

THE MANNING OF THE FLEET IN THE DECREE OF THEMISTOKLES

N. G. L. HAMMOND

IN *JHS* 102 (1982) 75–93 I dated the manning of the fleet to 481 B.C. and discussed the manning briefly. In the same year N. Robertson discussed the manning *inter alia* and came to different conclusions.¹ In *JHS* 104 (1984) 48–59 J. S. Morrison found my argument for the dating—my chief concern then—“convincing” (56), but he disagreed over the manning. This article is concerned only with the manning, and I cite the relevant part of the decree, as in my article page 88.²

- [ν] κοινω[ν]ήσειν τοῦ κινδύνου· καταστῆσαι δὲ καὶ τριη-
[ρ]ά[ρχους] διακοσίους ἕνα ἐπὶ τὴν ναῦν ἐκάστην τοὺς [σ]-
20 τρατη[γ]οῦς ἀρχομένους τ]ῇ αὐρίον ἡμέραι ἐκ τῶν κ[εκ]-
τημέν[ω]ν γ[γ]ήν τ[ε] κ[αὶ] οὐκίαν Ἀθ[η]νησι καὶ οἷς ἄμ παῖδ[ες]
ὥσι γνή[σιοι] μὴ πρεσβυτέρο]υς πεντήκοντα ἑτῶν κα[ὶ] ἐ-
πικλ[η]ρώσαι αὐτ]οῖς [τ]ὰς ναῦς· *υ*νκαταλέξαι δὲ καὶ ἐπ[ι]-
βάτας [δ]έκα [ἐφ’ ἐκάστη]ν ναῦν ἐκ τῶν ὑπὲρ εἵκοσιν ἔτη [γ]-
25 εγονότ[ω]ν μέχρι τριά]κοντα ἑτῶν καὶ τοξότας τέτταρ-
ας· δια[κ]ληρώσαι δὲ κ[αὶ] τὰς ὑπηρεσίας ἐπὶ τὰς ναῦς ὅτ-
αμπερ κ[αὶ] τοὺς τριηάρ]χους ἐπικληρώσιν· ἀναγράψα-
ι δὲ κα[ὶ] τοὺς . . . ⁶ . . . κατὰ] ναῦν τοὺς στρατηγούς εἰς λ-
ευκώ[ματα, τοὺς μὲν Ἀ]θηναίους ἐκ τῶν ληξιαρχικῶν γρ-
30 αμματέε[ων, τοὺς] δὲ ξ[έν]ους ἐκ τῶν ἀπογεγραμμένων πα-
[ρ]ά τῷ [πολε]μ[άρχ]ω[ι]· ἀναγράφειν δὲ νέμοντας κατὰ τάξ-
εις [εἰς] διακοσίας ἅ[ν]α ἑκατὸν ἀριθμὸν καὶ ἐπιγράψα-
ι τῇ [. . . ⁴ . . .] ἐκάστη τῆς τριήρους τοῦνομα καὶ τοῦ τρι-
ηράρχου καὶ τῆς ὑπηρε[σί]ας ὅπως ἂν εἰδῶσιν εἰς ὅποι-
35 αν τριήρη ἐ[μ]βήσεται ἡ [τ]άξις ἐ[κ]άστη· ἐπειδὰν δὲ νεμη-
θῶσιν ἅπα[σ]αι αἱ τάξεις καὶ ἐπικληρωθῶσι ταῖς τριή-
ρεσι, πληροῦν ἅ[π]άσας τὰς διακοσίας ναῦς τῇμ βουλῇν
καὶ τ[ο]ῦστρατηγού[ς] θύ[σαντας] ἀρεστήριον τῷ Διὶ τῷ
Παγκρατεῖ καὶ τῇ Ἀθηνᾷ καὶ τῇ Νίκῃ καὶ τῷ Ποσει-
40 δῶν τῷ Ἀσφα[λ]είῳ· ^υν ἐπειδὰν δὲ πεπληρωμένοι ὦσιν

J. S. Morrison has been most generous and helpful in commenting on an early draft of this article.

¹N. Robertson, “The Decree of Themistocles in its Contemporary Setting,” *Phoenix* 36 (1982) 1–44. We were unaware of each other’s work.

²As I supported that article with references to earlier writings on the decree, I have confined references here to the most recent works.

The text of lines 31–32 is that of Meiggs and Lewis, *GHI* 23, and it rests on the verdict of B. D. Meritt, that “this particular reading of the words [ε]ἰς διακοσί[α]ς is sure” and “about the διακοσίας there can be no doubt” (*Hesperia* 31 [1962] 413). Robertson criticised this text for omitting and misplacing square brackets (his n. 101); but he went on to say that “the reading now advocated by both Jameson and Meritt . . . appears to be generally accepted” and “I see no credible means of avoiding the restoration” (i.e., that of Meritt). This, then, is the text which commentators have adopted for discussion.

The chief crux is the meaning of ἀναγράφειν δὲ νέμοντας κατὰ τάξεις εἰς διακοσίας ἀνὰ ἑκατὸν ἀριθμόν in lines 31–32. All three of us agree in supplying as the subject “the generals” and as the object “the seamen” (we all restore τοὺς ναύτας in line 28), and I give Robertson’s translation (from his page 34) as the closest to the literal word-order: “In writing them up they shall distribute them in companies up to two hundred, at the rate of a hundred apiece.”

We all supply τάξεις after διακοσίας. But if anyone suggests supplying ναῦς, we can rule it out by noting that all references to “the (prepared?) two hundred ships” in the decree have the definite article—at lines 23, 26, 37, and 41. For Robertson’s “up to two hundred” we may cite as parallels Thuc. 1.100.1 and 8.29.1. His “at the rate of a hundred apiece” conveys the standard sense of ἀνὰ with a verb of distribution, here νέμοντας (see *LSJ*⁹ s.v. ἀνὰ C III, citing Ar. *Ranae* 554 κρέα . . . εἴκοσιν ἂν’ ἡμωβολιαῖα, “twenty meat-dishes at £10-steaks apiece”). The translation omits ἀριθμόν. For ἀριθμόν here, without an article and attached to a number, we may compare Hdt. 1.14.1 κρητῆρές οἱ ἀριθμόν ἕξ χρύσει. When a number is given, it is sometimes qualified by μάλιστα *vel sim.*, which means that the number is approximate; as, for instance, in Xen. *An.* 5.4.12, where the subject is the Mossynoeci, ἕστησαν ἀνὰ ἑκατὸν μάλιστα οἶον χοροὶ ἀντιστοιχοῦντες, “they stood like dance-groups in line about one hundred each.” In this passage we have another example of ἀνὰ, and we may note that the word to be supplied with ἑκατὸν is not χοροῦς but ἄνδρας. In the decree the companies consist of one hundred (men) each “in number” (ἀριθμόν). The supposition is that the number is exact, as in Hdt. 1.14.1 ἀριθμόν ἕξ, cited above.

Robertson took the sentence otherwise. Arguing that ἀνὰ ἑκατὸν would need the word ἄνδρας (or ναύτας) to mean “at the rate of a hundred men apiece,” he supplied τάξεις.³ What then does “at the rate of a hundred companies apiece” mean? His answer is one hundred companies of citizens and one hundred companies of foreigners; but this would be a clumsy and

³“If the men are in view, ἀνὰ ἑκατὸν ἄνδρας is wanted; without this indication, ἑκατὸν must refer to the same noun as διακοσίας, that is, τάξεις” (37).

obscure way of saying "distribute the citizens over one hundred ships and the foreigners over one hundred ships by companies."⁴ Moreover it leaves the number in a company unstated. We have only to point to Xen. *An.* 5.4.12 to demolish the argument on which he based his conjecture.

Morrison gave the following rendering (57): "They (the generals) are to make the posting, distributing (the men) in *taxeis* to the number of two hundred in (two) divisions of a hundred in number." "(The generals)" and "(the men)" are supplied from the previous sentence in the Greek text, but there is nothing in the Greek text to justify the introduction of "two" whether in brackets or not; he has retrojected it from his own explanation of the system of manning. He supplies *τάξεις*, as Robertson did. He mentions as an inferior explanation the separate division of citizens and foreigners, which Robertson had in fact proposed, and he prefers to put one of his "(two) divisions of a hundred" *τάξεις* in the home flotilla of 100 ships and the other in the flotilla of 100 ships for Artemisium, of which the decree tells us at lines 41–44. The decree, however, should in my opinion be self-explanatory as it goes along, and lines 31–32 should not wait for lines 41–44 to become intelligible. Both of Morrison's explanations leave the size of the *taxis* unstated.

For the proposer of the decree to have left the number of "seamen" in a *taxis* unstated seems to me to be unpractical. Themistocles knew how many men he had already allocated to each trireme in lines 18–27. The exact number of "seamen" that he wanted in each *taxis* was therefore in his head as he drafted the words of lines 31–32. He had every reason to state it in the decree. On the other hand, if he simply instructed the generals to allocate a two-hundredth part of the residue of men on the lists after the withdrawal of the men in the three categories of lines 18–27 to a *taxis*, it would be a matter of chance whether the resulting *taxis* would be of the desired size.

If my view of lines 31–32 is accepted, the manning proceeds section by section in the decree, and I add names in brackets as an example for each section. A trierarch, "one to each ship" *εἷνα ἐπὶ τὴν ναῦν ἐκάστην*, is to be appointed and allocated by lot to a ship (trierarch A to trireme Y). From men of twenty to thirty years there are to be called up ten marines "to each ship" *ἐφ' ἐκάστην ναῦν* and four archers (fourteen names A–N for trireme Y). The *hyperesiai* are to be distributed by lot "to the ships" *ἐπὶ τὰς ναῦς* at the same time as the trierarchs are allotted (*hyperesia* A to trireme Y). The "seamen" are to be published "by ship" *κατὰ ναῦν* (seaman A to trireme Y) from the two registers of citizens and foreigners and to be published and distributed by *taxeis* (seaman A to *taxis* A) up to two hundred companies of one hundred seamen each, which are to be allocated by lot "to the triremes"

⁴It would surely have been more prudent to mix citizens and foreigners in each "company" than to entrust half the fleet to "companies" of foreigners.

ταῖς τριήρεσι in lines 35–36 (company A of 100 seamen to trireme Y). Thus trireme Y has a complement of 115 men plus a *hyperesia*, of which alone the number is not stated, presumably because (we may assume, as Morrison does⁵) the *hyperesiai* were already in existence. For Athens, having been for some twenty-five years and still being at war with Aegina, had in operation the *hyperesiai* for a standing navy of perhaps 80 triremes. We may call these *hyperesiai* “naval service personnel” or “trained oarsmen-groups” in accordance with one or the other basic meaning of ὑπηρεσία in this the first surviving instance of its use.⁶ In any case we shall not be far out in suggesting that this pool of trained naval men for 80 ships at some 200 men each had been redistributed into groups of 80 men for the new fleet of 200 ships, and it was these groups which were now to be allocated by lot each to a ship. Thus the intended complement for trireme Y was 195 men. It was raised to 199 at the Battle of Salamis, when four more marines served on each ship (Plut. *Them.* 14.1). Thus the trireme of Cleinias at Artemisium had “two hundred men” (Hdt. 8.17), a round and probably an exact number.

On Robertson’s interpretation of lines 31–32 a half of the “seamen” were foreigners registered with the polemarch. Since he takes *hyperesia* to be “specialist officers” (his 33, n. 95, and 39), the “seamen” are the oarsmen, being some 34,000 for 200 ships at about 170 a ship, and half of them—namely, 17,000—are male foreigners “in their prime” (line 13 τοὺς ξένους τοὺς ἡβώντας), registered with the polemarch at Athens. So huge a total foreign population at Athens is unacceptable. Therefore, concludes Robertson, the decree is a forgery, attributable to a forger of the third century B.C., who wanted to flatter Ptolemy Philadelphus.⁷ The alternative is that lines 31–32 have been misinterpreted.

Morrison, like Robertson, takes the *hyperesia* to be the specialist officers and their aides up to some sixteen men in his categories (1) and (2) on his page 56. If we keep the categories separate and allow sixteen for the *hyperesia* and 200 for a ship’s full complement, he has companies of “seamen” at some 170 for a ship. However, he does not keep the categories separate but runs them into one another by placing the marines and the archers in the

⁵As Morrison puts it, “their mobilisation must have been otherwise provided for” (57). Since the appointment of trierarchs was so urgent “beginning tomorrow” (line 20), the allocation of each *hyperesia* by lot was presumably to happen a day or two thereafter, at which time the *hyperesiai* were evidently in existence and ready to be so allocated (lines 27–28).

⁶Its meaning is discussed in *JHS* 102 (1982) 89, n. 54, *Phoenix* 36 (1982) 33, n. 95 and 39, and *JHS* 104 (1984) 49–57. The rival derivations from “rowing” and “service” are to be seen in LSJ⁹ s.v. ὑπηρεσία.

⁷In the case of a free population one would multiply by five to arrive at a total population of men, women, and children. If we take three for foreigners, we shall have some 50,000 foreigners in Athens. One wonders if even the supposed forger would have expected this figure to commend his forged decree as credible.

hyperesia and by having *taxis* at line 35 mean “the whole ship’s company.”⁸ Yet if the marines and archers are in the *hyperesia*, why are they not included under that heading?⁹ And why should *taxis* change its meaning within two lines?

The word *hyperesia* has been something of an obstacle in the understanding of the decree. We know that in 432 B.C. and for long afterward it meant the specialists or “petty officers” in the crew of a trireme, as Morrison has shown conclusively (his 49–56, with an admirable mastery of the evidence). But to retroject that meaning to 481 B.C. is unwise in that the problem and the solution to the problem in that year were unique. Since 510 B.C. all citizens and foreigners in Attica had been equipped and trained for combat in the armed forces. Less than half were naval personnel, still struggling in 481 B.C. against Aegina. More than half were military personnel, who had defeated all comers and won undying fame at Marathon. When the Assembly decided to put all its forces onto the ships, the naval personnel were the only “specialists,” if that is the meaning to be given to *hyperesiai*, and of them the great bulk were “oarsmen-groups,” if we prefer that meaning. But in a short time, when the ex-military personnel become equally well trained at sea and were equally responsible for remarkable naval victories, the original “oarsmen-groups” lost their significance, and the term “specialists” came to be used only of the important “specialists”—the helmsman and the other “petty officers.” If we look forward from 481 B.C. to 432 B.C., we can understand and accept this historical development of the term *hyperesiai*.

Finally, in lines 32–35 it is a question whether we restore πύχῃ or τάξει. With πύχῃ we translate thus: “And (the generals) should write on the notice-board of the trireme in each case¹⁰ the names both of the trierarch and the *hyperesia* in order that they (the ‘seamen’) may know on what sort of trireme the ‘company’ in each case (ἡ τάξις ἐκάστη) will embark.” With τάξει we translate thus: “And (the generals) should register¹¹ for each ‘company’ the name of the trireme and of the trierarch etc.” The former restoration is to be preferred, because there is no point now in registering “the name of the

⁸That is made more difficult because the subject of εἰδῶσιν can only be the “seamen” and not the generals.

⁹Especially since the *hyperesia* was already in existence, as we have inferred from lines 26–27.

¹⁰The words τῇ [πύχῃ] ἐκάστη τῆς τριήρους are rejected by Robertson (35, n. 100) because τῆς τριήρους is in the singular. What is unusual to me is not the singular with ἐκάστος, which we see also in lines 19, 24, and 35 of the decree, rather than a plural τοῖς πύχῃν ἐκάσταις, but the order of the words, which might be easier to an English reader if it had been τῇ πύχῃ τῆς τριήρους ἐκάστη, “on the notice-board of the trireme in each case.” But the Greek language has its own word-order, which here emphasises the notice-board rather than the trireme.

¹¹Robertson translates ἐπιγράψαι τῇ τάξει ἐκάστη “over each company they shall write the names etc” (34). But this compound verb, as contrasted with ἀναγράψαι and ἀναγράφειν, should mean either “write upon” or (unusually) “register” (LSJ⁹ s.v. ἐπιγράφω III C 3).

trireme," because the "seamen" have already been assigned to their ship at line 28 κατὰ ναῦν.¹² It is only when the companies of "seamen" descend to the beaches at Phalerum for embarkation that each company will learn the name of its trierarch and its trained group of naval personnel.¹³ It is these which will determine at first the quality of the vessel when she goes into action.¹⁴ There is the same note of urgency in these lines which look forward to immediate embarkation as there is in line 20 "beginning tomorrow." Such urgency was appropriate in September 481 B.C., when Athens was at war with Aegina and Persia.

CLARE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

¹²I see no other meaning for ἀναγράψαι . . . κατὰ ναῦν than that the name of the man and the name of his ship were to be written up publicly.

¹³One imagines that the naval personnel had rowed the ships round from the docks or launched them from the shore, so that the companies could march on board and put to sea.

¹⁴Successful trierarchs were well-known (e.g., Cleinias) and crews also, because naval boat races were a feature of some Attic festivals (see How and Wells on Hdt. 6.87).