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Plut. *Them.* 10.5: Generosity and Greek Public Education in Historical Memory*

Fayah Haussker

Abstract: The present paper explores the feasibility of the evidence in Plutarch's *Them.* 10.5 regarding publicly-funded teaching that the people of Troezen bestowed upon Athenian children refugees on the eve of the battle of Salamis 480 BC. Examination of testimonies from Troezen referring to the generosity (*euergesia*) exhibited in absorption of the Athenian evacuees, together with the chronology of public involvement in Greek elementary education (*paideia*), undermines the historical credibility of Plutarch's account and indicates anachronism. This study suggests that the close interconnection between *euergesia* and *paideia*, first documented in the Hellenistic period, is the basis of Plutarch's, or his sources', interpretation of the Troezenians' munificence toward Athenian refugees in the form of subsidized schooling. Thus Plutarch's account less reflects the historical reality of the Archaic period, but rather the significance of Greek *paideia* in the historical memory of later generations.

Keywords: children; education (*paideia*); schooling; public; generosity (*euergesia*); Troezen; Plutarch

In his biography of Themistocles (*Them.* 10.5), Plutarch describes the warm welcome that the city of Troezen granted the Athenian women and children who were evacuated from Attica on the eve of the Battle of Salamis in 480 BC. He chronicles a decree (*psēphisma*), proposed by a citizen named Nicagoras and accepted by the Troezenian people's Assembly, that provided every Athenian family with nutritional security and their children with subsidized education by local teachers:

...κυρωθέντος δὲ τοῦ ψη-
φίσματος οἱ πλεῖστοι τῶν Ἀθηναίων ὑπεξέθεντο γενεὰς
καὶ γυναῖκας εἰς Τροιζήνα, φιλοτίμως πᾶν τῶν Τροιζηνίων
ὑποδεχομένων· καὶ γὰρ τρέφειν ἐψηφίσαντο δημοσίᾳ, δύο
ὄβολοὺς ἐκάστῳ διδόντες, καὶ τῆς ὀπώρας λαμβάνειν
ἐξεῖναι τοὺς παῖδας πανταχόθεν, ἐτι δ' ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν δι-
δασκάλους τελεῖν μισθοῦς, τὸ δὲ ψήφισμα Νικαγόρας
ἔγραψεν.

When this decision (initiated by Themistocles) was made, most of the Athenians evacuated their children and wives to safety in Troezen where the Troezenians received them very generously. After all, they voted to support them at the public expense at the

* This paper is a revised and extended version of a lecture given at the 48th Conference of the Israel Society for the Promotion of Classical Studies (Tel Aviv University, 2019), entitled "Plutarch *Themistocles* 10.5 and Greek Public Education in Historical Memory".

cost of two obols (per day per family), and also to allow their children to pick summer fruits everywhere, and they also voted to hire teachers for them. The initiator of the decree was Nicagoras.

(Unless otherwise stated, all translations and highlights are my own)

However, this interpretation, which has been adopted by numerous scholars of Greek education,¹ as well as by those who have discussed the evacuation of Attica in different historical contexts, including that of Plutarch's biography of Themistocles (Frank Frost and John Marr),² is problematic. Doubts arise not only because the information that Plutarch provides includes no references to other sources, but even more so because his narrative does not accord chronologically with the existing evidence regarding public concern with schooling in ancient Greece. Indeed, not all scholars accept Plutarch's account, some claiming anachronism and even forgery,³ and the subject remains under debate. Nonetheless, since the opposing view is presently unsupported, and referred to mainly in passing without any serious examination or substantiated arguments regarding the public dimension of Greek *paideia*,⁴ the issue calls for analysis and clarification.

The purpose of the present paper is to reexamine the feasibility of the information which Plutarch provides, by scrutinizing the passage under discussion first, in connection with the testimonies from Troezen regarding the absorption of Athenian evacuees, and then by analyzing Plutarch's remarks in relation to the chronology of the public characteristics of Greek elementary education. Here I will take into consideration the developments which took place in Greek basic education between the Late Archaic and Hellenistic periods, when the Greek concept of *paideia* (παιδεία) acquired its basic formulation, which continued to function during Plutarch's literary period in the Eastern Roman Empire.

The paper will conclude with the argument that in *Them.* 10.5 Plutarch reflects the tendency, adopted by ancient writers as well as by modern researchers, to over-formalize elementary education in antiquity in an anachronistic way. In the absence of compulsory education in antiquity, the passage under discussion actually indicates a public concern

¹ See Freeman 1912², 61: "So much did the Hellenes regard education as a necessity for their boys, that when the Athenians were driven from their homes by Xerxes, and their women and children crossed over to Troizen, the hospitable Troizenians provided their guests with schoolmasters, so that not even in such a crisis might the boys be forced to take a holiday."; Grasberger 1881, 563, Mahaffy 1882, 42, Marrou 1964⁶, 83, Beck 1964, 77, 84, Muir 1982, 20.

² Frost 1980, 119, Marr 1998, 94; cf. also Dascalakis 1962, 198-199 who considers Nicagoras' decree to be undoubtedly authentic.

³ See esp. Bauer 1881, 131, Ziebarth 1914², 32-33, Forbes 1942, 29, Habicht 1961, 20-21, Hands 1968, 125, Robb 1994, 208 n. 3, Robertson 1982, 4 n. 6 (discussed below), Harris 1989, 57, 101; cf. Jacoby's brief remark regarding the forging ("inventory") of the *psēphisma* and the name of the proposer (Nicagoras) in his commentary on *FGrH* 323 F 21.

⁴ Girard 1889, 22-25 does not interpret *Them.* 10.5 as evidence for public interest *per se* in elementary education in Athens or in Troezen. But he indeed does not preclude the possibility of a special decision in a dire situation, linking the Troezenian "humanitarian gesture" with the support of the Athenian state for war orphans (25), even though there is not the slightest evidence of this kind of support in the sources; and see below, n. 14.

or, more precisely, public characteristics of basic education in ancient Greece which most probably did not exist at the end of the Archaic period, but which were introduced during the Hellenistic era. At that time, under specific conditions of local philanthropic activity, the subsidizing of schooling by wealthy donors was a clear expression of exceptional, generous benefit toward the city, *euergesia* (εὐεργεσία)/*philotimia* (φιλοτιμία), which was publicly acclaimed and commemorated. This close connection between funding for elementary education, generosity and the donors' desire for glory, as supported by scattered evidence in some Greek cities in the Hellenistic period, provides a firm case in support of the argument that Plutarch and/or his Hellenistic sources understood the Troezenians' warm hospitality ("φιλοτίμως πάνυ τῶν Τροιζηνίων ὑποδεχομένων"), which the Troezenians most probably took care to perpetuate in subsequent generations, to mean the provision of subsidized education to the evacuated Athenians' children.

The Historicity of the Troezenians' *Psēphisma*

Although there is no contemporary record of the Troezenian decree concerning the evacuation from Attica, it is nevertheless undisputed that the *psēphisma* to absorb the Athenians was initiated by a Troezenian citizen, whatever his name, and that the city of Troezen took a decision to provide refuge to Athenian families. Both facts are mentioned in Hyperides' speech *Against Athenogenes* (15.15-21 and 16 Jensen), from the beginning of the last third of the fourth century (330-324 BC). It is clear from paragraphs 15 and 16 that thanks to the *euergesia* of the Troezenians in 480 BC, 150 years later a number of Troezen's citizens were welcomed into Athens in the years following the battle of Chaeronea (338 BC). The speech also provides clear indications that the Troezenians' decision to absorb refugees has been read to the Athenian jury (16.2, 5-10). The *psēphisma* itself and the name of its initiator have not been preserved, and scholars doubt whether this text was a copy of the original decision from 480 BC, and whether Plutarch was familiar with its text and used it as a source for the information in *Them.* 10.5.⁵

Likewise, two additional sources from Troezen that refer to the Athenian evacuation do not contain any information to confirm or refute Plutarch's testimony. First is an inscription dealing with Athenian strategy (including evacuation, mobilization and provisions) in Xerxes' invasion, called the "Troezen decree" or "The Decree of Themistocles", which was found by Jameson in Troezen in 1959.⁶ The composition of the text, as regards its stylistic expressions and language, leaves no doubt that it was written later than the fifth century, and can probably be dated to the early third century BC.⁷ The text also does not accord with Herodotus' account particularly in regard to the destinations of the evacuees, the timing of the decision and the implementation of the

⁵ Habicht 1961, 21 and discussion in Robertson 1982, 5 n. 9.

⁶ Jameson 1960, 1962 (revised), *SEG* 18.153, *ML* 23.

⁷ For compelling argumentation along with a comprehensive bibliography, see Johansson 2001, 91-92, 2004.

evacuation,⁸ and its authenticity has been the focus of scholarly debate for more than fifty years.⁹

The inscription depicts a decision by the Athenian *demos* assembly, proposed by Themistocles, that the Athenians will abandon Attica and settle their children and wives at Troezen, that the elders will be sent to Salamis, and that the men of military age will fight against the Persian invader at sea.¹⁰ The reference to evacuees, women and children, is brief and lacks any details about the provisions made for them (*SEG* 18.153 ll.6-11):

...Ἀθηναίου-
[ς δὲ αὐτοὺς καὶ τοὺς ξένους] τοὺς οἰκοῦντας Ἀθήνησι
[τὰ τέκνα]ν[α καὶ τὰς γυναῖκας] εἰς] Τροιζήνα καταθέσθαι
.....²¹..... τοῦ ἀρχηγέτου τῆς χώρας· τ-
10 [οὺς δὲ πρεσβύτας καὶ τὰ] κτήματα εἰς Σαλαμίνα καταθ-
έ[σθ]θ[αι] ...

... Athenian[s] [in their entirety and the aliens] who live in Athens| shall place [their children and their women] in Troezen | [-21-] the *archēgetēs* (“first leader”) of the land. [T] he elderly people and (movable) possessions shall (for safety) be| deposited at Salamis. (trans. Fornara 1983², 54, no. 55, with modifications)

Robertson’s proposal for restoring the lacuna in line 9 with a statement about supporting the Athenian economy at the Troezenians’ expense,¹¹ thus illustrating the *archēgetēs*’

⁸ E.g. the text of the inscription does not mention Aegina (cf. Hdt. 8.41.1 and below, n. 10). In addition, it seems that Athens initiated an evacuation plan before the battles of Thermopylae and Artemisium (esp. ll. 40-44; Nep. *Them.* 2.6-3.1), unlike the information in Herodotus and later writers (Hdt. 8.41; cf. e.g. Thuc. 1.18.2, Plut. *Them.* 10.4-5, Aristid. *Or.* 1.154, 3.247 with Johansson 2001, 70-78, 2003). This lack of synchronization between the sources has led to continuing debate about when the original decree of Themistocles was passed and implemented. For possible suggestions on how to resolve the sources’ apparent discrepancies, see e.g. Jameson 1960, 203, Green 1996, 97-105, 156-161, 2006, 66 n. 58 on 11.13.4, Garland 2014, 49, 58.

⁹ The controversy concerning the decree’s authenticity and origin emerged already in the 1960s (Bauer 1967², 109-111). It centers mainly upon whether it is a reliable copy or paraphrase of the evacuation order (e.g. Jameson 1960, 203, Marr 1998, 87-88) or whether the whole text is fabricated and belongs to an external literary source, as comprehensively discussed by Johansson (2001), whom I follow; and see (idem 2004) for the possibility of the common source of the inscription with Plutarch and Aelius Aristides.

¹⁰ For the destinations see also e.g. Diodorus (11.13.4) who mentions Salamis only (cf. Hdt. 8.60.2, Lys. 2.34), while Cicero (*Off.* 3.48) attests only to Troezen, and Nepos (*Them.* 2.8) indicated Troezen and Salamis, without specifying which evacuees went where. In any case, it is most likely that Troezen, a *polis* that, for historical and mythological reasons, had the closest relations with the Athenians of all the Peloponnesian cities (Piérart 2004, 616-617), would have been a preferred destination for refugees.

¹¹ Robertson 1982, 6: τ[ροφήν ὑποσχομένου πᾶσι] or τ[ροφήν ὑπεσχημένου πᾶσι] or τ[ρέφειν ἐπαγγελαμένου] all followed by τοῦ ἀρχηγέτου τῆς χώρας (“the *archēgetēs* of the land having promised sustenance to all”).

supportive protection, could indeed be acceptable to a certain extent.¹² Yet the text still provides no clue about subsidized education. In any event, Robertson, without definitely negating the authenticity of Nicagoras' *psēphisma*, argues that if the educational provision in Plutarch's account belongs to a later hand, it would have been inspired by the needs of Troezenian refugees in the 320s BC, a period when basic education was sufficiently widespread and also regulated, to a certain extent, by the *polis* authorities. As such it would have allowed Troezenian refugee children, whose fathers had been granted Athenian citizenship, to receive free education at public expense.¹³ But the problem with this argument arises from the lack of evidence for free elementary education in classical Athens (just as in the period of the Persian Wars), even in the case of war orphans, whose upbringing until adulthood was funded by the state.¹⁴

Nonetheless, if we relate to the text as is with the lacuna, the significance of the important part played by Troezen in the struggle against the Persian invader and Troezenian generosity are still evident. Additional evidence is provided by Pausanias' description of a memorial monument, in the form of a sculptural complex, depicting Athenian women and children who were evacuated to Troezen during Xerxes' invasion.¹⁵ The monument was placed in the *agora*, in an area that has not yet been excavated, and in the absence of other supportive evidence, it is difficult to evaluate Pausanias' account. Whether or not Pausanias' information proves reliable, as far as the topic discussed in this article is concerned, this testimony sheds no light on the conditions of the absorption of the evacuees, but rather points to the local tradition of perpetuating and probably amplifying the Troezenians' *euergesia*.

Likewise, no other sources referring to the evacuation contain any details relating to the manifestation and substance of the assistance accorded to the Athenian women and children by the Troezenians, beyond the provision of shelter (and probably basic nutrition). Indeed, although the Attic evacuation, as a formative event in Athenian and Greek collective memory, received tremendous attention in diverse discursive areas (historiography, oratory, drama), in connection with the victory over the Persian navy at Salamis, most ancient authors narrating the Persian Wars provide relatively limited details.¹⁶ There is a striking absence of detail regarding both the logistical aspects and the experience of the evacuees,¹⁷ but also about the experience of the children. The fact that children *per se* were hardly of central interest to ancient writers in general and in historiography in particular may explain why the evacuated minors under discussion

¹² Fully discussed in Robertson 1982, 1-12 with a list of previous restorations (2), which pointed to the *archēgetēs*' possible identity and the element of protection.

¹³ Robertson 1982, 4 n. 6.

¹⁴ See e.g. Thuc. 2.46.1, Pl. *Menex.* 248e6-249b2, Arist. [*Ath. Pol.*] 24.3, *SEG* 28.46 ll 9-11, 17, 19 (and tentative restorations in 61.51) with Stroud 1971, 288-290. Freeman's (1912², 58 n. 5, 71 n.3) and Muir's (1982, 20) suggestion to include education in such state support is not substantiated by the evidence.

¹⁵ Paus. 2.31.7 with Duff 2018, 182-183, no. 95.

¹⁶ Hdt. 8.40.1, 41.1, 60.2, Thuc. 1.18.2, 73.4; For evidence later than fifth century BC see e.g. Lys. 2. 33-34, Diod. Sic. 11.13.4, Nep. *Them.* 2.7-8 with Johansson 2001, 72-77. For references in a fourth-century Attic oratory, see the comprehensive discussion in Schlatter 1960, 98-131.

¹⁷ Garland 2014, 102-104, 2017, 46-54, 89, 100; cf. Graninger 2010, 308-309.

were listed mostly in the short stock phrase as “children and women” (here *γενεάς καὶ γυναικας*), an anonymous group of non-combatants endangered by the enemy’s aggressions.¹⁸

Hence, Plutarch’s complementary information is the earliest account of the physical details of the evacuation and the only one that discusses the provisions for the evacuees in the city of refuge as well as furnishing a glimpse of the children’s experience.¹⁹ Yet, beyond the fact that this is the only source for such information, it is hard to imagine that, apart from the right to pick summer fruits everywhere and thus stave off the Athenians’ hunger, the other two provisions for refugees that Plutarch notes — two obols per day per family for the refugees’ maintenance and subsidized education for children (if indeed free education existed in that period in Greece) for children — were feasible, either logistically or economically, for the host *polis*.²⁰ In contrast to Athens, which was a huge polis in terms of the Greek world,²¹ Troezen’s dimensions were much more modest,²² making it difficult to accommodate the needs of such a large mass of refugees.

In addition to these questions which remain open, the general sense of anachronism, chronological irregularities and historical inaccuracy, that characterize Plutarch’s narrative of the Athenian evacuation,²³ may cast doubt on the reliability of his account about the hiring of teachers. While none of these arguments alone is sufficient to discredit Plutarch’s testimony, the weight of evidence regarding its implausibility, combined with what we know about the socio-economic aspects of Greek schooling in the Archaic and Classical periods and the development of public concern with education from the fourth century BC to the post-classical era, strongly suggests an anachronism and can also point to its origin.

¹⁸ Golden 1997, 183-184; see e.g. *παῖδας τε καὶ γυναικας* (Hdt.8.40.1), *τέκνα καὶ γυναικας* (Diod. Sic. 11.13.4); and cf. above, line 8 in “Troezen decree” and Paus. 2.31.7.3-4 (in a different order: *γυναικας καὶ τέκνα*).

¹⁹ For the complementary, emotional aspect of separation and displacement, see. Aristid. *Or.* 1.155, 3.251.

²⁰ Habicht 1961, 21; cf. Böckh 1886³, 146 (162); for the allegedly excessive generosity, see Garland’s remark (2014, 104-105): “The warmth of the reception sounds almost too good to be true ...”; cf. Robertson’s suggestion (1982, 4-5) that the sum of 2 obols was probably adjusted to accord with later values and that the provision of subsidized education was a later extension to the original permission to pick fruit.

²¹ Hansen 2004, 627. The precise number of evacuated women and children cannot be estimated. Most reliable sources regarding the Athenian population are much later than the Persian Wars, see Hansen 1988, 23-25.

²² For demographic data and the number of available military forces, see Piérart 2004, 615-616; cf. Jameson and al. 1994, 556-559.

²³ These are beyond the scope of the present paper, see e.g. Marr 1998, 93 on 10.3 for chronological rearrangement of events for ‘dramatic’ needs and Graninger’s (2010) discussion on 10.8-9 pointing to Plutarch’s reliance on Thucydides’ description of the departure of the Sicilian Expedition (415 BC).

Greek Schooling: Between Private and Public Concern

To rely on Nicagoras' decree as evidence of state funding for teaching, as tempting as it may be, is to ignore the chronology of the existing evidence regarding the public character of ancient Greek *paideia*. It is important to note that the concept of public education, i.e. compulsory school attendance, financed by the state, subjected to its control and accessible to all, as an institutionalized system now virtually universal in the Western world, did not exist on the practical level in ancient Greece.²⁴ In Greek civilization, where education was in essence a private matter, public concern took the form of procedural and economic supervision and subsidization by city authorities of a non-compulsory system, which was intended only for the (primarily male) children of the freeborn. This concept, which will be discussed further, was implemented only in the Hellenistic period, about three centuries after we have first evidence about the collectivization of elementary Greek education, at the time when schools were firmly established as an integral part of the cultural landscape of the Greek *polis* and a key element of Greek identity. As will be shown below, it seems that this situation, which was so familiar to Greek scholars from the Hellenistic and Roman periods, often led them to make anachronistic pronouncements on educational issues, either by attributing educational legislation to eminent legislators of the past or by relating the concern with education to the formative events of Greek history, as in the case of Nicagoras' decree.

The tendency to deduce from *Them.* 10.5 that Greek education was a matter of public concern as early as the period of the Persian Wars probably stems from the chronology of the evacuation, which to some degree overlaps with the first evidence we have of the formalization of Greek *paideia* in a way that can be defined as schooling, i.e. collective learning in an out-of-home framework designed for this purpose.²⁵ It is difficult to extricate from the available sources when schools first emerged in the Greek world.²⁶ The credible evidence, which indeed is scanty, points to the operation of a school system in Chios and Athens at the end of the Archaic period. On the one hand, the sources do not suggest that schools were a new phenomenon in the late sixth–early fifth century BC, but on the other hand it cannot be inferred from these cases that collective teaching institutions were widespread in the rest of Greece. Furthermore, alongside the agreement on the centrality of reading and writing skills to proponents of formal schooling,²⁷

²⁴ See further references and n. 43 below.

²⁵ For definition see Cribiore 2001, 17. It is important to note that the existence of a school system did not efface alternative traditional systems of learning, and that one-on-one private teaching (or tuition) by an older authoritative individual continued throughout antiquity (e.g. *Hom. Il.* 9. 438-443, *Xen. Mem.* 2.2.6, *Arist. Eth. Nic.* 1180b7-13, *Quint. Inst.* 1.2.1-3, *Apollod. Bibl.* 2.4.9).

²⁶ See among others, Beck 1964, 77-78, Harvey 1966, 630, Harris 1989, 57-59, Cribiore 2015, 150-151, Griffith 2015, 47-51.

²⁷ In brief, although early abecedaria can be dated as early as the eighth century BC, and the gradual widespread use of the alphabet for literary and private purposes is attested in many Greek communities during the seventh and sixth centuries (for recent studies, to refer just a few, see Thomas 2009b, 349-351, Keegan 2014, 51-54, Langdon 2015, West 2015), there is disagreement between scholars regarding the degree, level and social distribution of literacy in Archaic Greece. Moreover, since the concept of literacy in Greek antiquity can signify very diverse levels of such skills (from basic through functional to scribal), Thomas (2009a

scholars continue to debate whether there was a connection between the introduction of schools and an accelerated rate of literacy.²⁸ In particular, what is important for the topic discussed in the present paper, these cases do not provide any information on the ways that schooling was funded and do not indicate public involvement in Greek education in the late Archaic period.

Documentation related to Chios provides the earliest example of school building and engagement in literary study in a collective framework. Herodotus (6.27) describes a disastrous event that occurred in 494 BC on the island, where 119 of 120 children, *paides* (παῖδες), who were at the time engaged in literary study, i.e. *grammata* (γράμματα), perished when the roof of the building collapsed. The majority of the other literary records about early Greek schooling outside Athens, including Nicagoras' decree from Troezen, are written later and their credibility is highly questionable, such as an account by Pausanias (6.9.6-7) about 60 boys on the island of Astypalaea in the 490's who were allegedly killed when an enraged Olympic boxer, Cleodemes, in his fury, caused the roof of the school building to collapse.²⁹ To these also belongs an anecdotal episode in Timaeus (*FGrH* 566 F 95), which describes how Gelon, tyrant of Gela and Syracuse, was saved from death because he had been in pursuit of a wolf when an earthquake caused the total collapse of the building of the school he attended, killing pupils and teachers. Two additional anachronistic cases may be added: Charondas' law regarding compulsory literacy education as narrated by Diodorus (12.12.4), and Aelian's (*VH* 7. 15) account about Mytilene's method of punishing rebellions of subjected allies by forbidding them to teach their children *grammata* and music (*mousikē*).³⁰ As for Athens, from which most information regarding schooling and education preceding the Hellenistic period comes, it is not possible to pinpoint a date on which schools were first founded, and there is no information as to how they were conducted and how they functioned. It might well be argued that the evidence about Solon's supposed school-related laws presented in Aeschines, *Against Timarchus* (9-12), which might be interpreted as indicating the existence of schools in Athens already in the beginning of

and b, 356) convincingly argues that the term *literacies* should be adopted, rather than the simple division between literacy and illiteracy.

²⁸ See e.g. Bloomer 2013, 445-449, who sees a direct connection between the increasing circulation of literary skills and the introduction of schools already in the early Archaic period, although the exemplary cases that he recruits cannot be termed "schools" *stricto sensu*; West 2015, 54-55, 64. Robb (1994, 189) on the contrary, whom I follow, warns that: "We must resist the automatic assumption of an alliance between literacy and paideia based on a model familiar to us, however natural."; cf. Harris 1989, 16, Griffith 2001, 68, Missiou 2011, 130-133 and below, n. 37. For socio-cultural permutations and genesis of schooling, see e.g. Marrou 1964⁶, 76-80.

²⁹ Harris 1989, 58, n.63; cf. also Pausanias' representation of Tyrtaeus as an Athenian schoolmaster (6. 96). For the relatively high number of children in Chios and Astypalaea, see esp. Harris 1989, 58, Griffith 2001, 68-69 with n. 150, 2015, 50.

³⁰ The feasibility of the story raises serious doubts, see e.g. Ziebarth 1914², 32 n. 6; and below, n. 65.

six century,³¹ is unreliable and is most probably nostalgic and represented a later reality.³²

Aristophanes' *Clouds* (961-1023), along with visual records of schooling in vase-painting scenes,³³ strongly suggests not only that some kind of collective education existed in Athens in the period of the Persian Wars but also that at the end of the Archaic era a full school curriculum, which included music, athletics (*gymnastikē* [γυμναστική]) and *grammata*, was already in operation. The importance attached to music and physical training, which characterized in Aristophanes' passage the "old education" (which was enjoyed by the generation who fought in the battle of Marathon), supports the assumption that archaic *paedeia* was accessible mainly to the aristocrats and the wealthy. This situation barely changed during the Classical period, from which there are much richer literary references for schooling in Athens and elsewhere, mainly from the last third of the fifth century and onward into the fourth.³⁴ The documentation does not mention any provision of subsidized education, but some references may imply that the Athenian schooling system enabled children from socio-economic strata lower than the wealthy and the aristocrats to be at least partially integrated.³⁵ This may have been due to the multilevel nature of *grammata* acquisition,³⁶ although this is not the place to attempt to resolve the familiar scholarly debate over whether the Athenian democratic regime's activity, which was open to all male citizens, required a particular level of literacy proficiency.³⁷ Since, the acquisition of reading and writing skills, unlike music

³¹ E.g. Girard 1889, 38-41.

³² See, among others, Ziebarth 1914², 33, Marrou 1964⁶, 83, 539 (n. 3), Harris 1989, 57. These laws, which are primarily related to the protection of minors from sexual exploitation (see e.g. Becker 1877², 52, Girard 1889, 39), can most probably be attributed to fourth century innovative regulations, such as the minimum age of the *choregoi* in section 11 (Pl. *Leg.* 764e, Arist. [*Ath. Pol.*] 56.3 with Golden 2015², 56), associated with Solon for rhetorical considerations (Joyal et al. 2009, 36 (3.3)); cf. Schmitter 1975, 283. They indeed can point to widespread elementary education in the fourth century BC; cf. Robertson 1982, 4 n. 6, discussed above.

³³ See e.g. scenes from a schoolroom — boys are instructed in the lyre, pipes (*auloi*), reading, reciting, and writing — on Athenian red-figure *kylix* ca. 500-480 BC, signed by Douris (*ARV*² 431-432, no. 48; Antikensammlung, Berlin F 2285), discussed in Beck 1964, 84, 89, Havelock 1982, 201-203, Booth 1985, Cribiore 2001, 28-29, Griffith 2015, 48-49; for schooling scenes on Attic pottery see Immerwahr 1964, esp. 17-24; cf. Harris 1989, 96-97, Robb 1994, 185-188.

³⁴ E.g. Ar. *Eq.* 987-996, 1235-1238 and discussion below; for Mycalessusin Boeotia (in 413BC), see Thuc. 7. 29.5.

³⁵ E.g. Ar. *Eq.* 188-193, Pl. *Prot.* 326c.

³⁶ See above, n. 27. On the *grammatistēs* (γραμματιστής) see Pl. *Prot.* 325e-6b with discussion in Beck 1964, 111-126. For study of *grammata* in the fifth and fourth centuries BC, and the evolution of its centrality, see esp. Robb 1994, 185-197, Morgan 1999, Griffith 2001, 67, Ford 2003, 24-30.

³⁷ Robb (1994, 189-190), for example, argues for accelerated "popular literacy" in the fifth century due to democracy; cf. Missiou 2011, esp. 109-149 — neither link literacy to widespread schooling; contra e.g. Harris 1989, 102-103, 114-115, Pritchard 2015, 117-118; cf. above, nn. 27-28. For hints at a complete lack of literacy, see e.g. fragments of lost plays of Euripides (*TrGF* 5 F382), Agathon (*TrGF* 1.39 F4) and Theodectes (*TrGF* 1.72 F6).

and body culture, did not require the outlay of expensive resources,³⁸ boys outside the circle of the rich elites could be sent to teachers, *didaskaloi* (διδάσκαλοι), or to a place of teaching, *didaskaleion* (διδασκαλείον), for the limited period necessary to acquire a certain level of *grammata*.³⁹ It is important to note in this context that many minors in Greek antiquity were used as helpers in manual domestic labour at the age when children today are supposed to be at school,⁴⁰ which, together with the need to pay for teaching services, meant that most Athenian children experienced schooling at best for a short period.⁴¹ Only the very rich citizens' sons, *hoi plousiōtatoi* (οἱ πλουσιώτατοι) as Protagoras attests, started their studies at a very young age and completed their education at a significantly later age.⁴² It is obvious that in such a situation of essentially private education, there was no place for compulsory schooling,⁴³ and in the absence of any official state-control and interest (unlike, for example, in choruses, which were subsidized by wealthy benefactors) only the fathers (or boy's *kyrios*) decided if and what the child would learn and what the duration of his studies would be.⁴⁴

With the exception of Sparta, we have no evidence of free equal basic education, funded by the state, and as such perceived as compulsory and supervised by the *polis*' authorities. But even in Sparta, which did have a form of obligatory education, the *polis* did not hire teachers or pay their wages,⁴⁵ and that system of *agogē* (ἀγωγή) was more of a collaborative nature, due to the involvement of many citizens (adults as well as youth) in the minors' education.

³⁸ For the physical conditions and material equipment required for *grammata* lessons, see e.g. Bloomer 2013, 454-455.

³⁹ Griffith 2001, 67-69, Pritchard 2015, 115-117, 119, 121; and see above n. 35; cf. e.g. Dion. Hal. *Comp.* 25.249-257 for two grades of literacy conducted in Hellenistic and Roman schools.

⁴⁰ Golden 2015², 28-31; cf. Dem. 18.257-258, Arist. *Pol.* 1323a5-6; and see immediately below.

⁴¹ For inequity of education see e.g. [Lys]. 20.11 with Dover 1968, lx; Sinclair 1988, 51, 193. For the connection between poverty and ignorance see e.g. [Xen.] 1.5, Isoc. 14.48.

⁴² Pl. *Prot.* 326c; Dem. 18.265; Dover 1968, lxi, Pritchard 2015, 114-115. For the full elementary educational curriculum in the classical period, see e.g. Pl. *Chrm.* 159C, Xen. *Lac.* 2.1, Isoc. 15.267, Arist. *Pol.* 1337b22-25.

⁴³ See, in particular Becker 1877², 52, Adam 1888, 64 on 50d16, Ziebrath 1914², 33, Marrou 1964⁶, 538-539 n. 3, Harvey 1966, 589 with n. 10, Dover 1968, lx, Schmitter 1975, 279-282, Harris 1989, 99, Golden 2015², 52; for studies supporting the existence of compulsory schooling in Athens (whether misleadingly interpreting 'nomoi' in Pl. *Crito* 50d as laws instead of "customs" or denying the inaccuracy of Plato's narrative), see e.g. Girard 1889, 32, Schneider 1967, 134. Although Beck (1964, 92-94) assesses Solon's law of compulsory education in *Crito* to be genuine, he nevertheless considers the argument that this is evidence of compulsory education encompassing an entire educational curriculum as problematic; for the demand for "semi compulsory" education allegedly implied by Solon-related laws cf. Bryant 1907, 80-81 n. 3, 107, Schmitter (above), 288-289.

⁴⁴ E.g. Xen. *Cyr.* 1.2.2, *Mem.* 2.2.6, Pl. *Leg.* 804d3-6, Arist. *Pol.* 1337a22-26.

⁴⁵ For the communal nature of Spartan education, see e.g. Xen. *Lac.* 2.2, 10-11 with Kennel 2013. For the inability to fund teachers' salaries, see Ducat 2006, 133: "The idea of public teaching at Sparta comes up against a concrete problem, apparently limited, but which one soon realizes overrules all else: that of the teachers' salary."; and see 134-135.

The perception that it was the state's duty to provide *paedeia* to all civilian children arose in the fourth century BC, a long time after the Persian Wars, in the framework of political thought, wherein both Plato and Aristotle propounded educational theories which proposed compulsory, so-called universal education. Plato presents the first evidence in antiquity for that radical concept,⁴⁶ which transferred the right to decide on the education of children from the father to the state:

...οὐχ ὄν μὲν ἂν ὁ πατήρ βούληται, φοιτῶντα,
ὄν δ' ἂν μή, ἐδῶντα τὰς παιδείας, ἀλλὰ τὸ λεγόμενον πάντ'
ἄνδρα καὶ παῖδα κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν, ὡς τῆς πόλεως μᾶλλον ἢ (5)
τῶν γεννητόρων ὄντας, παιδευτέον ἐξ ἀνάγκης...

...and no father shall either provide his son with education nor deprive him of schooling by his own will, but, every man and child must, so far as possible, be obliged to be educated, as they are more the children of the state than belong to their parents... (*Leg.* 804d3-6)

Plato's educational program, discussed primarily in book seven of *Laws*, inspired by Sparta but based on actual materials from Athenian reality,⁴⁷ deals with the institution, the management of schools, and the appointment of officers, as well as with administration and coherent curriculum. Yet it proposes essential innovations,⁴⁸ which would be partly incorporated into the Hellenistic schooling system, as discussed below. These innovations include, *inter alia*, the establishment of public schools and gymnasia (804c), the incorporation of education for girls (804c-e, 805c), the supervision of teachers (808e) and the appointment of a state board of education headed by a supervisor, *paidonomos* (παιδονόμος 809a, 813c; cf. 765d).

Likewise, Aristotle, in *Politics*, when addressing the question of how education serves politics and plays a pivotal role in producing worthy citizens, recommends schooling to be obligatory by law,⁴⁹ since the education must be communal, in the concern of the state, rather than private. In light of these theories, it is worthwhile to re-examine Charondas' legislation of educational law in Thurii, which allegedly ordered compulsory teaching of literacy skills financed by the city (Diod. Sic. 12.12.4):

...ἐνομοθέτησε γὰρ τῶν πολιτῶν τοὺς
[υἱεῖς] ἅπαντας μανθάνειν γράμματα, χορηγούσης
τῆς πόλεως τοὺς μισθοὺς τοῖς διδασκάλοις. ὑπέλαβε (5)
γὰρ τοὺς ἀπόρους τοῖς βίοις, ἰδίᾳ μὴ δυναμένους
διδόναι μισθοὺς, ἀποστερήσεσθαι τῶν καλλίστων
ἐπιτηδευμάτων.

(Charondas) legislated that all the sons of the citizens should learn reading and writing, and that the state should undertake the responsibility for paying teachers' wages. For he assumed that the needy citizens, who could not afford teachers' fees from their private resources, would otherwise be deprived of the noblest pursuits.

⁴⁶ Cf. Arist. *Pol.* I266b32-33 for Phaleas of Chalcedon, an anonymous Greek figure to whom Aristotle attributed the beginnings of the idea of equitable education; Saunders (1995, 135) suggested his activity to mid or late 5th century.

⁴⁷ E.g. Pl. *Leg.* 809e-810b and discussion in Patterson 2013, 367-372.

⁴⁸ Patterson 2013, esp.375-376.

⁴⁹ *Pol.* 1337a22-34.

Despite the fact that a few scholars consider that this information may quite likely be reliable,⁵⁰ it is reasonable to assume that this account is misleading and anachronistic. Firstly, Thurii was actually founded long after Charondas' death, and, secondly, the fact that this law, if indeed it had been enacted, is not referred to by Plato and Aristotle raises questions. Hence, the prevalent scholarly opinion presumes a lack of authenticity and an invention of the Hellenistic era.⁵¹ Since there is no evidence for the implementation and practice of such ideas in Greek antiquity, one cannot rule out that Diodorus' attribution to Charondas of legislation in favor of compulsory literacy was inspired, as Harris convincingly argues, by fourth-century educational theories.⁵²

Evidence of state-subsidized education (mainly for boys), in its concrete rather than conceptual form, first appeared in the Hellenistic age, when Greek education in its cohesive form became the distinct symbol of Hellenic identity and a civilized way of life.⁵³ During this period, elementary schools became standardized, as a pivotal element of the cultural and urban landscape. These basic educational institutions were either privately run (unlike *ephēbeia* and *gymnasia*),⁵⁴ or, as is witnessed in some Greek communities, owed their establishment and financing to the beneficence of a wealthy local philanthropist, or to external royal authority.

The earliest evidence for this probably came from an Attic inscription, if we give preference to the later chronology of the text (319/8 BC).⁵⁵ This is the decree of the deme of Eleusis, on a stele with relief, honoring the commander (*stratēgos*) Dercylus, for, *inter alia*, contributing to the education of *paidēs* (*IG II² 1187*):

...ἐπειδὴ Δερκύλ-
ος ὁ στρατηγὸς φιλοτιμεῖται π-
ερὶ τὸν δῆμον τὸν Ἐλευσινίων τ-
ὰ τε ἄλλα καὶ ὅπως ἂν οἱ παῖδες π-
αιδεύωνται οἱ ἐν τῷ δήμῳ, δεδ- (5)
όχθαι Ἐλευσινίοις ἐπαινέσαι
Δερκύλον...

...since Derkylus, the *stratēgos*, has shown generosity to the deme of Eleusis in other matters as well as (especially) in connection with the deme's children's education, may the Eleusinians praise Derkylos...

⁵⁰ E.g. Green 2006, 199, n. 70 who bases the probability of the law on the need to stabilize the Greek identity of the new settlers through *grammata*; and cf. below, n. 52.

⁵¹ See particularly Schwartz 1905, 685, Böckh 1886³, 154, Ziebarth 1914², 32-33, Habicht 1961, 21, Marrou 1964⁶, 544-545 (n. 26), Hands 1968, 124, Joyal et al. 2009, 140-141 (6.14); cf. Thomas, 1992: 131 n. 12.

⁵² Harris 1989, 98-99. For the association of the law with Protagoras, see Busolt 1920, 378-379, Mühl 1929, 440-441, Muir 1982; and see Green, above, n. 50.

⁵³ The term *enkyklios paideia* (ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία) coined during the first century BC, is beyond the discussion of the present paper. For its debated and flexible meaning and use by ancient as well as modern writers, educational curriculum and contents see Morgan 1998, 33-39, Joyal et al. 2009, 123-124.

⁵⁴ See e.g. Herod. 3.8-10 with Chiarini 2018, 113-117.

⁵⁵ *SEG* 49.135; for the earlier dating see below, n. 58.

Since this is the only evidence pointing to an exceptional connection between a *stratēgos* and young children, while in other cases this relationship appears only with *ephēboi* (for *stratēgoi* were eligible to supervise education only as officials of the *ephēbeia*) Mitschel, who also dated the inscription to 319/8 BC, interprets *paides* as *ephēboi*, hence understanding Derkylus' *philotimia* (1.2 φιλοτιμείται) as a contribution to the informal ephebic exercise, following the suspension of that institution by the pro-Macedonian oligarchy after the Lamian War, between 321 and 319 BC.⁵⁶ But, although this convincingly argued view has *prima facie* reasonable historical grounds, the meaning of *paides* as children (albeit without the possibility of precisely determining their age) should not be excluded. If that was indeed the original meaning⁵⁷ — which seems more reasonable since *ephēboi*, who crossed the age of minority, were not legally categorized as *paides*⁵⁸ — it can be argued (with all necessary caution) that this decree provides the first evidence for public responsibility for education, maybe intertwined with philanthropy, on the border between the classical and the Hellenistic period, and a unique example in Attica.

Other examples, mostly epigraphical, appear between the late third to second centuries BC, and at least four of them unequivocally indicate that in some Greek *poleis* elementary education was (at least occasionally) a public concern and as such funded by the state. The phenomenon was a local expression of philanthropic activity, initiated by private wealthy citizens, such as Polythrous of Teos and Eudemus son of Thallion in Miletus or by an external factor, a monarch, such as Attalus (II) in Delphi and Eumenes (II) in Rhodes.⁵⁹ We are unable to assess the extent and distribution of that phenomenon, although there are clues that it appeared in other Greek communities as well.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Mitschel 1964, for the meaning of *paides* see esp. 345, 348 and cf. below, n. 58.

⁵⁷ Girard 1889, 51-53, Dittenberg. *Syll*³ 956 n. 2, Marrou 1964⁶, 539 n. 3, whose remark that Derkylus' *philotimia* regarding children's education was carried out not as a magistrate, but as a private person, probably inspired by Hellenistic experience, lacks contemporary supportive evidence; Girard's proposal (53) that *stratēgoi*, from a certain time, extended their supervision to schools sounds more reasonable.

⁵⁸ Couvenhes 1998, 60-61 (concluding his argument for refuting Mitchell's later chronology of the inscription in favor of 340-330 BC [56-57]). For the broad range and general fluidity of Greek terminology, see esp. Golden 2015², 10-12. For *paides* as indicating an age group in Athens that had not reached social maturity and the age at which the status of *ephēbeia* began, see e.g. Arist. [*Ath.Pol.*] 42.1 with Rhodes 1985, 497-499.

⁵⁹ For a general discussion see chiefly Girard 1889, 20-22, Forbes 1942, 31-32 (although his statement "In some cities, however, public elementary education was the rule in the Hellenistic period..." seems too weeping), Marrou 1964⁶, 175-177, Hands 1968, 120-123, Walbank 1979, 515 on 31.31.1, Harris 1989, 130-133.

⁶⁰ See e.g. *IG* Vii.186I (first century BC) with Ziebarth 1914², 60, where an obscure benefactor Protogenes, son of Protarchus, of Thespieae, was honored by the Thespians for his expenditures on the children's instructors (εις τοὺς παιδευτὰς τῶν παίδων); an inscription from Phrygia (115/114 BC, Cousin and Diehl 1889, 334-340 no. 4, ll.6-11) provides a fragment of a decree honoring Chares, son of Attalus, who had rendered many services to the education of children and the young; and cf. teacher's epitaph from the beginning of the second century BC, from Rhodes (*IG* Xii¹ 141), where the large number of students (ll. 7-8) may suggest some state support.

Unlike any of the earlier examples, here there is firm evidence for subsidized elementary schooling. The earliest is Polythrous' contribution of 34,000 drachmas, from which 3900 drachmas per year was apparently devoted to basic education in Teos, dated to the late third century BC (*Syll.*³ 578 fragment A. ll. 3-10):

...ἵνα δὲ πάντες οἱ ἐλεύθεροι παῖδες πα[ι]-
[δε]ύωνται καθότι Πολύθρους Ὀνησίμου προνοήσας ἐπιγγείλα-
το τῷ δήμῳ κάλλιστον ὑπόμνημα τῆς ἑαυτοῦ φιλοδοξίας (5)
κατατιθέμενος, ἐπέδωκεν εἰς ταῦτα δραχμὰς τρισμυρίας
τετράκις χιλιάς, ἀποδείκνυσθαι καθ' ἕκαστον ἔτος ...
... γραμματοδιδασκ[ά]-
λους τρεῖς οἵτινες διδάξουσιν τοὺς παῖδας καὶ τὰς παρθέ-
νους: ... (10)

...so that all free children might be provided with education, since Polythrous, the son of Onesimus, ... informed the (Assembly) of the people, and inspired by a desire to establish a most worthy commemoration of his love for glory, donated 34,000 drachmas to this goal (from a budget of which it was decided) to appoint three teachers each year to teach *grammata* (*grammatodidaskaloi*), all those who teach boys and girls...

The text is an excerpt from the 68 surviving lines of a detailed inscription, which provide a glimpse into an educational system operating as a state institution in a Hellenistic city and relate to such topics as the appointment of schoolmasters, the determination of their wages, the *paidonomos*' age limit, the division of pupils into age groups, subjects of learning, and supervision and regulation of teaching activity. The existence of this diverse and highly regulated mechanism, along with its well-attested financial structure, indicates the importance accorded to basic education, its groundbreaking incorporation of female children, and the vital role played by the philanthropic activity that made the project possible.

Another example that reveals how the establishment and administration of elementary schooling was connected with charity and glory is provided by Miletus from the beginning of the second century BC (200/199) (*Syll.*³ 577, ll.1-6.):

...ἐπειδὴ Εὐδήμος Θαλλί-
ωνος αἰρούμενος εὐεργετεῖν τὸν δῆμον καὶ τῆς αὐτοῦ φιλο{τι} -
δοξίας εἰς τὸν αἰεὶ χρόνον μνήαν ὑπάρχειν τὴν ἀρίστην ἐπήγγελ-
ται δώσειν εἰς παιδείαν τῶν ἐλευθέρων παιδῶν ἀργυρίου τά-
λαντα δέκα ὑπὲρ τε αὐτοῦ καὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν Μενάνδρου καὶ (5)
Δίωνος, ... ἐψηφίσθαι Μιλησίοις ἐπηνῆσθαι μὲν Εὐδήμον...

...since Eudemus son of Thallion choosing to benefit his *demos* and to perpetuate forever the memorial of his own desire for glory, and has promised to endow for the education of the free children ten silver talents, on behalf of himself and his brothers, Menander and Dion, the Miletians have passed the following decree: to praise Eudemus...

This extract of the 89-line inscription shows the same principle that is witnessed in Teos inscription. The subsidies for schooling were made possible by the passion for fame and generosity of Eudemus and his brothers, a generosity that is expected to be perpetuated by memorialization. Hands' claim that these two cases are exceptions to the rule with regard to private donations for elementary education is perhaps too precipitant, but his

argument that the inscriptions are typical of philanthropists' concern for their own glory is compelling.⁶¹

Generous endowments by Hellenistic rulers of the Attalid dynasty have appeared in two cases. The first is an inscription from Delphi addressing the generous contribution of Attalus (II) of Pergamum, of 18,000 drachmas, for the provision of children's education, dated to 160/59BC (*Syll.*³ 672 ll.2-4, 6-11):

...· ἐπειδὴ βασιλεὺς Ἄτταλος βασιλέως Ἀττάλου, ἀποστειλάντων
 ἀμῶν πρέσβεις ποτ' αὐτὸν πρότερόν ...
 ...ὕπερ τὰς τῶν παιδῶν διδασκαλίας, ...

 ..., ἐπακούσας προθ[ύ]-
 μως τὰ ἀξιούμενα ἀπέστειλε τῆι πόλει εἰς μὲν τὰν τῶν παιδῶν διδασκ[α]-
 λίαν ἀργυρίου δραχμάς, Ἀλεξανδρείους, μυρίας καὶ ὀκτακισχιλίας,
 ..., ὅπως ὑπάρχη ἅ δω-
 ρεὰ εἰς πάντα τὸν χρόνον ἀάδιος καὶ οἱ μισθοὶ τοῖς παιδευταῖς εὐτα- (10)
 κτέωνται...

...since King Attalus (II) son of King Attalus (I), when we sent as delegates to him ... concerning the education of the children ...he listened favourably to our requests and sent to the city 18,000 Alexander drachmas of silver for the education of the children ... so that his donation might be for all time and in perpetuity and the wages of the teachers might be regularly paid...

The second account of a royal donation appears in Polybius (31.31.1), dated around the time of the inscription from Delphi at 161/0 BC,⁶² and recounts a gift made to Rhodes by Eumenes (II), of a total of 280,000 *medimnoi* of grain, interest from the proceeds of which would be used to pay the teachers' salaries.⁶³

ἐπεδέξαντο γὰρ σίτου μυριάδας ὀκτὼ καὶ εἴκοσι παρ'
 Εὐμένους χάριν τοῦ τὸ λογευθὲν ἐκ τούτων δανεῖζε- (5)
 σθαι, τὸν δὲ τόκον εἰς τοὺς μισθοὺς ὑπάρχειν τοῖς
 παιδευταῖς καὶ διδασκάλοις τῶν υἱῶν...

(Rhodians) accepted 280,000 *medimnoi* of grain from Eumenes (II) in order to lend out the proceeds and use the interest for salaries of the instructors and teachers of their sons...

These donations indicate the great public interest in providing elementary *paideia* for children, but it is still difficult to deduce from them a comprehensive policy of free education independent of direct philanthropy. The only credible example of such a policy is an inscription from Astypalaea, a unique example from the Hellenistic period, which furnishes evidence of schooling or education for children of another city in a crisis situation. An Ephesian decree, dated to the end of the second century BC, thanks the people of Astypalaea for repelling the pirates, rescuing their people who were taken as captives, and providing the captive children with free education (*IG XII*³ 171/1286 ll.35-38):

⁶¹ Hands 1968, 121.

⁶² Walbank 1979, 514 on 31.31.1.

⁶³ See Harris' (1989, 131) statement that: "...Rhodes may for some time have been the city with the nearest thing to universal public education for boys ever seen in antiquity".

...ἐ[πεμελοῦντο] περὶ αὐτῶν]
 [ὡς] περὶ τῶν ἰδίων τ[έκνων]: ὁ[μοίως δὲ καὶ τῆς τῶν]
 [ἡρ]πασμένων ἐλευθέρ[ων] πα[ίδων ἐπεμελοῦντο ἀγῶ]-
 [γῆ]ς τε καὶ παιδείας ὡ[—————]

They (Astypalaeans) treated them (the rescued Ephesians) like their own children, and similarly, they cared also for the children of free persons, provided them with training and education...⁶⁴

The text indicates public involvement in education both in Ephesus and Astypalaea. The Astypalaeans' extraordinary generous concern for the Ephesians, which here again took the form of education, can provide a strong base for arguing that there was a close link between schooling and generosity which was expressed in the sphere of foreign relations in the Hellenistic period. This may be the very concept that lies behind the origin of Nicagoras' *psēphisma*.⁶⁵

Conclusion

This discussion suggests that although ancient records contain only a sprinkling of references to public involvement in elementary education, and in general tend to be both inconsistent and vague, it can be concluded that Nicagoras' decree in *Them.* 10.5 does not correspond to historical reality. In 480 BC systematic concern for public education did not exist in Troezen or in any other *polis* in Greece. At the end of the archaic period, sources provide only initial evidence for the formalization of Greek education, its curriculum and values, in some Greek city states. Likewise, early evidence did not show any connection between elementary *paideia* and *euergesia*, a connection that is indicated only in some instances of Hellenistic evidence in the form of the provision of subsidized teaching. The anachronism of Plutarch and/or its Hellenistic origins in Nicagoras' decree was most probably a result of the Greeks' tendency in the Hellenistic and Imperial periods to view the supreme importance that they attached to education as rooted in their glorious past, thus enhancing its cultural significance.⁶⁶ For, following the Hellenistic tradition, between the first to third centuries AD, Hellenism, which was determined in particular by cultural rather than ethnic parameters, enabled many of non-Greek origin, who attained Hellenic *paideia*, to be culturally considered Hellenes.⁶⁷

Hence, resources for endowments, together with the communal desire to provide education, were esteemed as a definite expression of *euergesia* worthy of commemoration, and it was this sentiment that was probably responsible for the

⁶⁴ See also Gabrielsen 2005, 309 for the interpretation of ἀγῶ]- [γῆ]ς τε καὶ παιδείας as “caring and education”; cf. Harris 1989, 133.

⁶⁵ And probably, *vice versa*, this is what lies behind the Aelian's account in the second century AD about the Mytelenians' severe punishment of their allied rebels by prohibiting their children's education (see above, n. 30).

⁶⁶ E.g. Cic. *Rep.* 4.3: “...disciplinam puerilem ..., de qua Graeci multum frustra laborarunt, ...”. Indeed, although the connection between schooling and philanthropy or any form of financial assistance is not evidenced in the time of Plutarch, due to the political-economic reality of Greek *poleis* (e.g. Harris 1989, 133, 273), the importance of Hellenic *paideia* did not decline.

⁶⁷ For a recent comprehensive discussion, see in particular Xenophon 2015.

strikingly anachronistic use of the provision of *paideia* made by post classical Greek authors who, when writing about earlier periods, glorified the alleged public concern for education. These writers either attributed proclamations concerning public schooling to prominent lawgivers of the past (e.g. Charondas of Catana) or inserted this concern in accounts of great events from the past such as the victory over the Persian invader in 480 BC. We have no way of ascertaining if any information regarding children's education was included in Troezenian traditions. However, the tight interrelationship between *euergesia/philotimia* and *paideia* in post-classical periods caused later generations to imagine subsidized education for the Athenian children as part of the largesse Troezen bestowed on the refugees. It can be concluded, therefore, that although Nicagoras' proposal, as presented by Plutarch, does not reflect the historical reality of the Greek educational system in the early fifth century BC, it can indeed serve as a prominent case study indicating the important place occupied by education in Greek historical memory in later periods.

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