

## PLUTARCH, AELIUS ARISTIDES AND THE INSCRIPTION FROM TROIZEN

The authenticity of the famous inscription from Troizen (EM 13330) has already been the subject of several articles. In my article in the ZPE 137 I have tried both to summarize the discussion thus far and to reach a reasonable position concerning the inscription's authenticity.<sup>1</sup> The controversy caused by this inscription is not hard to understand, considering its sensational contents, which imply that in 480 B. C., during the Persian invasion of Greece, Athens was not deserted in panic after the battle at Artemisium, as told by Herodotus and other ancient writers, but before, and that the evacuation of the city was a carefully planned manoeuvre. That the inscription from Troizen is not a genuine early fifth century decree of Themistocles stood clear already to the finder and the first publisher of the inscription, Michael Jameson,<sup>2</sup> but the opinion that the inscription was either a 'modernized' version of a genuine decree or that it at least contained some historical facts that were traceable back to the Persian wars has lived on among several scholars, without them having produced any valid arguments. The arguments against its genuineness are, to my mind, solid. At once I would like to point out to the reader of this paper that this is not going to be an article aiming to debate on this issue, which in my view ought to be considered as settled by now (at least until some new valid evidence in favour of its genuineness shows up), but an article in which I will argue that later writers, like Plutarch and Aelius Aristides – we have text passages in some of their works that are amazingly similar to parts of the inscription from Troizen –, did not necessarily know the inscription from Troizen itself or its text. Rather they seem to have had access to the same original textual source as the author of the text of the inscription. That Plutarch was familiar with the text of the inscription is an opinion which,

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1) M. Johansson, *The Inscription from Troizen: a Decree of Themistocles?*, ZPE 137 (2001) 69–92.

2) M. Jameson, *A Decree of Themistokles from Troizen*, *Hesperia* 29 (1960) 198–223.

to my surprise, can be found sometimes. In J. L. Marr's<sup>3</sup> commentary on Plutarch's biography *Themistocles* for example, the author writes the following on the issue: "Plutarch had almost certainly seen a copy of this decree, a text which goes back at least to the fourth century (compare Dem. 19.303), but he seems here to be quoting from memory". Apart from discussing the interrelations between Plutarch, Aristides and the inscription from Troizen, it is my aim to try to reconstruct as much as possible of a potential common source.<sup>4</sup> I will also shortly discuss how the story of the early evacuation of Athens could have been invented in the first place. Before advancing any further, I see it fit to recapitulate some of the arguments against the decree's genuineness, since some of them are of substantial importance for my argumentation also in this article. The most obvious is that epigraphic investigations show that the inscription was cut no earlier than in the third century B. C. (c. 275),<sup>5</sup> which makes this century the absolute earliest period for which the notion of an early evacuation of Athens can be attested. The gods mentioned in the inscription have epithets that we ought not to find in an Athenian inscription, as for example Zeus παγκρατής (lines 38–39) and Athena μεδέουσα (lines 4–5),<sup>6</sup> but which are most likely literary, found in Attic theatrical writers. These epithets contribute to the decree's literary touch and so does its low frequency of hiatus. These literary features serve as arguments in favour of the inscription's prototype being a literary text, not an authentic early fifth century inscription.<sup>7</sup>

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3) J. L. Marr, *Plutarch. Life of Themistocles*, Warminster 1998, 93. Marr's opinion that Plutarch is quoting from memory stems from F. Frost, *Plutarch's Themistocles. A Historical Commentary*, Princeton N. J. 1980, 117–118.

4) No speculations about potential intermediary texts will be made, simply because there are none preserved. The great similarities between the texts could perhaps speak against the existence of too many of those.

5) S. Dow, *The Purported Decree of Themistokles: Stele and Inscription*, *AJA* 66 (1962) 353–368.

6) The epithet μεδέουσα is not an "archaic, ritual epithet for Athena", as Marr (above n. 3) 93 writes, but in Athens it worked as a literary and poetical epithet for the goddess. We do not know of any Athenian cult of Athena with this epithet.

7) All references to the inscription from Troizen are to Jameson's revised version of the text: M. Jameson, *A Revised Text of the Decree of Themistokles from Troizen*, *Hesperia* 31 (1962) 310–315.

Let me begin by commenting on Marr's statement above that the text of the inscription from Troizen goes back to the fourth century B. C. or even earlier. That Demosthenes<sup>8</sup> mentions a decree of Themistocles cannot be used as an argument in favour of our decree's existence in the fourth century B. C.<sup>9</sup> No one doubts that Themistocles proposed some kind of a decree in 480 B. C., but there is no evidence whatsoever for the decree mentioned by Demosthenes in the 340s B. C. being either a genuine decree of Themistocles or the text from the inscription from Troizen. The earliest evidence we have for the existence of the text of the inscription from Troizen is, as stated above, the inscription itself, and everything we say concerning its text being older than the inscription will be only speculations.

So, somewhere during the first decades of the third century B. C., that is if the inscription really could be dated to this period, a text existed, which either was fully copied on the stele at Troizen or served as source for the author of the text on it. The latter seems more probable. And since we have parts of three later literary texts which seem to have been influenced by the same text as the author of the inscription, namely Plutarch's Themistocles 10.4<sup>10</sup> and

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8) Demosthenes 19.303 τίς ὁ τοὺς μακροὺς καὶ καλοὺς λόγους ἐκείνους δημογορῶν, καὶ τὸ Μιλτιάδου καὶ τὸ Θεμιστοκλέους ψήφισμα' ἀναγιγνώσκων καὶ τὸν ἐν τῷ τῆς Ἀγλαύρου τῶν ἐφήβων ὄρκον; οὐχ οὗτος;

9) See e. g., J. Buckler, Philip II and the Sacred War, Leiden 1989, 116 n. 7.

10) Plu. Them. 10.4–5 κρατήσας δὲ τῆ γνώμῃ ψήφισμα γράφει, τὴν μὲν πόλιν παρακαταθέσθαι τῇ Ἀθηνᾷ τῇ Ἀθηνῶν μεδεούσῃ, τοὺς δ' ἐν ἡλικία πάντας ἐμβαίνειν εἰς τὰς τριήρεις, παῖδας δὲ καὶ γυναῖκας καὶ ἀνδράποδα σφάζειν ἕκαστον ὡς ἂν δύνηται. κυρωθέντος δὲ τοῦ ψηφίσματος οἱ πλεῖστοι τῶν Ἀθηναίων ὑπεξέθεντο γενεὰς καὶ γυναῖκας εἰς Τροιζήνα, φιλοτίμως ἅπαν τῶν Τροιζηνίων ὑποδεχομένων· καὶ γὰρ τρέφειν ἐψηφίσαντο δημοσίᾳ, δύο ὀβολοὺς ἕκαστῳ διδόντες, καὶ τῆς ὀπώρας λαμβάνειν ἐξεῖναι τοὺς παῖδας πανταχόθεν, ἔτι δ' ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν διδασκάλοις τελεῖν μισθοὺς. τὸ δὲ ψήφισμα Νικαγόρας ἔγραψεν. “At last his opinion prevailed, and so he introduced a bill providing that the city be entrusted for safe keeping to Athena, the patroness of Athens, but that all the men of military age embark on the triremes, after finding for their children, wives and servants such safety as each best could. Upon the passage of this bill, most of the Athenians bestowed their children and wives in Troezen, where the Troezenians very eagerly welcomed them. They actually voted to support them at the public cost, allowing two obols a day to each family, and to permit the boys to pluck of the vintage fruit everywhere, and besides to hire teachers for them. The bill was introduced by a man whose name was Nicagoras” (Translation from Plutarch's Lives. Themistocles and Camillus; Aristides and Cato Major; Cimon and Lucullus. Vol. 2. Loeb. Translated by B. Perin, Cambridge and London 1914 [repr. 1997], 29–31).

Aelius Aristides' Oration 1.154 (the *Panathenaic Oration*)<sup>11</sup> and Oration 3.247 (*To Plato: in Defence of Oratory*),<sup>12</sup> I will try to reconstruct some of the things this text might have said. By comparing these three text passages with the text of the inscription from Troizen we may come a little bit closer to what information the original textual source actually contained. It may, to begin with, be stressed that, concerning the evacuation of Athens, Plutarch and Aristides<sup>13</sup> do not agree with the text of the inscription, which implies that Athens was evacuated before the battle of Artemisium.<sup>14</sup> But Plutarch's mentioning of Themistocles' trying to make the citizens of Athens embark on their ships and meet the Persians at sea already before Tempe (Them. 7.1–2<sup>15</sup>) suggests that the common

11) Aristid. Or. 1.154 συνειδότες ἔξωθεν οὖσαν τῇ πόλει τὴν φυλακὴν ψήφισμα ποιοῦνται. τὴν μὲν πόλιν ἐπιτρέψαι τῇ πολιούχῳ θεῶ, παῖδας δὲ καὶ γυναῖκας εἰς Τροϊζήνα παρακαταθέσθαι, αὐτοὶ δὲ γυμνωθέντες τῶν περιττῶν προβαλέσθαι τὴν θάλατταν. “[The people of Athens...] who had recognized that the city's protection lay without, passed a decree, to entrust the city to the Goddess Cityholder, and to deposit their wives and children at Troezen, and themselves stripped of encumbrance, to use the sea as their shield” (Translation from P. Aelius Aristides. *The Complete Works*. Vol. 1. Translated by C. A. Behr, Leiden 1986, 36).

12) Aristid. Or. 3.247 (Θεμιστοκλής) γράφει τὸ ψήφισμα τοῦτο, τὴν μὲν πόλιν παρακαταθέσθαι Ἀθηνᾶ Ἀθηνῶν μεδούσῃ· παῖδας δὲ καὶ γυναῖκας εἰς Τροϊζήνα ὑπεκθέσθαι, τοὺς δὲ πρεσβύτας εἰς Σαλαμίνα, τοὺς δ' ἄλλους ἐμβάντας εἰς τὰς τριήρεις ὑπὲρ τῆς ἐλευθερίας ἀγωνίζεσθαι. “[Themistocles] wrote this famous decree: that they entrust the city to Athena, ruler of Athens, remove their children and women to safety at Troezen, and the old men at Salamis, and that the others embark on the triremes and fight for freedom” (Translation from P. Aelius Aristides. *The Complete Works*. Vol. 1. Translated by C. A. Behr, Leiden 1986, 197).

13) Aristid. Or. 1.154 συμβάντος γὰρ τοῦ περὶ τὰς Πύλας πάθους; Aristid. Or. 3.246 ἀναχωρησάντων γὰρ ἅπ' Ἀρτεμισίου τῶν Ἑλλήνων.

14) The only other ancient source placing the evacuation before Artemisium is Cornelius Nepos (Them. 2.6–3.1), but his version of the evacuation is hardly reliable (cf. M. Johansson, *Thucydides on the Evacuation of Athens in 480 B.C.*, *MH* 60 [2003] 1–5, n. 3).

15) Plu. Them. 7.1–2 παραλαβὼν δὲ τὴν ἀρχὴν εὐθὺς μὲν ἐπεχειρεῖ τοὺς πολίτας ἐμβιβάζειν εἰς τὰς τριήρεις, καὶ τὴν πόλιν ἔπειθεν ἐκλιπόντας ὡς προσωπάτω τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀπαντᾶν τῷ βαρβάρῳ κατὰ θάλατταν. ἐνισταμένων δὲ πολλῶν ἐξήγαγε πολλὴν στρατιὰν εἰς τὰ Τέμπε μετὰ Λακεδαιμονίων, ὡς αὐτόθι προκινδυνεύσόντων τῆς Θεσσαλίας, οὕτω τότε μηδίξειν δοκούσης. “On assuming the command, he straightaway went to work to embark the citizens on their triremes, and tried to persuade them to leave their city behind them and go as far as possible away from Hellas to meet the Barbarians by sea. But many opposed this plan, and so he led forth a large army to the vale of Tempe, along with the Lacedaemonians, in order to make a stand there in defence of Thessaly, which was not yet at that time supposed to be medising” (Translation from Plutarch's *Lives*. Themistocles and Camillus;

source also mentioned this, perhaps with a decision to sail to Artemisium following immediately upon Themistocles' first suggestion and immediately after the Tempe expedition as we read it in Plutarch's text (Them. 7.2<sup>16</sup>). Because of this possible early suggestion by Themistocles, the author of the text of the inscription from Troizen perhaps confused the actions that led up to the evacuation after Artemisium.

There are striking similarities between Plutarch, Aristides and the fragmentary inscription from Troizen:

The inscription lines 4–5: τῆ[μ] μὲν πόλιν παρακατα[αθέ]σθαι τῆ Ἰθηνᾶ τῆ Ἰθηνῶμ [μεδεο]ύ[ση]

Plutarch, Them. 10.4: τὴν μὲν πόλιν παρακαταθέσθαι τῆ Ἰθηνᾶ τῆ Ἰθηνῶν μεδεούση

Aristides, Or. 3.247: τὴν μὲν πόλιν παρακαταθέσθαι Ἰθηνᾶ Ἰθηνῶν μεδεούση

(Aristides, Or. 1.154: τὴν μὲν πόλιν ἐπιτρέψαι τῆ πολιούχῳ θεῷ)

In the text of the inscription, the phrase continues with “all other gods” κ[αὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις θεοῖς]. One wonders why Plutarch and Aristides did not quote the continuation if they had seen the decree. This perhaps could serve as an argument against Plutarch's and Aristides' being familiar with the text of the stele. Perhaps, though, Aristides' statement, in his praise of the decree,<sup>17</sup> when

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Aristides and Cato Major; Cimon and Lucullus. Vol. 2. Loeb. Translated by B. Perin, Cambridge and London 1914 [repr. 1997], 19).

16) Plu. Them. 7.2 μετὰ νεῶν ἐπ' Ἰρτεμίσιον τὰ στενὰ φυλάξων.

17) Aristides, Or. 3.249–50 (Behr's translation [above n.11] 198): “This decree is the fairest, most glorious, most perfect evidence of all under the sun in regard to virtue, containing successive proofs of all the best qualities, confidence in the gods, pride in self, the willingness to suffer anything before trying something shameful, and also in addition, of the preservation of one's original resolve, and of not bearing a grudge against those in similar circumstances, even if they seemed to have preferred to act like those in dissimilar circumstances. (250) It seems to me that no flatterer spoke this decree, with lowered gaze, and having yielded before his audience, but some god spoke it by means of Themistocles' voice. Indeed, does Mithaecus, who composed the Sicilian cookbook, or the petty merchant Sarambus, for now I have remembered his name, seem to you to have composed such things?

saying that the decree shows the Athenians' confidence in their gods (Aristid. Or. 3.249 τοῦ θαρρεῖν τοῖς θεοῖς), could serve as an argument in favour of other gods being mentioned in his source. That the sentence τὴν μὲν πόλιν παρακαταθέσθαι τῇ Ἀθηνᾷ τῇ Ἀθηνῶν μεδεοῦση was found in the original document I believe we can say for certain.

The inscription lines 6–9: Ἀθηναίου[ς δὲ αὐτ[οὺς καὶ τοὺς ξένο]υς τοὺς οἰκοῦντας Ἀθήνησι [τὰ τέκ]ν[α καὶ τὰς γυναῖκ]ας εἰς Τροιζῆνα καταθέσθαι [προστάτου ὄντος Πιθέω]ς τοῦ ἀρχηγέτου τῆς χώρας

Plutarch, Them. 10.4–5: παῖδας δὲ καὶ γυναῖκας καὶ ἀνδράποδα σφῆξιν ἕκαστον ὡς ἂν δύνηται. κυρωθέντος δὲ τοῦ ψηφίσματος οἱ πλείστοι τῶν Ἀθηναίων ὑπεξέθεντο γενεὰς καὶ γυναῖκας εἰς Τροιζῆνα, φιλοτίμως πάνυ τῶν Τροιζηνίων ὑποδεχομένων

Aristides, Or. 3.247: παῖδας δὲ καὶ γυναῖκας εἰς Τροιζῆνα ὑπεκθέσθαι

Aristides, Or. 1.154: παῖδας δὲ καὶ γυναῖκας εἰς Τροιζῆνα παρακαταθέσθαι

Here we read in Plutarch that each man should provide the best he could for the safety of his children, wives and slaves. This does not fit very well with the seemingly well-ordered evacuation plans in the decree from Troizen. Marr<sup>18</sup> states that “this is probably because he has been influenced by Herodotus' narrative at 8.41, where a proclamation is made to the effect that everyone should get his children and members of his household to safety as best he could”. It may very well be so, but the rest of Plutarch's text gives the impression that he has used the same source as the author of the inscription from Troizen, a source that probably said that children and wives were to be transported to Troizen. Herodotus writes that most Athenians transported their children and slaves to

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Compare with this decree, if you wish, the compositions and the laws of the sophists, for I do not need to mention names. I do not think that it would appear less honourable than many of them.”

18) Marr (above n. 3) 93. Cf. Frost (above n. 3) 118: “no decree passed by the people could have contained such a phrase.”

Troizen, but some to Salamis and Aegina (Hdt. 8.41 τέκνα τε καὶ τοὺς οἰκέτας ... οἱ μὲν πλεῖστοι ἐς Τροιζήνα ἀπέστειλαν, οἱ δὲ ἐς Αἴγινα, οἱ δὲ ἐς Σαλαμῖνα).

The following phrases of our texts, Plutarch's *γενεὰς καὶ γυναῖκας εἰς Τροιζήνα*, Aristides' *παῖδας δὲ καὶ γυναῖκας εἰς Τροιζήνα* and the inscription's *[τὰ τέκν]ν[α καὶ τὰς γυναῖκ]ας εἰς Τροιζήνα*, are derived from a common source, but it is hard to guess which word for 'children' it had.<sup>19</sup> Perhaps Plutarch uses *γενεὰς* variationis gratia here because of his use of *παῖδας* a couple of words earlier. As both Plutarch and Aristides (Or. 3.247) use the verb *ὑπεκτίθεμαι* this word is perhaps what they read in their original source (in the decree we read *κατατίθεμαι*).<sup>20</sup> The similarity between our texts once again shows that probably the same source was used.

The inscription lines 10–12: *τ[οὺς δὲ πρεσβύτας καὶ τὰ] κτήματα εἰς Σαλαμῖνα καταθέ[σ]θ[αι]· τοὺς δὲ ταμίας καὶ τ[ὴν] ἱερέας ἐν τῇ ἀκροπόλε[ι] μένειν φυλάττοντας τὰ τῶ]ν θεῶν*

Plutarch, Them. 10.9: *καίτοι πολλὸν μὲν οἱ διὰ γῆρας ὑπολειπόμενοι τῶν πολιτῶν ἔλεον εἶχον· ἦν δὲ τις καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν ἡμέρων καὶ συντρόφων ζῶων ἐπικλώσα γλυκυθυμία, μετ' ὠρυγῆς καὶ πόθου συμπαραθεόντων ἐμβαίνουσι τοῖς ἐαντῶν τροφεῶσιν*

Aristides, Or. 3.247: *τοὺς δὲ πρεσβύτας εἰς Σαλαμῖνα*

Why Plutarch writes that the old remained in Athens when the city was deserted is not an easy question to answer. Perhaps the story of the old being left behind just contributed to making his story the more moving.<sup>21</sup> But the mentioning of the tame animals that were left behind in Plutarch's text is found also in Aristides (Or. 3.251 *τῶν κυνῶν φασι τῶν χειροῆθων ὠρουμένων πρὸς τὴν ἀπόλειψιν καὶ τῶν ἄλλων θρεμμάτων ἐφεπομένων ἄχρι τῆς θαλάττης πολλὴν τὴν*

19) Diodorus, when writing that the Athenians transported their children, wives and useful articles to Salamis (D. S. 11.13.4 *τέκνα καὶ γυναῖκας καὶ τῶν ἄλλων χρησίμων ... εἰς Σαλαμῖνα*) uses *τέκνα*, as does Herodotus (8.41) as we have seen.

20) Cf. Lysias 2.33 *ὑπεκθέμενοι δὲ παῖδας καὶ γυναῖκας καὶ μητέρας εἰς Σαλαμῖνα*.

21) Herodotus (8.51) says that the treasurers and the needy men remained.

σύγχυσιν εἶναι), wherefore they might have used the same lost source. That source possibly was that which also contained a Themistocles decree. In this decree, an urge to transport the old to Salamis, as we read it in the inscription and in Aristides, probably was found.

The inscription lines 12–16: τοὺς δὲ ἄλλους Ἀθη[ναίους ἅπαντας καὶ τοὺς ξέ]νους τοὺς ἡβῶντας εἰσβαίνειν εἰς τὰς ἐτοιμα-σθ[ε]ί[σ]α[ς] διακοσίας ναῦς καὶ ἀμύνεσ[θαι] τ[ὸ] μὲν βάρβαρον ὑπὲρ τῆς ἐλευθερίας τῆς τε ἑαυτῶν [καὶ τῶν ἄλλων Ἑλλήνων] ...

Plutarch, Them. 10.4: τοὺς δ' ἐν ἡλικίᾳ πάντας ἐμβαίνειν εἰς τὰς τριήρεις

Aristides, Or. 3.247: τοὺς δ' ἄλλους ἐμβάντας εἰς τὰς τριήρεις ὑπὲρ τῆς ἐλευθερίας ἀγωνίζεσθαι

The orders that the Athenians were to embark on their ships (in all our three texts above) and fight for freedom (Aristides and the inscription) probably stem from a common source. And since we read about an age limit for those who were to embark on those ships in the decree and in Plutarch, this probably is what their common source said.

The inscription line 45–46: τοὺς μὲν μεθεστηκότας τὰ [δέκα] ἔτη ἀπιέναι εἰς Σαλαμίνα

Plutarch, Them. 11.1: γράφει ψήφισμα, τοῖς ἐπὶ χρόνῳ μεθεστῶσιν ἐξεῖναι κατελθοῦσι πράττειν καὶ λέγειν τὰ βέλτιστα ...

Here we read in the inscription from Troizen that those who had been banished for a period of ten years should go to Salamis. We must remember that the decree read in the inscription is presented as passed before the battle of Artemisium, while in Plutarch's text the banished are not ordered to return until after the battle, when the Greeks were already assembled at Salamis.<sup>22</sup>

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22) Also Herodotus (8.79), as Plutarch, thinks of a last minute recall of the ostracized when the Greeks were already at Salamis.

Marr<sup>23</sup> writes that Plutarch's "τοῖς ... μεθεστῶσιν was probably suggested by the text of the Themistocles Decree". μεθίστημι is used in other texts in the sense of 'banish',<sup>24</sup> but, of course, there is a chance that this word was used by the common source of Plutarch and the author of the inscription from Troizen.<sup>25</sup> What is probable, though, is that this source mentioned the recall of the ostracized. But Plutarch makes it clear that he knew that this recall belonged to another decree, something that the author of the text of the inscription from Troizen must have misunderstood. Nevertheless, the account of the recall of the ostracized in Plutarch's *Themistocles* could very well have been influenced by the same source as the author of the text of the inscription from Troizen.<sup>26</sup>

The text of the inscription from Troizen stems from a literary source.<sup>27</sup> Perhaps the source for the decree was found in one of the many writers of universal history in the Hellenistic period.<sup>28</sup> It probably was not found in any of the *Atthides*, since the epithet for Athena, μεδέουσα, would not have been used by someone more deeply familiar with Attic history.<sup>29</sup> The text of the inscription from Troizen was not to be found in this original source, since in

23) Marr (above n. 3) 97–98.

24) On μεθίστημι, see J. Kennelly, *Archaisms in the Troizen Decree*, CQ N.S. 40 (1990) 539–541.

25) Cf. e.g. Plutarch, *Arist.* 8.1 λύσαντες τὸν νόμον ἐψηφίσαντο τοῖς μεθεστῶσι καθοδόν. The fact that Plutarch refers to ostracism as μετάστασιν ἐτῶν δέκα in *Arist.* 7.2 and uses μεταστήσαι for 'ostracize' in *Arist.* 7.5 (ὄστρακον λαβὼν ἕκαστος καὶ γράψας ὃν ἐβούλετο μεταστήσαι τῶν πολιτῶν) makes it plausible that Plutarch could have used τοῖς ... μεθεστῶσιν without referring to a possible Themistocles decree.

26) Plutarch puts the recall earlier in the *Aristides* (8.1 Ἐέρξου διὰ Θετταλίας καὶ Βοιωτίας ἐλαύνοντος).

27) Apart from the things stated concerning the decree's literary touch in the beginning of this article, cf. also W. K. Pritchett (*Herodotus and the Themistocles Decree*, *AJA* 66 [1962] 45) who claims that the symmetric arrangements of μέν and δέ in lines 4, 41 and 45, as well as the use of the particles δὲ καὶ in lines 18, 23, 26, 28, and 44 do not belong to a document of 480. Chr. Habicht (*Falsche Urkunden zur Geschichte Athens im Zeitalter der Perserkriege*, *Hermes* 89 [1961] 7) argues that the lines of the decree in which Themistocles is urging the Athenians to fight for their liberty together with the other Greeks give a literary impression.

28) Cf. Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*De Compositione Verborum* 4.30), who speaks of the endless number (μυρίους) of historians that no one could "bear to read to the final flourish of the pen".

29) Cf. n. 6 above.

that case Plutarch could hardly have used it without commenting on the early evacuation of Athens in it. More likely another document, a decree<sup>30</sup> quoted by the Hellenistic historians, is the source for the author of the text of the inscription from Troizen as well as for Plutarch and Aristides.

Plutarch was probably not used by Aristides, according to C. A. Behr:<sup>31</sup> “Despite many close parallels between Plutarch and Aristides, because of some striking differences, I very much doubt that Aristides used Plutarch. I suspect that they both employed a common source, probably Ephorus.” Ephorus seems to have become a veritable fountainhead for almost everything concerning the Persian wars that cannot be traced back to Herodotus.<sup>32</sup> But

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30) Therefore Plutarch’s *κυρωθέντος δὲ τοῦ ψηφίσματος* and Aristides’ *ψήφισμα ποιούνταιαι* and *(Θεμιστοκλήης) γράφει τὸ ψήφισμα τοῦτο*.

31) C. A. Behr, P. Aelius Aristides. *The Complete Works*. Vol 1. *Orations 1–16*, Leiden 1986, 528–529.

32) So e. g. in C. Hignett, *Xerxes’ Invasion of Greece*, Oxford 1963, 463. As I perhaps need not say again, the evacuation of Athens in 480 B. C. has been the cause for much controversy, ever since Jameson found the inscription from Troizen in 1959 and a year later published the first edition. The account of the evacuation of Athens, given by Herodotus (8.41) and supported by several other, though later, ancient sources, was being put to the test. Was Athens desperately evacuated when the Greeks could no longer keep up their defence at Thermopylae and Artemisium, as reported by Herodotus, or was the city evacuated in good time, before the Persians had even reached Thermopylae, as implied by the inscription from Troizen? And was not this early evacuation supported also by Cornelius Nepos, in his biography *Themistocles* (2.7–8)? How do we explain this coincident? It is here that Ephorus has played a role. For Hignett, who is a critic of the decree’s genuineness, but who obviously feels an urge to explain why Nepos speaks of an early evacuation, Ephorus becomes the solution. Hignett simply states that Nepos perhaps found his version in Ephorus’ account of the evacuation, without coming up with any proof at all for the account of an early evacuation of Athens in a text of Ephorus. This is a typical example of Ephorus the fountainhead. And P. Green, in his *The Greco-Persian Wars* (Berkeley / Los Angeles 1996, 134–135), quotes Ephorus out of the work of Diodorus in the most peculiar way. In a part of his work dealing with Thermopylae, Green writes that “Ephorus makes a revealing comment”, thereafter quotes a passage that the reader first assumes to be the words of Ephorus, and ends it with a reference to Diodorus 11.6.3–4. We, of course, have no way of knowing that every word in Diodorus’ history is the words of Ephorus, even though it is generally held that Ephorus is Diodorus’ main source for the classical period. When used in this way, Ephorus is used to put some weight behind the lightweight Diodorus. No one could compare Diodorus to Herodotus in terms of importance as a historian. But Ephorus, whom we cannot judge ourselves, gives weight to Diodorus’ account. Ephorus was much appreciated during antiquity, he was fairly acquainted with naval warfare, at least according to Polybius (12.25), who also states

concerning the evacuation of Athens in 480 B. C. Ephorus cannot be proven to have been the source for Plutarch or Aristides. But it is probably right that Aristides and Plutarch used the same source, and Aristides' praise of a Themistocles decree<sup>33</sup> suggests that he had read one but that he did not get access to it through Plutarch. Let us reconstruct some of the contents of this lost original source from the words of Plutarch, Aristides and the text of the inscription from Troizen.

It is clear from both Plutarch and Aristides that in their common source Athens was not deserted before Artemisium. It is on the other hand probable that it mentioned something about Themistocles' trying to make the Athenians embark on their ships and meet the Persians at sea already before Tempe, since Plutarch mentions it, and this could perhaps explain the misunderstanding in the text of the inscription concerning the date of the decree for the manning of the fleet as well as for the date of the evacuation. It is possible that this source also contained a story about the animals that were left behind when Athens was deserted, as Plutarch and Aristides report this, while Herodotus does not. The original source most likely must also have contained some information about the recall of the ostracized. It is also highly probable that this text contained a passage that claimed to be Themistocles' genuine decree of 480 B. C., since our preserved texts speak in favour of this. We can be quite sure that this decree must have contained a phrase in which Athens was to be entrusted to Athena μεδέουσα,

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that he was unacquainted with battles on land, and he was active in a time closer to the actual events. But most important for statements such as the one by Green above, is that we have no access to his work, a fact that makes him useful. Without Ephorus, Diodorus' account probably would be regarded only half as important. Ephorus has also, we learn from A. R. Burn's *Persia and the Greeks: the Defence of the West*, c. 546–478 B. C. (Stanford CA 1962 [rev. 1984 with a postscript by D. M. Lewis], 374) been suggested as the one having discovered the famous documents that showed up in the fourth century, claiming to belong to the Persian wars, namely the oath of Plataeae and the treaty with the king at the peace of Callias. All this because of Diodorus' quoting of the above-mentioned oath and retelling of the treaty. Again, how can we know that Diodorus builds on Ephorus? In the introduction to his work, Burn (*ibid.* 10) writes that Diodorus' "main and perhaps sole source on Greece proper in the fifth century was the popular, readable and 'romantic' work of the fourth-century Ephorus" and that Ephorus perhaps derived details on the battle of Salamis "from one of the dry and factual pre-Herodoteans". These kinds of speculations concerning Ephorus are, I think, far too common.

33) Quoted in n. 17 above.

and that children and wives were to be transported to Troizen, while the old were to be transported to Salamis. It probably urged all the Athenians of a certain age to embark on their ships and fight for freedom. It is hard to see that there could have been a phrase in the decree quoted in this text urging some people to remain on the Acropolis, even if a story of some people being left behind in the city while the rest of Attica was deserted probably was found in the surrounding text.

The common source for Plutarch, Aristides and the text of the inscription from Troizen cannot have been in existence much earlier than c. 300 B. C., since none of the classical writers seems to have known its distinctive features. The figure below shows how our preserved texts were influenced by a common source. But since the date of the inscription cannot be epigraphically exactly determined, we perhaps ought to think of the inscription as being closer in time to the age of Plutarch and Aristides than has previously been argued.

