

## The *Ephebeia* and Oropos in Lycurgan Athens

Created after Alexander the Great's destruction of Thebes in 335/4 B.C., the Athenian *ephebeia* was a state-organized and -funded system of mandatory national service for citizens aged 18 and 19, consisting of garrison duty, military training, and civic education ([Arist.] *Ath.Pol.* 42.2-5). In her overview of post-Chaeronea Athens, Sally Humphreys rightly observes that "the notion of *paideia* was embodied in a new educational institution, the ephebate, and was acted out in ritual" (Humphreys 2004). This paper examines one aspect of the involvement of the ephebes in Athenian religious life during the first decade or so of the *ephebeia*'s existence. It asks why the cult of Amphiaraos at Oropos was included in the limited program of festivals (in comparison to the *ephebeia* in the Hellenistic Period: e.g. *IG II<sup>2</sup>* 1006) which the ephebes would have collectively celebrated in the 330s and 320s B.C., even if we are not reliably informed about the nature and extent of their activities at the Amphiaraion at this time.

The epigraphic evidence shows that the Athenians, having recovered Oropos (lost to the Boeotians in 366 B.C.) probably in the same year in which the *ephebeia* was founded, devoted considerable resources to the refurbishment of the Amphiaraion and organized a new penteteric festival for Amphiaraos (regulations drafted by Phanodemus of Thymitadae), first celebrated in 329/8 B.C. (*IOrop.* 295, 296, 297, and 298: Parker 1996; Mikalson 1998). In an environment of tradition and innovation, they may well have also (substantially?) modified the program of the annual festival held in honor of the god, about which little is known and which predated the recovery program undertaken by Lycurgus' administration after Philip's decisive victory at Chaeronea in 338/7 B.C. (Osborne 2010). Against this background, the Athenians would have been able to accommodate the ephebes both as spectators of the festivities and competitors in

athletic events, although positive evidence is lacking for the *lampadedromia* and the *eutaxia* at Oropos, both events closely associated with ephebes in Lycurgan Athens (Lambert 2001; Friend 2014).

Of the three inscriptions from Oropos which mention ephebes, *IOrop. 353* has drawn the most scholarly attention since its publication by Leonardos in 1918. Not only is the date of erection for this end of service dedication uncertain but the find-spot is atypical for the Lycurgan ephebic corpus. Indeed, the ephebes of Leontis had set up *IOrop. 353* at the sanctuary rather than at the garrison deme (e.g. Eleusis) or border fortress (e.g. Panakton) where they were stationed in their second year or at the shrine of their tribe's eponymous hero (Humphreys 2004-2009). The ephebes of Leontis, having marched from Piraeus or from the Attic-Boeotian frontier to Oropos, would have celebrated a festival at the Amphiaraion before returning promptly to their garrison duties. Given the range of dates for the enrollment year of the Leontid contingent (332/1-326/5 B.C.), we cannot dismiss the possibility that the ephebes were present at the quadrennial Amphiaraia of 329/8 B.C. These ephebes, impressed with the elaborate festival program and with the popularity of Amphiaraos, sought to commemorate their national service with *IOrop. 353*, where ephebes and non-ephebes alike could admire the monument in subsequent years (cf. Lambert 2011).

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