

The Athenian Revolt from Demetrios Poliorketes: New Evidence from Rhamnous (*I.Rhamnous* 404)

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Abstract: The recent publication of a decree from Rhamnous (*I.Rhamnous* 404) sheds new light on the Athenian revolt against the occupying forces of Demetrios Poliorketes and the expulsion of the king's garrison from the Mouseion Hill, an action that is usually dated to 287. The decree honors Aristeides of Lamptraï for his distinguished record in the period between the capture of the Mouseion, when he held the office of general *epi ten paraskeuen*, and his generalship of the coast at Rhamnous in the year of Menekles (267/6) when the decree was passed. Since we know from another source that Aristeides held a generalship in the archonship of Telokles (280/79), the decree has been cited as evidence that the expulsion of Demetrios' garrison should be downdated to Telokles' year. But *I.Rhamnous* 404 also credits Aristeides' brother Mnesidemus for his role in the capture of the Mouseion, and a richly detailed stratagem recorded by Polyainos demonstrates that Mnesidemus was killed in a botched attempt to evict another Macedonian garrison from Piraeus in 286. Thus, the decree for Aristeides confirms the traditional dating for the capture of the Mouseion and helps elucidate the other sources that document the Athenian revolt from Demetrios.

Keywords: Aristeides of Lamptraï; Demetrios Poliorketes; Polyainos; Mouseion; Piraeus; Macedonian garrisons

In the historiographical wreckage of the early third century BC, the chronology and history of Athens in the 280s are particularly poorly documented. The date of the revolt from Demetrios Poliorketes vacillates between a high (287) and low (286) dating, although there is now a strong scholarly consensus for the high date, and we are in the dark for much of what happened during the subsequent years.¹ The argument that Athens somehow recaptured the Piraeus from the Antigonids in the mid- to late 280s, though without support in the surviving sources, remains persistent.² But new discoveries can invite us, not always correctly, to

¹ High Chronology: Habicht 1979: 45-67; 1999: 95-97; 2006: 111-113; Osborne 1979; 1982: 155-67; 2012: 36-43; 2015; 2016; Heinen 1981: 189-93; Hammond and Walbank 1988: 228-233; Dreyer 1996; 1999: 197-223; Oliver 2007: 54-68; Knoepfler 2011: 562-566; 2014: 435-436; Wheatley and Dunn 2020: 395-6. Low Chronology: T.L. Shear Jr. 1978; J.L. Shear 2010; 2020. For good recent discussions of the revolt, see Rose 2015: 318-22; Wheatley and Dunn 2020: 393-405. In a forthcoming publication, Thomas Rose argues that while Habicht's and Osborne's dating of the revolt to spring 287 is correct, T.L. Shear and J.L. Shear are correct in arguing that the Panathenaia of 286 was cancelled, not however as a result of the revolt itself but in consequence of the failed attack on the Piraeus recorded by Polyainos (*Strat.* 5.17) and datable to shortly after Anthesterion (February/March) 286 (see further below).

² Arguing for an Athenian recapture of the Piraeus c.281, either through diplomacy or military action: Shear 1978: 28-29; Gauthier 1979; Reger 1992: 368-79; Dreyer 1999: 257-278; Clinton 2022. Arguing against recapture: Ferguson 1911: 152-153 n.4; De Sanctis 1927; Habicht 1979: 95-109; 2006: 438 n. 3; Osborne 1979: 193; Heinen 1981; J. and L. Robert *BÉ* 1981: 401-2, no. 238; Taylor 1998; Oliver 2007: 54-68; Paschidis 2008: 134-135 n.3; Osborne 2016: 88-93; Waterfield 2021: 69. Denis Knoepfler (2012: 444-449; 2014: 435-436) argues for a diplomatic reintegration of the deme Piraeus into the Athenian state, without the physical capture of Mounychia, in 281.

rewrite the established narrative. In 2020, Basileos Petrakos produced in volume VI of the Rhamnous series the remaining unpublished inscriptions from the coastal fort, some of which had been unearthed as long ago as the early 1990s. Of particular note is *I.Rhamnous* 404, a decree of 267/6 in honour of the Athenian general Aristeides son of Mnesitheos of Lamptraí, which provides new details on the siege and capture of the Mouseion fortress from the troops of Demetrios Poliorketes.³ In a recent article in the journal *Grammateion*, Kevin Clinton has argued that this decree proves that the Athenian capture of the Mouseion took place in 280/79, rather than in the year of the revolt, 287, as is almost universally agreed. Further, and without evidence, Clinton argues that the capture of the Mouseion by Aristeides in 280/79 was the final triumph in a series of victories that saw Athens regain control of Piraeus, Mounychia, and the Mouseion between 286 and 279.

Responding to Clinton's argument and integrating the decree for Aristeides into the narrative of the Athenian revolt of 287, we argue that rather than providing evidence for down-dating the capture of the Mouseion to 280/79 and unattested captures of Piraeus and Mounychia in the years prior to this, the decree actually provides conclusive evidence – unnoticed by Petrakos and Clinton – for dating the siege and capture of the Mouseion to 287. Further, there is no evidence for any siege or capture of either Piraeus or Mounychia in the 280s. Rather, what evidence we have suggests that the Piraeus remained under Antigonid control continually from 295–229.

1. The Decree for Aristeides

The decree in honour of Aristeides was passed in 267/6 and records a series of actions and offices held by Aristeides between the siege of Mouseion and his generalship of the coast at Rhamnous in the year of Menekles, 267/6 (ll.23–24: ἐπὶ τὴν χώραν τὴν παραλίαν τὸν ἐνιαυτὸν τὸν ἐπὶ Μενεκλέ[ου]ς ἄρχοντος). The full text of the decree is included in an appendix.

1. Lines 5–11: At some point after the revolt from Demetrios in spring 287, Aristeides along with his brother Mnesidemos and others took the lead in a *praxis* so as to take control of a fort, likely the Mouseion. After a meeting of the *ekklesia*, undoubtedly the meeting at which the generals for the forthcoming year were assigned, Aristeides was elected General of the Equipment (χειροτονηθεὶς ἐπὶ τὴν παρασκευὴν), in which capacity he pursued the siege of the Mouseion and was thereafter honoured along with others with a crown and feasting (*sitesis*) in the *prytaneion*.

2. Lines 11–14: Sometime after the capture of the Mouseion, Aristeides took part in an embassy to Antigonos Gonatas which saw the return of Eleusis and a gift of 661 talents.⁴ Demochares was also involved in this embassy and Ps. Plutarch's record of the *aítesis* for his *megistai timai* provides us with a *terminus post quem* for this embassy of the archonship of Diokles (286/5), the year in which Demochares returned to Athens from exile.⁵

³ Notice of inscription was made by Petrakos in *Ergon* (2003) [2004]: 15–16; see also Clinton 2008: 245. On Aristeides, see Habicht 1976.

⁴ The gift is immense in comparison to the relatively modest sums realized by Athenian embassies to the courts of other dynasts in the period and the figure, which is partially restored, may be incorrect (cf. Clinton 2022: 13).

⁵ The preserved text of the *aítesis* links the recovery of Eleusis with an Athenian embassy to a certain Antipatros, not Antigonos: καὶ πρὸς Ἀντίπατρον πρεσβεύσαντι καὶ λαβόντι εἴκοσι τάλαντα ἀργυρίου καὶ Ἐλευσῖνα κομισαμένῳ τῷ δήμῳ ([Plut.] *Mor.* 851d–f). The identity of this Antipatros has long been a vexed

3. Lines 14-18: Having been elected general in charge of Eleusis (ἐπὶ Ἐλευσίνος) in the year in which Antigonos Gonatas invaded the Megarid, likely c.270, Aristеides defended the fort at Eleusis and handed it over to his successor “safe and democratic” (l.18: σῶιον καὶ δημοκρατούμενον).⁶

4. Lines 18-22: Aristеides was voted to be one of the two *synedroi* sent by the Athenians to the Spartan king Areus at the start of the Chremonidean War. Kallippos of Eleusis was the other *synedros* as preserved in the Chremonides decree of prytany II, 269/8 (IG II³.1 912, l.69).

5. Lines 22-34: Aristеides served as General of the Coast in the year 267/6, the year in which the decree was passed (ll.23-24: ἐπὶ τὴν χώραν τὴν παραλίαν τὸν ἐνιαυτὸν τὸν ἐπὶ Μεγекλέλους ἄρχοντος). Once again, he defended the fort during a period of war, maintained its defences, and oversaw collection of the grain.

2. Clinton’s Argument

The date of the siege and capture of the Mouseion is not recorded in the decree, though it has hitherto almost universally been assumed that the fort on the Mouseion was captured shortly after the opening of the revolt, in summer 287, as documented in Pausanias’ brief description of the career of the Athenian politician and general Olympiodoros (1.26.1–3) and as mentioned in the decree for Kallias of Sphettos of 270/69 (IG II³.1 911), on which see below. However, emphasising the new information that Aristеides was elected *strategos* ἐπὶ τὴν παρασκευὴν in the year in which the Mouseion was captured, Clinton argues that the siege and capture of Mouseion must be down-dated to the archonship of Telokles (280/79) since that is the earliest known year in which Aristеides held a generalship (IG II² 2797, l.7 = IG II³.4 7: στρατηγούντος [Ἀρισ]τείδου Λαμπρέως). Clinton’s argument works on the assumption that the decree from Rhamnous records *all the generalships* held by Aristеides up to and including the year 267/6: “It is highly unlikely that it [the generalship held during the siege and capture of Mouseion] is an unattested generalship held before 280/79, for that would mean that his attested service in 280/79 was omitted – an omission that would have constituted a grave insult to a distinguished soldier and citizen, who was also honoured by the *Boule*.”⁷ However, there is no evidence that the generalship held by Aristеides in the

question (for a discussion, see Roisman and Worthington 2015: 274 n. 17), but Clinton argues that the embassy to Antipatros in Ps. Plutarch and the embassy to Antigonos in the decree for Aristеides are one and the same, noting that “but for the slip about ‘Antipatros,’ the account in [Plut.] *Mor.* 851d-f is not inconsistent with the data in the new decree” (Clinton 2008: 245; 2022: 12-13). This solution is attractive, but not certain. A letter of Epikouros (Erbi F 15) dating to the period 280-277 mentions an Antipatros, evidently a prominent Antigonid official, and the recovery of Eleusis may have involved one Athenian embassy to Antigonos in Asia and another to his representative in Greece. In either case, the return of Eleusis is one of the most remarkable events of early third century Athenian history and warrants further attention.

⁶ The year of Aristеides’ generalship at Eleusis (*strategos epi Eleusinos*) is not made clear in the decree. Petrakos dates it to 268/7 (2020: 24) while Clinton dates it variously to 268/7 (2022: 9) and 270/69 (2022: 13). *I.Rhamnous* 404 records Aristеides’ generalship ἐπὶ Ἐλευσίνος before his election as *synedros* to deliberate with Areus of Sparta, which we know from the Chremonides decree took place in 269/8 (IG II³.1 912, ll.68-69), so it is reasonable to assume that his generalship ἐπὶ Ἐλευσίνος should be dated prior to 269/8. Hammond and Walbank (1988: 270) would have Antigonos “acquire” Megara “probably between 272 and 268,” so a date c.270 for Aristеides’ generalship would seem plausible.

⁷ Clinton 2022: 10 n.11.

archonship of Telokles should be identified with the generalship ἐπὶ τὴν παρασκευὴν held in the year of the revolt.

3. Mnesidemos and Polyainos

In fact, internal evidence from the Rhamnous decree in honour of Aristeides disproves Clinton's theory and confirms a date of 287 for the siege of Mouseion. What has hitherto escaped notice, is that the decree records the name of Aristeides' brother, Mnesidemos son of Mnesitheos of Lamptrai. This is highly significant as the name Mnesidemos is very rare. The *Lexicon of Greek Personal Names* records only three known Athenians with the name, to whom we can now add as a fourth Mnesidemos son of Mnesitheos of Lamptrai, brother of Aristeides:⁸ first, Mnesidemos of Lamptrai born c.336/5, probably uncle to the brothers Aristeides and Mnesidemos sons of Mnesitheos (*IG II*² 1514, l.62; 1516, l.38; 1518, l.80; *SEG XIX* 174, l.11 = *PA* 10274); second, one Mnesidemos of Kephisia from the late fourth century (*IG II*² 6430 = *PA* 10273); third, the eponymous archon of 298/7 (*IG II*² 1270; *D.H. Din.* 9 = *PA* 10272). One other isolated reference to an Athenian Mnesidemos survives in a very important stratagem recorded by Polyainos (*Strat.* 5.17):

When Demetrios was in Lydia, he left Herakleides in charge of Athens in his absence. The Athenian generals negotiated in secret with the foreigner Hierokles, a Karian. They persuaded him to open the gates by night and admit Athenian troops to murder Herakleides. This conspiracy was formed on the banks of the Ilissos, where the Lesser Mysteries were celebrated, and the generals Hipparchos and Mnesidemos exchanged oaths with Hierokles. But Hierokles remained faithful to Herakleides and revealed the plot to him. Herakleides arranged for the Athenians to be admitted by opening a certain part of the gates. Accordingly, four hundred and twenty men were let in during the night, under the leadership of Mnesidemos, Polykles, Kallisthenes, Theopompos, Satyros, Onetorides, Sthenokrates and Pythion. As soon as they had entered, Herakleides attacked them with two thousand soldiers and killed them all. (Trans., Rose)

Δημήτριος Ἡρακλείδην φύλακα τῶν Ἀθηνῶν συντάξας αὐτὸς μὲν ἦν περὶ τὴν Λυδίαν. οἱ δὲ στρατηγοὶ τῶν Ἀθηναίων ἐν ἀπορρήτῳ βουλευσάμενοι τὸν ξεναγὸν Ἱεροκλέα, Κᾶρα τῷ γένει, ἔπεισαν νυκτὸς ἀνοίξαι τὰς πύλας καὶ δέξασθαι στρατιώτας Ἀττικοὺς, οἳ κτενοῦσιν Ἡρακλείδην. ταῦτα μὲν δὴ συνέθεντο παρὰ τὸν Ἰλισσὸν, οὗ τὸν καθαρμὸν τελοῦσι τοῖς ἐλάττοσι μυστηρίοις, Ἱππάρχου καὶ Μνησιδήμου στρατηγῶν ὅρκια δόντων καὶ λαβόντων. Ἱεροκλῆς δὲ πιστὸς Ἡρακλείδῃ γενόμενος ἐμήνυσε τὴν πρᾶξιν. ὁ δὲ συνέπραττε νύκτωρ αὐτοὺς εἰσεδέξασθαι ἀνοίξαντές τι μέρος [τῶν] πυλῶν. καὶ δὴ νυκτὸς εἰσεδέξαντο τετρακο-σίους καὶ εἴκοσι ἄνδρας, ὧν ἡγοῦντο Μνησίδημος, Πολυκλῆς, Καλλισθένης, Θεόπομπος, Σάτυρος, Ὀνητορίδης,

⁸ Mnesidemos son of Mnesitheos of Lamptrai, brother of Aristeides, may also be mentioned in *IG II*² 2354, l.21, which dates to the third century.

Σθενοκράτης, Πυθίων· Ἡρακλείδης δὲ στρατιώτας δισχιλίους ὥπλισμένους ἐπαφῆκεν, οἳ πάντας αὐτοὺς εἰσελθόντας ἐφόνευσαν.

Polyainos' account is full of detail that allows us to date the anecdote with unusual precision. He records that before or when Demetrios was in the area of Lydia, he left one Herakleides in charge of Piraeus.⁹ His subordinate, Hierokles of Karia, was approached by the Athenian generals Mnesidemos and Hipparchos by the Ilissos river, during the Lesser Mysteries, which took place in Anthesterion (February/March).¹⁰ Mnesidemos and Hipparchos attempted to persuade Hierokles to open the gates of the Mounychia fortress to Athenian troops, but Hierokles acted as a double-agent and informed Herakleides of the plot. The gates were duly opened and the Macedonians executed Mnesidemos, seven other men who may also have been Athenian generals, and 420 citizen troops.¹¹

Two points are worthy of particular attention here. First, Polyainos includes two chronological markers that allow us to date this attack quite precisely: Demetrios was in or near Lydia when the attack took place, which followed shortly after the Lesser Mysteries. Now, since Plutarch (*Demetr.* 46.2) records that Demetrios' destination after breaking the siege of Athens in winter 287 was Karia and Lydia, which he planned to wrest from Lysimachos, we should date Mnesidemos' plot, attack on Piraeus, and death to spring 286, shortly after the Lesser Mysteries in Anthesterion (February/March), as almost all scholars, including Clinton himself, have done.¹² Second, due to the rarity of the name this Mnesidemos must be none other than Aristeides' brother, recorded in *I.Rhamnous* 404 as having also taken a leading role in the capture of the Mouseion.¹³ We can now join both pieces of evidence and see that the Mnesidemos who took part in the capture of Mouseion later planned and led, as *strategos*, the botched attack on the Piraeus. Mnesidemos cannot have aided Aristeides in an attack on the Mouseion in 280/79 if he had died in spring 286. Therefore, *I.Rhamnous* 404 provides firm evidence for dating the capture of the Mouseion to spring/summer 287, a full year *before* Mnesidemos' attempt to make lightning strike twice and capture Piraeus, again by deception.¹⁴ *I.Rhamnous* 404 does not provide evidence for down-dating the capture of Mouseion to 280/79 and hypothesising an earlier capture of Piraeus and Mounychia, as Clinton has argued. Rather, it proves that the capture of Mouseion

⁹ This may be the Heraklei[des] of Karia, an Antigonid commander who served in Athens in 306/5 (*IG* II² 1492b, ll. 106, 116; Billows 1990: 389).

¹⁰ Hierokles may have served in the Antigonid garrison until 260 or later, see Diog. Laert. 2.127; Reger 1992: 373-7; Paschidis 2008: 178 n. 1.

¹¹ The dead were buried in the Kerameikos (Paus. 1.29.10), next to those who died fighting against Lachares. The funerary epitaph for Chairippos who died during an assault on Mounychia (*IG* II² 5227a = *ISE* 13) is perhaps connected with this assault in 286 (Shear 1978: 83; Oliver 2009: 122; Worthington 2021: 101).

¹² Scholars who date the attempted recapture of Piraeus to 286 or 285 include: Moretti 1967: 26-27; Shear 1978: 82-3; Habicht 1979: 98; Gauthier 1979: 356, 366; Hammond and Walbank 1988: 237 n.3; Cuniberti 2006: 72 n.219 (pre-283); Oliver 2007: 58-60; Knoepfler 2012: 446-447; Clinton 2022: 10. The plot must date between 287 and 282, the years of the revolt and Demetrios' death (Dreyer 1999: 238). Osborne (1979: 192-4; 1982: 161; 2012: 45-7) and Worthington (2021: 100-1; cf. Dreyer 1999: 276) date the assault on Piraeus to c.281, but this cannot stand as Demetrios was by then dead. Indeed, Osborne (2016: 93 n.36) has recently come over to the view that it must date to c.285.

¹³ This identification was made by Denis Knoepfler 2012: 446-447, with advance knowledge of the text of *I.Rhamnous* 404."

¹⁴ The fact that the Athenians adopted precisely the same tactics for the attacks on the two hilltop positions strengthens the argument for the primacy of the successful Mouseion operation over the catastrophic failure in Piraeus.

took place in spring/summer 287, before Mnesidemos' attack on the Piraeus. What is more, the decree perfectly complements and helps elucidate the other sources that document the capture of the Mouseion.

4. Kallias, Olympiodoros, and Strombichos

Other sources mention the attack on Mouseion in 287. Since Clinton argues that they do not all refer to the same event, it is worth discussing the evidence briefly. First, the decree for Kallias of Sphettos of 270/69 (IG II³.1 911) records that Kallias arrived in Athens from Andros with Ptolemaic mercenary troops and, while the Mouseion was still held by the Macedonians, undertook to aid the Athenians in the collection of their grain harvest, in May or June 287, most likely in coordination with his brother Phaidros who was *strategos* in 288/7 and is recorded as having handed Athens over to his successor “free, democratic and autonomous, and under the rule of law.”¹⁵ Second, Pausanias preserves a brief biography of the Athenian politician and general Olympiodoros who is recorded as having routed the Macedonians in battle, pushed them back to the Mouseion, and then having stormed and captured the fort with the young and old troops.¹⁶ Third, the honorary decree for Strombichos of 266/5 records that he defected from Demetrios' side and aided the Athenians in the capture of the Mouseion.¹⁷ Faced with the defection of a portion of their troops, the Macedonians under Spintharos retreated to the Mouseion and, after the arrival of Kallias of Sphettos and his Ptolemaic reinforcements, eventually capitulated to the Athenians, after having been attacked by Olympiodoros and the young and old citizen troops.

Fourth, and finally, a series of Athenian inscriptions from the 280s call for the unification of the Piraeus and the *asty*.¹⁸ Following Philippe Gauthier, Clinton has argued that these clauses are evidence for an impending attack on the Piraeus, and successful capture, which must have taken place between 282-280.¹⁹ But this would appear to contradict the evidence of Epikouros' letters. Soon after the defeat and death of Lysimachos at Korupedion in

¹⁵ IG II³.1 985, ll.38-40: καὶ τὴν πόλιν ἐλευθέραν καὶ δημοκρατουμένην αὐτόνομον παρέδωκεν καὶ τοὺς νόμους κυρίου τοῖς μεθ' ἑαυτὸν.

¹⁶ Paus. 1.26.1: ὁ δὲ σφᾶς ἐπὶ τοὺς Μακεδόνας ἦγε καὶ γέροντας καὶ μειράκια ὁμοίως, προθυμίᾳ πλεον ἢ ῥώμῃ κατορθοῦσθαι τὰ ἐς πόλεμον ἐλπίζων· ἐπεξελθόντας δὲ τοὺς Μακεδόνας μάχη τε ἐκράτησε καὶ φυγόντων ἐς τὸ Μουσεῖον τὸ χωρίον εἶλεν. Ἀθηναί μὲν οὕτως ἀπὸ Μακεδόνων ἠλευθερώθησαν. Thirteen men died with Olympiodoros and were buried in the Kerameikos (Paus. 1.29.13). Leokritos son of Protarchos was the first over the walls of the Mouseion and the Athenians honoured his memory by dedicating his shield to Zeus Eleutherios (Paus. 1.26.2). On Olympiodoros and the honours recorded by Pausanias, see Habicht 1985: 90-92, 100-101; Oliver 2007: 55-63; Paschidis 2008: 133-139; Iacoviello 2021.

¹⁷ IG II³.1 918-919, ll.7-15: ἐπειδὴ Στρώμβιχος στρατευόμενος πρότερο[v] | παρὰ Δημητρίῳ καὶ καταλειφθεὶς ἐν τῷ ἄστει μετὰ Σ[πι]νθάρου, λαβόντος τοῦ δήμου τὰ ὅπλα ὑπὲρ τῆς ἐλευθερ[ι]ᾶς καὶ παρακαλοῦντος καὶ τοὺς στρατιώτας τίθεσθαι[ι π]ρὸς τὴν πόλιν ὑπήκουσεν τῷ δήμῳ εἰς τὴν ἐλευθερίαν [κ]αὶ ἔθετο τὰ ὅπλα μετὰ τῆς πόλεως οἰόμενος δεῖν μὴ ἐνίσ[τ]ασθαι τῷ τῆς πόλεως συμφέροντι ἀλλὰ συναίτιος γενέσ[θ]αι καὶ τεῖ σωτηρίᾳ, συνεπολιόρκει δὲ καὶ τὸ Μουσ[εῖ]ον μετὰ [το]ῦ δήμου.

¹⁸ IG II³.1 871, ll.32-35 (prytany XII, 285/4): [ε]ἴς τε τὴν τοῦ Πειραιέως κομιδ[ή]ν καὶ τὴν τῆς πόλεως ἐλευθερί[α]ν; IG II³.1 877, ll.33-36 (prytany III, 283/2): ὅπως ἂν διαμένει ὁ δήμ[ο]ς ἐλεύθερος ὦν καὶ τὸν Πειραιᾶ κομίσηται καὶ τὰ | φρούρια τὴν ταχίστην; IG II³.1 881, ll.28-31 (prytany VII, 282/1): ὅταν ὁ Πειραιεύς καὶ τὸ ἄστυ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ γέννηται; cf. Agora XVI 177 with Tracy 1995: 140-141; Osborne 2016, 88 n.1.

¹⁹ Above n.2 for further bibliography.

February 281,²⁰ Mithres, the king's former minister of finance and an intimate friend of the philosopher Epikouros, was taken into custody in Corinth by Demetrios' stepson and lieutenant Krateros. Epikouros details Mithres' arrest, his subsequent transfer to the custody of the Macedonian garrison in Piraeus, and his own efforts to arrange for the unfortunate Mithres' release in several fragmentary letters,²¹ some of which are dated by the archon year in which they were written. One of these letters, in which Epicurus advises Mithres on how best to endure the distress brought on by his change of fortune—surely a reference to his imprisonment—dates to the archonship of Telokles, suggesting that Piraeus was still in Macedonian hands in 280/79.

Since the capture of Mouseion is firmly dated to 287 and there is no evidence for an Athenian capture of Piraeus between 295 and 229 – and hypothesising an Athenian capture of Piraeus during the 280s necessitates inventing yet another unattested (re)capture of the Piraeus by Antigonos Gonatas before the outbreak of Chremonidean War in 269/8 – we must find a different interpretation for these calls for unification. We suggest that, rather than implying an impending attack on the Piraeus, these references imply just the opposite: a dawning realisation by the end of the 280s that the recapture of the Piraeus, the major policy commitment of the Athenians in that decade, would go unrealised. For whatever reason, hope faded by the end of the 280s, so references to the wish to reunite the city and Piraeus ceased. After the botched attack of 286, Antigonos Gonatas tightened his control of Piraeus and blocked Athenian access to its ports, as Plutarch records: “Antigonos writing to a captain of his, whom he had ordered to fortify the hill Mounychia, bade him not only make the collar strong but keep the dog lean; intimating thereby that he should take care to impoverish the Athenians.”²² The consequences were devastating as numerous inscriptions dating from the immediate aftermath of Mnesidemos' attack attest to the difficulty of importing grain without access to Piraeus and being forced to rely on the rural ports.²³ Rather than anticipating an impending assault on the Piraeus, or implying a successful recapture as Gauthier and Clinton have argued, the hopeful expressions of reunification were just that. That such expressions cease in 282/1 does not mean that the Piraeus was back in Athenian hands, it just means that the Athenians had given up hope of ever getting it back.

Conclusion – Cautionary Silences

Clinton argues that the Mouseion could not have been captured in 287 because the decree for Kallias does not explicitly say so. He suggests that the sources describe two different events: the collection of grain while the Mouseion was garrisoned in 287 (mentioned in the Kallias and Phaidros decrees) and the eventual capture of the Mouseion fortress in 280/79

²⁰ On the date of Mithres' arrest, see Shear 1978: 29 n. 61; Clay 1982: 21; Hammond and Walbank 1988: 270 n.2; Landucci-Gattinoni 1992: 253; Erbi 2020: 129, 170; cf. Clinton 2022: 11 n. 17.

²¹ Erbi F 14, 54; cf. Erbi F 96, 109; cf. Plut. *Mor.* 1097a-b; id. *Mor.* 1126e-f.

²² Plut. *Mor.* 754b: ὁ μὲν γὰρ Ἀντίγονος ὠχυρωμένῳ τὴν Μουνιχίαν τῷ φρουροῦντι γράφων ἐκέλευε ποιεῖν μὴ μόνον τὸν κλοιὸν ἰσχυρὸν ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸν κύνα λεπτόν, ὅπως ὑφαίρῃ τὰς εὐπορίας τῶν Ἀθηναίων.

²³ IG II³.1 863 (prytany I, 286/5); IG II³.1 870 (prytany VIII, 285/4); IG II³.1 871 (prytany XII, 285/4); IG II³.1 872 (prytany XII, 285/4). For the rural ports, see IG II³.1 871, ll.29-30 (prytany XII, 285/4): καταστήσας εἰς τ[ο]ὺς λιμένας τοὺς τῆς πόλεως. As Taylor has eloquently shown, and as the compact between Hierokles and Mnesidemos sworn on the banks of the Ilissos during the Lesser Mysteries attests, the Macedonian-controlled Piraeus was not normally completely shut off from Athens (1998: 212): “it is not self-evident that the Peiraieans must have been walled up in their deme year upon year.”

(referred to in Pausanias' brief biography of Olympiodoros, the Aristeides decree, and the Strombichos decree). This is unnecessary as all sources describe the same event, but from different perspectives, and make the best sense when put together. The decree for Aristeides proves that the Mouseion was captured in 287, the year before Mnesidemus' attempted recapture of the Piraeus. The decree for Strombichos reveals that the mercenary commander had joined the Athenian cause after he was convinced "to place his soldiers at the service of the city" (IG II³.1 918 ll. 10-11). It is likely that Aristeides, Mnesidemus, and Olympiodoros had arranged for Strombichos to defect, which would explain why Mnesidemus hoped that the trick would work a second time with Hierokles (the Athenians would return to this plan with Diogenes in 229 [IG II³.1 1160; Plut. *Arat.* 34.4; Paus. 2.8.6]). Considering the outcome, it is tempting to see Hierokles as a double-agent empowered by Herakleides to seek out Mnesidemus and Hipparchos and lead them on – perhaps, even, the idea for an attack on Piraeus was Herakleides' own, a tempting ruse to exploit Athenian over-confidence after the capture of Mouseion. In 286, the Antigonid position in Greece and Athens was seriously weakened: Demetrios had lost Macedon and numerous outposts throughout Greece, the garrison on the Mouseion had been expelled, the siege of Athens had been lifted, and Demetrios had left for Karia and Lydia. The remaining Antigonid military positions in Greece would have been particularly vulnerable to attack. A highly visible, crushing defeat of the newly-free and over-confident Athenians would stabilise Gonatas' position in Greece by securing Macedonian control of Piraeus for a generation – there is no evidence of further Athenian military operations against the Antigonids until 269/8 – and deterring attacks on other Antigonid outposts in Greece. The massacre of 8 Athenian generals and 420 citizen soldiers followed by closing the Piraeus to Athenian grain ships was a potent display of Macedonian strength and would have done much to give Gonatas some breathing space at a very sensitive point in his reign.

The Rhamnous decree for Aristeides is also a cautionary reminder of the local, even parochial focus of Athenian decrees. Clinton says that it is "highly unlikely" that Aristeides held a generalship that was not mentioned in the Rhamnous decree, but it now seems certain that his generalship of 280/79 was not mentioned in *I.Rhamnous* 404. Clearly, we must accept the fact that not mentioning a prior generalship was not the "grave insult" that Clinton makes it out to be. The Aristeides decree is a military deme decree, not an official state decree of the Athenians, so its focus is local and military. The three generalships included in the decree (ἐπὶ τὴν παρασκευὴν in 287/6; ἐπὶ Ἐλευσίνος in c.270; and ἐπὶ τὴν χώραν τὴν παραλίαν in 267/6) are mentioned not because they are a complete list of all the generalships held by Aristeides pre-266, rather they are the positions deemed most relevant to the content of the decree, namely they are the occasions on which Aristeides fought against Antigonid forces. During the period of his generalship in 280/79, he was probably not involved in any military action against the Antigonids, so there was no need to mention it in the Rhamnous decree, which was passed in the midst of the Chremonidean War and reviewed Aristeides' history of opposition to the Antigonids. This explains why the decree's narrative of events abruptly leaps forward in line 14 from the recovery of Eleusis in c.280 to Antigonos' invasion of the Megarid in c. 270—the intervening decade was one of relative calm in Athenian relations with Antigonos, who was preoccupied with events in Asia Minor, Macedon, and the Peloponnese.²⁴ Opposition to the Antigonids was obviously on Athenian minds during the Chremonidean War and it is no accident that the honours for Strombichos were awarded a year later in 266/5 (IG II³.1 918-919). Indeed, the decree for Strombichos is wholly preoccupied with the honorand's dealings with the Antigonid kings, tracing a narrative arc

²⁴ For Antigonos' activities in this period, see Waterfield 2021: 113-133.

from his early service under Demetrios Poliorketes (ll. 7-8) to his pivotal role in the capture of the Mouseion fortress and subsequent (unspecified) service to the city (ll. 9-17) and concluding with his ongoing efforts on behalf of the Athenians in the Chremonidean War (ll. 18-20).

Clinton argues that the Mouseion could not have been captured in 287 because the decree for Kallias does not explicitly say so. This does not hold water. As T.L. Shear Jr said, the decree for Kallias “dwells myopically on the career of a single man.”²⁵ It says nothing of the capture of the Mouseion in 287 not because it did not happen, but because Kallias was not involved in its capture; he was busy collecting the harvest with his brother Phaidros.²⁶ Both Pausanias and the Rhamnous decree record Olympiodoros’, Aristeides’, and Mnesidemos’ participation in the capture of the Mouseion because they were militarily involved in the act. Neither Pausanias nor the Rhamnous decree mention the emergency collection of the grain harvest, not because it did not happen, but because the subjects of their focus were not involved in it. Similarly, the Rhamnous decree describes Aristeides’ involvement in the return of Eleusis, but it does not mention Demochares’ role in this, which is recorded in Ps. Plutarch’s account of the *aitesis* for Demochares’ *megistai timai* in 271/0, which in turn does not mention Aristeides; each source is focused purely on one individual’s career, not recording all aspects of or participants in the event. Each of the sources describing the revolt of 287 and the capture of Mouseion concerns the career of one individual within those events – Kallias of Sphettos, Phaidros of Sphettos, Olympiodoros, Aristeides and Mnesidemos, Strombichos – and it is only by putting them all together that we can get the fullest possible image of the capture of the Mouseion in summer 287 and the attack on the Piraeus in spring/summer 286.

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²⁵ Shear 1978: 1.

²⁶ See the comments of Knoepfler 2011: 563-564.

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