

SEPTEMBER 12-13 AND THE ATHENIAN EPHĒBIA

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In the prologue of the *Seven Against Thebes* Eteocles urges the people of the city to defend her against the attack from Argos. He first speaks of his own duty as their leader, prays that Zeus the Defender be true to his name, and at line 10 turns to the duty of his hearers: ὑμᾶς δὲ χρὴ νῦν . . . πόλει . . . ἀρήγειν, "And your duty now is to defend the city." But lines 12 and 13 have caused great bewilderment and confusion for editors and commentators without yielding a thoroughly satisfactory sense. The text in M reads:

10 ὑμᾶς δὲ χρὴ νῦν, καὶ τὸν ἐλλείποντ' ἔτι
 ἦβης ἀκμαίας, καὶ τὸν ἔξηβον χρόνῳ,
 βλαστημόν ἀλδαίνοντα σώματος πολύν,
 ὦραν ἔχονθ' ἕκαστον, †ᾧστι† συμπρεπές,
 πόλει τ' ἀρήγειν καὶ θεῶν ἐγχωρίων
 15 βωμοῖσι, τιμᾶς μὴ ἔξαιλειθῆναί ποτε,
 τέκνοισι τε γῆ τε μητρὶ, φιλιτάτη τροφῶ.

13: ὦραν *ferè* *codd.* et M ante correctionem, ὦραν τ' nonnulla *apographa* *codicis* *perditi* quem Wilamowitzius Φ appellavit, ὦραν δ' Triclinius, ὦραν QΣ et M post correctionem a manu recentiore factam, fortasse e memoria *codicum* *aliorum*.

The following is a tentative literal translation which may serve to lead us into the discussion:

And it is now necessary for you, both the one still falling short of ripe *hêbê* and the *exêbos* in age, nurturing much strength of body, each in the prime of life, as is fitting, to defend both the city and the altars of our local gods -- may their honors never be wiped out -- and our children and Mother Earth, dearest nurse.

Editors have traditionally followed the scholiast in interpreting the *hapax legomenon* ἔξηβος to mean an old man beyond the years of military service. Early editors (Schütz, Bothe) assumed that Eteocles is addressing two groups who fall outside military age, *viz.*, boys lacking maturity, and old men; others (e.g., Campbell, Rose), that he is addressing the entire male populace -- boys, old men, and men in their prime. We will argue that he is addressing neither boys nor old men, but exclusively those within the age limits of military service.

Those who argue that he addresses three classes of citizens understand τὸν ἐλλείποντ' ἔτι ἥβης ἀκμαίας to mean one below military age, and understand ἔξηβος to mean one beyond the age of military service, although the grounds for doing so, as we will argue below, are exiguous in the extreme. Since line 12 βλαστημὸν ἀλδαίνοντα σώματος πολὺν then seems inappropriately to apply to the old men, editors have followed Campbell in reversing the order of lines 12 and 13, so that the expression then applies to ὧραν ἔχονθ' ἕκαστον, which they understand to mean each man in the prime of life.¹⁾ In order to make this the third group in the series, it is customary to read the elided τε found in MSS of the Φ group. This gives:

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| 10 | καὶ τὸν ἐλλείποντ' ἔτι |
| 11 | ἥβης ἀκμαίας, καὶ τὸν ἔξηβον χρόνῳ, |
| 13 | ὧραν τ' ἔχονθ' ἕκαστον, ᾗστί+ συμπρεπές, |
| 12 | βλαστημὸν ἀλδαίνοντα σώματος πολὺν |

1) See Campbell's note in *CR* 45 (1931) 5-6. Rose, *CR* 46 (1932) 11, for the most part agreed with Campbell, despite a spirited exchange in that year's volume of *CR*, pp. 155 and 203. It is unnecessary to recapitulate further the various solutions based upon such misinterpretations, but a word must be said about the reading ὧραν in MS Q of the Thoman tradition, which has been imported by a later hand into M as a correction. The meaning would be 'each having concern'. The problem is that ὧρα would be expected to take an objective genitive, and usually occurs with a negative or an expression implying a negative (LSJ s.v.). This would be an unparalleled usage. Secondly, we may ask concern for what? We might like to say 'concern to defend the city', but that would require ὥστε plus the infinitive (*Soph. OC* 386). If we were to read ὥστε in this sense for ὥστι, we would be left with the problem of fitting in συμπρεπές. The mistake arose when an uncial text without breathing marks and accents was transliterated into minuscule.

both the one still falling short of ripe manhood, and the one past full manhood, and each man in the prime of life, as is fitting, nurturing much strength of body...

There are at least three obvious disadvantages to this remedy. First, †ὥστι† συμπερέτες ends up in an odd place, since it ought to apply to the infinitive that follows, i.e., ἀρήγειν. With lines 12 and 13 transposed, it seems that to possess the bloom of youth or to put forth strength of body is what is proper. Second, the three ages -- boys, old men, and young men -- are in a peculiar order. Third, the combination of connectives καὶ...καὶ...τε is nowhere used in Greek tragedy to mark the enumeration of three elements.²⁾

The second interpretation, that Eteocles addresses only the boys and the old men, also rests upon the assumption that ἔξηβος means an old man past military age. Behind this interpretation lies the quite unwarranted presupposition that the city is in such peril that the regular army is already manning the walls, that Eteocles has only the boys and old men before him, and that he must urge this feeble remnant to a last ditch stand.³⁾

But there is no compelling reason elsewhere in the text to assume that these listeners are old men and boys, and indeed there are several logical reasons against it. First, in line 16 they are asked to defend their children. It strains our credulity to imagine that Eteocles is saying

2) Nor does it occur in Aristophanes, Xenophon, Herodotus, or Homer, so far as we can tell by scrutiny of the concordances and indices. *Soph. Phil.* 656f. at first glance appears to be an example, but there, as Ellendt pointed out (*Lex. Soph.*² p.353b), the first καὶ means 'even', is bound to ἐγγύθεν, and is not part of the enumeration. Likewise, *Hom. Od.* 11.468f.; 24.16f. prove not to be applicable cases because καὶ does not begin the sequence, but is actually between the first and second elements. In any event, the τ' of *Sept.* 13 has only the most exiguous manuscript authority.

3) Schütz *ad loc.* says: *In summo tamen rerum discrimine et senes, et impuberes pueros armatos fuisse legimus.* And Bothe *ad loc.* takes the pathos one step further, reading an adverbial πολὺ in line 12 and ὄραν 'care' in line 13, and imagines the old men summoning up what strength of body they still have. He translates: *Oportet autem vos, et illum, qui adhuc abest a viro iuventae, et eum, qui iuveniles annos supergressus est omnes corporis vires diligenter reparando, et quae opus sint curando, huic urbi...succurrere.*

this to boys. Second, Eteocles has addressed them (line 1) as πολῖται, but boys before they come of age are not πολῖται (Arist. *Pol.* 1275 a 22). Further, the statement (line 16) that Earth had undertaken the cost of their παιδεία so that they would be her faithful defenders, implies that their childhood is past.

It is equally illogical to assume that he is addressing old men beyond the age of military service. First, in lines 19-21 he says that Earth had nurtured them to be her shield-bearing citizens, which means that they are the men whom Thebes had prepared in advance against the possibility of attack. Who else could this be but the hoplite citizenry, the regular military force? It makes little sense to say that Earth had prepared *the old men* to be her defenders. Eteocles employs what appears to have been a mild cliché of military rhetoric, that just as men owe care to their fathers in return for the cost of their own upbringing, so the soldier pays back the cost of his upbringing to the state by fighting in her defense.⁴⁾ At line 477 Megareus may pay his debt to Earth by dying in her defense: θανὼν τροφεῖα πληρώσει χθονί. χρέος in line 20 (contrary to what the scholiast says) means 'debt', and Eteocles is saying, in effect, "Earth has undertaken the cost of raising you to manhood so that you may be faithful to this debt by fighting in her defense." But this is a sentiment appropriate to young men, or at least men of military age. Indeed, since men past the age of service are to be cared for by their sons, and by Solon's law (Plut. *sol.* 22) have a legal right to γηροτροφία, it would be grotesque to apply this commonplace to them.

Furthermore, the belief that Eteocles is addressing old men and boys rests upon the assumption that the regular army, i.e., all the men of military age, are somewhere else. Moreover, the notion that extreme danger necessitates calling up the old men and boys makes sense only if the regular army

4) Cf. H.D. Cameron, "The Debt to Earth in the *Seven Against Thebes*," *TAPA* 95 (1964) 1.

is unavailable or severely outnumbered.⁵⁾ It is sometimes said that the regular forces are already on the walls, but what sense is there in Eteocles' giving this speech to everybody but the real defenders, who are already on the job? And we must remember that it is dawn or shortly thereafter (line 29): are we to suppose that the regulars were stationed there in the dark expecting a night attack? When at lines 30ff. Eteocles orders *everybody* to man the defenses *in full armor*, we should find it hard to believe that the walls have *already* been manned by the regular army, and we should pause at the notion that boys and old men, otherwise unfit for service, would be expected to manage full armor.

If we consider for a moment the staging of the prologue, we must ask whom the actor playing Eteocles was addressing. Calder has persuasively argued that in the prologue of Soph. *OT* Oedipus directs his speech to the audience, as though they were Theban citizens, rather than to supernumeraries on the stage. It is reasonable to assume, as did Murray and Rose, that Eteocles, too, is speaking to the Athenian audience, who hear themselves addressed as "Citizens of Cadmus," and who for the purposes of the prologue are to imagine themselves the soldiers of Thebes. Can we believe that if they are addressed as "Citizens of Cadmus," they will imagine themselves to be only the old men and boys of Thebes?⁶⁾

5) The situation in the *Seven* is not analogous with that in Hom. *Il.* 8.517ff., where the very point is that the army is away from the city (λαῶν ἀπεόντων, line 522), and where the women are included with the young and old men; nor is the situation in the *Seven* analogous with that in Tyrtaeus 11 (Bergk, West), where there is no suggestion of an emergency. During the expedition of Myronides in 458 B.C. (Thuc. 1.105), the regular army was engaged in Aegina and Egypt; that is the reason the old men and the young mounted the emergency campaign in the Megarid. Gomme *ad loc.* argues that the old and young mentioned here were *not* outside military age, but rather the youngest and oldest classes within the age of military service.

6) See W.M. Calder, "The Staging of the Prologue of *Oedipus Tyrannus*," *Phoenix* 13 (1959) 121-29. Calder's view still seems tenable despite its dismissal by D. Bain, "Audience Address in Greek Tragedy," *CQ* 25 (1975) 13-25, esp. p. 22, n. 1. The objections which are raised by O. Taplin (*The Stagecraft of Aeschylus* [Cambridge 1977] 129-34) to the possibility that Eteocles addresses the audience do not seem to us very strong, and certainly not decisive.

If there are so many illogicalities, how ever did this interpretation grow current? The sole reason is the meaning given to the *hapax legomenon* ἔξηβος. The Medicean scholiast glossed τὸν ἔξηβον as τὸν ἔξω ἡλικίας, τὸν γέροντα, and from this false gloss all the trouble springs. Whatever authority the Medicean scholiast ought to have is cancelled by the much greater authority, in this case, of Hesychius, who explains the word as: ἔξω τῆς ἡβης. τριδάκοντα πέντε ἐτῶν (s.v. ἔξηβος, Latte Vol. II, p. 125 no. 3827). A 35-year-old man is certainly not beyond military age, and cannot be called γέρον.

Hesychius' authority is to be preferred to that of the scholiastic tradition, since we know that his definitions of Aeschylean words were taken from the Λέξεις Τραγικῆ of Didymus, which itself goes back to the Ἀττικαὶ Λέξεις of Aristophanes of Byzantium.⁷⁾ Furthermore, Hesychius certainly had access to commentaries on Aeschylus from the Alexandrian period (cf. Hesychius s.v. ἐναροκτάντας, Latte Vol. II, p. 88 no. 2679) which were at best known to the medieval scholiasts only in fragmented and corrupted form.⁸⁾ These are excellent *prima facie* reasons for trusting Hesychius in matters of Aeschylean vocabulary. Accordingly, ἔξηβος simply does not mean old man, and we must discount those interpretations which result from the assumption that it does.

What ἔξηβος does mean is any man past the age of adolescence (ἡβη), i.e., an adult, who is consequently liable to regular military service. This is fully in accord with the fact that the classes of the Spartan army were designated by the number of years since adolescence, ἀφ' ἡβης, as we learn from Xenophon. τὰ δέκα ἀφ' ἡβης (Xen. *Hell.* 2.4.32; 3.4.23; 4.5.14; Xen. *Ages.* 1.31) are those cadres in the first decade after entering upon full manhood, i.e., those between

7) See A. Wartelle, *Histoire du texte d'Eschyle dans l'antiquité* (Paris 1971) 192; H.J. Mette, *Die Fragmente der Tragödien des Aischylos* (Berlin 1959), Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin: Schriften der Sektion für Altertumswissenschaft 15, 277-79.

8) See L. Cohn, s.v. "Didymos," *RE* V.1 (1903) col. 451.

20 and 29.⁹⁾ τὰ πεντεκαίδεκα ἀφ' ἧβης (Xen. *Hell.* 4.5.16; 4.6.10) are the first 15 classes, those between 20 and 35. The other expressions attested are τὰ πέντε καὶ τριάκοντα ἀφ' ἧβης (Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.17), and τὰ τεσσαράκοντα ἀφ' ἧβης (Xen. *Hell.* 5.4.13; 6.4.17; Plut. *Ages.* 24.3). It is clear that those beyond *hêbê* in this system were precisely those within the age limits of military service.

It is not easy to ascertain unambiguously what the limits of the period of adolescence or ἧβη were, but we may say roughly it began at about 16 and ended at about 20.

At Athens the orphaned children of those who died in war were supported by the state μέχρι ἧβης (Thuc. 2.46; Lys. *Against Theozotides* 2; Aeschines *Against Ctes.* 154). But it is difficult to determine whether this means until the point of puberty or until the end of adolescence, when a boy entered full manhood.¹⁰⁾ A passage in Plato's *Menexenus* (248 e-249 b) indicates that they were supported until they entered manhood εἰς ἀνδρὸς τέλος, and therefore μέχρι ἧβης means 'to the end of adolescence'.

An expression from legal language, found in the orators and the ancient oratorical lexicons, also indicates that *hêbê* was a period in life during which certain obligations and rights were acquired. Harpocration quotes a passage from Hyperides' oration against Chares on the guardianship (Harp. s.v. ἐπὶ διετὲς ἡβῆσαι):

ἐπειδὴ δὲ ἐνεγράφην ἐγὼ καὶ ὁ νόμος ἀπέδωκε τὴν κομιδὴν τῶν καταλειφθέντων τῇ μητρὶ, ὅς κελεύει κυρίους εἶναι τῆς ἐπικλήρου καὶ τῆς οὐσίας ἀπάσης τοὺς παῖδας ἐπειδὴν ἐπὶ διετὲς ἡβῶσιν.

When I had been enrolled [in the deme at maturity] and the law had granted [me] the management of the property left to my mother, the law, that is, which says that the children of an *epiclêros* are to be responsible for her and all her property whenever they are two years past adolescence (or have been mature for two years).

9) Cf. F. Ollier, *Xenophon La République des Lacédémoniens* (Paris 1934) 34; and A. Billheimer, "Τὰ δέκα ἀφ' ἧβης," *ΤΑΡΑ* 77 (1946) 216-17. Both conclude that the age of majority at Sparta was 20.

10) See C. Pélékidis, *Histoire de l'éphébie Attique* (Paris 1962) 16ff.

In Bekker's *Anecdota Graeca* s.v. ἐπὶ δειτεῖς ἠβῆσαι we find it explained as τὸ γενέσθαι ἐτῶν ἄλλων δυοῖν μετὰ τὴν ἠβην. This appears to mean that a boy enters the period of *hêbê* two years before he is enrolled in the deme, acquires control of property only when he is enrolled in the deme at age 18 (Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 42.1), but reaches complete adulthood only when he has emerged from *hêbê*.

To summarize, the language in our sources appears to mark several stages of life: boyhood, from birth to puberty at age 16, a two-year period of adolescence from 16 to 18 (at the end of which he is enrolled in his deme and may undertake legal obligations and control property), and a second period of adolescence from 18 to 20 (during which he fulfills his preliminary military service, and at the end of which he acquires full and complete adult status).¹¹⁾ *Hêbê* then would be the period between 16 and 20, after which he is an ἔξηβος.

This view is consonant with a passage of the *Seven* where Eteocles appears to catalogue the stages of a young man's life. Polyneices has claimed that *Dikê* leads him back from exile, and Eteocles denies that *Dikê* ever looked with favor on Polyneices at any time of his life (664ff.):

ἀλλ' οὔτε νιν φυγόντα μητρόθεν σκότον
οὔτ' ἐν τροφαῖσιν οὔτ' ἐφηβήσαντά πω
οὔτ' ἐν γενείου ξυλλογῆ τριχώματος
Δίκη προσεῖδε καὶ κατηξιώσατο

But *Dikê* never looked on him with favor, not when he fled the darkness of his mother's womb, nor while he was a boy, nor when he had reached adolescence, nor when he had reached the time when the beard's hair thickens.¹²⁾

While this passage does not distinguish the two periods

11) For a full discussion concerning our sources on the age of majority, see Pélékidis (above, note 10) ch. 4.

12) The strange expression γενείου ξυλλογῆ τριχώματος probably contains a military metaphor "in the mustering of the beard's hair," where ξυλλογῆ has the sense of mustering of troops, as in Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.6. Cf. also Eur. *IA* 514; 1545; Xen. *Cyr.* 6.2.11. Solon 27.5-6 (Bergk, West) characterizes the third seven-year period of a man's life as the time when his beard begins to grow.

of *hêbê*, it clearly marks boyhood, adolescence, and full manhood.

Let us return to the prologue of the *Seven* with the knowledge that ἔξηβος means someone of military age, and that ἦβη is a period of life ending with full manhood. The expression τὸν ἐλλείποντ' ἔτι ἦβης ἀκμαίας can be seen in a new light. The adjective ἀκμαία must not be glossed over. It should be clear that the expression cannot mean those who are lacking ἦβη, i.e., boys who have not yet reached adolescence, but rather those *in* the period of adolescence who are still short of its full ripeness, who are short of the end point of ἦβη but close to it, i.e., just under 20.¹³⁾ Then ἔξηβος quite naturally means those who have emerged from the period of ἦβη, i.e., those over 20. Then βλαστημὸν ἀλδαίνοντα σώματος πολὺν applies directly to the ἔξηβος, but its meaning needs to be discussed.

The assumption that ἔξηβος meant 'old man' has led to some very strained interpretations of the expression βλαστημὸν ἀλδαίνοντα σώματος πολὺν. For instance, Schütz *ad loc.*, following a suggestion of Hugo Grotius, says it means *vigorem corporis augere*, and he explains further that the old men are

13) The metaphor is of growing grain which is at the end of its period of growth, when it is ἐν ἀκμῇ (Thuc. 4.2). Cf. Eur. *Alc.* 316 ἦβης ἐν ἀκμῇ, at the point when a girl is ready for marriage. In this sense, cf. also Eur. *Hel.* 12. At *Med.* 920 Jason, speaking of his sons, looks forward to the end of their *hêbê*. Cf. the odd usage at *Soph.* *OT* 1034, where ἀκμή means 'extremity'. *Soph.* *OT* 741 presents problems, since there ἦβη seems to refer to middle age. Oedipus, as the possibility dawns upon him that the man he killed may have been Laius, asks Jocasta what Laius looked like and what his age was (τὸν δὲ Λαῖον φύσιν/ τίς' εἶχε φράζε, τίνα δ' ἀκμὴν ἦβης ἔχων;). Jocasta, in answer, does not give his age, but gives a description, including the fact that his hair was grizzled. Because ἦβη is not suitable to Laius, several editors have emended the word away. If we retain it, the passage must be understood to be extremely ironic. Oedipus hopes to learn that Laius was young, and consequently could not be the man he murdered. He loads the question to invite the desired response ("Having what ripeness of youth?"). With Jocasta's answer, μέγας, χυοάζων ἄρτι λευκανθὲς κάρα, the irony is further intensified, because with the word χυοάζων she seems to be saying that Laius was young. Elsewhere this word and its commoner form χυοάω always refer to the bloom of youth, and a compound of ἄνθος also suggests youth. Only with the last word of the line does it become clear that she is not speaking of a young man, but of a man of middle age whose hair is gray.

to refresh their bodies with food and drink so as to be equal to undertaking the exertions of war.

But it is extremely doubtful that βλαστημός can mean *vigor corporis*. It means offspring at Aesch. *Supp.* 314 and its congener βλάστημα means offspring at *Sept.* 533; the verb βλαστῶ is used of plants putting forth new shoots; and βλάστη is used of the birth of children (*Soph. OT* 717; *OC* 972). The basic meaning of this group of words is *budding and sprouting*, and not simple increase of size or strength. The words for that kind of growth are φύειν and αὐξάνειν. In short, the interpretation 'nurturing much strength of body' is no more than an aberration of the scholiasts, and does not stand up to scrutiny.

If line 12 modifies ἔξηβον, meaning of full military age, and if we take βλαστημός in its only supportable meaning, then the thought that these warriors are also fathers, producing scions to populate the state for her future defense, is not only in accord with traditional Greek feeling (cf. *Hdt.* 7.205.2),¹⁴) but is also in accord with the metaphorical language of this play, where the citizens of Thebes literally grew out of the ground, a notion which is brought to our attention again and again (e.g., 412ff.; 474). The phrase means 'nurturing many scions of his body'.

The word χρόνῳ in this passage has traditionally been taken as a dative of respect with ἔξηβον, and the phrase has then been taken to mean 'an old man in age'. This would seem to be parallel with *Soph. OC* 112, χρόνῳ παλαιοί. But given the fact that an ἔξηβος is a man in the prime of life, a better parallel is *Soph. OC* 374, where Eteocles is called ὁ νεάζων καὶ χρόνῳ μείων γεγώς in contrast to his older brother. Accordingly, there is no difficulty in taking χρόνῳ with a word designating a young man.

There is, however, another possibility. If χρόνῳ has its common Aeschylean meaning 'in the course of time' (*Ag.* 126; 463; *Ch.* 650), it should be construed with the participle

14) Headlam, *CR* 14 (1900) 109, had already seen that βλαστημός had to mean offspring, and that this line reflects a commonplace sentiment.

ἀλδαίνοντα. In the three Aeschylean passages cited, χρόνω also appears with the present tense used with future meaning. We may translate: "the one who has passed to full manhood, nurturing many scions of his body in the course of time." With this interpretation, χρόνω is directly parallel with the ἔτι of line 10.

There remains the problem of line 13. It does not connect syntactically with the rest, which has compelled scribes and editors to supply a conjunction. Furthermore, as we will argue, it is clumsily redundant with other elements of the speech. It is no more than a remnant of a prose paraphrase of lines 10-12 which has found its way into the text from an ancient commentary.¹⁵⁾

The commentator was explaining that it is necessary for each man of military age, including the cadets, to defend the city. ὑμᾶς δὲ χρῆ is paraphrased by συμπρεπές,¹⁶⁾ and the two expressions ἔξηβος and ἐλλείποντ' ἤβης ἀκμαίας are paraphrased by the single comprehensive expression ὄραν ἔχονθ' ἕκαστον. There seems to be no point to ἕκαστον unless it is to make clear that saying ἔξηβον and ἐλλείποντ' ἤβης ἀκμαίας is tantamount to saying each man of military age.

We conclude finally that Eteocles addresses two groups, those just under full military age, and those of military age; that ἔξηβος designates precisely those of military age, not old men; that βλαστημός means offspring; and that line 13 is to be excised as a remnant of an Alexandrian commentary which has made its way into the text and has been adjusted to the meter.¹⁷⁾ The text should read:

15) For the practice of rendering poetic texts into prose paraphrases, which goes back at least to Aristarchus, see W.G. Rutherford, *A Chapter in the History of Annotation* (London 1905) 336ff. In the preface to his edition of Aeschylus (Leipzig 1873), p.xxiv, Dindorf argued that line 13 was added by an interpolator, who felt the need to supply a third group of citizens.

16) Rose, *CR* 46 (1932) 203, also saw that συμπρεπές (ἔστι) paraphrases ὑμᾶς δὲ χρῆ. Since ὅστι is puzzling, we may suspect that it represents what is left over from an original ὡς ἔστι συμπρεπές, which would not fit into a trimeter.

17) Cf., for example, Eur. *Supp.* 252 and E. Fraenkel's discussion of *Ag.* 871 (*Aeschylus Agamemnon* Vol. II [Oxford 1962] 393, n. 1).

10 ὑμᾶς δὲ χρὴ νῦν, καὶ τὸν ἐλλείποντ' ἔτι
 11 ἥβης ἀκμαίας καὶ τὸν ἔξηβον, χρόνῳ
 12 βλαστημὸν ἀλδαίνοντα σώματος πολύν,
 14 πόλει τ' ἀρήγειν καὶ θεῶν ἐγχωρίων
 15 βωμοῖσι...

"And it is now necessary for you, both him who still falls short of the end of adolescence, and him who has passed into full manhood, nurturing many scions of his body in the course of time, to defend his city and the altars of his country's gods..."

The text as we have established and interpreted it has a most interesting implication. The regular military force consists of adult men, presumably within the ages of 20 and 59, and a force of cadets just under full manhood, let us say between the ages of 18 and 20. This obviously suggests the *ephēboi* in the *Constitution of the Athenians*. If the text of the *Seven* reflects the *ephēbia*, it would be the earliest reference to that institution.

Using the date of the first ephebic inscriptions (IG 2². 1156, 1189), Wilamowitz argued that the *ephēbia* became a formal institution in 335/34 on the basis of a law passed the year before.¹⁸⁾ Moreover, the earliest literary evidence explicitly referring to the *ephēbia* appears in Aristotle *Ath. Pol.* 42.2-5. There surfaced only sporadic dissent from Wilamowitz's view for over half a century. Lofberg¹⁹⁾ saw a reference to the Athenian *ephēbia* in Thucydides' use of the terms νεώτατοι (1.105.4; 2.13.7) and περίπολοι (4.67.2). Reinmuth²⁰⁾ noted that Aeschines' description of his youthful service to the state in 372/71 (*Aeschin.* 2.170) appears to be the same duty which Aristotle tells us was performed by the ephebes φρουροῦσι δὲ τὰ δύο ἔτη (*Ath. Pol.* 42.5). Both Reinmuth and Pélékidis²¹⁾ voiced the expectation that an

18) U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Aristoteles und Athen* Vol. I (Berlin 1893) 193-94.

19) G.O. Lofberg, "The Date of the Athenian Ephebia," *CR* 20 (1925) 330-35, esp. 330-31.

20) O.W. Reinmuth, "The Genesis of the Athenian Ephebia," *TAPA* 83 (1952) 34-50, esp. 36-39.

21) Reinmuth (above, note 20) 50; Pélékidis (above, note 10) 8.

ephebic inscription dated before 336/35 would someday be found, to confirm their position that the *ephêbia* existed as a formal institution at least since the youth of Aeschines. Finally, in 1967, their expectation was fulfilled with the publication of an inscription dated 361/60 (EM 13354, 13354a), in which the tribe Akamantis honors the *kosmêtês* of the *ephêboi*.²²⁾ Justifiably arguing that this inscription demanded a reassessment of the accepted dating of the institution, Reinmuth restated his earlier position that the *ephêbia* became a formal organization in the early fifth century, sometime shortly after the Persian Wars.²³⁾

In support of this view, he cited a story which Aristotle himself tells of this earlier period (*Ath. Pol.* 24.1). After the Athenian treasury, he says, had been augmented by the tribute from the allied states in 478/77, the Athenians took Aristides' advice that they should strive towards the leadership of Greece. Aristides said that some should serve in the army, others *as guards*, and others as administrators of the state. As Reinmuth notes, "the juxtaposition of service in the army and service as guards suggests the contrast between the services of the mature citizen and the preliminary service of the young citizens which we see in the *ephêbia*."²⁴⁾

Both Reinmuth and Pélékidis are led to the conviction that the *ephêbia* was established at Athens just after the Persian Wars. We argue that the text of *Sept.* 10-16, correctly understood, contains a reference to the *ephêbia*. That its

22) The inscription was published by M.Th. Mitsos, 'Αρχ. 'Εφ. 1965 (1967) 131-32. See Reinmuth's discussion of the inscription in *The Ephebic Inscriptions of the Fourth Century B.C.*, *Mnemosyne Supp.* 15 (1971) 1-4.

23) Reinmuth (above, note 22) 123-38. His position was supported by Pélékidis (above, note 10) 79. Recently, P. Vidal-Naquet, "The Black Hunter and the Origin of the Athenian Ephebia," *Proc. Camb. Philol. Soc.* N.S. 14 (1968) 49-64, has stressed that the *ephêbia*, or something like it, was a common inheritance from the period of Greek pre-history.

24) Reinmuth (above, note 22) 137, further identifies the *φρουροὶ νεωρίων πεντακόσιοι* (*Ath. Pol.* 24.3) -- who Aristotle says received subsistence from the state under the policy of Aristides -- with the *φρουροῦντες* at *Ath. Pol.* 24.1. Both, then, refer to the ephebes.

dramatic locale is Thebes need not disturb us. The point of lines 10 and 11 must have been understood by an Athenian audience, and that is sufficient to indicate that this was an institution with which they were familiar. By a circumlocution Aeschylus avoids the jingle of ἔφηβος/ἔξηβος, but still, by using the one explicitly, he suggests the other hidden in the periphrasis. If we now take a look at *Sept.* 665, where Eteocles catalogues the stages of Polyneices' life, the word ἐφηβήσαντα leaps to our attention with enhanced significance. "Justice never looked with favor upon him, neither when he fled the darkness of his mother's womb, nor in childhood, nor when he had become an epebe, nor in full manhood with the muster of beard's hair." We may still hope for the solid confirmation of the long expected inscription, but until then *Sept.* 10-16 and *Sept.* 665 give us good reason to believe that the institution of the *ephêbia* was familiar to the Athenian audience of 467 B.C.²⁵⁾

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[Keep *Septem* 10-16 as transmitted, and read in 13 ὡς τ<ο>ι συμπρεπές (sc. ἐστί), referring to ὑμᾶς δὲ χρῆ νῦν . . . ἀρήγειν. For τοι implying a general sentiment, compare *Prom.* 39; for συμπρεπές, *Suppl.* 458. L. Koenen suggests ὡραν ἔχονθ' ἕκαστον, <ῆ> 'στι συμπρεπές (corrupted to ῆ 'στι because of the preceding ἕκαστον) and interprets this as an allusion to X 71ff. (νέω [as opposed to old Priamos] δέ τε πάντ' [sc. death when defending one's city] ἐπέοικεν . . . πάντα δὲ καλὰ θανόντι) and Tyrt. 10 West, 27ff. νέοισι δὲ πάντ' ἐπέοικεν. *Editor*].

25) We wish to thank our colleagues at the University of Michigan for their suggestions and critical comments on the several drafts of this paper.