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## Cults and Rites of Passage in Ancient Thessaly\*

Archaeological and historical research concerned with the classification of Greek citizens into age-classes in antiquity as well as with the performance of ritual passages between the individual stages of biological and social life within ancient Greek communities has been continuously conducted since the last century, aligned with modern socio-anthropological concerns.<sup>1</sup> The ‘bears’ of Brauron, the intriguing patrols of the Attic *ephebes* on the outskirts of civic territory, the attitudes of Spartan *agelai* and *dromeis*, or the Cretan Kouretai have for decades almost monopolized all attempts to pinpoint the aforementioned parameters within the complexity of the Greek social and ritual landscape. At a time when almost all inquiries into the Greek attitudes towards matters of age and cult were oriented towards the Greek South, the pioneering study of Miltiades Hatzopoulos, focusing on cults and rites of passage in the land of Macedonia, came to decisively enrich these perceptions.<sup>2</sup> Hatzopoulos’ *Cultes et rites de passage en Macédoine* marked an important moment in the study of Greek religion and society, by shedding light upon the presence of similar institutions in northern Greece; these institutions aimed to ensure a balanced affinity between biological norms and social dynamics, overseeing life-changing social roles and their ritual aspects. In later studies, the same author discussed the divine agents and the initiatory rituals related with the transition to the afterlife.<sup>3</sup>

### 1. Introduction

Hatzopoulos’ research equally highlighted Thessalian epigraphic evidence attesting to local rites of passage that were integrated into the religious and social life of the region.<sup>4</sup> The author argued that the past participle *νεβεύσα(ν/σ)σα* in third- and second-century votive inscriptions to Artemis from Atrax, Demetrias and Larisa relates to the verb *νεβεύω*, which derives from the adjective *νέ(φ)ος*, -α, -ον. In this respect, *νεβεύσα(ν/σ)σα* signifies the state of a young girl who belongs to an age-class imbued with religious significance and whose passage to adulthood was attained through the performance of an initiatory rite.<sup>5</sup> In other words, it designates the state of the young girl who

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1. VAN GENNEP 1909; HARRISON 1912; JEANMAIRE 1939; BRELICH 1969; CALAME 1977; KAHIL 1977; VIDAL-NAQUET 1981; SOURVINOU-INWOOD 1988; ead. 1990; WALDNER 2000; GENTILI, PERUSINO 2002; CALAME 2003; id. 2010; id. 2013; CHANIOTIS 2005, 51-56. Cf. DOD, FARAONE 2003; HITCH 2015, 521-536.

2. HATZOPOULOS 1994; also, id. 2002, 11-21; id. 2006a, 55-57.

3. HATZOPOULOS 2006b, 131-141; cf. id. 2002, 22-28; id. 2006a, 58-60.

4. HATZOPOULOS 1994, 25-40.

5. *Ibid.*, 31-32.



has accomplished her initiatory cycle in the service of the goddess and is entering adulthood.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, he maintained that the past participles ἐπινεβέυσασσα and ταγεύσασσα/ταγεύσανσα in Thessalian votive inscriptions to Artemis indicate that an hierarchy existed within the age-class of young girls during their service in the deity's sanctuary.<sup>7</sup> Using the same perspective, the author drew attention to contemporary third- and second-century votive stelai to Artemis Throsia from Atrax, Gyrtone and Larisa.<sup>8</sup> The epithet's provenance from the noun \*θρόσις meaning 'support', 'protection' and also 'transition' has been demonstrated to qualify Artemis as protector of the transition of young girls to adulthood.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, Hatzopoulos argued that τελείωμα points to the 'accomplishment' of the ritual term, following the completion of physical growth of young individuals, while λύτρον denotes the payment of a 'ransom' aimed at the safe passage into marriageable age.<sup>10</sup> He also associated λύτρον in a third-century votive to Dioskouroi from Larisa with their quality as celestial *kouroi* and protectors of young males, and justified λύτρον in a second-century votive to Artemis Akraia from Trikka by applying the derivation of the divine epithet from ἄκρα, signifying 'edge' and eventually the 'peak' of someone's life.<sup>11</sup> Finally, Hatzopoulos drew attention to τελείωμα in a second-century votive from the region of Phalanna to Demeter and Persephone, both protectors of the passage from the status of a young girl to that of a full-grown woman ready for marital life.<sup>12</sup> The author correlated this case with the sanctuary of Demeter and Kale Thea at Lete, where similar epigraphic evidence attests to the presence of νεύσασσαι and ἀρχινεύσασσαι.<sup>13</sup> The statue of Kore in motion from the sanctuary at Lete was taken by Hatzopoulos as proof of a local running contest for young girls, as a final test and a ritualized passage into the status of full-grown females.<sup>14</sup> It is already known that racing contests within groups of youths belonging to individual age-classes of both sexes were part of cults of initiatory character in southern Greece.<sup>15</sup>

The significant impact of Hatzopoulos' *Cultes et rites de passage* is evident in later studies focusing on rites of passage in northern Greece, as well as in general studies examining Greek socio-religious institutions.<sup>16</sup> Nonetheless, the initiatory character of those rites has not gone unchallenged, and the *nebeusasai/neusasai* of the Thessalo-Macedonian inscriptions have been alternatively identified with priestesses serving kourotropic deities, while the term *teleiouma* has been taken as a 'ransom' paid by women after childbirth or on the occasion of marriage.<sup>17</sup> Lately, skepticism has been expressed regarding the Thessalian rites of passage, as research on initiatory rites has been

6. *Ibid.*, 31-32, 39-40.

7. *Ibid.*, 33-34.

8. *Ibid.*, 26-30.

9. *Ibid.*, 33-34, 40; cf. GARCÍA-RAMÓN 1999, 11-13.

10. HATZOPOULOS 1994, 34-40.

11. Larisa: HATZOPOULOS 1994, 38-40; *SEG* 44 (1994) 451; *Bull.* 1988, 742. Trikka: HATZOPOULOS 1994, 34-37; *SEG* 44 (1994) 460.

12. HATZOPOULOS 1994, 40; *SEG* 44 (1994) 457; HEINZ 1998, no. 209. Bruno Helly suggested to me that the inscription possibly comes from Larisa, rather than Phalanna.

13. HATZOPOULOS 1994, 41-53.

14. HATZOPOULOS 1994, 48, pl. 8.

15. Theoc. *Id.* 18.22-25, 39-49; Paus. 3.13.7 (Sparta); Paus. 5.16.2-8; Plut. *Mor.* 251 E (Olympia); KAHIL 1977, 88, 97, figs. A-B; cf. JEANMAIRE 1939, 415-416; CALAME 1977, 408; CUCHE 2014, on armed running.

16. PSOMA 2006; KALAITZI 2010; MARI 2011; VÉRILHAC 2014; HELLY 2012-2013. Cf. BIELMAN 2002; GUETTEL COLE 2004, 210; DENIS 2009, 126-131.

17. BRULÉ 1997, 319-330; GRANINGER 2007, 151-164, esp. 154-157; MILI 2015, 204, esp. n. 246, questioning the coherence of the Thessalian evidence brought forward by HATZOPOULOS 1994, and the assimilation between the terms *tageusasa* and *archinebeusasa*; cf. LYNN BUDIN 2016, 81.

deemed outdated.<sup>18</sup> But, should we so easily wipe initiatory rites (such as the *Arkteia* or the *Koureion*) out of the map of ancient Greek religion and dismiss them altogether as an outfashioned product of an inventive research model? Would we not, then, by such strict renunciations, be running the risk of disregarding some significant aspects of Thessalian cults?

The aim of this paper is to reanimate the discussion on Thessalian rites of passage, in the light of supplementary epigraphic evidence, directly or indirectly related to local age-classes and pertinent ritualized attitudes. Focusing on age-classes is conditioned by the fact that their existence in a given society is a prerequisite for the performance of age-changing rites of passage. Archaeological evidence will be taken into consideration as well, in particular groups of votives from Thessalian sanctuaries dedicated to kourotrophic deities, who presided over the passage between the various stages of the human biological and social life. Lastly, attention will be paid to legendary narrations, which recount attitudes as well as feats of young Thessalian heroic figures.

## 2. Thessalian age-classes

Rites of passage or initiatory rituals performed by young individuals are directly related to the transition from one physiologically determined stage of life to another, usually following physical development. They are forms of ritualized behaviour of socially determined age-classes and their individual grade levels.<sup>19</sup> In this respect, any attempt to dismiss extant pieces of evidence pointing to the existence of ritualized transitions between the physiologically and socially defined stages of human life, within the historical and social context of a given geographical area would mean: to either accept that age-classes existed but rites of passage did not; or to deny both the existence of age-classes and, consequently, as redundant, the existence of any ritualized commemorations of age-related passages. Therefore, when discussing Thessalian rites of passage, there are fundamental questions regarding the very presence of their performers that ought to be addressed: Was Thessalian society structured in terms of age-classes? What were the institutional aspects of the educational/training system of young Thessalians? Lastly, what was the position of the rites of passage within the Thessalian cultic landscape?

In order to introduce these questions into the discussion, it has to be underlined that, following prevailing Greek attitudes, Thessalian public and private inscriptions exhibit a marked interest in describing human age and its individual stages. The term *ἡλικία/ἀλικία* was used to denote ‘age’ from at least the fourth century onwards.<sup>20</sup> Different age-grades could also be signified by the same term, while the compound *ὁμηλικίη* designated persons of the same age.<sup>21</sup>

### 2.1 Young females

Inscriptions from non-cultic contexts make use of a specific technical vocabulary that – except for simple and usual age terminology – can be equally instrumental in revealing the existence of Thessalian female age-classes. The occurrence of death, for example, offered a suitable occasion for contemplating and hence publicly declaring someone’s chronological age. Funerary epigrams commemorating the untimely death of young girls not only occasionally record their chronological age but can also offer complementary information on the structural age – that is, the age-class and

18. Quoting MILI 2015, 204: “Having gone through its period of vogue, speaking about initiation rites today is bound to raise some eyebrows and several questions (...)”; cf. *ibid.*, 138: “(...) a fashion which now seems to be waning (...)”.

19. DAVIDSON 2006, 29-67; CHANKOWSKI 2013, 178-180.

20. For example, SEG 34 (1984) 545 (Atrax, early 4<sup>th</sup> c.); IG IX 2, 466, l. 10 (Krannon, 3<sup>rd</sup> c.); IG IX 2, 219, l. 3-4 (Thaumakoi, 50 BC); cf. CHANTRAINE 1968-1980, s.v. *ἡλικία*; DAVIDSON 2006, 42-51.

21. SEG 34 (1984) 558, l. 57 (Larisa, 150-130 BC): ἄνδρες καλοὶ καὶ ἀγαθοὶ ὑπάρχοντες ἐκ τῆς πρώτης ἡλικίας. IG IX 2, 639, l. 3 (Larisa, 1<sup>st</sup> c. BC - 1<sup>st</sup> c. AD): *ὁμηλικίη*; cf. *homelikia* as age-class, CALAME 2001, 29-30; cf. DAVIDSON 2006, 51.

specific grades – to which they belonged.<sup>22</sup> This attitude could possibly aim at declaring the social status of the deceased and their inevitable withdrawal from the official age-class system. For example, a late Hellenistic epigram from Larisa designates the deceased young Leonto as a *parthenos*, comparing her to a blooming flower (*neon anthos*); moreover, the text narrates that this *parthenos* suffered an untimely death at the age of fifteen (*dekapentaetes*) and was taken away in the flower of her age, before getting married (*mellousa gamo*).<sup>23</sup> The Larisaean *parthenos* was a fifteen-year-old girl, who was about to reach womanhood and consummate her marriage, a socially defined status which was however never attained, as her passage to the status of *nymphē* and *gynē* was never achieved. Her virginal status associates her with the well-known *parthenoi* attested in both literary and epigraphic evidence in various places of the Greek world.<sup>24</sup> Under a similar perspective, a funerary epigram of one Dionysia from Larisa, dating to the Roman period, records her passage from the age of *parthenos* to that of *gynē*. The text praises the virtues of the deceased, in particular her excellence in the social roles she had undertaken – her exemplary virginal status (*kale parthenos*), followed by marriage and the birth of three children, all correlating with her *sophrosyne*.<sup>25</sup>

Furthermore, an unpublished funerary inscription from the area of Demetrias records the young age of the prematurely lost Synesis, by using the feminine substantive adjective *nea*, the equivalent of the masculine *neos*.<sup>26</sup> The late date of the inscription suggested by its context<sup>27</sup> could account for the absence of the *digamma* from the term *nea* – *neFa* in the Thessalian dialect. *Nea* allows us to see in Synesis a young girl who died before reaching the stage of the full-grown female (*teleia*), getting married and fulfilling her female destiny within the framework of Thessalian society.

This is the only known Thessalian inscription recording the term *nea* on a private monument destined for public display; nevertheless, the term is attested elsewhere, from Classical to Roman Imperial times, and indicates the existence of a female age-class that corresponds etymologically to its male counterpart of *neoi*.<sup>28</sup> Arvanitopoulos had already underlined the technical meaning

22. ‘Structural age’, ‘age-class’, ‘age-grade’, in KENNEL 2013b, 2-3; DAVIDSON 2006, 29-67.

23. IG IX 2, 649: [Παρ]θένος οὔσα τέθ[νη]κα Λε[ι]ο[ν]τώ ὡς νέον ἄνθος | ὥρης παντοθαλοῦς πρωτο[[φ]ανή<ς> καλύκων καὶ μέλλου[σα] γάμω δεκαπενταετῆς | μείγνυσθαι ἐν φθι[μ]ένοις κείμαι ὑπνον | ἔχουσα μακρόν. | Μητρόπολις Λεοντῶ | τῆ ἰδίᾳ θυγατρὶ μνείας | χάριν ἥρωσ χρηστ[ῆ] | χαῖρε. Cf. the *parthenos* Hediste from Istros, who was deprived of her youth before getting married, 4<sup>th</sup> c. (*I.Histriae* 231, ll. 8-9: πρὸ γάμω[ν] ὤλεσας ἡλικίαν); the fifteen-years-old *parthenos* Andro from Thespiiai, 2<sup>nd</sup> c. (*SEG* 39 [1989] 458C, 2); the unmarried *parthenos* (*anymphos*) Philostrata from Corinth (*IG* IV 196); cf. the later *parthenoi*, in *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 13138, ll. 2-3 (Attica, 2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD); *Corinth* 8.3, 670 (267-268 AD); *SEG* 26 (1976/1977) 753 (Thessaloniki, 3<sup>rd</sup> c. AD).

24. On the technical meaning of *parthenos*, see JEANMAIRE 1939, 529; BRELICH 1969, 305; CALAME 1977, 65, 411-420; BRULÉ 1987, 301-302, 392; SOURVINOU-INWOOD 1988, 29-30; ead. 1990, 50, 54; HATZOPOULOS 1994, 36-37, 47, 75; GUETTEL COLE 2004, 209-211; LYNN BUDIN 2016, 88, 93-95. On wildness reflected on virgins’ natural appearance, see SOURVINOU-INWOOD 1988, 111-112, 128-130, 133-134; ead. 1990, esp. 57-60, on the passage from the state of *parthenos* to *gynē*, and the *arkteia* ritual; ead. 1991, 99-143; cf. BEAUMONT 2000, 45.

25. IG IX 2, 656, ll. 1-7: οὔνομά μοι γλυκερὸν Διο|νυσίας, ἀλλ’ ἐγαμήθην Ἰου|λιανῶ γάμον παρθένος οὔσα καλή· τρίς δέκα τούτῳ συ[ν]ζήσασα χρόνους ἐνιαυτῶν | τρισσοῦς παῖδας ἐγὼ τῶδ’ ἐτέ|κνωσα φίλους. Cf. the term *partheneia* in *SEG* 32 (1982) 612 (Ktouri, 3<sup>rd</sup> c. AD).

26. *SEG* 38 (1988) 455: Σύνεσις νέα. On *neos* (‘youth’) and the age-class of *neoi*, KENNEL 2013a, 217-232, esp. 232; CHANKOWSKI 2013, 178-179. Cf. DREYER 2004, 211-236; VAN BREMEN 2013, 31-58.

27. *Nea* Ionia, Volos: INTZESILOGLOU 1981, 252. The stele was found within a context of Roman and Early Christian tombs; in the brief report available, the stele is mentioned as “belonging” to one of the tombs, in all probability having been reused as many Hellenistic stelai were in Thessaly.

28. For example, *IG* IV 114 (Aigina, after the 5<sup>th</sup> c.): Ἐρατῶ Λακρεῖδα (?) | θυγάτηρ νέα; *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 13080 (Attica, 2<sup>nd</sup> c.): Χρυσίς | Νικοκλέους | νέα; *TAM* V 1, 30, ll. 12-14 (Lyendos, 139/140 AD): Θυ|γατρὶ νέα Πω|λλίτιττῆ; *I.Leukopetra* 85, ll. 4-5 (234 AD): Γερμάνα ναία.

‘women competing in the sacred race’ that the term *neai* acquires in Hesychius’ commentary; this suggested to Hatzopoulos the idea that *neai* should be identified with an age-class of young females participating in an initiatory rite, which marked the threshold to adulthood.<sup>29</sup> In this regard, the epitaph of Synesis –presumably contemporary with or later than the Hellenistic Thessalian *nebeusasai* inscriptions– points to the presence of *neai* in Thessaly by providing the social *aition* that matches perfectly with its ritualized counterpart, the *nebeusasai*. Was Synesis to be enrolled during her lifetime in a ritual service paid to a Thessalian female deity? For the time being and without any further evidence we cannot provide a definite answer to this question; however, it needs to be addressed, as it is closely linked with the question of the character of the local training systems designed for young females. Were Thessalian ritual terms and rites of passage compulsory and all-inclusive or was it that only specific groups of female children were eligible candidates for them?<sup>30</sup> The question will be discussed below (see section 3.2).

Young married females were recorded in Thessalian inscriptions by the usual terminology employed in other regions. The term *nymphē* was used for newly married women, as is shown by the third-century funerary stele of Hediste from Demetrias, who died in childbirth, or the much later Aristopolis from Larisa, who died when just married and a new mother.<sup>31</sup> The term more frequently employed to denote the official social status of the married woman is that of *gyne*, followed by the name of the spouse.<sup>32</sup>

## 2.2. Young males

The absence of systematic excavations of the civic areas of ancient Thessalian poleis deprives us of public buildings that could be securely identified with gymnasia, while no gymnasarchical law has been discovered so far.<sup>33</sup> Nonetheless, certain aspects of the training systems designed for young Thessalian males can be brought into view owing to epigraphic and literary evidence.

### 2.2.1. Children and youth in the gymnasium

A Hellenistic inscription from Pherai, preserving a long list of gymnasiarchs, spans the life of the local gymnasium over more than fifty years. Hellenistic and Roman gymnasia and gymnasiarchs are reported in many Thessalian cities.<sup>34</sup> Also, statues representing young men in their later teens or males in early manhood – conventionally described nowadays as *ephebes* or athletes – have been unearthed in many Thessalian sites, unfortunately in most cases deprived of

29. Hsch. s.v. νέαι: ἀγωνισάμεναι γυναῖκες τὸν ἱερὸν δρόμον; ARVANITOPOULOS 1929b, 250-251; HATZOPOULOS 1994, 31, 32, 46; cf. GAUTHIER, HATZOPOULOS 1993, 77.

30. Cf. MILI 2015, 203-205; KENNEL 2013b, 40-51 (age-classes and local elites).

31. GVI 1606, l. 2 (Demetrias, c. 250): ὅτε ὠδίνος νύμφη ἀπηντίασεν; SEG 23 (1968) 440, ll. 11-12 (Larisa, 2<sup>nd</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> c. AD): νύμφη καὶ μήτηρ | [ὀλίγ]ον χρόνον.

32. For example, SEG 29 (1979) 496 (Demetrias, mid-3<sup>rd</sup> - 2<sup>nd</sup> c.): Εἰσιδώρ[α] | Μέντορο[ς] | γυνή.

33. DECOURT, NIELSEN, HELLY 2004, 676-731 (Classical Thessalian public buildings).

34. SEG 29 (1979) 552 (Pherai, late 3<sup>rd</sup> - early 2<sup>nd</sup> c.) (= HELLY, TE RIELE, VAN ROSSUM 1979, 330-189); IG IX 2, 460 and 461 (Krannon, gymnasiarchs, 2<sup>nd</sup> c.); ARVANITOPOULOS 1929A 126, 423 (Demetrias, gymnasium, gymnasiarch, 2<sup>nd</sup> c.); Livy 36.22.5-7 (Herakleia Trachinia, gymnasium); IG IX 2, 31 and 56 (Hypata, gymnasium and gymnasiarchs; undated and Roman period, respectively); IG IX 2, 517 (Larisa, gymnasiarchs, 214 BC); SEG 13 (1956) 391 (Larisa, gymnasiarch, 3<sup>rd</sup> - 2<sup>nd</sup> c.); SEG 33 (1983) 460 (Larisa, renovation of the gymnasium, 197-186 BC); SEG 54 (2004) 566 (Pelinna, gymnasiarchs, 190-170 BC); IG IX 2, 1238 (Phalanna, gymnasiarch, undated); *I.ThessEnipeus* 52 (Pharsalos, 300-250 BC); *ArchEph* 1924, 155, 403 (Pythion, gymnasiarchs, after 125 BC); SEG 43 (1996) 313 (Skotoussa, gymnasiarchs, Roman imperial). Cf. HELLY, TE RIELE, VAN ROSSUM 1979, 228-229.

their original context.<sup>35</sup> These are iconic images of youths frequenting the local gymnasia. Lastly, a series of honorific stelai for the gymnasiarchs or other instructors (for example, the *paidonomos* or the *paidotribes*) attest to the following age-classes: *paides* ('boys'), *neoi* ('young men'), *neaniai* and *neaniskoi* (usually a synonym to *neoi*, occasionally denoting 'fighting young men' in Hellenistic times), who underwent physical training (*aleiphomenoi*) in the local gymnasia.<sup>36</sup>

### 2.2.2. *Ephebes, guards and royal pages*

Do the individual terms describing the μετέχοντες τοῦ γυμνασίου designate male youths simply hanging out in Thessalian gymnasia or do they point to socially defined age-set-mates enrolled in a formal training institution?<sup>37</sup> For example, a third-century tombstone from Larisa, making use of a formulaic Homeric expression, narrates that young Therson died "before attaining the term of ἥβη".<sup>38</sup> Did Therson just miss the threshold to physical adolescence and/or the official service of the ephebate? ἥβη was the equivalent of modern 'adolescence'.<sup>39</sup> In a civic sense, it began for Athenian males at the age of sixteen – approximately when their fathers enrolled them in the phratry – and lasted two years, while at its completion males were considered eligible for citizenship.<sup>40</sup> Similarly, a contemporary, third-century decree from Pharsalos uses the term εἰβάτας, 'the one in full youth', in order to describe the newly registered citizens receiving a plot of land.<sup>41</sup>

As a compound of the stem ἥβη and the prefix ἐπι-, in generic terms ἔφηβος denotes 'a youth in his adolescence/puberty'.<sup>42</sup> The term was largely used in this sense at least in the Roman Imperial period.<sup>43</sup> In a narrow sense, however, ἔφηβος and ἐφηβᾶν, both stemming from the verb ἥβᾶν and the prefix ἐπι-, indicate the 'one who has reached adulthood'. In the Classical and a major part of the Hellenistic period the term acquired a technical and at the same time institutional meaning, designating a young man enrolled in an ephebate.<sup>44</sup> Fourth-century Athenian youths began a two-year period of military training in their eighteenth year, while Hellenistic ephebates could either follow the same model – as was the case, for example, in Beroia or Amphipolis – or locally defined, individual criteria – lasting one or three years, for example.<sup>45</sup>

35. ZAPHEIROPOULOU 2004, 110 nos. 10-11 (Pharsala, 4<sup>th</sup> c.; Phthiotic Thebes, late 4<sup>th</sup> - early 3<sup>rd</sup> c.), 128 no. 31 (Larisa? Second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> c.), 129-130 no. 32 (Larisa, Roman copy of an original of the second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> c.). Cf. Beaumont 2000, 42-48, on iconographic problems in the distinction of age-grades.

36. *Paides*: ARVANITOPOULOS 1929A, 126, 423, l. 3 (Demetrias, 2<sup>nd</sup> - 1<sup>st</sup> c.). *Neoi*: IG IX 2, 259-25 (Kierion, 117 BC); SEG 29 (1979) 527, l. 1 (Larisa, 1<sup>st</sup> c.). *Paidonomos*: *ibid.*, l. 3. *Paidotribes*: *PraktAkAth* (1935) 65, 1, l. 2 (Phthiotic Thebes, Hellenistic). *Neaniai*: IG IX 2, 205, ll. 25-26 (Melitaia, 145 BC). *Neaniskoi*: IG IX 2, 620, l. 1 (Larisa, 2<sup>nd</sup> c.); IG IX 2, 621, l. 1 (Larisa, undated); IG IX 2, 1238, l. 1 (Phalanna, undated); cf. Polyaeus, *Strat.* 2.34 (Krannon); *I.ThessEnipeus* 52, l. 3 (Pharsalos, 300-250 BC): τοῖς νεανίσκοις τοῖς ἐν τῶι γυμνασίωι ἀλειφομένοις. Cf. KENNEL 2006, 49-50, 68, 72, 74, 79, 99-100. On *neaniskos* and *neos*, see GAUTHIER, HATZOPOULOS 1993, 76-78; CHANKOWSKI 2010, 253-264; KENNEL 2013b, 12-13. Also, VAN BREMEN 2013, 33-34, on the military character of *neaniskoi*.

37. ARVANITOPOULOS 1929a, 126, 423, ll. 2-3 (Demetrias, 2<sup>nd</sup> - 1<sup>st</sup> c.).

38. SEG 42 (1992) 522, l. 1 (Larisa): πρὶν ἥβης μέτρον ἰκέσθαι; cf. Hom. *Od.* 4.668. Cf. *I.ThessEnipeus* 93, l. 2 (Pharsalos, 300-250 BC): ἥβας τὰν στέρισ' αἴσα λυγρά.

39. CHANTRAINE 1968-1980, s.v. ἥβη; CHANKOWSKI 2010, 48-63.

40. LAMBERT 1993, 167-173-174; cf. CHANKOWSKI 2010, 72-73.

41. IG IX 2, 234, l. 4 (Pharsalos): πέλε]θρα ἐξείκοντα ἐκάστου τοῦ εἰβάτα ἔχειν πατροῦεαν τὸμ πάντα χρόνον; cf. TZIAFALIAS, HELLY 2013, 226, n. 184.

42. GARLAND 1990, 166; GOLDEN 1990, 28. CHANKOWSKI 2010, 48-63.

43. CHANKOWSKI 2010, 47, 135 and n. 34.

44. CHANKOWSKI 1997, 339; *id.* 2010, 135-136; KENNEL 2013b, 18.

45. CHANKOWSKI 2010, 235-237; KENNEL 2013b, 7-10 (Athens); GAUTHIER, HATZOPOULOS 1993, 70 (Macedonia); CHANKOWSKI 2010, 232-233, 240-249 (local attitudes).

In Thessaly, the term *ephebos* is attested twice in Achaia Phthiotis, in a funerary epigram from Palaiokastro and in a newly discovered Hellenistic (end of the third century / second century?) tombstone from the south cemetery of Phthiotic Thebes.<sup>46</sup> The former inscription being fragmentary and undated deprives the term of semantic contextualisation. The second inscription addresses Dorothes son of Antigonos with *chaire* and calls him an *ephebe*. The text is accompanied by a relief scene, which depicts a man wearing a short chiton and a cloak (*chlamys*), characteristic of *ephebes*' vesture, who is standing next to another man who wears a long cloak and appears to be handing him an object, which looks like a garment – a cloak?<sup>47</sup> The combination of epigraphic and iconographic elements offered by this stele constitutes to date the most explicit testimony referring to an *ephebe* in Hellenistic Thessaly, when the entire region was under Antigonid control.<sup>48</sup> The ongoing study of the stele will hopefully shed light on individual aspects of the local institution.

The presumption that male youths were enrolled in an institutionalized training system in Hellenistic Phthiotic Thebes is supported by the presence of the *skopoi* and their chiefs, the *archeskopoi*, which can be traced back to the third century, and also earlier, to the fourth century, when the city was founded by Cassander.<sup>49</sup> Helly has already identified them with the third to first century *phrouroi* and *archiphrouroi* from Gonnoi and Mikro Kesperli, as young *ephebes*-members of the polis' guard, aged just under twenty and engaged in the patrol and defense of the civic territory during their military service.<sup>50</sup> The topography of Phthiotic Thebes can offer a useful insight into the role of the *skopoi* as guards of the civic territory. The fortress of Skopion – its name deriving from the verb *skopeo*, meaning 'to look/inspect faraway and from a high point' – is mentioned by Polybius when describing the camps of Philip V's army in his expedition against the city in 217 BC.<sup>51</sup> The panoramic view from the city and the acropolis, overlooking the Krokian plain, from Mount Orthys to Mount Pelion and the Pagasetic Gulf, reaching as far as Euboea and the islands, corroborates both the name of the fortress and the *skopoi* as city guards.<sup>52</sup> The same service was reserved in Athens for youths belonging to the age-class of the *ephebes* and specifically for the *peripoloi*.<sup>53</sup> Under the same perspective, the Thessalian *skopoi* and *phrouroi* have been linked with the Macedonian royal *kynegoi*, although the latter were select youths, chosen from among the ranks of the Macedonian elite on the grounds of personal excellence.<sup>54</sup>

Epigraphic evidence recently brought to light attests to the presence of royal *kynegoi* also in Thessaly. The letter of Antipater referring to the *diagramma* of Philip V (186 BC) that prescribes the colour of the *petasoi* and the *chlamydes* of the *kynegoi* of Herakles attests to the contemporary presence of royal *kynegoi* in the *basileion* of Demetrias, apparently engaged in training activities

46. Palaiokastro: IG IX 2, 1338; Phthiotic Thebes: ALEXANDROU, KRAVARITOU forthcoming.

47. *Chlamys ephebike*: HATZOPOULOS 1994, 102; CHANIOTIS 2005, 54 drawing attention to SEG 38 (1988) 1210, ll. 11-12. I thank Prof. R.R.R. Smith and Dr. Myrina Kalaitzi for very useful commentary on the relief scene.

48. HELLY 2009, 339-368.

49. ARVANITOPOULOS 1908, 173; IG IX 2, 1322. Cf. DECOURT, NIELSEN, HELLY 2004, 717; MILI 2015, 341-342; KRAVARITOU forthcoming.

50. HELLY 1973, vol. I, 145-146; id. 1977, 541, n. 24. CHANKOWSKI 2010, 195, 231-231, on *phrouroi* and *ephebes* after Arist. Pol. 1322a.19-29. Cf. POUILLOUX 1954, 334, 411-412, on young *phrouroi* in Thasos; CHANIOTIS 2005, 28, 51-52.

51. Polyb. 5.99.7-8; cf. STAMATOPOULOU 2004-2009, 644, fig. 3 (Skopion). CHANTRAINE 1968-1980, s.v. σκοπέω.

52. STÄHLIN 1924, 171-173; ADRIMI-SISMANI 2012, 241.

53. CHANKOWSKI 2010, 359-366; CHANIOTIS 2005, 28, 51-52; CASEY 2013, 428 (early third-century ephebic guard duties on the Mouseion Hill at Athens).

54. HATZOPOULOS 1994, 108-109; STROOTMAN 2014, 136-144 (royal pages).

in the domains of its *basilike chora*.<sup>55</sup> Nonetheless, the emergence of this *par excellence* Macedonian institution in Demetrias should be sought earlier, during the years following the city's founding by Demetrios Poliorketes (297 BC).<sup>56</sup> Early third-century evidence for *kynegoi* comes from Atrax in northern Pelasgiotis, while earlier, fourth-century traces of Herakles Kynagidas' cult have been recently located in Doliche in Perrhaibia, a region also sharing common cultural features with Macedonia.<sup>57</sup> As far as the identity of the Thessalian royal *kynegoi* is concerned, it was a common practice for the Macedonian kings to include among their *philo*i and eventually the royal *kynegoi* members of the civic elites of their conquered lands.<sup>58</sup> In the reign of Philip II and Alexander the Great, members of the Thessalian elite had been already introduced into the Macedonian court.<sup>59</sup> In addition, the fact that apart from the offspring of Macedonian noble families royal *kynegoi* in the court of the Antigonids could incorporate descendants of distinguished members of local societies could provide some clues, even if inconclusive, to the composition of Demetrias' *kynegoi* and their Perrhaibian counterparts.<sup>60</sup>

The evidence on *kynegoi* in Demetrias provided by the letter of Antipater seems to be corroborated with epigraphic and iconographic evidence provided by some of the city's painted tombstones. N. Sekunda has recently argued that the painted representation on the grave stele of Stratonikos son of Straton from Demetrias, who died at Eidomene, points to a Demetrian royal *kynegos*.<sup>61</sup> Also, a funerary epigram narrates that Antigenes, citizen of Demetrias, died fighting in a battle against the Aetolians in Phthiotic Thebes.<sup>62</sup> The text is accompanied by a painted representation of the deceased wearing a chiton, a cloak and a *kausia*, which led Bruno Helly to identify him as a royal *kynegos*, an offspring of the local elite.<sup>63</sup> Antigenes fell bringing aid to ἡβητῆς λόχος – a troop of *ephebes*. It is already known that Hellenistic *ephebes* competed in the agonistic category called ἡβῶντες and that they could also be involved in armed fights.<sup>64</sup> If Antigenes was indeed a royal *kynegos*, he could be perfectly qualified for the role of the leader of an ephebic troop from Demetrias, as also implied by his funerary epigram.<sup>65</sup>

To sum up, early Hellenistic inscriptions attesting the terms *hebe*, *hebao* and the derivative *ephebos* provide strong evidence that the institution of the ephebate was in function in Phthiotic Thebes and in the region of Achaia Phthiotis. There is also good reason to accept that ἡβητῆς λόχος describes a similar and almost contemporary institution in Demetrias – the royal seat of the

55. SEG 56 (2006) 625, ll. 2-3: οἱ κυνηγοὶ τοῦ Ἡρα[κλέ]ους; INTZESILOGLOU 2006, 68. Cf. MILI 2015, 205-206; KRAVARITOU 2016, 142. HATZOPOULOS 1994, 102-111 (royal pages, cult of Heracles Kynagidas); MARI 2011, 461. BATZIOU-EFSTATHIOU, PIKOULAS 2006 (Demetrias' *basilike chora*).

56. Demetrias' synoecism: Strab. 9.4.15; 9.5.15; BATZIOU-EFSTATHIOU 2002; KRAVARITOU 2011, 114-116; ead. 2016, 129-149.

57. SEG 47 (1997) 686 (Atrax, early 3<sup>rd</sup> c.): Πολύ[χ]αρμος κυναγός. DERIZIOTIS, KOUGIOUMTZOGLOU 2012, 665, fig. 9 (Doliche): Ἀλέξανδρος Εὐδήμιου Ἡρακλεῖ Κυναγίδαί. HELLY 2007, 198-200; HATZOPOULOS 2011, 53-54 (Perrhaibia and Macedonia).

58. HATZOPOULOS 1996, 333; SAVALLI-LESTRADE 2003, 51-64; PASCHIDIS 2006, 251-267, esp. 256-266.

59. Theopomp. *FGHist* 115 F 224.23-25 = Ath. 167b: ἔπειτα δ' οἱ ἑταῖροι αὐτοῦ ἐκ πολλῶν τόπων ἦσαν συνερρηκότες οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἐξ αὐτῆς τῆς χώρας, οἱ δὲ ἐκ Θετταλίας, οἱ δὲ ἐκ τῆς ἄλλης Ἑλλάδος. Cf. SPRAWSKI 2005, 46-48.

60. STROOTMAN 2013, 41-42; id. 2014, 138, 144 (royal pages as sons of *philo*i); cf. MILI 2015, 205.

61. SEKUNDA 2012, 38-39, 41, pl. C1; id. 2013, 61-63. Cf. SEKUNDA, MCBRIDE 1984, 8; ARVANITOPOULOS 1909, 122-127 no. 9; *Bull.* 2015, 416.

62. ARVANITOPOULOS 1909, 128-133 no. 10, l. 10 (Demetrias, 217 BC).

63. HELLY forthcoming, no. 397; I thank Bruno Helly for allowing me to consult his study prior to publication. *Contra* ΒΟΕΗΜ 2015, speculating the presence of a soldier expressing 'epichoric' identity in the royal city; apparently, the author is unaware of the presence of royal *kynegoi* in Demetrias.

64. *I. di Cos* ED 45 (*hebontes*, 2<sup>nd</sup> c.). Cf. KENNEL 2006, 70 and n. 107. CHANKOWSKI 2010, 366-382 (*ephebes* in battlefields).

65. HATZOPOULOS 1994, 107-108 (royal *kynegoi* and simple members of paramilitary corpses).



Antigonids that also hosted the royal *kynegoi* –, especially when similar contemporary institutions (ephebate, royal pages) were operating in Macedonia proper.<sup>66</sup> Complementary evidence still lacking, however, the understanding of these tantalizing Thessalian findings is bound to be partial; for the time being, it is only tentative conclusions that one can draw regarding the exact date and mode of operation of such institutions.

Based on the available epigraphic and archeological evidence on Thessalian gymnasia and their users, as well as on linguistic and iconographic evidence related to youths and the institution of the ephebate, Classical and Hellenistic Thessaly – following attitudes and institutions flourishing in other parts of the Greek world – demonstrates equal interest in grouping citizens into age-classes as the rest of the Greek world, aiming at providing males with military and intellectual training, in order for them to serve as full-grown citizens in their own cities.

### 2.2.3. Age groups and public games

Beside competitions and feasts, such as the Herakleia or the Hermaia, organized in the gymnasia exclusively for their users, Hellenistic cities had their young men, divided into age-classes, participating in religious celebrations, where they might compete in various games (*agones*);<sup>67</sup> among these games, it has been argued that horse racing and foot races may also be connected with military training.<sup>68</sup> Although evidence on the kind of competitions organized in the Thessalian gymnasia is lacking, a series of victor lists in games organized during local religious ceremonies in the Hellenistic and Roman periods attests to the categorization of the participants into the classes of *paides*, *ageneioi* and *andres*.<sup>69</sup> As suggested by the case of a Larisaeian who won twice as an adolescent (*ageneios*) and three times as an adult (*andros halikia*),<sup>70</sup> this categorization reflects different stages in both biological and social life.

## 3. Thessalian age-classes and ritual attitudes

### 3.1. Young guards and their votives

Two fourth- and third-century inscribed votives dedicated to Athena Polias and Eirene on the acropolis of Phthiotic Thebes indicate that the local groups of young fellow guards (*syskopoï*) and their chiefs (*archeskopoï*) displayed ritual activity by bestowing honours upon local divinities; the votives also record their names.<sup>71</sup> Similar third- and second-century votives dedicated to Athena Polias by young *phrouroi* were located on the acropolis of Gonnoi.<sup>72</sup>

Given her strong military character and her role as overseer of the city's protection, Athena Polias, poliad deity of Phthiotic Thebes and Gonnoi, was most probably related with ephebic service.<sup>73</sup> Her epithet *hoplophoros* ('warrior') at Gonnoi has been associated with the armed dances (*pyrrhichioi*) of the young soldiers, while she was venerated as chief military deity in Macedonia.<sup>74</sup>

66. GAUTHIER, HATZOPOULOS 1993, 155-172; PSOMA 2006, 285-297.

67. CHANKOWSKI 2013, 179.

68. CHANIOTIS 2005, 48.

69. For example, IG IX 2, 526 (Larisa, after 196 BC). GRANINGER 2011, 159-178.

70. IG IX 2, 614a, ll. 8-10: ἀλλ' ἀγένειος δισοῦς, τρεῖς δὲ ἐλόμαν ἀνδρ-ὸς ἐν ἀλικία.

71. IG IX 2, 1322, ll. 1-2 (3<sup>rd</sup> c.): οἱ ἀρχέσκοποι Ἀθηνᾶι Πολιάδι. ARVANITOPoulos 1908, 172 no. 3: βωμὸν Εἰρή(ι)νηι. | Φά<λ>αϊκος καὶ Στρατοκλήης | καὶ οἱ σύσκοποι. Cf. HEINZ 1998, 396-397 no. A28; MILI 2015, 341-342; KRAVARITOU forthcoming.

72. HELLY 1973, vol. II, 150, ll. 1-3: Ἀθηνᾶ Πολιάδι ὁ ἀρχίφρουρος Ἄσανδρος Δημαινέτου καὶ οἱ σύνφρουροι; also, 148-149. Cf. HEINZ 1998, no. 59, 61, 64-65, fig. 45, 70; MILI 2015, 106-107.

73. MILI 2015, 105-110; KRAVARITOU forthcoming.

74. HELLY 1973, vol. II, 156 (250-200 BC); MILI 2015, 106. MARI 2011, 462 (Athena in Macedonia).



Similar attitudes are displayed in southern Greece, where youths of both sexes and particularly the *ephebes* played a critical role in the civic ceremonies in honour of Athena Polias in Athens.<sup>75</sup> Elsewhere, Eirene was engaged in the same role; for example, she was praised by the *ephebes* in the ‘Hymn of the Kouretes’.<sup>76</sup>

Apart from the aforementioned groups from Phthiotic Thebes and Gonnoi, a third group of third- to first-century votives by young *phrouroi* comes from the site of Mikro Keserli (ancient Gyrtone?).<sup>77</sup> They were dedicated to male and female deities: Apollo, Dionysos Karprios – a Thessalian deity associated with Demeter Phylake –, Zeus Perpheretas and Aineas – a local heroic healer locally assimilated to Asclepius –, Apollo Leukatas, as well as to Artemis and Artemis Phosphoros.<sup>78</sup>

The past participle ἀρχιφρουρείσας in those collective votives suggests that these were no ordinary dedications (for example, collective votives by associations on the occasion of an assembly), and that they followed the completion of the service of the ἀρχίφρουροι along with that of the σύνφρουροι/φρουροὶ of the same rank. If one recognizes the *phrouroi* as of ephebic status, as already proposed, it can then be tentatively suggested that these stelai were dedicated by *ephebes* upon completion of their military training.

Angelos Chaniotis underlined the existence of civic ceremonies following the end of the ephebic training – for example, Ekdysia or Periblemaia in Crete, during which young men exchanged their ephebic garments for those of the citizen, marking their transition to the status of the citizen warrior.<sup>79</sup> In addition, following the end of ephebate, ephebic cloaks were dedicated to the gods, as evidenced by the inventory of the temple of Artemis Khitone at Miletus.<sup>80</sup>

If the interpretation submitted above is correct, then the deities mentioned in the *phrouroi*’s stelai would have actually presided over the passage from ephebate to citizenship. At Mikro Keserli, the dedications to Artemis and Zeus are inscribed on pedimental stelai bearing a shield of the so-called Macedonian type, while those dedicated to the Thessalian Dionysus Karprios and Aineas are inscribed on stelai with horizontal tops.<sup>81</sup> But before rushing to connect typological with ethnic divergence, it must be underlined that at least Artemis and Dionysus presided over rites of passage both in Thessaly and Macedonia.<sup>82</sup>

Staying in Thessaly, we will examine the relation of the deities of Mikro Keserli with Thessalian youths, outside the *phrouroi*’s context. Let us start with the male deities.

### 3.2. Thessalian youths and ritual attitudes

#### 3.2.1 Zeus

Zeus, patron deity of the Macedonians and chief deity of the Thessalians during the Macedonian dominion, was linked with ritual transitions of youths and ephebic service in many areas of

75. PÉLÉKIDIS 1962, 254-255; PARKER 1996, 254-255.

76. CHANIOTIS 2005, 252-253.

77. Cf. BOUCHON, HELLY 2016, 105-109, 115-128, esp. 115-116.

78. IG IX 2, 1064: [Ε]ῖφρουροι Αἰνεία Ἀντίγονος Ἀνδρονίκειος ἀρχιφρο[υρεῖ]σας καὶ οἱ σύνφρουροι. Also, IG IX 2, 1057-1063; SEG 16 (1959) 381; SEG 17 (1960) 299-300; SEG 23 (1968) 443-445; RPhil 1911, 128, 31; 129, 32. Cf. HEINZ 1998, nos. 21-23, 95-96, 116, 178-181, 210, figs. 2, 73, 75, 125, 181-182, 184; MILI 2011; HELLY 2013, 78, 95-108. Cf. MILI 2015, 106-107; BOUCHON, HELLY 2016, 215-216 (detailed catalogue of the inscriptions). Dionysios Karprios and Demeter Phylake: MILI 2015, 114-115.

79. CHANIOTIS 2005, 55.

80. SEG 38 (1988) 1210, ll. 11-12; Cf. CHANIOTIS 2005, 54.

81. HEINZ 1998, figs. 2, 73-75, 125, 181-182, 184.

82. HATZOPOULOS 1994, 25-37, 52, 64-72; id. 2006a, 54-60; id. 2006b, 14-28.



southern Greece (as, for example, in Crete and Athens).<sup>83</sup> In Demetrias ‘the preeminent citizens at the peak of their age’ celebrated Zeus Akraios annually, climbing up to his sanctuary on the peak of Mount Pelion, where centaur Cheiron was also venerated; the young participants were selected by the priest.<sup>84</sup> Aston has already pointed out the correlation between young participants in Cheiron’s cult and the tutelage that the wise healer exercised over the young legendary heroes, who spent a training term with him on Mount Pelion – as, for example, Achilles.<sup>85</sup> In this perspective, the epithet Akraios borne by Zeus on Mount Pelion relates him to Artemis Akraia, the protector of young *nebeusasai* in Demetrias, as well as with Hera Akraia in Corinth, who equally hosted ritual terms of young boys and girls in her sanctuary and oversaw rites of passage.<sup>86</sup>

### 3.2.2. Apollo

Epigraphic and archaeological evidence indicates the important role that Apollo played in Thessalian kourotrophy and, in all likelihood, in local rites of passage. Apollo as Leschaios – of the *lesche*, ‘assembly place’ – and Kerdoos received Classical and late Hellenistic inscribed votives by the *δauχναφόροι/δαφναφόροι* and the *ἀρχιδauχναφόροι/ἀρχιδauχνοφόροι* in Phalanna, Atrax, Pherai and Glauke.<sup>87</sup> The celebration of the Daphnephoreia rite during the enneateric festival of the Septerion linked the Thessalian sacred and socio-political space with the Delphic oracle. The legendary *aition* presents young Apollo traversing Thessaly to purify himself at Tempe after the murder of Python, before returning to Delphi as legitimate owner of the oracle. His path was subsequently followed during the festival of the Septerion by a theory of noble youths, with one *amphithales* between them acting as *architheoros*. They used to reach Tempe and take with them branches of laurel – *daphne* –, while on their return to Delphi they made a meal at Deipnias.<sup>88</sup> Deipnias has been identified with Glauke, find-spot of one of the *dauchnaphoroi* votives.<sup>89</sup> Literary evidence on the Daphnephoria in Thebes attests to the participation of choruses of both girls and boys, while the young *amphithales daphnephoros* was always a handsome and strong figure chosen from among members of the most distinguished families of Thebes.<sup>90</sup> Although the social and ritual identity of the Thessalian *dauchnaphoroi/daphnaphoroi* remains unrevealed, both legendary narration and its historical ritual counterpart focus on achievements made by youths, thus taking on an accentuated initiatory character; as to the age of the Thessalian *dauchnaphoroi/daphnaphoroi*, the same evidence points most probably to local youths. It has already been tentatively proposed that the Thessalian

83. Macedonian Zeus: HATZOPOULOS 2006a, 53-54; MARI 2011, 456. Thessalian Zeus Olympios: PARKER 2011; CHANIO-TIS 2005, 46-49, 146.

84. Heraclides Creticus 2.8 Pfister: Ἐπ’ ἄκρας δὲ τῆς τοῦ ὄρους κορυφῆς σπήλαιόν ἐστι τὸ καλούμενον Χειρώνιον καὶ Διὸς Ἀκραίου ἱερὸν, ἐφ’ ὃ κατὰ κυνὸς ἀνατολὴν κατὰ τὸ ἀκμαιοτάτον καῦμα ἀναβαίνουσι τῶν πολιτῶν οἱ ἐπιφανέστατοι καὶ ταῖς ἡλικίαις ἀκμάζοντες, ἐπιλεχθέντες ἐπὶ τοῦ ἱερέως, ἐνεζωσμένοι κώδια τρίποκα καινά. τοιοῦτον συμβαίνει ἐπὶ τοῦ ὄρους τὸ ψῦχος εἶναι; cf. MILI 2015, 203.

85. ASTON 2009, 91.

86. Hsch. s.v. ἀκρέα· παῖς θήλεια· Μακεδόνες. HATZOPOULOS 1994, 34-37.

87. SEG 47 (1997) 679 (Atrax, late 5<sup>th</sup> c.): Εὐφορβος | ἀρχιδauχνη|οφόρες κοῖ σ|υνδαφναφό|ροι; also, IG IX 2, 1027, l. A2 (Glauke, c. 450-425 BC): συνδauχναφόροι; IG IX 2, 1234, l. 4 (Phalanna, 1<sup>st</sup> c.): ἀρχιδauχναφορείσας; HEINZ 1998, 212-213 no. 75, ll. 1 and A2 (Pherai, 3<sup>rd</sup> c.): ἀρχιδauχναφόρος and συνδauχναφόροι, respectively. Apollo Leschaios: GRANINGER 2011, 101 (in connection with the month name Leschanorios); MILI 2015, 191, 299. Apollo Kerdoos: MILI 2015, 135-140, esp. 138 (on the presumably initiatory character of the cult).

88. Callim. *Aet.* 4.86-89, 194 Pfeiffer; Plut. *De def. or.* 417-418. Cf. JEANMAIRE 1939, 388-390; BRELICH 1969, 388; CALAME 2001, 101-103.

89. Steph. Byz. s.v. Δειπνιάς (= Callim. fr. 87 Pfeiffer). HELLY 1987, 139-142, 147-149.

90. Procl. *apud Phot. Bibl.* 321b 30; Paus. 9.10.4.



Dauchnaphoria/Daphnaphoria were celebrated on a more regular basis, with the participation of various Thessalian communities.<sup>91</sup> In this regard, it would be no surprise to have local rites resembling the Theban Daphnephoria, engaging youths from eminent families of the area.<sup>92</sup>

The cult statue of Apollo as hoplite discovered in the Archaic sanctuary at Lianokokkala relates the divinity to the world of Thessalian young males and stresses the importance of military training for the local communities already since the Archaic period, when the configuration of the Thessalian state was established through Aleuas' reforms.<sup>93</sup> In addition, the Archaic and Classical sanctuary of Apollo, presumably Pagasaios, at Soros (ancient Pagasai?), in the area of the major Thessalian port in the Pagasetic Gulf, has delivered sculpted offerings illustrating the presence of both sexes: statues of boys and a relief with an adolescent girl standing next to the god associate Apollo with childhood and adolescence.<sup>94</sup>

Furthermore, Thessalian Apollo, in his quality as Patroos, was closely related to local ancestors (*patrai*), kinship groups responsible for the introduction of young men into citizenship.<sup>95</sup> In Per-rhaibian Pythion, Apollo's cult seat is located next to that of Poseidon Patroos, while the latter also bears the related epithet Patrigenes at Atrax and the region of Agia.<sup>96</sup>

### 3.2.3 Poseidon

At first sight, Poseidon, an old Thessalian deity holding a key role in the legendary creation of the Thessalian plain, would seem to be a stranger to Thessalian kourotrophy, overseeing the ages of childhood and youth. Nevertheless, a series of fourth- and second-century inscribed votives from the region of Larisa, dedicated to Poseidon and Poseidon Impsios – an epithet related to child growth and kourotrophy – by parents for the sake of their male or female children provides evidence to the contrary.<sup>97</sup> Moreover, a second-century inscribed votive from Phthiotic Thebes was also dedicated to Poseidon 'for the sake of a child' as a λύτρον.<sup>98</sup> As already said, the term λύτρον, met in the *nebeusasai* dedications to Artemis Throsia and in those to Artemis Akraia and the Dioskouroi – all kourotrophic deities in Thessaly and elsewhere –, has been interpreted as a 'ransom' paid to these deities during an initiatory ritual marking the passage from childhood to adolescence and eventually to adulthood.<sup>99</sup> Could the *lytron* addressed to Poseidon possibly share the same function? Could Thessalian Poseidon preside over local rites of passage? A contemporary inscribed relief plaque also from Phthiotic Thebes bears evidence supporting such a possibility.<sup>100</sup> The relief represents two long hair plaits, a hair offering to Poseidon made by two brothers, reflecting similarity to the well-known rite of *koureion* accompanying the boys' registration in the Greek *phratries*.<sup>101</sup> The correlation of this votive with the divine epithet Patrigenes attributed to the god demonstrates

91. GRANINGER 2011, 101; MILI 2015, 190, n. 171.

92. Theban Daphnephoria: BERMAN 2015, 57, 64-65, 135.

93. INTZESILOGLOU 2002; MILI 2015, 333-334. Aleuas: HELLY 1995.

94. MAZARAKIS-AINIAN 2012; LEVENTI 2009. Cf. GARCÍA-RAMÓN, HELLY 2007, 307; MILI 2015, 343-345.

95. MILI 2015, 91, n. 173.

96. MILI 2015, 91 n. 173, 92, with earlier bibliography.

97. *IG IX 2*, 585, ll. 4-6 (Larisa, first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> c.): Ποτειδο[ῦ]νι πὲρ τοῦ πα[ι]δ[ό]ς; *SEG 42* (1992) 512 (Nikaia, first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> c.): πὲρ τᾶς κόρας Ποτει[δ]ου[νι] | [Γ]μψίου; *SEG 42* (1992) 511 (Nikaia, second half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> c.): ὑπὲρ τοῦ υἱοῦ | Ποσειδῶνι Ἰμψίωι.

98. *ArchDelt* 43 (1988), *Chronika* 260 (Phthiotic Thebes, first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> c.): Ποτειδοῦνι | Κλείτια Κινιαία πὲρ | τοῦ παιδὸς λύτρον.

99. HATZOPOULOS 1994, 26-28, 33-34, 37-38, 40.

100. *IG IX 2*, 146 (Phthiotic Thebes, first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> c.). HEINZ 1998, 192 no. 41, fig. 255.

101. LEITAO 2003, 109-129; CHANKOWSKI 2010, 72-75, 99, 238; cf. CHANIOTIS 2005, 54.

that Thessalian Poseidon was in every probability equally presiding over ritual passages related to active age-classes within the Hellenistic Thessalian society.

To sum up, the groups of Thessalian ephebic guards (*skopoi, phrouroi*) made votive offerings to both female and male divinities. These male deities, as well as Poseidon, also received votives by children and youths of both sexes or by adults for the sake of their children. This is indicative of the fact that Thessalian kourtophy overseeing young age-classes and their passage to adulthood could evidently cut across gender. Complementary evidence is also provided by statues of boys and girls that were discovered in Thessalian sanctuaries of Asclepius.<sup>102</sup>

Let us now turn to female deities.

### 3.2.4. Artemis

Artemis is a deity already shown to preside over third- and second-century initiatory rites of young Thessalian *nebeusa(n/s)sai*.<sup>103</sup> Contemporary votives to Artemis recording five more *nebeusa(n/s)sai* have come to light during the last decades at Atrax and Phayttos.<sup>104</sup> These important findings offer new perspectives regarding the number of Thessalian girls originally participating in rites of passage performed after the end of their ritual term in the deity's sanctuaries. Most of the *nebeusa(n/s)sai* come from Atrax, one of the few sites to have delivered a considerable epigraphic corpus; most of the Thessalian cities and sanctuaries remain as yet unexplored and could perhaps deliver further related evidence in the future.

All votives mentioning the *nebeusasai* were dedicated by the girls themselves, just having had crossed the threshold to the status of a full-grown female and, in that sense, they form a semantically unified corpus. Nevertheless, they should not be considered to be the only Thessalian epigraphic evidence attesting female age-class grouping and ritual crossing of age boundaries, nor the earliest ones, as complementary evidence is offered by other inscriptions that do not directly belong to this corpus. For example, a significantly earlier, fourth-century dedication to Artemis by a female devotee records the latter's contribution to the expenses towards the upbringing (*τροφεΐα*) of her children, who possibly spent a term in one of Artemis' sanctuaries.<sup>105</sup> In addition, the well-known monumental relief from Echinus in Achaia Phthiotis depicts the introduction of a baby girl to Artemis, in the presence of family members and in anticipation of a blood sacrifice. Following the Thessalo-Macedonian cases of the *nebeusasai* and *neusasai* and that of the Attic *arkteia*, Anne-Marie VÉRILHAC recently refuted the old interpretation of the scene as a mother's thanksgiving after childbirth, and insisted on its initiatory character, taking it to depict the introduction of a girl to a ritual term in the sanctuary of the goddess.<sup>106</sup>

Furthermore, legendary narratives focusing on the area of Achaia Phthiotis present Artemis as protector of young females in the critical moment before crossing the threshold to adulthood. Melitaia hosted the cult of Artemis Aspalis, protecting girls of nubile age. This cult commemorated

102. ARVANITOU-METALLINOY 1982 (Gonnoi); ADRIMI-SISMANI 1991, 210 (Phthiotic Thebes); DOULGERI-INTZESILO-GLOU 2006 (Skopelos).

103. HATZOPOULOS 1994, 25-40.

104. SEG 49 (1999) 602 (Atrax, 3<sup>rd</sup> c.): Ἀρτέμιδι Θαυμαρέτα | Εὐδαμιδαία νεβέυσασσ[α]; TZIAFALIAS *et al.* 2016, 58. SEG 46 (1996) 636 (Atrax, 3<sup>rd</sup> c.): [---].Α Δαμοχαρεία Ἀρ[τ[έ]μ[ι]δ[ι] νεβέυσασσα; TZIAFALIAS *et al.* 2016, 58. SEG 43 (1993) 240 (Atrax, 200-150 BC): Ἀντιπάτρα Κλευγενεΐα | Ἀρτέμιδι νεβέυσασσα; TZIAFALIAS *et al.* 2016, 61. SEG 46 (1996) 633 (Atrax, 2<sup>nd</sup> c.): Λαυκρίτα Φιλονικεΐα | νεβέυσασσα; TZIAFALIAS *et al.* 2016, 59. SEG 51 (2001) 732 (Phayttos, 3<sup>rd</sup> c.): Ἀρτέμιδι Ἁγίς Ἀστοκρατεΐα νεβέυσασσ[α].

105. IG IX 2, 417 (Pherai, 4<sup>th</sup> c.): Κυθερία ὀνέθεικε | τάρτάμιδι τᾶ ἐν σκιᾷ δῶρόν τε [κ]ά[π]ω[ν] | καὶ τροφεΐα τῶν τέκνω|ν.

106. VÉRILHAC 2014, 133-146.

the legend of *parthenos* Aspalis, who, in her effort to escape sexual abuse by a local tyrant, decided to kill herself; Artemis intervened and saved her.<sup>107</sup>

Moving into the area of the inlet of the Pagasetic Gulf, the legendary narration on the Panhellenic Argonautic expedition brings forward Artemis – tutelary divinity of Iolkos’ palace –, overseeing Jason and his young male and female (*Atalante*) companions on their adventure to the outskirts of the Greek world and also during their return to the palace of Iolkos.<sup>108</sup> The Argonautic voyage from the shores of Pagasai was preceded by the construction of an altar to Apollo Embasios (‘of embarkation’), while Jason also prayed to the god for a safe return to Greece.<sup>109</sup> Related religious attitudes in this area of the biggest Thessalian port, controlled in Archaic and Classical times by the port cities of Iolkos and Pagasai, and later by Demetrias, indicate that the tutelary divinities Apollo Pagasaios and his sister, Artemis Iolkia and Pagasitis, were conjointly overseeing kourotrophy and rites of passage at least from Classical times on, if not earlier.<sup>110</sup> The early evidence from Apollo’s sanctuary was discussed above, while well-known is also *nebeuosa* Dynatis, a young girl who, in the second century, accomplished her ritual term of training in the sanctuary of Artemis Pagasitis in Demetrias.<sup>111</sup> Helly has recently demonstrated that contemporary priestesses of Artemis from Demetrias were members of local prominent families and, before undertaking those priesthoods, they had been through ritual terms in the sanctuaries of the deity, with the aim of accomplishing their service of *neai*, as did all the other well-known Thessalian *nebeusasai*.<sup>112</sup> This observation correlates with the earlier literary evidence on cult activity in honour of Zeus Akraios and Cheiron on the peak of mount Pelion by select youths at the peak of their age. They both highlight social and ritual attitudes of the local elite from the fourth century onwards.

### 3.2.7. Artemis, En(n)odia and Pasikrata

In Hellenistic Demetrias religious syncretism between Artemis and En(n)odia, the famous Thessalian goddess of neighbouring Pherai, encompasses the kourotrophic character of both deities and their mutual interest in crossing age boundaries.<sup>113</sup> En(n)odia’s epithet Koroutarra illustrates her as ‘the one who makes children grow’.<sup>114</sup> Contemporary syncretism is attested to by a mid-fourth-century dedication to ‘Artemis Ennodia’ from Pherai.<sup>115</sup> Furthermore, the finds from the recently excavated sanctuary at Melitaia include a late fourth-century marble head that has been tentatively identified as Artemis, an inscribed dedication to Ennodia, a marble statuette of a female figure holding a torch, probably portraying Artemis Ennodia, and the statuette of an *ephebe*, which possibly hint at kourotrophic aspects of the local cult.<sup>116</sup> Lastly, the votives from the periurban sanctuary of Pasikrata and Artemis Enodia in Demetrias include a large number of clay figurines of boys wearing the *chlamys* and the *kausia*, figurines of standing or seated women, young females and girls, *kourotrophoi*, and also a stele dedicated by a couple for the safety of their daughters (ὕπερ θυγατέρων). All the other inscribed votives mention Pasikrata and belong to both female and male devotees. Lately,

107. Ant. Lib. Met. 13. CANTARELLI 2008, 371-434.

108. Ap. Rhod. Argon. 1.312, and 1.570-572. KRAVARITOU 2011, 119-120; ead. 2016, 134-136.

109. Ap. Rhod. Argon. 1.359-362, 411-424.

110. LIAMPI 2005, 23-40; KRAVARITOU 2011, 115-117; ead. 2016, 129.

111. HATZOPOULOS 1994, 25-26; MILI 2015, 151, 203-204.

112. HELLY 2012-2013, 190-204; cf. Bull. 2014, 495.

113. CHRYSOSTOMOU 1998, 187-230 (En(n)odia and Artemis); KRAVARITOU 2011, 119; ead. 2016, 139-141; cf. STAMATOPOULOU 2014.

114. GARCÍA RAMÓN, HELLY 2007, 291-312.

115. CHRYSOSTOMOU 1998, 191.

116. STAVROGIANNIS 2014, 59, 70-71, 73, figs. 119, 136, 142.

Stamatopoulou interpreted those finds as belonging to a cult incorporating kourotrophic functions with an interest in presiding over important passages in peoples' lives.<sup>117</sup> Similar finds which have been found in many sanctuaries of Artemis outside Thessaly – such as Brauron, Artemision of Thasos and lately Epidamnos-Dyrrhahion – have been already connected with the deity's protective role over important stages and passages of human life – such as the passage from adolescence to adulthood.<sup>118</sup>

### 3.2.8. Demeter

Following Hatzopoulos' accentuation on the accomplishment of ritual terms by young girls in the sanctuary of Demeter and Persephone, which he based on a Hellenistic inscription from the region of Phalanna,<sup>119</sup> the kourotrophic role of Thessalian Demeter appears equally highlighted by the earlier, late Archaic and Classical finds from the deity's sanctuary at Proerna. They include statuettes of girls, seated *kourotrophoi* with babies on their laps or holding children, clay feminine genitals and statuettes of boys.<sup>120</sup>

## 4. Conclusions

Hatzopoulos' pioneer research on cults and rites of passage in Macedonia has at the same time laid the basis for the study of similar ritual attitudes in Thessaly. He drew attention to a series of Hellenistic Thessalian votives revealing the engagement of young girls – *nebeusasai* – in training terms in local sanctuaries and the ritual commemoration of their endpoint that marked these girls' passage to adulthood. Having followed a tentative approach, according to which the epigraphic dossier of the *nebeusasai* constitutes only one of the sources that can bear evidence to Thessalian cults and rites of passage, I have tried to highlight certain aspects of their social context, in the light of epigraphic and archeological evidence indicating the existence of local age-classes. Although, due to lack of evidence, questions regarding either diachronic or region-specific parameters pertaining to age-classes still remain open, I hope to have shown that, chiming in with common Greek attitudes, Thessaly shared an equal interest in determining age-groups, while also developing institutional training for the youths, especially during the Classical and Hellenistic periods. Disparate epigraphic and archeological evidence indicates that male age-groups equally celebrated rites of passage similar to those of the female *nebeusasai*, while a series of female and male deities shared Thessalian kourotrophy and the role of overseeing ritual passages commemorating changes both in individual physiology and social norms.

Were Thessalian cults and rites of passage socially all-inclusive or were they exclusive to civic elites? For the moment, any attempt to answer this question would have to remain inconclusive, and thus reformulating the question could prove more fruitful. Could different categories of votives – for example, a marble votive statue set on an inscribed base as opposed to a modest terracotta figurine – be seen as connected with rites of passage but at the same time reflecting the diversified social status of the devotees? In other words, could it be that we are faced with diversified attitudes towards rites of passage, depending on social status and private means? Hopefully, future research, bringing together more categories of primary material, will be able to offer informative answers on this complex question.

117. STAMATOPOULOU 2014.

118. NIELSEN 2009 (Brauron); MAFFRE, TICHIT 2011, esp. 160, 162-163 (Thasos); MULLER, TARTARI 2009, esp. 20-22 (Epidamnos).

119. See above, n. 12.

120. DAFFA-NIKONANOU 1973.

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