

What are the Dialects of West Greek?

This should be a non-question; the standard handbooks subdivide West Greek into Phocian, Locrian, Elean (which constitute Northwest Greek), Megarian, Corinthian, Argolic, Laconian, Cretan, Theran, Coan, and Rhodian (with maybe a handful of others thrown in). On the other hand, when I conducted a phylogenetic analysis of the Greek dialects as a part of my dissertation, the analysis was unable to produce a single evolutionary tree for West Greek. This could mean one of two things: either the phylogenetic methods I was trying to use were inappropriate, or the West Greek dialects were not all discrete dialects. To test this second possibility, I performed a cluster analysis of the West Greek dialects using Multidimensional Scaling. The analysis found that several dialects were similar enough that they could be grouped together as single dialects (Phocian and Locrian, Argolic and Laconian, and Theran, Coan, and Rhodian). Given the differences which do exist between these dialects, do you all think this is a fair assessment? Grouping the dialects together in this way did resolve the problems with the phylogenetic analysis, and the resulting tree implied an initial split between Corinthian and Northwest Greek on the one hand, and Argolic, Laconian, Cretan, and Island Doric on the other hand. What do you think of this result, since it more or less contradicts all of the existing theories on the development of West Greek?