CHAPTER 6

The Nemesia in Lycurgan Athens

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Stais’ discovery of a rounded base (\textsc{ig} \textsc{ii} 12 \textsc{3105}), found below the eastern wall of the \textit{temenos} of Nemesis at Rhamnous, perplexed scholars until Petrakos’ recent addition of two new fragments to the heading of the dedicatory inscription removed any doubt that it belonged to the Lycurgan ephebic corpus.\textsuperscript{1} Petrakos’ restoration of the heading, along with the demotic for the \textit{sophronistes}, is as follows (\textit{SEG} 31. 162):

\begin{quote}
[ὁ σωφρονιστὴς Περικ[. . . of Anagyr]ας
καὶ οἱ τῆς Ἐρε[χθεῖδος ἐφήβων γ[υμ].]νασίαρχοι ἀνέθεσαν,
[οἱ ἐπὶ Νικοκράτους ἄρχοντος λαμπάδι νικήσαντες
[. . .]ο[νδρὸς Τιμ[. . . ] Εὐωνυμεύς, Χαρικλῆς Ἀλεξιμένου Περγασήβεν.
\end{quote}

The \textit{sophronistes} Perik[. . . of Anagyr]ous and the gymnasiarchs of the ephebes of Erechtheis made this dedication. Those in the archonship of Nicocrates gained victory in the torch race, [. . .]Andros, son of Tim[. . .], of Euonymon, Charikles, son of Alexime, of Pergase.

The reason for the dedication is clear. The \textit{sophronistes} and \textit{gymnasiarchoi} of Erechtheis erected it in commemoration of the ephebes’ victory in the \textit{lampadedomia}. Below the heading the entire ephebic \textit{phyle}, consisting of 47 or 48 names arranged in 5 columns, was honored for being \textit{lampadoephoroi}, although only 10 ephebes would have actually run in the torch race (cf. \textsc{ig} \textsc{ii} 12 \textsc{1250}, lines 13–22, dated to 350’s or 340’s). The heading uses an abbreviated enrollment formula (ἐπὶ Νικοκράτους ἄρχοντος) to designate the archon year (333/2) in which this particular \textit{phyle} of ephebes entered the ephebeia.\textsuperscript{2}

\textsuperscript{1} Stais 1891: no. 7. Petrakos 1979: no. 21. Before Petrakos’ discovery scholars were divided over whether \textsc{ig} \textsc{ii} 12 \textsc{3105} was an ephebic inscription (Pouilloux 1954: 111; Pélékidis 1962: 119; Reinmuth 1971: 52; Lewis 1973: 256). For a bibliography on \textsc{ig} \textsc{ii} 12 \textsc{3105}, see Petrakos 1999: vol. 2, no. 98. Also see \textit{SEG} 34. 208; 37. 233; 39. 185. All dates in this paper, except where otherwise indicated, are BCE.

\textsuperscript{2} The full formula is shown in \textsc{ig} \textsc{ii} 12 \textsc{1156}, lines 52–3: οἱ [ἔφηβοι] οἱ ἐπὶ Κτησικλέους ἄρχοντος ἐνγραφέντες. This literally means “the ephebes enrolled in the archonship of Ctesilcles” i.e. their enrollment year was 334/3.
Since the ephebes were required to perform two years of garrison duty and could have competed in the torch race at any time during their military service ([Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 42. 4), it follows that the *sophronistes* and *gymnasiarchoi* must have made their dedication in 333/2 or 332/1. Stais associated the base with *NM* 313, a hip-herm of a youthful male figure dressed in a short *chiton* and *chlamys*, found nearby.3 Palagia and Lewis have studied this sculpture and conclude that it would have fit into the base’s rectangular cutting. There is no certainty as to identification, but possibilities include Hermes, an Athenian ephebe, or Munichus, the eponymus hero of the *helikia* of 333/2.4

Beginning with Pouilloux, scholars have tentatively suggested that the Nemesia was the occasion for the victory of the ephebes of Erechtheis.5 The inscription, however, does not refer to the festival context. This is unsurprising if we consider that the twenty-eight known ephebic dedications securely dated (or thought to belong to) to the 330’s and 320’s do not provide an itinerary of the ephebes’ religious activities – sacrifices, processions, and athletic competitions – during their stint in the ephebeia.6 The earliest explicit mention of an Athenian festival is found in *Ag. I* 7484 (214/3), though if we can trust the restoration οἱ τῶν Ἔμμυστηρίων ἐπιμεληταί in *SEG* 29. 104, line 13, then the first instance can be dated instead to 258/7. Nor do later inscriptions, which attest to the widespread participation of the ephebes in state cult, list the Nemesia as one their events (e.g. *IG II²* 1006 [122/1]; *IG II²* 1011 [106/5]). But this absence is not decisive because the Hellenistic festival program may have been established only after 229 in the wake of Athens’ regained independence from Macedon.7 We must also take into account that the ephebeia itself had changed greatly by this time. While the Aristotelian *Athenaion Politeia* (42. 3–5) describes the ephebeia as a two-year long state-funded and-organized program of compulsory military service for eighteen and nineteen year old citizens, its Hellenistic successor declined in military importance and developed into a voluntary educational institution for the wealthy.8 Given these differences and their implications for the nature and extent of the ephebes’ involvement in the religious life of the *polis*, one should be hesitant to extrapolate from later ephebic decrees for the fourth century.

3 Stais 1891: 56–60.
6 The Lycurgan ephebic corpus is collected in Friend 2009: 194–234.
8 For a detailed but dated discussion of the Hellenistic ephebeia, see Pélékidis 1962: 211–56.