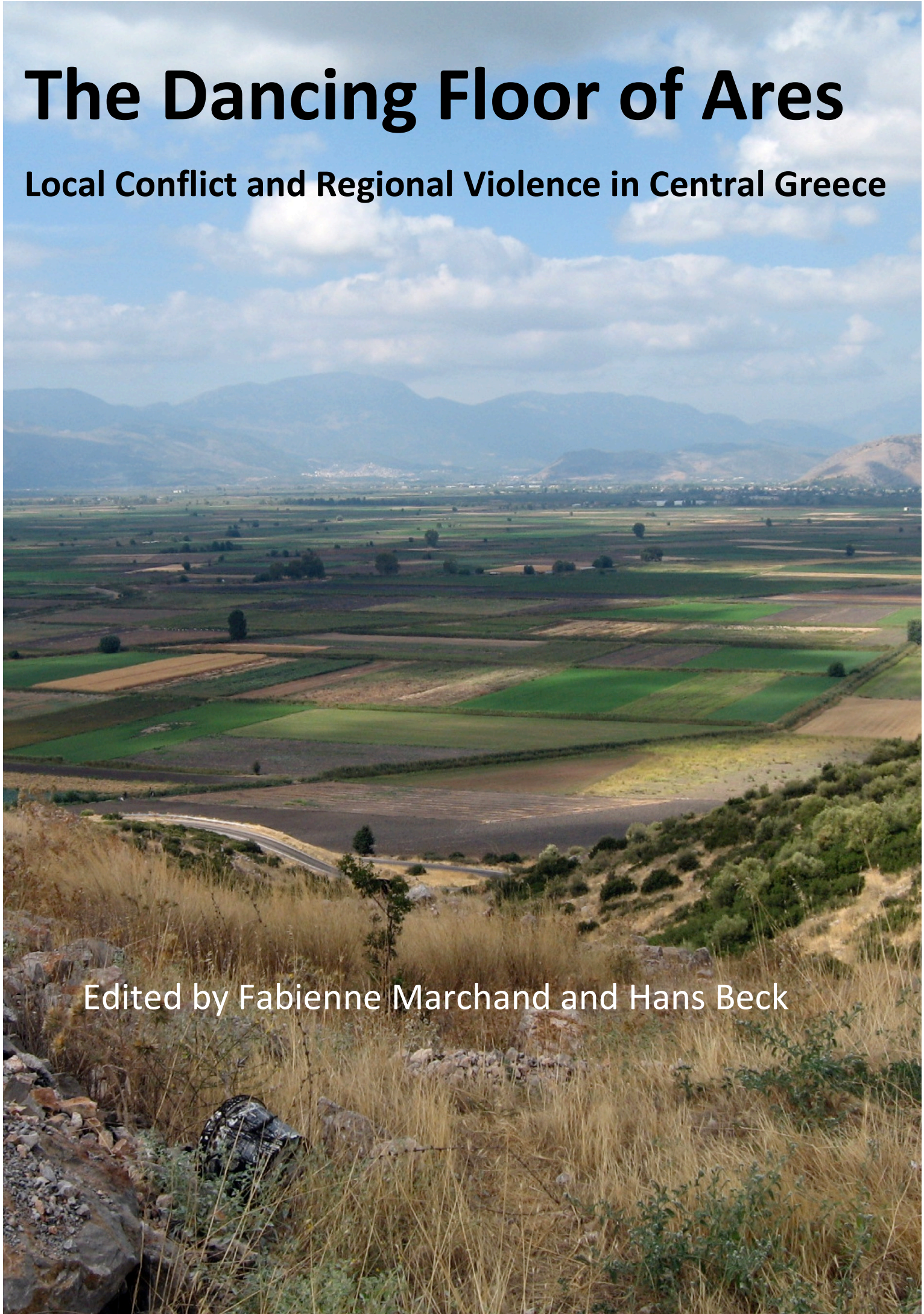


# The Dancing Floor of Ares

Local Conflict and Regional Violence in Central Greece

Edited by Fabienne Marchand and Hans Beck



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## Preface

The present collection of papers stems from two one-day workshops, the first at McGill University on November 9, 2017, followed by another at the Université de Fribourg on May 24, 2018. Both meetings were part of a wider international collaboration between two projects, the *Parochial Polis* directed by Hans Beck in Montreal and now at Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster, and Fabienne Marchand's Swiss National Science Foundation *Old and New Powers: Boiotian International Relations from Philip II to Augustus*. The collaboration was further facilitated by a Swiss National Science Foundation Short Visit Fellowship that brought Fabienne Marchand as a Visiting Professor to McGill University in the fall of 2017.

Famously dubbed, according to Plutarch, the “Dancing Floor of Ares” by the 4th century Theban general Epaminondas (Plut. *Life of Marcellus* 21.2), the region of Boiotia hosted throughout Antiquity a series of battles that shaped the history of the ancient world, such as the battle of Plataia – which ended the Persian Wars in 479 – and the battle of Chaironeia, won in 338 by the Macedonian king Philip II and his son Alexander the Great over a coalition of Greek states. The present volume is devoted to different dances of Ares. Rather than discussing seminal battles through the lens of military history, it investigates regional conflicts and local violence in Central Greece, with a particular focus on the region Boiotia, through the complementary approaches, conceptual approaches and synergies offered by the two research projects. This double perspective allows us to explore the crucial role played by conflict in the shaping of the Boiotian experience. At the same time, the region's relations with various foreign powers (the Achaian *koinon*, the Macedonian kings, the Romans among others) as well as with its neighbours, such as Athens, Lokris, and Euboa, become visible. Organised as a series of thematic studies involving mythology, genealogy, federalism, political institutions, and geopolitical strategies, our inquiry starts with the Mycenaean period, and runs down through the Classical and Hellenistic periods to conclude with the involvement of the Romans in Central Greece.

The Montreal workshop received funding from the Anneliese Maier Research Prize that was awarded to Hans Beck by the German Humboldt Foundation, as well as from the John MacNaughton Chair of Classics, which he held at McGill University at the time. The Fribourg workshop was supported by the Université de Fribourg Fonds du Centenaire and the Faculté des lettres et sciences humaines. The respective teams of research assistants in Montreal and Fribourg did a magnificent job to turn both workshops into a wonderful experience: Corey Straub, Cyrena Gerardi, Emilie Lucas, Daniel Whittle, and Roy van Wijk. As the papers were prepared for publication, we received insightful comments from the anonymous peer-reviewers. Tim Howe offered helpful advice to improve the manuscript of this first volume in the new AHB Supplement Series. To all we offer our heartfelt thanks.

Fabienne Marchand and Hans Beck

May 2019

# The Making of a Fetter of Greece: Chalcis in the Hellenistic Period<sup>1</sup>

*Fabienne Marchand*

**Abstract:** In 197 BC, proudly holding Chalcis along with Corinth and Demetrias, the Macedonian King Philip V claimed to be controlling the “fettters” of Greece. Indeed, the site of Chalcis, located at the narrowest point of the strait of the Euripos separating the island of Euboia from the continent, allowed the control not only of the Euboic Gulf and its maritime routes, but also of Central Greece as a whole, and by extension, of the Greek peninsula. This paper investigates the strategic, political and military factors needed in the early Hellenistic period for the transformation of the Euboian commercial port into one of the most significant strongholds in Greece. It will be argued that to achieve this, it was first necessary to destroy Boiotian Thebes, the strongest local power in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, and to disperse its territory. Also, foreign interest in tightly controlling the region was needed. The Macedonian dynasts were the first of course, and it will be argued that, after Alexander the Great, it was probably Demetrios Poliorketes who first conceived the concept of the three “fettters” of Greece, and who developed a significant element to the system of fortifications of Chalcis: the so-called Aniphorititis Wall, or at least the associated kastro. A survey of the use of the site in international affairs down to the Mithridatic Wars is also offered, followed by an analysis of the impact such a disputed site had at a more local level, in particular on the territory of Oropos.

**Keywords:** Boiotia; Euboia; Euboic Gulf; Chalcis; Oropos; Demetrios Poliorketes; fortifications; Hellenistic Period

Few Greek cities could be used as dramatically as Euboian Chalcis as a case study for history in the *longue durée*, from the Dark Ages down to the Venetian and even the Ottoman periods. Located at the narrowest point of the Euripos strait where the island almost touches Boiotia (see map fig. 1), and with two of the best ports of the island, Chalcis was

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<sup>1</sup> This research was funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation, and belongs to the *Old and New Powers* project. I benefited from a Swiss National Science Foundation International Short Visit Fellowship to become Visiting Professor at McGill University between September and December 2017, where an early version of this paper was presented. I wish to express deep gratitude to Hans Beck for welcoming me in Montreal, and for co-organising both the Montreal and Fribourg *Dancing Floor of Ares* workshops. His team of driven students in Montreal also deserves to be praised for exceptional organisational skills. I am grateful to audiences at both the Montreal and Fribourg workshops, and to John Fossey for the insightful comments provided at the Montreal workshop. This contribution has also greatly benefited from Sylvian Fachard's expertise and generosity, for he not only shared his personal observations of the Aniphorititis wall, but also his photographs (see figs. 2, 5-6). I also wish to thank the *AHB* anonymous reviewer for useful suggestions, as well as Roy van Wijk, the Netherlands Institute at Athens, the Bakhuizen family and Brill for helping with securing permission to publish figs. 3-4. Finally, I am indebted to Maggy Sasanow for careful reading of the text. All mistakes remain entirely my own. Epigraphic abbreviations are those in use in *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*.

able to control the largest part of the Euboic gulf, one of the main maritime routes linking the Cyclades, the Peloponnese and Attica with Thessaly and the north (fig. 1).



Fig. 1: Map of Central Greece. CC-BY 4-0.  
<http://awmc.unc.edu/awmc/applications/alacarte/>

As we are going to examine in detail below, Chalcis was fortified by Macedonian rulers in the late 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, and became a strategic stronghold in Central Greece utilized almost continuously by a series of foreign powers throughout the Hellenistic period, and even beyond. In 197 BC, the Macedonian King Philip V, as he was holding Chalcis alongside Demetrias in Thessaly and Corinth in the Peloponnese, claimed to be holding the “fettters of Greece” (Plb. 18.11.6), a famous expression reiterated in Strabo (9.4.15) and Appian (App. Mac. 8), who both use both use the term πέδη, and in Livy (32.37.4), who renders it as *compes*. Diodorus Siculus sums up well what Chalcis had become by 313 BC: an ideal place to carry out a war for supremacy, πρὸς τὸ διαπολεμεῖν περὶ τῶν ὅλων (DS 19.78.2). Indeed, all three sites benefit from enviable locations, allowing the control of strategic land and maritime routes, and consequently the whole of the Greek peninsula. According to Polybius, the Greeks themselves were fully aware of their vulnerability when the three “fettters” were in Macedonian hands, as their embassy expressed clearly to the Roman

Senate in 197 BC.<sup>2</sup> Let us analyse now in detail the strategic, political and military factors that allowed Chalcis to become one of the three “fettters of Greece”. We will then review a series of case-studies illustrating how the site was utilized by a series of foreign power down to the Mithridatic wars. In a final section we will examine the impact such a stronghold had at a local level.

## Background

Chalcis was a very prolific maritime power which played a pivotal role in linking East and West as early as the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC onwards, and which was also involved in the early colonisation of Italy and Sicily with the foundations of Cumae, Naxos, and Rhegium for example.<sup>3</sup> Its prestige significantly declined later, and the site was even turned by the Athenians into a cleruchy following their famous victory of 506 BC (Hdt 5.77.2).<sup>4</sup> Not every defeated enemy of the Athenians was turned into a cleruchy: clearly the Athenians had measured the economic and military importance of Chalcis.

A significant event for the development of Chalcis lies in its revolt from Athens during the Peloponnesian war in 411 BC, at a time when the Athenians were considerably weakened both by their disastrous Sicilian expedition and the Deceleian war. And only then was the first bridge connecting the island with the continent built, as a joint venture between the Euboians and Boiotians. It consisted of a fortified wooden construction with towers built across the narrowest point of the strait (fig. 2).<sup>5</sup> It allowed only one ship to cross at a time (DS 13.47.3-6). As we are going to see shortly, later in the early Hellenistic period Chalcis underwent a fundamental transformation, when at the instigation of the Macedonians, a massive system of fortifications was built. This led to almost uninterrupted attention of foreign rulers: Macedonian kings of course, but also the Aitolians, the Seleucid

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<sup>2</sup> Plb. 18.11.4-7 (with, among many others, Cohen 1995: 111): τὰ μὲν οὖν ἄλλα παραπλήσια τοῖς καὶ πρὸς αὐτὸν τὸν βασιλέα πρότερον εἰρημένοις ἦν· τοῦτο δ' ἐπιμελῶς ἐντίκτειν ἐπειρῶντο τῇ συγκλήτῳ πάντες, διότι τῆς Χαλκίδος καὶ τοῦ Κορίνθου καὶ τῆς Δημητριάδος ὑπὸ τῷ Μακεδόνι ταττομένων οὐχ οἷόν τε τοὺς Ἕλληνας ἔννοιαν λαβεῖν ἐλευθερίας, ὃ γὰρ αὐτὸς Φίλιππος εἶπε, τοῦτο καὶ λίαν ἀληθὲς ἔφασαν ὑπάρχειν· ὃς ἔφη τοὺς προειρημένους τόπους εἶναι πέδας Ἑλληνικὰς, ὀρθῶς ἀποφαινόμενος, οὔτε γὰρ Πελοποννησίους ἀναπνεῦσαι δυνατόν ἐν Κορίνθῳ βασιλικῆς φρουρᾶς ἐγκαθημένης, οὔτε Λοκρούς καὶ Βοιωτοὺς καὶ Φωκέας θαρρήσαι Φιλίππου Χαλκίδα κατέχοντος καὶ τὴν ἄλλην Εὐβοίαν, οὐδὲ μὴν Θετταλοὺς οὐδὲ Μάγνητας δυνατόν ἐπαύρασθαι τῆς ἐλευθερίας οὐδέποτε, Δημητριάδα Φιλίππου κατέχοντος καὶ Μακεδόνων. Their accusations were in general similar to those they had brought against the king in person, but the point which they all took pains to impress upon the senate was that as long as Chalcis, Corinth, and Demetrias remained in Macedonian hands it was impossible for the Greeks to have any thought of liberty. For Philip's own expression when he pronounced these places to be the fetters of Greece, was, they said, only too true, since neither could the Peloponnesians breathe freely with a royal garrison established in Corinth, nor could the Locrians, Boeotians, and Phocians have any confidence while Philip occupied Chalcis and the rest of Euboea, nor again could the Thessalians or Magnesians ever enjoy liberty while the Macedonians held Demetrias (tr. W. R. Paton. Revised by F. W. Walbank, C. Habicht).

<sup>3</sup> See Reber, Hansen & Ducrey 2014 for a brief outline.

<sup>4</sup> See among others Moreno 2007: 93-96; Igelbrink 2015: 175-184. The *Hippobotai* were ousted again by Pericles (Plut. *Per.* 23.4.17). The status of Chalcis after 446 BC remains debated: for an overview see among many others Zelnick-Abramowitz 2004: 332-336; Igelbrink 2015: 252-260. Against a cleruchy at that time: Nesselhauf 1933: 133-140 – who argues in favour of land leases. See also Balcer 1978: 21-24; Reber, Hansen & Ducrey 2014: 649; Moreno 2007: 93-102.

<sup>5</sup> Bakhuizen 1985: 48-54.

King Antiochos III, the Romans, and even in first century BC the troops of King Mithridates. Interest in the site remained vivid until much later times: in 1210 AD, the Venetians seized the city and turned it into the capital of their kingdom of Negroponte. Chalcis went on to play a significant role in Frankish Greece. The Ottomans captured it in 1470, and built a castle over the Venetian fort on Karababa hill, whose remains are still visible today (fig. 2).



**Fig. 2. Modern Chalcis, with on the left Karababa Hill, and the site of the ancient bridge. Courtesy of Sylvian Fachard.**

Despite wielding early significant commercial and naval power, and founding a series of colonies, Chalcis does not appear to have aimed at hegemony in Central Greece. Within Euboea it competed with Eretria, a rivalry perhaps best expressed in the Lelantine war which took place in the early Archaic period.<sup>6</sup> However, although our sources hint at some early conflict between Boiotia and Chalcis,<sup>7</sup> territorial competitiveness between Euboea and Boiotia appears to have been focused mainly on the territory of Oropos, which crystallised Athenian, Boiotian and Euboian interest among others, as we will examine in detail below in a further case-study. As I have argued elsewhere, Eretria, Chalcis, Oropos and Eastern Boiotia were, from the Archaic period onwards, sharing economic interests, as well as epigraphic, funerary and onomastic habits.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, Chalcis in the hands of foreign powers became in the Hellenistic period a major player in the control of Central Greece, and Greece overall.

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<sup>6</sup> Lelantine war: see among others Walker 2004: 162-168.

<sup>7</sup> Summarised by Bakhuizen 1970: 145 n. 17.

<sup>8</sup> Marchand 2011; Marchand 2015.

## The making of a fetter

Leaving the Athenian cleruchy aside, foreign military interest in Chalcis does not appear to start until the later part of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. Indeed, in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC the strategic key points to control Central Greece remain the Thermopylae – the pass located between Mt. Callidromus and the Euboic gulf, which on many occasions played a significant role in the Dancing Floor of Ares, notably when Leonidas' troops famously defended the pass against the Persians in 480 BC – and Elateia, another much coveted site, favoured for example by Cassander and the Roman general T. Q. Flamininus (see map fig. 1).

Foreign military interest in the site appears to have been initiated by the Macedonian dynasts. Although many scholars have argued that Philip II garrisoned Chalcis in 338 in the aftermath of his victory at Chaironeia, none of our sources actually provides any evidence for such an enterprise.<sup>9</sup> The decisive move is more likely to have been the work of his son Alexander the Great, who became deeply involved in Central Greek affairs, culminating with the destruction of Thebes. Even though a pro-Macedonian regime had been installed there by Philip II in 338, in 335 the Thebans decided to expel the Macedonian garrison from their city, and revolt. Alexander acted swiftly. With the help of his Boiotian allies, he laid siege to the city, and in a ferocious act of violence, he enslaved women, children and survivors (with the exception of priests and priestesses, and friends and *proxenoi* of the Macedonians – according to Arrian 1.9.9, about 30.000 people in total), recorded in DS 17.14.4 as raising 440 talents of silver in the process. Thebes was razed to the ground, and a Macedonian garrison was installed on the Cadmeia. With his actions, Alexander appears to have aimed at a long-term geopolitical impact on the region: he successfully deprived Boiotia of its most powerful city, only just 30 years after it had enjoyed a short-lived period of hegemony over Greece (if we follow the dates of 371-362 BC traditionally assigned to the so-called period of Theban hegemony). Furthermore, Alexander ordered the restoration of Orchomenos and Plataia, two cities previously destroyed by the Thebans. This process, serving a propagandistic agenda initiated by Philip II in the aftermath of his success at Chaironeia, was probably not very advanced, for Arrian 1.9.10 hints that in 335 both cities still had no walls.<sup>10</sup> More crucially for our purposes, the former huge Theban *chora* was divided amongst Alexander's Boiotian allies.

As the leading Boiotian city disappeared, a new era started for Chalcis. According to Strabo (10.1.8) at the time Alexander crossed over to Asia Minor in 334 – just one year after the destruction of Thebes – Chalcis had embarked on a fortification plan which included a fort (called the Euripos fortress<sup>11</sup>) installed on the continental so-called Karababa hill (see

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<sup>9</sup> For a discussion on the garrisons installed by Philip in the aftermath of the battle of Chaironeia see Hammond & Griffith 1979: 612 and n. 3, who argue that only Thebes, Corinth and Ambracia were garrisoned. In favour of a garrison at Chalcis, see among many others, Picard 1979: 253 and n. 1 (with references to earlier scholarship); Brunt 1969: 264. On the role of Euboea in Philip II's political agenda: see Brunt 1969.

<sup>10</sup> See Bosworth 1980: 91; Prandi 1988: 138-145; Konecny, Aravantinos & Marcese 2013: 33 and 221-223.

<sup>11</sup> *Castellum Euripi* Livy 35.51.7; see Bakhuizen 1985: 47. Different interpretation: Gehrke 1986: 101-103. The Euripos fortress is mentioned in *IG II<sup>2</sup>* 469, dated around 305 BC: Polemaios' soldiers abandoned the Euripos fortress when they heard of Polemaios' death in Kos. See Bakhuizen 1970: 128-129; Knoepfler 2014: 77.



figs. 2 and 3), the Canethos Hill, a (re-)fortified bridge, and a newly enlarged circuit of city walls encompassing the fortress hills and the bridge:<sup>12</sup>

κατὰ δὲ τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρου διάβασιν καὶ τὸν περίβολον τῆς πόλεως ἠΰξησαν,  
ἐντὸς τείχους λαβόντες τὸν τε Κάνηθον καὶ τὸν Εὐριπον, ἐπιστήσαντες τῇ  
γεφύρᾳ πύργους καὶ πύλας καὶ τεῖχος.

At the time of Alexander's passage across, the Chalcidians enlarged the circuit of the walls of their city, taking inside them both Canethus and the Euripus, and fortifying the bridge with towers and gates and a wall (tr. H.L. Jones).

The fortification of the 75m high hill located on the continental side of the Euripos is far from trivial. Albeit small, this was very strategically sensitive territory, which allowed not only the control of the bridge, but also control of the land and sea routes across Central Greece. Bakhuizen points out that with the extended city walls enemies would have struggled using the increasingly popular siege engines against the city.<sup>13</sup> In the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, the Theban *chora* extended down to the Euripos north of Tanagra.<sup>14</sup> In the process of dispersion of the Thebaid in 335 BC the main beneficiaries of former Theban territory in Eastern Boiotia appear to be the people of Tanagra.<sup>15</sup> By fortifying the strategic hill of Karababa near the Euripos, the Chalcidians reinforced further Euboea's double status of island and mainland.<sup>16</sup> It is not known when exactly the Chalcidians came to possess land on the continental side of the Euripos. Unless it was an old acquisition, either the Chalcidians took the liberty to simply annex the land they coveted after the destruction of Thebes,<sup>17</sup> or this was achieved under the supervision of the Macedonians, or rather the Macedonian garrison. There is a possibility that Alexander himself purposefully allocated the Chalcidians a part of the dismantled Theban *chora*:<sup>18</sup> although our sources are not explicit, these extensive building works are unlikely to have been carried out by the Chalcidians alone relying on their own resources, and without the Macedonian ruler's permission. Besides, it is questionable whether Alexander would have tolerated such opportunistic – and militarily significant – land-grabbing at a time when he was seeking

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<sup>12</sup> Bakhuizen 1985: 39-48 (fortress), 52 (bridge), 92-94 (new circuit of walls).

<sup>13</sup> Bakhuizen 1985: 48.

<sup>14</sup> Bakhuizen 1970: 21-22; Gullath 1989: 165 (according to her, around 395 BC the Theban *chora* included the coast on the Euboic Gulf from Larymna to the Euripos); Schachter 2003: 52-54 = Schachter 2016: 88-91.

<sup>15</sup> Bakhuizen 1970: 22-23.

<sup>16</sup> Noted by Ephoros *FGrH* 70 F119; see among others for this concept Constantakopoulou 2007: 15. See also DS 13.47.4: συγκαταθεμένων δὲ τῶν Βοιωτῶν διὰ τὸ κάκεινοις συμφέρειν τὴν Εὐβοίαν εἶναι τοῖς μὲν ἄλλοις νῆσον, ἑαυτοῖς δ' ἥπειρον. The Boeotians agreed to this [the building of the bridge], since it was to their special advantage that Euboea should be an island to everybody else but a part of the mainland to themselves (tr. C.H. Oldfather). Today this region on the continent still belongs to the *nomos* of Euboea.

<sup>17</sup> As Bakhuizen 1970: 22 argues. See however Bakhuizen 1985: 48.

<sup>18</sup> As already noted by Schäfer 1887: 38, who assumes that the Chalcidians held the coastline following a donation from Philip II. His preference for Philip is to be associated with the now disproved belief that the territory of Oropos was given to the Athenians by Philip II after Chaironeia and not by Alexander in 335. See also Gehrke 1986: 98-99 (“das von Makedonen beherrschte Chalkis also eine Peraia, und zwar eine gesicherte Peraia, erhielt”).

stability in the region, and after making an example of Theban arrogance. On the contrary, Alexander appears to have included Chalcis in a long-term strategy to control Central Greece, as the new defence system swiftly turned the Euboian city into a Macedonian military base. Ships were stationed there in 333, when Proteas son of Andronikos left at night with a 15-ship strong fleet to attack the Phoenicians in Kythnos (Arrian 2.2.4-5). Strategic Euboia was also the place chosen by Alexander to send his Thessalian cavalry alongside the Greek allies he dismissed at Ecbatana in 330 (Arrian 3.19.6). Arrian does not specify where in Euboia – he simply writes ἐς Εὐβοίαν –, but it is hard to believe that none of the triremes dispatched by Alexander would have disembarked in the fortified port of Chalcis.

As a result of these building works, Chalcis becomes a fortress, an *oppidum inexpugnabile* (Livy 28.6.11). The process of the fortification of Chalcis not only included a new circuit of city walls, a fortified bridge and a fortress on the continental side: the Macedonian programme involved a third element, namely the kastro of the so-called Aniphoritis Wall, an 11-km long and about 2.4m thick wall, built from dry rubble, stretching over the hills of Mt Messapion, which controlled the pass linking Boiotia and Chalcis (figs. 3-5). It was equipped with a military fort (kastro) complete with barracks and a cistern, secondary fortresses and a series of bastions.<sup>19</sup> The exact date for the addition of this strategic element to the defence of the region surrounding Chalcis remains uncertain. On the basis of his recent observations, Sylvian Fachard identifies two phases: in the 5<sup>th</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, the 11-km wall was built across Mt Messapion.<sup>20</sup> The kastro, along with the towers and the cistern, is a later addition, for which Fachard suggests a date in the 4<sup>th</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, after c. 375.<sup>21</sup> Fachard notes in addition that the cistern bears striking resemblances with those in fortresses held by garrisons.

**Fig. 3. Hellenistic fortified Chalcis. After Bakhuizen 1985: 93 fig. 59.**



<sup>19</sup> See for an extensive study Bakhuizen 1970.

<sup>20</sup> Private communications, for which I am deeply grateful. The historical context for the early 5<sup>th</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> century BC construction of the Aniphoritis Wall needs to be investigated. Perhaps a Euboian attempt at protecting the Euripos strait and/or Chalcis during a period of conflict with Boiotia? The Peloponnesian War may provide a fruitful avenue to investigate.

<sup>21</sup> The later addition of the kastro was already noted by Bakhuizen 1970: 92 and Fossey 1974: 104.

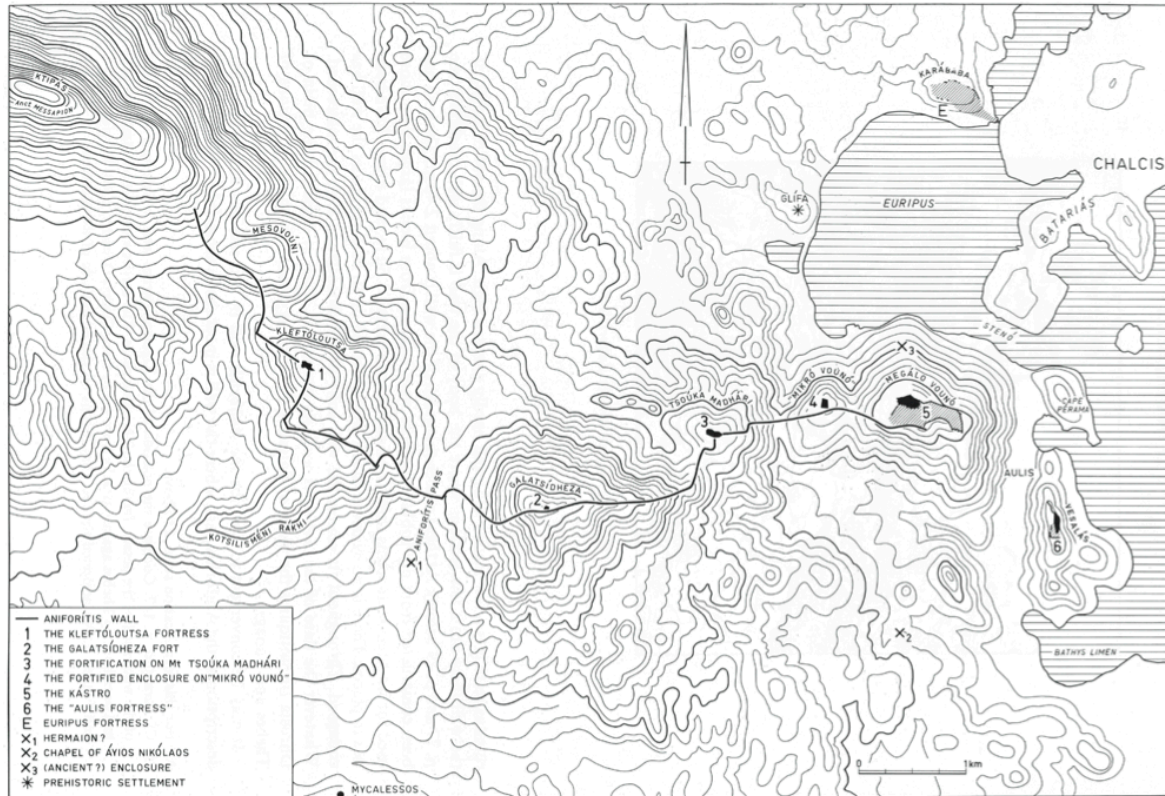


Fig. 4. The Anphoritis Wall. After Bakhuizen 1970: 68 fig. 45.



Fig. 5. Views of the Anphoritis wall. Courtesy of Sylvian Fachard.



**Fig. 6: View of the Aniphoritis wall. Courtesy of Sylvian Fachard.**

From archaeological evidence drawn from the typology of the masonry used for the cistern located in the fort, Bakhuizen suggested a date in the first decades of the Hellenistic period,<sup>22</sup> and argued that the whole complex was the work of Polemaios, the general (and probably also the nephew) of Antigonos Monophthalmos, while trying to dislodge Cassander's garrison from Chalcis in 313 or 312 BC.<sup>23</sup> Bakhuizen's argument largely rests on a passage of Diodorus Siculus (19.77.4) in which Polemaios is said to have fortified Salganeus in the process (τειχίσας τὸν Σαλγανέα). Bakhuizen defended the view that by the fortification of Salganeus one needs to actually understand the fortification of the whole plain of Salganeus, and that with the building of the Aniphoritis Wall Polemaios aimed at protecting his troops stationed in the plain from attacks originating from Boiotia. This hypothesis was accepted by some scholars,<sup>24</sup> but others such as Wallace, Picard and Gehrke, expressed doubt.<sup>25</sup> Wallace did not provide any argument, but Picard rightly stressed that the Aniphoritis wall did not exactly meet Polemaios' needs.<sup>26</sup> The structure indeed appears

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<sup>22</sup> Bakhuizen 1970: 95.

<sup>23</sup> Bakhuizen 1970: 105-130. A later date is preferred by some scholars, among which Knoepfler 2001b: 13.

<sup>24</sup> See for all references Gehrke 1986: 84 n. 7.

<sup>25</sup> Wallace 1979: 41; Picard 1979: 256; Gehrke 1986.

<sup>26</sup> Picard 1979 : 256: "Les fortifications de l'Aniphoritis sont un ouvrage considérable, s'étendant sur onze kilomètres; il est difficile de comprendre comment Polémaios se serait lancé dans de tels travaux alors que l'ennemi tenait Chalcis et l'Euriepe, et que le temps pressait. Et surtout ces fortifications répondent aussi mal que possible aux besoins du stratège: elles ne forment pas un camp lui permettant d'abriter son armée et

to have been clearly defensive, and to have been aimed at the protection of the region surrounding Chalcis from potential threats from Boiotia, mainly from the regions of Thebes and of course Tanagra. Incidentally, Bakhuizen himself demonstrated, in his close analysis of Antiochos' III movements in the region in 192 BC, that the Aniphoritis Wall alongside its *kastro* was actually used for the benefit of the defence of Chalcis.<sup>27</sup> On these grounds, Polemaios must be ruled out. The question as to who was responsible for the Hellenistic addition of the *kastro* to the defensive structure remains open for discussion.

As established earlier, the Macedonian dynasts, with garrisons in their name almost continuously stationed in the region, must have been involved in the process, or at least have allowed it. The earliest ruler who might have conceived such an extensive defence system could have been Alexander the Great. However, as we saw above, Strabo (10.1.8) does not include the structure on Mt Messapion in his list of the improvements brought to Chalcis' fortifications by 334 BC. Besides, Alexander did not need to fortify this position, for no threat could have come from Boiotia just after 335: Thebes had been razed to the ground and his Boiotian allies, the Tanagraians in particular, were content with their newly acquired territories from Theban spoils. It is therefore very likely that the site was fortified again after the refoundation of Thebes, when the former strong local power in the region started to rise from its ashes.

Amongst the Diadochi, Cassander does not make the most attractive candidate. Although he initiated the process of the reconstruction of Thebes, stationed troops there, and occupied Chalcis between 315 and 312, and later in 305 BC, his presence and influence in the region was rather short-lived. Besides, Thebes was no menace to Cassander, its new *ktistes*, when he was holding Chalcis. As a passage by Diodorus Siculus makes clear, Cassander benefited by default from Theban support (DS 19.77.6).

A more attractive possibility could come in the form of another Macedonian ruler, Demetrios Poliorketes, who showed long-standing interest in the domination of the region. His first period of influence covered the years 304 to 301 BC. When Poliorketes disembarked at Aulis in 304, he found Chalcis occupied by a Boiotian garrison in the name of Cassander (DS 20.100.5-6). Both Chalcis and Thebes were taken, and used as military bases for his movements in Central Greece. His overall leniency to Thebes at that point was expressed in his donation of oil for the gymnasium: King Demetrios indeed features among the *euergetai* who contributed to Cassander's rebuilding of Thebes.<sup>28</sup> Chalcis, too, retained his attention: in 302 BC he gathered his army and fleet there, and organised naval expeditions.<sup>29</sup> The defeat at Ipsos in 301 saw Demetrios losing vast territories, including Central Greece. His attention to Euboia and Boiotia was nevertheless renewed early in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC within the context of his programme of reconquest of Greece, presumably shortly after his accession to the Macedonian throne in 294 BC, at a time when he aimed at controlling

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elles le couvrent du côté de la Béotie alors que l'adversaire est dans la direction opposée. En fait ces ouvrages sont un complément de la forteresse de l'Euriepe".

<sup>27</sup> Bakhuizen 1970: 135-136.

<sup>28</sup> Holleaux 1895 ll. 30-34: [Βα]σι[λεὺς Δαμάτριος] | δραχμὰ[ς] ——— ἐντὸ | ἔληοχ[ρίστιον ἀπὸ τῶν] | πὰρ Ῥοδ[ίων λαφύρων] | δεκάτ[αν τοῖς θεοῖς ἀνέθεικε]. See also Wehrli 1968: 149. Holleaux' restoration of [τοῖς θεοῖς ἀνέθεικε] is probably erroneous, for the donation of olive oil was obviously aimed at the gymnasium. If we believe Polemon of Ilios, the Thebans sought to accommodate the Macedonian king by building a temple of Aphrodite Lamia, in honour of the Poliorketes' mistress Lamia (FHG 3 p. 120 F 15). Schachter suggested that by extension Demetrios may have been honoured as her companion Ares (Schachter 1981-94 vol. I: 41).

<sup>29</sup> See DS 20.110.2; Knoepfler 2001a no. XIV (p. 232-236).

communications between Northern Greece and the Peloponnese. According to Plutarch, he first sealed an alliance with the Boiotians (Plut., *Demetr.* 39.1), but their arrangement soon turned sour, leading the Boiotians to revolt twice in the late 290s.<sup>30</sup> In the first instance, pushed by King Lysimachos, under the leadership of Peisis of Thespiiai and with the help of the Spartans, the Boiotians defied the Macedonian king, but they were forced to surrender after a frightful siege led with siege engines. Their punishment included the payment of a hefty tribute and the garrisoning of the city with Hieronymos of Cardia as *epimeletes* and *harmost*. Demetrios, however, displayed some clemency as he spared the life of Peisis, who went on to be appointed polemarch by the king in his home city.<sup>31</sup> Shortly afterwards, the Boiotians revolted for a second time against Demetrios, who, seconded by his son Antigonos Gonatas, was again victorious: Gonatas defeated the Boiotian troops, and later, with his father successfully besieged Thebes. Thirteen ringleaders were executed, a few citizens were banished, and the others pardoned (Plut., *Demetr.* 40.1-4). The Thebans also lost their constitution in the process, and were subjected to yet another garrison. Although our literary sources are not prolific on these events – we must rely on Plutarch’s *Life of Demetrius*, Diodorus Siculus 21.14, and a very short passage by Polyainos (4.7.11) –, the resonance of these significant events for the Boiotians transpires from two inscriptions from Akraiphia. The first is a posthumous Hellenistic monument originally erected on the agora of Akraiphia, bearing an equestrian statue and an epigram in elegiacs honouring Eugnotos of Akraiphia, a commander of the cavalry – perhaps a federal hipparch – who, while being defeated by the troops of an unidentified king in the vicinity of Onchestos, chose to commit suicide by removing his breastplate and offering his chest to a fatal sword thrust (either his own or the enemy’s). Ma places the episode during the second Boiotian revolt in 291, and identifies the royal troops to those of Demetrios Poliorketes, or rather to those of his son Antigonos Gonatas, while Demetrios Poliorketes was still underway from Thrace.<sup>32</sup> The second document was recently published by Yannis Kalliontzis.<sup>33</sup> It consists of a decree in honour of metics who fought alongside the Akraiphians in a war against a certain Demetrios, and who are granted *isotelia* in return for their services. Kalliontzis convincingly argues that the Demetrios mentioned in lines 7-8 of the decree is King Demetrios Poliorketes, and that the inscription dates to the immediate aftermath of the liberation of Boiotia from the king’s rule in 287 BC. Because the second Boiotian revolt was significantly more sustained than the first and rallied more forces throughout Boiotia, Kalliontzis is inclined to add this document to the dossier of the second Boiotian uprising. Given the strategic location of Boiotia in Central Greece, both King Demetrios and his son, as well as their troops, were mobilised. Several cities, and not just Thebes, appear to have been garrisoned in the aftermath of the first revolt (Plut., *Demetr.* 39.2: ὁ δὲ ταῖς πόλεσιν ἐμβάλων φρουράν). This visible and active Macedonian military presence shows how tight a military control Demetrios ambitioned to keep over the whole region of Boiotia, and not just over rebellious Thebes. Kalliontzis suitably highlights how a subtle feeling of relief at being liberated from Demetrios’ yoke is conveyed in the decree from Akraiphia.<sup>34</sup> Less

<sup>30</sup> See among others Wehrli 1968: 173-176 (“Démétrios et la Béotie”); Gullath 1982: 189-193; Hammond & Walbank 1988: 219-221.

<sup>31</sup> Plut. *Demetr.* 39.2 for this precise context, with Paschidis 2008 no. C15.

<sup>32</sup> *ISE* 69, with Ma 2005 (cf. *SEG* 55 553; *BE* 2006 no. 195).

<sup>33</sup> Kalliontzis 2017.

<sup>34</sup> Kalliontzis 2017: 682.

understated, the Thebans also expressed their antagonism towards Demetrios by erasing his name from the list of *euergetai* who had contributed to the reconstruction of their city.<sup>35</sup>

The period of Demetrios' presence in Central Greece in the early 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, and the 290s in particular, would therefore provide a favourable historical context for the re-fortification of the Aniphoritis Wall and the building of the Hellenistic kastro. At a time when Demetrios aimed at hegemony in Greece, was facing unrest in Boiotia and was the master of Euboia, the wall would have allowed him to retain tight control over Boiotia, and would also have guaranteed an efficient protection of Chalcis. Indeed, in 289/8 the Euboian city featured among the sites where Demetrios elected to build up his new 500-strong fleet, alongside the Piraeus, Corinth and Pella (Plut., *Demetr.* 43.4). The kastro could therefore also have served the additional purpose of protecting his naval base from the unruly Boiotians. Besides, to finance this enterprise, the Macedonian king also installed a royal mint at Chalcis.<sup>36</sup>

By 290 Demetrios had achieved domination in Greece: the territories under his authority covered Macedonia, Thessaly, Boiotia, Attica and parts of the Peloponnese.<sup>37</sup> His strategy relied on the control of several key sites, which all shared similar topographical features, including a fortified hill and a harbour: Demetrios in Thessaly, Corinth, and Chalcis. Demetrios took Corinth in 303 BC, and installed a garrison there, at the request of the Corinthians according to Diodorus (DS 20.103.3).<sup>38</sup> He also appears to have been involved in the remodelling of part of Corinth's defensive system, including the strategic fortress of the Acrocorinth.<sup>39</sup> He also founded Demetrias on the Pagasitic Gulf in 294 BC, through a *synoikismos* of several settlements (Plut., *Demetr.* 53.7). The newly founded city came with an extensive circuit of city walls equipped with 170 towers.<sup>40</sup> The addition of the kastro to Chalcis' defensive system under Demetrios would have worked remarkably well in complement with Demetrias and Corinth, the other two fortresses commanded by the Macedonian king. It is therefore quite possible that Demetrios Poliorketes actually conceived the network of the three fetters of Greece, later exploited by other rulers and famously by Philip V as we saw above.<sup>41</sup> A later date for the fortification of Mt Messapion remains of course possible, but a precise historical context would be difficult to offer.<sup>42</sup> As

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<sup>35</sup> Holleaux 1895: 30 and 45. They also appear to have promptly stopped issuing coins in Demetrios' name in 287 BC: see Newell 1927: 130 with pl. XV 7. Chalcis on the other hand may have remained loyal: coinage in Demetrios' name was still minted after 285 BC according to Newell 1927: 140.

<sup>36</sup> From 291/0 onwards according to Newell. See Newell 1927: 139-140, and Picard 1979: 179-180. Cf. Hammond & Walbank 1988: 227.

<sup>37</sup> Wehrli 1968: 175.

<sup>38</sup> On Demetrios and Corinth, see among others Dixon 2014 ch. 3, "*The Corinthian Troubles*," *Corinth and the Diadochoi*, 323-301 BC, and ch. 4 *Antigonos Gonatas and Corinth*.

<sup>39</sup> See Carpenter, Bon & Parsons 1936, with Winter 1991.

<sup>40</sup> See Stählin, Meyer & Heidner 1934; Cohen 1995: 33 and 111-114.

<sup>41</sup> See for example the Aitolians in 192 BC, who aimed at taking both Demetrias and Chalcis, as well as Sparta (Livy 35.34.6-12). See also Grainger 1999: 436.

<sup>42</sup> Chalcis indeed appears to have regained a short-lived independence from the Macedonian yoke with the help of the Boiotians and the Aitolians at the latest during the winter of 274/3 or shortly afterwards, and joined the Boiotian Confederacy until 269, when it was besieged again by Antigonos Gonatas: see Knoepfler 1995: 145-148; Knoepfler 2014.

we saw above, it appears that the wall was in place in 192 BC at the time of the Seleucid King Antiochos III's presence in the region.<sup>43</sup>

### **Chalcis' strategic role in international relations – an outline**

Throughout the Hellenistic period, Chalcis never ceased to crystallise foreign interests, and especially that of the Macedonian kings'.<sup>44</sup> The Macedonian King Philip V for example, relentlessly aimed at controlling the site, along with his other "fettlers of Greece", Corinth and Demetrias. This was the case for example during the first Macedonian War (214-205 BC).<sup>45</sup> A bid to capture the site, unsuccessfully, was made for the first time by the Romans in 207 BC. Indeed, P. Sulpicius Galba had to cut short his attempt after unfavourable currents and winds prevented him from making full use of his fleet. He also appears to have found the combination of the fortified bridge with a strong Macedonian garrison supported by faithful citizens too challenging (Livy 28.6.8-12). Philip V immediately came to the rescue of Chalcis, from the continent, ousting on his way the Aitolians from the Thermopylai (Livy 28.7.1-3). Later in 207, he returned to Chalcis, praised its inhabitants, and before leaving for Demetrias put in charge citizens who earlier had preferred to desert the city rather than surrender to the Romans (Livy 28.8.12-13). During the Second Macedonian War (200-197 BC), Chalcis similarly crystallised interests from the parties at war, and even from pirates who were threatening Attica in 200 BC (Livy 31.22.7). Philip V installed a garrison at Chalcis quite early on during the war in 200 BC.<sup>46</sup> Later the same year, citizens from Chalcis ousted by the garrison, rallied the Roman side and betrayed the city to C. Claudius Centho, who easily took it, burned part of it, including the royal granaries and the arsenal, and loaded booty onto his ships. Sopatros, the commander of the garrison, was killed, and citizens were slaughtered (Livy 31.23). The Romans did not appear to give as much importance to the site as the Macedonians did: indeed, as they often did with other Euboian cities, they decided to abandon Chalcis, no matter how strategic the stronghold was at the time. They would have needed too many troops to secure it, and instead they elected to give priority to the defence of Athens. Therefore, they promptly returned to the Piraeus. Livy obviously considers their decision a mistake, as holding Chalcis meant controlling the whole Euripos strait, which he compares to the Thermopylai.<sup>47</sup> Philip V, who was in Demetrias when he heard about the events, speedily made his way to Chalcis, but only to assess the damage.

Despite holding a highly valuable militarily strategic location, the Macedonians did not succeed at fully controlling Central Greece, or even Eubolia. Later during the war, in 198 BC, the Macedonian garrison stationed at Chalcis indeed remained unsuccessful at rescuing the Euboian cities threatened by the fleets of the Pergamene King Attalos and the Rhodians,

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<sup>43</sup> Bakhuizen 1970: 133-136, who clearly shows that the wall plays a defensive role for Chalcis on two occasions in the early 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, during attacks by the Aitolians, and later the Seleucid King Antiochos III (see below).

<sup>44</sup> For a more detailed account of the same period, Picard 1979: 278-285.

<sup>45</sup> See for example Plb 10.42.2 and Livy 38.5.11.

<sup>46</sup> For the role of Philokles, see Picard 1979: 280.

<sup>47</sup> Livy 31.23.12: *nam ut terra Thermopylarum angustiae Graeciam, ita mari fretum Euripi claudit. For just as the pass of Thermopylae is the gateway to Greece by land, so too is the strait of Euripos by sea* (tr. J.C. Yardley).



who then joined forces with L. Flamininus to besiege Eretria. The Eretrians were forced to surrender, as were the Carystians soon afterwards (Livy 32.16-17.4). As one of the so-called “fettters” of Greece, Chalcis was at stake in the settlement of the war with the Roman Senate (Plb 18.11.4-6; Livy 32.37.3). After the decisive battle of Cynoscephalai, the treaty with the Romans included the surrender by the Isthmia of 196 BC of several key sites, among which Chalcis obviously featured. In 196, Corinth was handed back to the Achaians, but the Romans aimed at occupying the three fettters – the Acrocorinth, Demetrias and Chalcis (Plb 18.45.10-12) –, a decision they justified by their growing fear of an involvement of the Seleucid King Antiochos III in Greek affairs. The Roman garrison remained at Chalcis until 194 BC, when T. Quinctius Flamininus sailed back to Rome, where he celebrated a triumph (Livy 34.51.1). Flamininus came to Chalcis in person to release the garrison, and free the city from tribute (Livy 34.51.1-3). Perhaps on this occasion, and therefore as early as 194 BC, the revived Euboian *koinon* instituted a festival of the *Romaia*, which were celebrated at Chalcis.<sup>48</sup>

A very short-lived period of relief ensued, for the first two decades of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC Chalcis became bone of contention not only for the Romans, but also for the Aitolians, the Attalids, and the Seleucids. Indeed, in 194 or 192 BC<sup>49</sup> the Aitolians started a campaign in Greece, and endeavoured to capture Sparta, Demetrias and Chalcis. Their leader Thoas remained unsuccessful at taking the latter, but he did capture Demetrias.<sup>50</sup> Although the Romans had deserted Chalcis in 194, T. Quinctius Flamininus tried not to lose the site again, and with his ally King Eumenes II of Pergamon, decided to leave a Pergamene garrison of 500 to guard the site (Livy 35.39.1-3). As soon as the Seleucid King Antiochos III crossed over to Europe, called by his allies the Aitolians to fight the Romans, Chalcis attracted his attention. At first the Aitolians attempted to negotiate a double alliance with the Chalcidians, but this failed, as the Chalcidians preferred to retain their single alliance with the Romans.<sup>51</sup> Flamininus continued his policy of defending Chalcis, and sent an Achaian contingent, along with some Attalid soldiers. In doing so he almost appears to have been mimicking the Macedonian strategy in Central Greece. So far in 192 BC he had only lost Demetrias to the Aitolians.

In 192 BC, Antiochos III endeavoured to take Chalcis, which would have secured him a much better naval base in Central Greece. After Roman soldiers were slaughtered in the famous episode of Delion, and troops gathered around their city, the Chalcidians were persuaded to open their gates to the Seleucid king, not before being offered guarantees – no garrison, freedom, and an alliance (Livy 35.51.6-10). All foreign troops – Pergamene, Achaian, and eventually the Romans – negotiated their way out.<sup>52</sup> Antiochos III spent the winter of 192/1 in Chalcis, during which he appears to have attempted to increase his popularity locally, and perhaps also at a wider Greek level, by marrying a beautiful local girl, whom he conveniently renamed Euboia.<sup>53</sup> Livy describes the winter months at Chalcis as a debauchery (Livy 36.11.1-5). Antiochos III abandoned Chalcis after his defeat at the

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<sup>48</sup> IG XII.9 899b; see Robert 1969: 44-49; Mellor 1975: 99-100. For a later date in the aftermath of the Achaian War: Knoepfler 1990: 486; BE 2008 no. 271 p. 664; Knoepfler 2015: 177.

<sup>49</sup> See Picard 1969: 283 and n. 3.

<sup>50</sup> See the discussion by Bakhuizen 1970: 133-134. See also, among many others, Deininger 1971: 76-86; Grainger 1999: 438-442; Grainger 2002: 203.

<sup>51</sup> Grainger 1999: 449; Grainger 2002: 197-198; Pfeilschifter 2005: 270-271.

<sup>52</sup> Deininger 1971: 84-85; Grainger 2002: 205-208. Delion episode: Livy 35.51.3.4; App., Syr. 3.12

<sup>53</sup> Grainger 2002: 219-220; see also Paschidis 2008: 445 on Livy's exaggerated account of these events.

Thermopylai in 191 BC. The same year, the very pragmatic Chalcidians re-opened their gates to T. Quinctius Flaminius, who was welcomed with open arms and a series of honours.<sup>54</sup>

In 172, the Romans requested assistance from the Achaians to secure Chalcis with 1000 men. During the Third Macedonian War (171-167 BC), Chalcis remained a Roman base of operations, while the Macedonian King Perseus was trying to hold on to Demetrias.<sup>55</sup> In 171 BC, an impressive number of foreign allied fleets came to Chalcis: Pergamene, Carthaginian, from Heracleia Pontica, Chalcedon, Samos and Rhodes.<sup>56</sup> On a more regional level, Chalcis was conveniently used by the Romans to settle Boiotian affairs, and ultimately to dissolve the Boiotian *koinon*. It is from Chalcis, for example, that M. Lucretius Gallus set out to besiege the pro-Macedonian Boiotian city of Haliartos in 171 BC (Livy 42.56), before his brother C. Lucretius Gallus destroyed it completely later the same year, and allocated its *chora* to the Athenians (Livy 42.63).<sup>57</sup> Relations with the Romans, however, turned sour, for in 170 BC the Chalcidians sent an embassy to the Roman Senate to denounce acts of plundering committed both by C. Lucretius Gallus and L. Hortensius (Livy 43.7.5-11).

During the Achaian War in 146 BC, Chalcis probably suffered at the hands of Lucius Mummius, who slaughtered the local *Hippeis* according to Polybius (Plb 39.6.5). Livy appears to imply that the fortress was dismantled (Livy *Epit. Per.* LII). However, since Chalcis was used as a refuge in the following century by the troops of the Pontic King Mithridates, damage must have been limited.<sup>58</sup> Chalcis indeed appears to have played a significant role in the Boiotian episodes of the First Mithridatic War (89-85 BC), for it was clearly used as a military base by the army of the Pontic king, who had fully grasped the strategic importance of the site for their fleet.<sup>59</sup> Again, Chalcis was used by foreign troops coming from the East. During the siege of Athens in 87-86 BC, Archelaos called for reinforcement from the islands, as well as from Chalcis (App., *Mith.* 5.31). He had troops stationed there, and given the strength of the fleet on the Mithridatic side, Chalcis was an unsurprising choice as a harbour and naval base. This appears to be confirmed by that fact that shortly afterwards the Roman L. Munatius Plancus defeated Mithridatic troops led by Neoptolemos in the vicinity of Chalcis, presumably on their way to Athens.<sup>60</sup> After his victorious siege at Athens in March 86 BC, Sulla moved away from the famine ravaging Attica, and elected to confront Mithridates' troops in Boiotia. Archelaos offered battle, but since Sulla hesitated, he retreated to the safety of his Chalcidian base. A first encounter finally took place at Chaironeia in the spring of 86 BC,<sup>61</sup> during which Archelaos suffered heavy losses, but

<sup>54</sup> See Plut., *Flam.* 16, discussed below.

<sup>55</sup> See for example the proxeny decree IG XII.9 900B (= ISE III 143, with BE 2008 no. 271) from Chalcis dated to 169 BC for Ariston of Soloi, who was in charge of shipping a donation of corn from King Ptolemy VI Philometor of Egypt to Roman troops. See Picard 1979: 291 and. n. 13; Knoepfler 1990: 488-491.

<sup>56</sup> Livy 42.56.67. Cf. Picard 1979: 290-291; Knoepfler 1990: 489-490.

<sup>57</sup> See also Picard 1979: 291; Deininger 1971: 165-166; Müller 1996: 136.

<sup>58</sup> Picard 1979: 293; see also Bakhuizen 1985: 94, who defends the view that the city walls were not demolished.

<sup>59</sup> See Deininger 1971: 258.

<sup>60</sup> 1,500 were killed, and many more prisoners taken (App., *Mith.* 5.34). The decree of Chaironeia for the Thracian commander Amatokos serving in Sulla's army (see Holleaux 1919) shows that Sulla left troops wintering in Boiotia in 87/6. Holleaux explains the Roman general's interest in controlling Boiotia at that time by the threatening presence of Mithridatic troops at Chalcis and in Euboeia in general (Holleaux 1919: 337).

<sup>61</sup> See for the development of the battle Hammond 1938: 186-201.

nevertheless escaped back to Chalcis along with, according to Appian, only 10,000 of his 120,000 troops.<sup>62</sup> Sulla, on the other hand, is said to have only lost 12 soldiers (Plut., *Sull.* 19.5; App., *Mith.* 6.42-45). Archelaos attempted to make an escape, but had to retreat back to Chalcis “more like a pirate than a soldier” (App., *Mith.* 6.45). He soon received reinforcements in Chalcis thanks to the 80,000 troops and fleet led by Dorylaos (Plut. *Sull.* 20.2; App. *Mith.* 7.49). A second decisive battle was fought again on Boiotian soil at Orchomenos in the autumn of 86 BC, where Sulla took advantage of the local topography to push Archelaos into the marshes of the Copais, where he hid for two days before seeking refuge again in Chalcis (Plut. *Sull.* 21 and 22.4; App. *Mith.* 7.49-50).

### Chalcis as a place for local domination

The events briefly outlined above are all quite well-known episodes of ancient Greek history. Now it is time to explore the impact such a fortified site had at a very local level. For this, a completely different case study, perhaps less obvious, will be analysed. It will aim at exploring exactly how much power foreign leaders are able to wield from holding this enviable position.

The period covering the last third of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC provides perhaps the best case-study, for the fate of Chalcis appears to be closely linked to that of Oropos, a territory highly coveted by the Athenians, the Eretrians and of course the Boiotians. It was used in the early Hellenistic period as a pawn in the hands of various foreign powers to reward their allies and punish their enemies. Knoepfler has argued that, unlike what is claimed by our ancient sources (among which Pausanias 1.34.1), the territory of Oropos was allocated to the Athenians not by Philip II in 338 BC in the aftermath of the Battle of Chaironeia, but by Alexander the Great in 335.<sup>63</sup> Knoepfler established from epigraphical evidence from Oropos that Philip indeed detached the Oropia from Theban domination in 338, but only to turn it into an independent territory. By including the territory of Oropos in the package of negotiations with Athens just before departing for Asia, Alexander tried to conciliate the Athenians and secure their long-term support. It would have been in some ways a quick way to “solve” the Athenian “problem”. It seems also that moving the border of Attica towards Boiotia makes sense from a geopolitical point of view: keen to disperse the Thebans’ former territory, pushing Oropos even further away in foreign hands was perfectly coherent with Alexander’s programme for Boiotia, especially since a northern chunk of the old Theban territory may well have been given to the Chalcidians, as we saw earlier.

After his victory in the Lamian War in 322 BC, the Macedonian regent Antipater was quick to use the territory of Oropos as a lever against the Athenians: he took it away from them, and turned it into an independent territory. In his famous *diagramma* dated to 319 BC preserved in DS 18.56.6, Antipater’s successor Polyperchon, keen to overturn his predecessor’s policies, returned to the Athenians their former territories. He however did not alter the status of Oropos, whose liberty is confirmed and guaranteed in the *diagramma*.

Only three years later, in 316, the Macedonian Cassander started the process of reconstructing Thebes. Antipater’s son was very active in the region, and besides

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<sup>62</sup> For numbers on both sides, see McGing 1986: 126 and n. 173.

<sup>63</sup> Knoepfler 2001a: 371-389, with references p. 371 to earlier scholarship.

displaying great interest for Boiotia, he also put pressure on Euboia. By 315 he was the master of Chalcis, and dominated the region. The period from 312 onwards was more peaceful, as Cassander left Chalcis, which passed under Antigonos Monophthalmos' influence through his nephew Polemaios. Polemaios expelled Cassander's garrison from Chalcis, and this time handed Oropos, which had been seized by Cassander and garrisoned, over to the Boiotians. According to Diodorus Siculus (DS 19.78.2), in order to avoid upsetting the Chalcidians and to be coherent with his uncle's policy of the freedom of the Greek cities, Polemaios initially left Chalcis *aphrouretos*. When he had to install troops in the aftermath of his new alliance with Ptolemy and Cassander in 310, he seems to have done so on the continental side of Chalcis: Bakhuizen with DS 19.78.2 argues in favour of the plain of Salganeus,<sup>64</sup> along with of course the Euripos fortress, mentioned as we saw in the honorary decree IG II<sup>2</sup> 469 l. 4. In 309, Polemaios embarked for Kos, where he was eventually executed by Ptolemy. Learning about his death, his garrison departed.<sup>65</sup> This did not last long: Cassander made every effort to recover Euboia, and was able to capture it by 305. In 304 Demetrios Poliorketes disembarked at Aulis, captured Thebes, and found Chalcis occupied by the Boiotians in the name of Cassander (DS 20.100.5-6). Again, the fate of Chalcis became closely linked to that of Oropos, as it seems that the master of Chalcis once more wielded enough power to decide the status of Oropos: after taking Chalcis back, in retaliation, the territory of Oropos which had been offered to the Boiotians by Cassander was handed over by Demetrios Poliorketes in 304 BC to the Athenians, who held it at least until 295, or perhaps 287.<sup>66</sup> This important move also led the Boiotians to defect from Cassander's alliance, and abandon Chalcis and Eretria.<sup>67</sup>

What such constant a foreign domination meant locally at Chalcis is more difficult to grasp. Local civil life appears to have been largely eclipsed by the international importance of the site.<sup>68</sup> Besides, epigraphic evidence for Chalcis is sketchy, as the site has been continuously occupied. Dixon recently argued that Corinth actually enjoyed of a period of prosperity under the Macedonian dynasts, even while being used as a "fetter". The picture appears less favourable in Boiotia despite Cassander's efforts to rebuild Thebes. We saw above how the Akraiphians and Thebans expressed relief at being freed from Demetrios Poliorketes and the Macedonian kings in general. At Chalcis, perhaps enthusiasm at being liberated from the almost uninterrupted foreign domination since 334 is best expressed in honours for the Romans, unless these could be explained by some yearning for stability at a time when the Aitolians, Seleucids and Romans were waging war in the region. The festival of the *Romaia* celebrated at Chalcis (see IG XII.9 899b) may date as early as the 190s, but as we saw above (see n. 48) it could actually date from the aftermath of the Achaian War. On the other hand, in another bid for freedom, and to benefit once again from the Roman general's leniency after he saved them from M' Acilius Glabrio's wrath after Antiochos III used their city as his headquarters, the Chalcidians awarded outstanding honours to T. Quinctius Flamininus in 191 BC (Plut., *Flam.* 16.3-4):

<sup>64</sup> Bakhuizen 1970: 110.

<sup>65</sup> IG II<sup>2</sup> 469; cf. Knoepfler 2014: 77.

<sup>66</sup> Knoepfler 2001b: 14; Knoepfler 2014: 70.

<sup>67</sup> Knoepfler 2014: 76.

<sup>68</sup> See however Knoepfler 1977 and 1990.

Οὕτω διασωθέντες οἱ Χαλκιδεῖς τὰ κάλλιστα καὶ μέγιστα τῶν παρ' αὐτοῖς ἀναθημάτων τῷ Τίτῳ καθιέρωσαν, ὧν ἐπιγραφὰς ἔστι τοιαύτας ἄχρι νῦν ὄρα· “Ὁ δῆμος Τίτῳ καὶ Ἡρακλεῖ τὸ γυμνάσιον,” ἐτέρωθι δὲ πάλιν, “Ὁ δῆμος Τίτῳ καὶ Ἀπόλλωνι τὸ Δελφίνιον.” ἔτι δὲ καὶ καθ' ἡμᾶς ἱερεὺς χειροτονητὸς ἀπεδείκνυτο Τίτου, καὶ θύσαντες αὐτῷ τῶν σπονδῶν γενομένων ἄδουσι παιᾶνα πεποιημένον, οὗ τᾶλλα διὰ μῆκος ἡμεῖς παρέντες ἀνεγράψαμεν ἃ παυόμενοι τῆς ὥδῆς λέγουσι·

πίστιν δὲ Ῥωμαίων σέβομεν,  
τὰν μεγαλευκτοτάταν ὄρκους φυλάσσειν·  
μέλπετε κοῦραι,  
Ζῆνα μέγαν Ῥώμαν τε Τίτον θ' ἅμα Ῥωμαίων  
τε πίστιν·  
ἰήϊε Παιάν, ὦ Τίτε σῶτερ.

Having been thus saved by Titus, the Chalcidians dedicated to him the largest and most beautiful of the votive offerings in their city, and on them such inscriptions as these are still to be seen: “This gymnasium is dedicated by the people to Titus and Heracles,” and again in another place, “This Delphinium is dedicated by the people to Titus and Apollo.” Moreover, even down to our own day a priest of Titus is duly elected and appointed, and after sacrifice and libations in his honour, a set hymn of praise to him is sung: it is too long to be quoted entire, and so I will give only the closing words of the song:

“And the Roman faith we revere, which we  
have solemnly vowed to cherish; sing, then, ye  
maidens, to great Zeus, to Rome, to Titus, and  
to the Roman faith: hail, Paeon Apollo! hail,  
Titus our saviour!” (tr. B. Perrin)

The Chalcidians bestowed one of the earliest cults to a Roman general in Greece,<sup>69</sup> and Plutarch specifies that in his time a priest was still being appointed. Several buildings were dedicated to the Roman general, alongside a local god: the Delphinium to Flamininus (“Titus”) and Apollo, and the gymnasium to Flamininus and Herakles. A dedication by two gymnasiarchs (*IG XII.9 931*) to Titus *Soter* and *euergetes* (Τίτῳ Σωτῆρι καὶ εὐεργέτη) confirms the strong association of the Roman general with the local gymnasium<sup>70</sup>. The paeon preserved in Plutarch reveals that a cult to the Roman πίστις (*fides*) was also celebrated.<sup>71</sup>

## Conclusions

Alexander the Great’s destruction of Thebes, despite its brutality, turned out to have rather short-term consequences: indeed, 19 years later in 316, the Macedonian Cassander re-

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<sup>69</sup> See Ferrary 1997 appendix 2.

<sup>70</sup> See Biard 2017: 98-99.

<sup>71</sup> See Pfeilschifter 2005: 271.

settled the city. The award of the territory of Oropos by Alexander to the Athenians in 335 was also short-lived. It inaugurated, however, an era during which Oropos was used as a pawn by the Macedonians to put pressure on both Boiotians and Athenians. One of the most long-lasting imprint the Macedonian kings left on the Central Greek landscape – and one could argue even well beyond –, appears to have been Chalcis, or rather, its early Hellenistic system of fortifications, alongside the power that could be wielded from it. This would hardly have been possible without two pre-requisites. First, it was necessary to weaken Thebes, the strongest local power in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, and to disperse its territory. No strong Chalcis could emerge while a strong Thebes was still at play. Second, foreign interest in tightly controlling the region was needed. The Macedonian kings were the first to make full use of the strategic location as a naval and military base. They were followed by many others, over many centuries.

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