

Preface

This volume completes the publication of the project *The Oath in Archaic and Classical Greece*, based at the University of Nottingham and funded by the Leverhulme Trust (award no. F.00 114/Z), whose assistance is warmly acknowledged. The main previous publications of the project have been the Nottingham Oath Database (Sommerstein, Bayliss and Torrance 2007) and *Oath and State in Ancient Greece*, edited by Sommerstein and Bayliss and referred to in this volume as S&B.

The authors have in broad terms a common view of the nature and effect of oaths as a cultural phenomenon of ancient Greek society, as will be apparent from this volume, though – as will also be apparent – they inevitably disagree on matters of detail and nuance and on the interpretation of some particular passages and incidents.

The several chapters of the volume deal with different aspects of the oath phenomenon, and it thus inevitably often happens that the same passage is discussed from different points of view in more than one chapter.

We should draw attention to a peculiarity in the chapter numbering. There are some tall buildings that have no thirteenth floor, and some books in which chapter 14 directly follows chapter 12; this volume, contrariwise, has both a chapter 13 and a chapter 13a. This is because there are several references in S&B to specific numbered chapters of the present volume, and changes in the chapter plan since the publication of S&B would otherwise have rendered some of these references incorrect.

The acknowledgements made in the preface to S&B apply equally to this volume, and are gratefully reiterated. But it is particularly appropriate, on the occasion of his retirement from the Department of Classics of the University of Nottingham, that Alan Sommerstein should record explicitly his deep appreciation of all that the University, the Department, the School of Humanities, their academic and administrative staffs, and not least their students, have done to assist and encourage him over all but forty years, and especially over the ten years of the Oath project.

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