HENDERSON (T.R.) **The Springtime of the People: The Athenian Ephebeia and Citizen Training from Lykourgos to Augustus**. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2020. Pp. xix + 439. €112/$135. 9789004433359.
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This book offers a new, comprehensive description of the Athenian *ephēbeia* for the first 300 years of its existence. The ongoing discovery of epigraphic material allows for a more detailed chronological account of this civic and military training system than ever before. In the process of establishing the nature and development of that system, Thomas R. Henderson tackles a number of long-standing controversies surrounding its origins, character, purpose and its supposed decline during the Hellenistic period.

The first two chapters deal with the definition of 'ephebe' and the origins of the *ephēbeia*. Against much twentieth-century scholarship, Henderson shows that ephebe was never a term for adolescents on the cusp of adulthood, whose entry into the *ephēbeia* marked a rite of passage or period of initiation into full citizenship. In fact, the word was consistently used to indicate young adults who had already reached social and political maturity. Crucially, this means Athenians could be called ephebes without implying or necessitating the existence of an institutional *ephēbeia.* Most of the arguments in favour of the view that some form of this training system existed prior to the Lycurgan period are thereby swept away. Henderson's own survey of the (lack of) evidence reconfirms the old view of Wilamowitz (*Aristoteles und Athen* (Berlin 1893), 1.191–94) that there was no public military training system like the *ephēbeia* prior to the Law of Epicrates of 336/5. While Henderson's bibliography on Greek military training is dated (127 n.58), the argument is both sound and significant; regular training for Athenian militia is strictly a feature of the period after Chaeronea.

On that note, in the third chapter Henderson dismisses the old theory that the *ephēbeia* was a strategic response to defeat at Chaeronea. A central argument of this book is that the *ephēbeia* was never meant purely as a military training programme, but rather as a revivalist system that used training and garrison duty to improve the general fitness, spirit and civic commitment of young Athenians. This argument is not always easy to maintain alongside Henderson's other key point, namely that the institution retained its fundamentally military character throughout the Hellenistic period. Henderson uses Isocrates, Plato and Xenophon to show that military training was thought to instil civic virtues (good order, obedience, self-control); it might have been useful to stress the same authors' view that these virtues also, in turn, made citizens better soldiers (for example, *Cyr.* 3.3.57–59). Rather than civic or military, the *ephēbeia* was both, and its programme always reflected these mutually reinforcing strands, as Henderson shows in later chapters.

Chapters 4–6 describe the *ephēbeia* of the Lycurgan period in indulgent detail: its organization, the contents of the programme and its role in Athenian religious life (which Henderson suggests was far more limited than widely assumed in this initial phase of the institution's existence). The treatment is exhaustive to a fault – a sincere attempt to find answers to even the most difficult or seemingly trivial questions. Chapter 7 explores whether, and in what form, the *ephēbeia* may have existed during the various stages of Athens' troubled history between 323 and 267, for which concrete evidence is still lacking. Chapters 8–10 describe the training system during the better-attested part of the Hellenistic period. Henderson rightly argues that the dramatically reduced scale of the *ephēbeia* must be explained by the fact that it was no longer publicly funded. However, he notes that this hardly seems to have affected the character of the programme; neither the ephebes' growing involvement in religious festivals nor the introduction of philosophical instruction look out of place in a training programme that was meant to instil civic consciousness in the sons of wealthy citizens as much as to train them for

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war. Finally, the earlier point that completion of the *ephēbeia* was never a precondition for citizen status (since ephebes were already citizens when they joined) allows Henderson to reject the notion that participation in the later Hellenistic *ephēbeia* was a way for non-Athenians to gain citizenship.

In addition to an epilogue on the end of the *ephēbeia*, the book offers a full catalogue of ephebic inscriptions, a selection of documents in Greek and in translation, four appendices with demographic and prosopographic data, an index of literary and epigraphic sources, and a general index. The selection of documents (324–55) is an odd feature, since these documents are essentially illustrative; in its place, more direct quotation of relevant or typical texts in the course of the argument would have been welcome.

This book is not a straightforward introduction to its subject; it is shaped by the historiographical debates in which it takes part, and its main audience will be those who are already familiar with those debates. Even so, it is a rich and valuable work, which has the further virtue of being engagingly written. It helpfully integrates new evidence into known discussions and advances the study of the Athenian *ephēbeia* on numerous points.

Roel Konijnendijk
University of Edinburgh
Email: roel.konijnendijk@ed.ac.uk

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It is hard to think of an author from Greek antiquity more appropriate for inclusion in a series titled ‘Ancients in Action’ than Xenophon, whose *Anabasis* shows his own predilection for adventure. But beyond that, as Fiona Hobden shows, Xenophon presents the ‘the deeds of exceptional individuals in conflict situations’ (16) as exemplars for the instruction of his readers. Actions provide the starting point for his narrative and his analysis.

The late twentieth- and twenty-first century resurgence in studies of Xenophon has produced a vast array of monographs and edited collections exploring specific themes and details in his extensive and varied corpus. While, as Hobden observes, Xenophon’s writing should make him the ‘most accessible’ (1) of the ancients, in some ways the recent burgeoning of bibliography on him has complicated matters. Fierce debates in this scholarship have had a polarizing effect; is Xenophon a simplistic moralist, a savage ironist or somehow simultaneously both? Does reading him as an ironist necessitate a specific interpretation of his political thought? This short and straightforward introduction provides a clear sense of the structure and detail of Xenophon’s work, and will equip a wide array of readers to understand the breadth of his corpus and to make sense of the often irreconcilable presentations of him in the secondary literature.

Hobden’s initial organizing principle is genre, starting appropriately enough with historiography, but one way in which Xenophon is complex is his elusive slippage between more recent constructions of genre, so there is necessarily some crosstalk as episodes from his major works find their way into multiple chapters, and as themes, such as the pursuit of the good life (the focus of chapter 4), extend across the corpus.

As Hobden notes in the first chapter, ‘Writing History’, Xenophon’s contribution to the genre has been undervalued and misinterpreted. The reputation of his history of Greece (*Hellenica*) has suffered from its being treated as a continuation of Thucydides’ history of the Peloponnesian War; Hobden starts with the view that Xenophon successfully achieves his goal of narrating the past in a way that develops critical reflection. She treats the *Cyropaedia* as another historical work.

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