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Albert Schachter

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BOIOTIA IN ANTIQUITY

Boiotia was – next to Athens and Sparta – one of the most important regions of ancient Greece. Albert Schachter, a leading expert on the region, has for many decades pioneered and fostered the exploration of it and its people through his research. His seminal publications have covered all aspects of its history, institutions, cults, and literature from late Mycenaean times to the Roman Empire, revealing a mastery of the epigraphic evidence, archaeological data, and the literary tradition. This volume conveniently brings together twenty-three papers (two previously unpublished, others revised and updated) which display a compelling intellectual coherence and a narrative style refreshingly immune to jargon. All major topics of Boiotian history from early Greece to Roman times are touched upon, and the book can be read as a history of Boiotia, in pieces.

ALBERT SCHACHTER is Emeritus Hiram Mills Professor of Classics in the Department of History and Classical Studies at McGill University, Montréal. His major publication is *Cults of Boiotia* (4 vols.; London 1981–94), and he edits the electronic journal *Teiresias*. Together with G. Argoud and G. Vottéro, he brought out the late Paul Roesch's *Les Inscriptions de Thespies* (an online publication).

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Author's foreword

Some years ago, Hans Beck suggested that I should publish a selection of my articles. Since most of these have appeared in relatively out of the way places – conference proceedings, Festschriften, and the like – this seemed to be a good idea.

When it came to preparing the material for publication, I soon realized that it would not do simply to reproduce it as originally published. My views on the Boiotian dialect and the coinage, among other things, have changed, thanks in no small part to the work and insights of others. Accordingly, I have revised and brought up to date several of the papers, so as to present a consistent argument which reflects my current and, I hope, more mature judgement. Occasionally I have recorded, mainly in the footnotes, the reactions of others to my work, and even more occasionally, commented on them. Two of the papers are published here for the first time.

Many of the chapters reflect my growing interest in the history and institutions of the Boiotians. This was inevitable: it is impossible to isolate any aspect of a society from its historical context. This is especially true of its religious practices. So it is not surprising that I have broadened the scope of my research to include more aspects of ancient Boiotian society than just its cults, from which I started.

Several chapters deal with specific Boiotian cults, in greater depth than was possible in the format of a quasi-encyclopaedic work such as *Cults of Boiotia*. Three pieces have to do with literary matters that have a Boiotian interest. There is a certain amount of overlapping, especially in the historical chapters, but this could not be avoided. After all, this book is not a monograph, but a collection of what began as more or less self-contained essays, each dealing with a specific and limited subject.

I have for the most part confined my work to Boiotia, with only an occasional excursion abroad. If there is a common theme to these papers, it is that in them I try to look at the ancient Greek world from a Boiotian

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Author's foreword

perspective, rather than, for example, from the standpoint of the Athenians, which colours so much of our interpretation of Greek antiquity. Occasionally, a picture may emerge which is different from the accepted view, and motives and behaviour appear in a different light.

I have included only material which was written up to 2010. Of the twenty-three articles in this collection, eighteen were produced after the publication of the last volume of the *Cults of Boiotia*, thirteen of them since my retirement. I hope that this last statistic may encourage others who are still struggling with the pressures of teaching and administration.

It is a long time since I began my work on Boiotian matters, and throughout I have benefited greatly from the encouragement, advice, instruction, and example of others; it would be impossible for me to list them all. I restrict myself here to naming only those who are no longer among the living, and recording my gratitude to them. They are, in alphabetical order: Gilbert Argoud; Kees Bakhuizen; Robert Buck; John Buckler; E. R. Dodds; John G. Griffith; Reynold Higgins; Siegfried Lauffer; David Lewis; Margaret Packer; Paul Roesch; Humphrey Sutherland; Annie D. Ure.

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Preface

The Linear B tablets from the Kadmeia in Thebes have fuelled the scholarly debate about the status of the palace at Thebes and its place in central Greece and beyond. Although there is no consensus in sight, everyone agrees that the tablets are invaluable for our understanding of the late Mycenaean period. They document, at least in part, how the proprietors of the palace at Thebes lived, what their beliefs were, and how they organized, administered, and structured the world around them. The tablets also allow us to look ahead, from the palatial period into the Archaic, Classical, and Hellenistic eras of Greek history. Frequent references in Linear B to place names and ethnics spark the notorious question of how the occupants of the site in later times – Kadmeians, Thebans, and Boiotians – understood their ties stretching back to the original owners of the palace.

Albert Schachter is the leading voice in all affairs Boiotian (although I know he would not want to hear this). For many decades now, his research has fostered the exploration of the region and its people. This research engagement unfolds in publications across all scholarly formats, including the edition of epigraphic corpora and the Herculean task (apt for Boiotia, actually) of maintaining an ongoing research bibliography that is invaluable to anyone in the field. Schachter's research does not recognize chronological confinements, as he covers Boiotia from late Mycenaean times to the Roman Empire. Neither does he limit himself to a specific body of evidence. His scholarly approach is holistic in a magisterial sense, with full coverage and resourceful interpretation of all epigraphic testimonies, archaeological data, and the literary tradition.

The greatest expression of this expertise is of course his *Cults of Boiotia* (1981–94). Incidentally, it is interesting to note that *Cults* began to take shape at a time when the study of regions beyond Athens and Sparta was still not considered particularly rewarding, and when the disclosure of the ritual dynamics of cult festivals and sanctuaries was not yet on the agenda

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Preface

of many scholars. Albert Schachter appears generally unimpressed by fashionable research trends. This timelessness, too, is characteristic of his work.

The selection of articles assembled in this volume documents the enormous breadth of his expertise. Albert Schachter insists, rightly so, that this book is not a monograph, not even a quasi-monograph. But I am convinced that readers will swiftly pick up the threads that run through the various chapters of this book to make it one. There is a particular, if not peculiar, way in which Schachter presents his arguments throughout. The intellectual coherence is compelling; the narrative style refreshingly immune to jargon. Thematically, readers will discover that almost all major topics of Boiotian history from early Greece to Roman times are touched upon in one way or the other. In this sense, this book can be read as a history of Boiotia, in pieces.

The notorious Kadmeians are covered, too. It is noteworthy to recall that the tablets from Thebes, or elsewhere for that matter, bear no attestation of the place-name or ethnic Kadmeioi. Albert Schachter would never give much weight to an argument of silence, just as he never joined in the choir of scholarly voices that declare Thebes the major centre of power on the Mycenaean mainland in the LH III B period. As early as 1985, he argued that the arrival of Kadmos in Boiotian tradition followed an itinerary that was distinctly different from what is commonly assumed; the article is reprinted as Chapter 2. The explanation offered there is as intriguing as it is ingenious. And, after many turns triggered by ethnic, memory, and identity studies, I should think it continues to stand the test of time, as do the other articles assembled in this book.

HANS BECK, MCGILL UNIVERSITY, MONTREAL

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Chapter 1: 'Costituzione e sviluppo dell'*ethnos* beotico', *QUCC* 52 (1996) 7–29.

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Chapter 21: 'The Mouseia of Thespiai: organization and development', *Rudiae* 22–23 (2010–11) 29–61.

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Chapter 10: 'The seer Tisamenos and the Klytiadai', *CQ* 50 (2000) 292–5.

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Chapter 5: 'Politics and personalities in Classical Thebes', in R. B. Egan and M. A. Joyal, eds., *Daimonopylai: Essays in Classics and the Classical Tradition Presented to Edmund G. Berry* (Winnipeg 2004) 347–61.

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Chapter 3: 'Boiotia in the sixth century BC', in H. Beister and J. Buckler, eds., *Boiotika: Vorträge vom 5. Internationalen Bötien-Kolloquium zu Ehren von Professor Dr Siegfried Lauffer* (Munich 1989) 73–86.

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Note on the text

For technical reasons, it has not been possible to reproduce the correct alignment of the text of the right hand column of 'Block B' on page 365. For the correct layout please go to: www.cambridge.org/9781107053243

Abbreviations

Abbreviations follow the lead of the fourth edition of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (OCD⁴) for authors and books, and of *L'Année philologique* for journals (although in some cases fuller versions are used). In addition, there are the following:

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| <i>IOrop</i> | V. Petrakos, <i>Οἱ Ἐπιγραφές τοῦ Ὠρωποῦ</i> (Athens, 1997) |
| <i>IThesp</i> | †P. Roesch, <i>Les Inscriptions de Thespies</i> : online corpus (2007), available at www.hisoma.mom.fr/production-scientifique/les-inscriptions-de-thespies (Google the title) |
| <i>NIO</i> | P. Siewert and H. Taeuber, eds., <i>Neue Inschriften von Olympia (Die ab 1896 veröffentlichten Texte)</i> = Tyche Sonderband 7 (Vienna, 2013); also available as an open access book (Google the title) |

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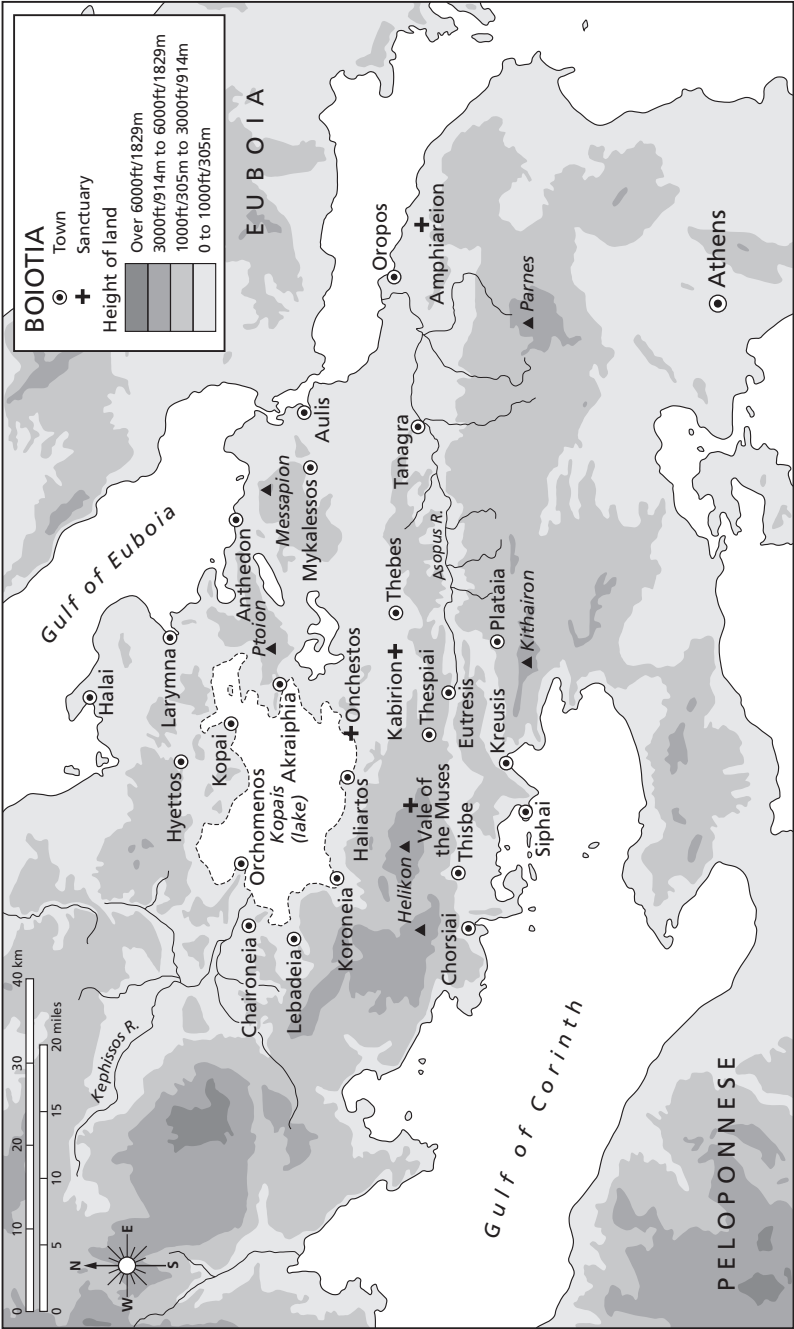
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Map of Boiotia



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