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Euexia, Eutaxia, Philoponia: Three Contests of the Greek Gymnasium


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EUEXIA, EUTAXIA, PHILOPONIA: THREE CONTESTS OF THE GREEK GYMNASIUM

The following are the important epigraphical testimonia to these three contests:1

1. Samos (SIG3 1061, 1-6), second century B.C. The events listed are stade, diaulos, euexia, eutaxia, philoponia, lithobolos with victors' names. No ages or prizes are mentioned, but the contestants are presumably younger than the παλαήκοι later in the inscription (below).

2. Samos (SIG3 1061, 8-19). The events listed are katapaltes, akontios, toxos, hoplomachia, thureamachia, dolichos, stade, diaulos, euexia, eutaxia, philoponia, lithobolos with victors' names; these contests are for the παλαήκοι = μελόηβοι (Dittenberger).

3. Sestos (OG 1.339.83ff = I.K. 19,1,83ff.) The gymnasiarch sets up in the last month of the year in honour of Hermes and Herakles ὀπλα as prizes for the long run, eutaxia, philoponia, euexia and other contests.


5. Beroea (SEG 27.261.45ff.), second century B.C. In the last month of the year at the Hermaia, the gymnasiarch is to set up a prize of a ὀπλόν for the euexia, eutaxia, philoponia for those up to the age of thirty.3 The victors are to be crowned on the same day and are allowed to bind on ribbons. This most important inscription is discussed in more detail below.

6. Pergamum (IGR 4.482), second to first century B.C.4 The names of παδε are listed under the headings of ἐπίκτητοι. [φιλά]πονοι, [εύ]κτατοι. These inscriptions on the walls of the temple of Asclepius appear to represent the criteria to progress from παδε to ἐφήβοι.

7. Chalcis (SEG 29.806), c. 120-100 B.C.5 Two victors' names are listed for each event at the festival of Hermes: for ἐφήβοι τητινοί (ephebes of the year) in philoponia, eutaxia, for νεῶτεροι in eutaxia, philoponia. Knoepfler conjectures (probably correctly) that the three missing events were euexia, lampas, dolichos.6

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1 The three terms are not found together in literature, nor seemingly as contests; cf., however, Plat. Alc. 122 c 6-7 εὐταξία and φιλοπονία of the Spartans, Demosth. Erot. 24.7, 26.5 φιλοπονία of exercise.


3 D.Knoepfler, "Contributions à l'épigraphie de Chalcis", BCH 103 (1979) 173 n.28 conjectures that the name of an additional contest has dropped out of the inscription after ὀπλόν.


5 Cf. Knoepfler (above n.3).

6 Knoepfler (above n.3).
8. Heraclea Pontica: one contest of eutaxia and two of euexia are mentioned with some victors’ names. Derenne restores to show eutaxia, euexia, philoponia in different age categories.\(^7\) These are listed with the pancration and other contests.

9. Delos (1. Délos 1958), second century B.C. The contests listed are [eutaxia?], lampas, philoponia, eutaxia, lampas, philoponia. The two victors in philoponia are non-Delian.\(^8\)

10. Tralles (SIG\(^3\) 1060 = I.K. 36,106), third century B.C. Victors are listed from among the ἐνδρεῖ in dromos, euexia, akontisia, toxike.

11. Tralles (SIG\(^3\) 1062 = I.K. 36,107), second to first century B.C. Victors from among the νέοι are listed in dromos, akontisia, euexia, toxike.

12. Gorgippia, third century B.C.\(^9\) The names of fifty-seven victors in the euexia are given, with a list of victors in the dolichos at the Hermaia, and lists of victors in two other unknown events.


16. Athens (IG II\(^2\) 417): the eutaxia is the subject of a liturgy among the different tribes of Attica.\(^10\)

17. Oropus (SIG\(^3\) 298, 45 = IG 7.4254), 329/8: τῷ αἰρεθέντι ἐπὶ τῆν ἑυταξίαν. This may refer to a liturgy as above or merely to the good conduct of the Amphiaraiɔa.\(^11\)

18. Centuripiae: eutaxia is mentioned here in the genitive, but the actual contest may be in the dative θυρεῖ: in this case eutaxia may be followed by e.g. [ἐνεκε(ν)].\(^12\)

19. Eretria (IG 12.9.282): φιλοπονίας ποίδων Παράμονος Δωροθέου. Ziebarth thinks that Paramonos is the teacher, not pupil.\(^13\)

20. Priene (1. Priene 113.30-31): the gymnasiarch sets the prize for philoponia.\(^14\)

21. Xanthos (CIG 4269d.10): an individual is crowned by the νέοι for his philoponia.\(^15\)

It will be noticed that all three events are found together at Samos, Sestos, Erythrae and Beroea, probably also at Chalcis, Heraclea Pontica and Pergamum. They are sometimes

\(^7\) E.Derenne, "ΤΥΜΝΑΣΤΙΚΑ," AC 2 (1933) 81-87.

\(^8\) C.A.Forbes, Greek Physical Education (London-New York 1929) 212 remarks that Delos was a cosmopolitan centre which attracted students from different cities.

\(^9\) B.Latyschev, Inscriptiones antiquae orae septentrionalis Ponti Euxini, IV Graecae et Latinae (Petersburg 1916\(^2\), Gorg. 432.

\(^10\) Cf. E.Szanto, "Zum attischen Budgetrecht," Eranos Vindobonensis (1893) 105, J.Oehler, "Leiturgie", RE 12 (1925) 1871-79 who remarks that the euandria, eutaxia, euoplia and hamilla neon were also financed by liturgies in Athens.

\(^11\) J.Jüthner, "Eutaxia," RE 6 (1909) 1491 thinks that it is a contest.

\(^12\) Cf. G.Libertini, "Iscrizioni centuripine," SicGymn 2 (1949) 91-94. Eutaxia is common in a general sense: cf. IG II\(^2\) 665.20, 30, 1028.46, 1156.31, 40, 58.

\(^13\) Above n.4. So too Knoepfler (above n.3) 174 n.30.

\(^14\) Cf. Ziebarth (above n.4) 143.

\(^15\) Cf. Ziebarth (above n.4) 143.
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linked with non-athletic activities, as with [πολυμ]σθία at Erythrae. What they have in common is that they are "judgement" contests which depend on the interpretation of the judges. Such contests are rare among events at the Crown Games: at Olympia we find only from 396 B.C. onwards competitions for trumpeters and heralds; at Delphi there were various musical contests; in local festivals there were among others the euandria, euoplia and equestrian parades.

The Beroea inscription is particularly informative. For the euexia, seven men from the area are registered and three chosen as judges by lot (ll. 48ff.). The gymnasiarch himself is the judge for the eutaxia and philoponia (ll. 54-55). It is probable that the euexia was judged on one day, the eutaxia and philoponia over a period of time when only the gymnasiarch had the opportunity to observe. At Beroea and apparently also at Sestos this period of time was one year, at Gorgippia to judge from the numerous victors listed perhaps one month. I have suggested elsewhere that the euexia was a kind of physique competition where "symmetry, definition, tone, bearing and especially a general fit and healthy appearance" were the probable criteria. The Beroea inscription states that the judges should select ὁ ἀν αὐτῷ δοκῇ ἄριστα τὸ ἔσσωμα διακεκθέα (l. 50). The euexia, however, appears to be more than a "school" event in the gymnasium, since the contest at Tralles (no. 10) was for ἀνδρεῖα. Indeed the contests at Beroea in the euexia, eutaxia and philoponia are for those up to the age of thirty.

The prize for the eutaxia at Beroea was awarded to ὁ ἀν αὐτῷ δοκῇ εὐταξίτατος εἶναι (l. 55), that is to the best behaved, most disciplined of those in the gymnasium. That discipline was a problem in the gymnasium can be seen from the numerous references in the inscription (ll. 13-25 νεανίκοι associating with παύδει, 41-45 striking the gymnasiarch, 69-71 failure to dedicate prizes, 99-103 stealing).

It is suggested that the eutaxia at Athens which was the subject of a liturgy (no. 16) and perhaps also at Oropus (no. 17) was a different kind of contest than the above, perhaps of a military nature. It is noteworthy, however, that the eutaxia is not found in the victory lists

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16 Cf. δοκῇ of the Beroea inscription below.
17 Cormack (above n.2) rightly suggests that the engraver who wrote εὐταξίαν has made a mistake here.
20 We may note that at the Theseia in Athens ἀνδρεῖα from the Lyceum were victorious in the torch race (IG II² 957.51-52). There is no evidence, apart from the Tralles inscription, for the euexia as a contest outside the gymnasium although there seems no reason why it should not exist as such.
21 Cf. C.Panagopoulos, "Vocabulaire et Mentalité dans Les Moralia de Plutarque," DHA 3 (1977) 213, who believes that the term eutaxia refers to those 'qui savent' 'rester à leur place' et garder une allure 'décente' en toutes circonstances."
22 Cf. J.Jüthner (above n.11), Darenberg Saglio, Dictionnaire des antiquités (Paris 1887) 758 who suggests a collective event like the euandria or euoplia; L.Robert, La Carie II (Paris 1954) 289 notes that εὐταξία is sometimes associated with soldiers.
of the Panathenaia and Theseia, with for example the euandria and euoplia, nor is it known elsewhere as a contest in a festival in Athens. Similarly there is no reference to the eutaxia in the (incomplete) victory list (IG 7.414) for the Amphiaraia at Oropus.

The prize for philoponia at Beroea is given to ὅς ἄν αὐτῷ δοκῇ φιλοπονώτατα ἀλείφθαι ἐν τῷ ἐνεκτῷ ἐνιαυτῷ (ll. 56-57). Here clearly we can see that this is an annual contest. The victor is the one who in the opinion of the gymnasiarch has been the most diligent or industrious in the gymnasium. Knoepfler translates this contest as "ẑèle", but it is uncertain to what extent the idea of enthusiasm or eagerness can be seen in the term; certainly the literary reference in Demosthenes τῆς τῶν δρόμων φιλοπονίας (Erot. 24) suggests laborious practice rather than enthusiasm for running. This event as one might expect is not found outside the gymnasium.