ethnofederalism.⁸ Applying and adapting these diverse methods to Greek antiquity invited innovative interpretations of the ancient evidence.

Throughout the thesis, ethnicity is considered a multi-layered process, with the main focus pertaining to the identity of regional, sub-regional, and polis groups; these are regarded as different layers of ethnic identity. The project investigates how groups with these various levels of identity interacted, as well as how such layers of identity were organised within federal states. This is combined with an ethnosymbolic approach, centring upon myths, memories, festivals, and symbols as elements of identity.

Following the thesis's main case studies, there are a series of appendices to elaborate further upon the arguments. The first four of these focus on the genealogical origin stories of the four core regions covered in the thesis. These appendices look at various genealogical connections for the regional eponyms and the interregional implications of these diverse genealogical links. Appendices five and twelve provide two additional shorter case studies looking at Triphylia and Achaea to evidence that the approaches employed throughout the thesis are also applicable to other regions in the ancient Greek world. The remaining appendices provide brief yet relevant case studies of developments and topics, elaborating on some key developments referred to in the main part of the thesis. This includes a survey and analysis of communities incorporated into Megalopolis, the ghost of Polycritus and its relation to the incorporation of Ozolian Locris into Aetolia, and poetry and history use in Hellenistic Aetolia.

⁶ McKay (1982).

⁷ For an introduction to this research field, see Brædder (2019). See Krasilnikoff (2021) for the concept applied to Greek and Roman antiquity, with an emphasis on polytheistic religions.

⁸ For some definitions of ethnofederalism in the modern world, see Anderson (2014), 171-175.

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