

John L. Friend, *The Athenian Ephebeia in the Fourth Century BCE*. Brill Studies in Greek and Roman Epigraphy, Volume 13. Leiden, 2019. ISBN: 978-90-04-40204-1. EUR: €110 / List price US: \$132.

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John Friend's new study of the early Athenian ephebate is a conscious attempt to people the stark information provided by *stelai* and the famous passage in the Aristotelian *Constitution of the Athenians* with ephebes, their fathers, and officials. Whether he succeeds in the more traditional domain of presenting a consistent reconstruction of the training system that takes all the relevant evidence into account is, however, debatable.

After an introductory first chapter in which, as is *de rigueur*, F. outlines his argument chapter by chapter, he divides his main argument into five chapters (their content again summarized at the beginning of each), followed by an epilogue and a catalogue of epigraphic testimonia. The first chapters consist partly of a vigorous restatement of Wilamowitz's view that the ephebate did not predate the first appearance of inscribed ephebic lists in 334/3 BCE¹ and partly of an attempt to dissociate the ephebate's foundation from the defeat at Chaeronea and make it a reaction to hypothetical Boeotian border raids (8–57). The following chapters contain an account, sometimes useful, of the later 4th century ephebate's officials, their duties, and the institution's ideological foundations.

Central to F.'s stance on the date of the ephebate's foundation is his contention, argued at length in Chapters 2 and 3 (8–57), that the word *ephebos* came into being before the ephebate itself and denoted a newly enrolled citizen and/or a young conscript, but was not confined to citizens-in-training. Aeschines' references to his ephebic service (*Or.* 1.49; 2.167) as a youth, when he patrolled Attica for two years, are to be understood in this wider sense.² But F.'s attempt to match this interpretation of Aeschines' usage with that of the *Constitution* (42.1-2) does not take into account that work's clear distinction between the enrollment of a new citizen in his deme's *lexiarchikon grammateion* and the registration of that new citizen as an ephebe in Athens after a lengthy process of examination, appeal, and oath-taking.³ A lack of unambiguous examples of this supposed usage beyond those F. identifies in Aeschines' speeches does not strengthen his case. On the other hand, Occam's razor suggests that Demosthenes' allusion to the oath of the ephebes in 343 (*Or.* 19.303) and the text of the oath itself be taken as evidence of an *ephebeia* in the mid-4th

¹ U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, *Aristoteles und Athen I* (Berlin, 1893) 193–4.

² Probably 372/1-371/0; see E. Harris, "When was Aeschines Born?" *CP* 83 (1988) 211–14.

³ N. Kennell, "Age-Class Societies in Ancient Greece?" *Ancient Society* 43 (2013) 7-8; A. Chankowski, "L'éphébie athénienne antérieure à la réforme d'Epikratès: à propos de Reinmuth, *Eph. Inscr.* 1 et de la chronologie des premières inscriptions éphebiques." *BCH* 138 (2014) 63–65.

century.⁴ In addition, F. does not engage with or explain away the wish Demosthenes declares in his speech *On the False Embassy* (343 BCE), that Athens never be so badly off that it should need either of his political enemies, Aphobetus or Aeschines, as *sophronistai* for the youth (*Or.* 19.285), which has been thought to refer to these important officials of the ephebate.⁵

F.'s eagerness (36) to dissociate the 'founding' of the ephebate in 334/3 from the Battle of Chaeronea leads him to invoke a persistent threat of Boeotian border raids in the wake of the sack of Thebes as the primary motivator for the system's foundation (41–53). Needless to say, no evidence exists for Attica's territorial integrity being exceptionally imperiled at this time. Athens had for many decades maintained defensive garrisons along its borders and at other strategic points at which *peripoloi* had been stationed as far back as the 5th century.

In Chapter 4 (58–94), F. surveys ephebic practicalities, examining the officials, trainers, and ideology of the 4th-century ephebate. He presents (59) a clear and compelling view that the *kosmetes* was in charge of a single year-class of ephebes through their two years of service, marred by a blunder in using Mitsos' numeration of his epigraphical testimony T1 instead of his own (60). Pages 61–65 concern the tribal *sophronistai*, a detailed account in which F. expatiates on the sparse information provided by the *Constitution*. The roles of the *strategoï*, who are attested in several ephebic texts, and of the *peripolarchoi*, who are not, manifest the ephebes' military function (66–69). Throughout the ephebes' two-year service, F. sees an extensive overlap of jurisdictions of the *strategoï*, *peripolarchoi*, *kosmetes*, and *sophronistai*, who all directed the ephebes, in their various capacities as civilian administrators and military commanders. F. does admit that no evidence links *peripolarchoi* to ephebes; the Rhamnous dedications he cites in support (69 n.55) were erected by soldiers (*stratiotai*), not ephebes. The following pages (69–94) contain a competent treatment of ephebic ideals, their trainers, and some conjectures on the influence of ephebic training on the Athenian army as a whole.

Once again, F.'s reconstruction is flawed. Relying on the Roman-era lexicographer Pollux, he holds that ephebes actively patrolled Attica in both years and consequently arms them with what he terms a "minimal panoply" on their first day of service. Yet the *Constitution* unequivocally states that the city presented ephebes with a shield and spear at the beginning of their second year, just before they were stationed at the border forts (42.5)

In Chapter 5 (95–135), F. presents what he terms a "plausible (if speculative) circumstantial argument" for the ephebes' attitudes to service in the training system. He argues that training was not restricted to the upper three Solonian property

⁴ L. Robert, *Études épigraphiques et philologiques* (Paris, 1938), 293-316; G. Daux, "Deux stèles d'Acharnes." In *Charisterion eis Anastasion k. Orlandon*. Vol. 1 (Athens, 1965) 78-90.

⁵ Chankowski, "L'éphébie athénienne," 21-22, 77.

classes because these distinctions had been nullified by conscription by year-class. State subsidies for supplies and the provision of arms would have aided the less wealthy to participate fully (98–100). Rightly acknowledging that demographic data indicate that only about 50% of an annual cohort enrolled, he accounts for the remainder through medical exemptions and reluctance to serve. F. regards ephebic service as compulsory, with avoidance subject to the same sanctions as for draft-dodging and desertion (106). But all his supporting evidence is earlier than his date for the ephebate's foundation and relates to adult citizens avoiding service or deserting from field armies engaged in campaigns outside Attica.

Since the ephebate was obligatory, F. also assumes that all citizens were subject to conscription by age class (*helikia*). This procedure was only valid only for hoplites, however, and naval conscription, which also drew upon citizens, was conducted in a different way. The inevitable and unlikely result of F.'s reconstruction is that only those citizens who were exempted from the *ephebeia* would have been eligible for service on Athens' triremes — an unlikely if not impossible situation. Inexplicably, F. never mentions the Athenian navy or its impact on military conscription.

Turning to ephebic education (136–171), F. pursues an ambitious agenda — to reconstruct what he terms the “ephebic paideia,” the process by which youths were inculcated with the civic values that good citizens exhibited. While he makes valid points about the importance of *sophrosyne*, discipline, and courage, offering some intriguing if excessively speculative conjectures about certain details, particularly in regard to the ephebic tour of sanctuaries (Ar. AP 42.3), careless treatment of sources is also evident. For example, he states that after 334/3 ephebes, described in the *Constitution* as *ateleis panton*, were denied “an opportunity to participate in democratic government” (138–139). To illustrate their previous situation, he cites a section of Xenophon's *Memorabilia* in which a young Glaucon is teased for having insufficient experience to speak at the Assembly since he is not yet twenty (*Mem.* 3.6) as evidence that “ephebes could and did attend the Assembly.” First, *ateleis panton* most probably refers to the ephebes' immunity from liturgies; it has nothing to do with their capacity (or not) to visit the *Ekklesia*.⁶ Second, the person ribbing Glaucon in the passage from Xenophon is not, as F. states, “the Demos,” but Socrates (of course, as the *Memorabilia* consists solely of Socratic dialogues). Finally, the work is set in Socrates' lifetime, before his execution in 399, well before the term *ephebos* was invented. Unless we follow a tortuous, Escher-like path of reasoning, the *Memorabilia* thus has nothing to say about ephebes or the 4th-century ephebate.

The next section (158–164) consists of a sensible overview of ephebic participation in festivals in Athens and Attica, particularly the Panathenaea, the Nemesia at Rhamnous, and the Amphiareia at Oropos. F. agrees with earlier views that no detailed cult “program” existed for the ephebes in this period, preferring to see a gradual evolution over time. He concludes the chapter (164–171) with a restatement

⁶ P.J. Rhodes, *A Commentary on the Aristotelian Athenaion Politeia* (Oxford, 1981), 509.

of the case against Vidal-Naquet's influential initiatory theory of the ephebate, as laid out in *Le chasseur noir*.

F.'s last chapter (172–184) is a sketch of events after Alexander's death down to the end of the 4th century. He first presents a plausible picture of ephebic participation in the Lamian War, then, after admitting that opinion is divided over the fate of the ephebate under Antipater, follows the well-worn path blazed by Mitchel and others in accepting as fact the institution's supposed abolition in 323/2 (177) but, like many Anglophone scholars, displays no awareness of Couvenhes' vital 1998 article that demolished Mitchel's arguments.⁷ Nor again does the absence of evidence prevent him from speculating at length on the possible motives of Antipater or even Athenian oligarchs for this abolition. At the end of the century, another "abolition" is conjured up under the tyrant Lachares based simply on the lack of ephebic inscriptions from 300 to 296/5 (183–184). This principle would imply the Athenian ephebate was also suppressed on many more occasions in the Hellenistic and Roman periods during intervals when no other ephebic inscriptions survive — a clearly insupportable conclusion.

F.'s rigid view of the impossibility of an earlier ephebate renders his treatment of epigraphical evidence sometimes Procrustean. The first testimonium in the Catalogue (187–254), a decree honoring one Autolykos for having dutifully served as *kosmetes*, is a case in point (T1, pp. 187–8). Problems begin with the rubric, "The Kosmetes of Akamantis." There was no such official. Certainly, the Akamantis tribe passed a decree honoring one of its members, but the *kosmetes* was not an official of Akamantis or of any other Cleisthenic tribe; rather, the entire *demos* elected a single *kosmetes* to supervise the citizen training system ([Ar.] AP 42.3). Furthermore, since F. rightly understands that ephebic service straddled three archon years, with ephebic honorific decrees inscribed in the second year following their enrollment, he dates the passage of this decree to 332/1, two years after the ephebes were registered under the archon Ktesikles 334/3, whose archonship is referred to twice in restored sections of the text. But those references denote the date of the decree's passage, not when the ephebes under the *kosmetes* Autolykos began their service. If the restoration of the archon's name as Ktesikles is correct, the ephebes it concerns must have enrolled in 336/5, the second year before the date of the tribal decree.⁸ As Chankowski has pointed out, however, the historical context and the inscription's physical characteristics present strong arguments against restoring Ktesikles and in favor of an earlier archon.⁹ F. dismisses his extensive account with the bald statement, "there is no corroborating evidence" for an ephebate earlier than 334/3.

⁷ J.-C. Couvenhes, "Le stratège Derkylos, fils d'Autoklès d'Hagnous et l'éducation des *paides* à Éleusis," *CCG* 9 (1998) 49-69.

⁸ Thus, Autolykos could not have been known as ὁ κοσμητῆς τῶν ἐφήβων τῶν ἐπὶ Κτησικλέους ἄρχοντος (61).

⁹ Chankowski, "L'éphébie athénienne," 75-76.

On the contrary — this inscription is just that corroborating evidence, whether or not Ktesikles is restored as archon.

Like the curate's egg, parts of this book are quite good. When F. keeps to what can reasonably be extracted from the evidence and restrains his propensity for speculation, his conclusions are sound, if not revelatory. But on those occasions when he indulges his creative impulses, signaled by phrases like “it is not inconceivable” (33), “[i]t is conceivable” (47), “[d]espite the silence of the ancient sources, the outcome . . . was probably” (50), “[p]erhaps” (50, 87), “presumably” (50), “one suspects” (61, 123), “[w]e may speculate... [w]e may further speculate (62), “we may suppose” (87), “[p]resumably ... [p]erhaps (93), “plausible (if speculative) circumstantial argument” (95), “[i]t is likely” (113), “[w]e may suppose a scenario” etc., the result is more akin to historical fiction than evidence-based scholarship.

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