

Magnesia and the Greeks of Asia (*I.Magnesia* 16.16)

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IN THE SPRING of 208 B.C., teams of *theoroi* set out from the city of Magnesia on the Maeander in south-western Asia Minor on embassies to the most distant fringes of the Hellenistic *oikoumene*. Their task was to persuade the monarchs and cities of the Greek world both to recognise the city and territory of Magnesia as sacred and inviolable, and also to recognise a new stephanitic contest at Magnesia, the Leucophryena. The Leucophryena itself was an annual festival of some antiquity, in honour of the city's patron deity Artemis Leucophryene. The aim of the embassies of 208 was to have the contest "upgraded" to stephanitic status, on a new penteteric cycle. As we have recently been reminded in a useful study of the institutions of the Leucophryena,¹ status as "crowned" games was not a decision the host city could make for itself; stephanitic status was conditional on being recognised as such by other cities.

The success of the Magnesians' appeal is attested in the form of more than sixty decrees and letters inscribed on the perimeter wall of the Magnesian agora from cities and monarchs as far afield as Sicily and Persia, recognising Magnesia as *asylós* and the *agon* as stephanitic. Even this large corpus of documents represents only a fraction of the original response; several of the decrees have the names of other cities appended, more than a hundred in number, marking their acquiescence to the Magnesians' request. Most of the documents seem to date to 208 or the immediate aftermath, but recognitions con-

¹ W. J. Slater and D. Summa, "Crowns at Magnesia," *GRBS* 46 (2006) 275–299 (hereafter "Slater and Summa").

tinued to be added down to the mid-second century.²

This note is concerned, however, not with the successful *theoria* of 208, but with an earlier, unsuccessful attempt by the Magnesians to have the festival recognised as stephanitic.³ We learn of this earlier attempt from *I.Magnesia* 16, the great narrative inscription recounting the history of the foundation of the penteteric Leucophryena. The surviving part of the inscription begins with an epiphany of Artemis, presumably at Magnesia. The Magnesians consult the oracle at Delphi, which recommends that they have their city and territory recognised as sacred and inviolable. The Magnesians accept the oracle, and vote to establish a stephanitic contest, interpreting the oracle to the effect that those who honour Apollo Pythius and Artemis Leucophryene ought to be encouraged to share in a festival at Magnesia. The rest of the Greek world apparently did not see it that way: the Magnesians were politely rebuffed, and the effort was abandoned for the time being.

The date of the failed first appeal is indicated in no fewer than four different ways: by the eponymous *stephanephoros* at Magnesia (Zenodotus); by the eponymous archon at Athens (Thrasylphon); by reference to the Pythian games (the year after an unknown Boeotian's victory as citharode); and by Olympiad dating (the year before the 140th Olympiad):

ἐπὶ σ[εφανηφόρου]

Ζηνοδότου, ἐν Ἀθήναις δὲ ἄρ[χο]ντος Θρασυφ[ώντος, Πύθι]- 12
 α δὲ καθαριδοῦ νικῶντο[ς τ]ῶι προτέρῳι ἔτ[ει - - - ca. 8 - - -]
 ου Βοιωτίου, Ὀλύμπια δὲ τῶι ὑστέρωι ἔτει τῆν [ἐκατοστὴν]
 καὶ τετταροκοστὴν Ὀλυμπιάδα νικῶντος [τὸ τρίτον]
 [π]αγκράτιον Ἀγησιδάμου Μεσσηνίου, κτλ. 16

² *I.Magnesia* 16–87. The “foundation-decree” *I.Magnesia* 16 and the decrees of recognition are re-edited with commentary by K. J. Rigsby, *Asyilia. Territorial Inviolability in the Hellenistic World* (Berkeley 1996) 179–279. Rigsby omits *I.Magnesia* 17 (mythological history of Magnesia) and 20 (fictional Cretan decree); for the latter, consult A. Chaniotis, “Empfängerformular und Urkundenfälschung: Bemerkungen zum Urkundendossier von Magnesia am Mäander,” in R. G. Khoury (ed.), *Urkunden und Urkundenformulare im klassischen Altertum und in den orientalischen Kulturen* (Heidelberg 1999) 51–69.

³ For the restoration [στεφανί]την in *I.Magnesia* 16.16–17, see Slater and Summa 278–284.

The Olympiad dating firmly establishes the date of the first Magnesians appeal as 221 B.C.⁴

The Magnesians go on to describe the nature of the first attempt to have the *agon* recognised as stephanitic. The most recent edition of the relevant passage reads as follows:⁵

>< πρώτ[ον στεφανί]- 16

την ἀγῶνα θεῖναι τῶγ κατοικούντων τὴν Ἀσίαν [ἐψηφίσαν]-
 το, τὴν ἐκδοχὴν τοῦ χρησμοῦ ταύτην λαβόντες, [ὅτι πάντες]
 τιμήσουσιν οὕτως Ἄρτεμιν Λευκοφρυηνήν, μάλ[λον δὲ εἰς]
 τὸ θεῖον εὐσεβῶς ἔχοντες, ἐὰμ Μάγνησιν ἐπὶ τὸν ἀ[ρχαῖον ἐπό]- 20
 μνοι βωμὸν Ἀρχηγέτιδι γέρα κεχαρισμέν[α ἀποδιδῶσιν,]
 ἄτε καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἀ[γ]ῶνων τὴν ἀρχὴν μὲν ἐπ' ἀργ[υρίωι τε]-
 θέντων, χρόνωι δὲ ὕστερον διὰ χρησμοῦς στεφαν[ιτῶν γεγο]-
 νότων. >< ὡς δὲ ἐπιβ[α]λόμενοι παρηλύσθησ[αν, κτλ.] 24

There are a number of puzzling aspects to these passages.⁶ First, the fact that the Magnesians chose to record their humiliating failure in 221 at all. It will not do simply to say that it is “recorded only as a rhetorical foil for the following claim to success”;⁷ the fact that the cities of the Greek world rebuffed the Magnesians once does not increase the prestige derived from being accepted later. Epigraphic parallels for such a

⁴ J. Ebert, “Zur Stiftungsurkunde der Λευκοφρυηνά in Magnesia am Mäander,” *Philologus* 126 (1982) 198–216, at 201–202 (= *Agonismata. Kleine philologische Schriften* [Stuttgart/Leipzig 1997] 258–279, at 262–264). I hope to discuss the vexed problem of the date of the Athenian archon Thrasyphon elsewhere.

⁵ Slater and Summa 289–291.

⁶ Lines 18–20, as restored by Slater and Summa, are ungrammatical: δέ cannot co-ordinate a main clause and a participial clause. Indeed, the participial clause as it stands is suspiciously superfluous. I suggest that what we have is the subject of the verb τιμήσουσιν, namely [οἱ πρὸς] τὸ θεῖον εὐσεβῶς ἔχοντες. I would restore the whole clause: τὴν ἐκδοχὴν τοῦ χρησμοῦ ταύτην λαβόντες, [διότι?] | τιμήσουσιν οὕτως Ἄρτεμιν Λευκοφρυηνήν μάλ[ιστα οἱ πρὸς] | τὸ θεῖον εὐσεβῶς ἔχοντες, ἐὰμ κτλ.. “Understanding the meaning of the oracle thus, that those who are piously disposed towards the divine will best honour Artemis Leucophryene in this way, if (etc.)” Compare e.g. *I.Magnesia* 48.11–13, πά[τρι]ον δ' ἐστὶν Ἐρετρο[ιεύ]σιν τὰ τε πρὸς τὸ θεῖον εὐσεβῶς διακεῖσθαι [καὶ μάλισ]τα πρὸς τὴν Ἄρτε[μιν]; 100a.16–19.

⁷ Slater and Summa 276.

record of failed diplomacy are scarce.⁸ Second, the fact that the earlier appeal is dated with such precision: the use of four different dating criteria for a single event is, while useful in establishing late third-century Athenian archontic chronology, to my knowledge unique in Hellenistic epigraphy. Third, and perhaps strangest of all, the suggestion that the stephanitic contest proclaimed in 221 was to be restricted to “those dwelling in Asia.” I know no other instance of a contest, let alone a stephanitic contest, at which competition was limited in this way. Even the festivals celebrated by regional *koina* in Hellenistic Asia Minor (the Alexandria of the Ionian *koinon*, the Panathenaia of the *koinon* of Athena Ilias in the Troad, the Rhomaia of the Lycian *koinon*) regularly attracted contestants from other parts of the Greek world: they were not exclusively ἀγῶνες τῶν κατοικούντων τὴν Ἀσίαν.⁹ Indeed, it is hard to imagine that the Greeks of Asia ever had a sufficiently developed sense of corporate identity, at this or any other period, to have taken any pride or pleasure in a festival which explicitly excluded the Greeks of “Old” Greece.¹⁰ The case is still further weakened by the fact that the only response which can confidently be connected to the appeal of 221 derives from the Aetolian league;¹¹

⁸ The great inscription from Lycian Xanthos recording the various apologies and excuses put forward by the Xanthians for not providing more financial assistance towards the rebuilding of the walls of Kyttenion is not a true parallel, since it is not the Kyttenians who are recording what was essentially a failed embassy: *SEG XXXVIII* 1476.49–65.

⁹ The (illegitimate) parallel with the festivals of the Asiatic *koina* is drawn by C. Vial, “A propos des concours de l’Orient méditerranéen à l’époque hellénistique,” in F. Prost (ed.), *L’Orient méditerranéen de la mort d’Alexandre aux campagnes de Pompée* (Rennes/Toulouse 2003) 311–328, at 314–316. For the international competitors at these festivals, see e.g. Ph. Gauthier, “Inscription agonistique de Messène,” *REG* 113 (2000) 631–635.

¹⁰ The reorganised Acraephian Ptoia in the late third century was restricted to the cities of the Boeotian League (*I. Oropos* 304.3–4: ambassadors sent πρὸς τὰς πόλεις τὰς ἐν τῇ Βοιωτίᾳ), but this is part of a much broader pattern of Boeotian political and religious federalism, completely absent from Hellenistic Asia Minor. See P. Roesch, *Études béotiennes* (Paris 1982) 225–242; K. J. Rigsby, “A Decree of Haliartus on Cult,” *AJP* 108 (1987) 729–740.

¹¹ *IG IX.12* 4.c, with Rigsby, *Aydia* 190–193 (222/1 B.C.). It is possible,

the thesis of a “two-tier” *theoria*, with the Greeks of Asia invited to recognise Magnesian *asylia* and to share in the *agon*, and the remainder of the Greeks invited only to recognise *asylia*, has little to recommend it.

All three problems are solved by the alteration of a single restored letter. In lines 16–18, read:

πρῶτ[οι στεφανί]- 16
 την ἀγῶνα θεῖναι τῶγ κατοικούντων τὴν Ἀσίαν [ἐψηφίσαν]-
 το, κτλ.

They were the *first of those dwelling in Asia* to vote in favour of establishing a stephanitic contest.¹²

Claims, justified or otherwise, to be the “first” from a particular city or region to have achieved a particular distinction have a long history in the Greek world.¹³ This was not merely a matter of vanity. In the second century A.D. the Magnesians’ own claim to membership of the Panhellenion rested on the fact that they had been “the first of the Greeks to cross over to Asia and settle there,” *πρῶτοι Ἑλλήνων [διαβάντες εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν καὶ κατοικήσαντες*. Naturally only those Asiatics who could present a bona fide Greek genealogy were welcome in the Panhellenion; a successful claim to be the first of the mainland Greeks to have settled in Asia had practical diplomatic consequences.¹⁴

Individual victors frequently claimed to be the “first” from a city or district to have won a particular athletic contest. So a

but unprovable, that other surviving recognition-decrees pertain to the first appeal.

¹² I first proposed this supplement at a workshop paper on *LMagnesia* 16 delivered in Oxford by W. Slater in January 2006; it is rejected without argument by Slater and Summa 289.

¹³ W. Günther, “Zu den Anfängen des Kaiserkults in Milet,” *AthMitt* 39 (1989) 173–178, at 177–178. There is no comprehensive study, hence the relatively full treatment here.

¹⁴ *IG* II² 1091.4–5. For the mythological foundations of this claim, F. Prinz, *Gründungsgeschichte und Sagenmythologie* (Munich 1979) 112–121. For the historical context, A. Heller, “Ἀρχαιότης et εὐγένεια. Le thème des origines dans les cités d’Asie Mineure à l’époque impériale,” *Ktema* 31 (2006) 97–108, at 99–100.

Milesian athlete of the late first century B.C. was the “first and only of those from Asia” (πρώτον καὶ μόνον τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς Ἀσίας) to be proclaimed ἄριστος Ἑλλήνων at the Plataean Eleutheria after his victory in the race in full armour; he is further designated the “first of the Ionians” (πρώτον τῶν Ἴωνων) and the “first of the Milesians” (πρώτον Μιλησίων) to have won a number of other contests in both Greece and Asia.¹⁵ A much earlier example is provided by the victory monument of a boxer in the boys’ category at the Pythian games, dating to the early fourth century, the “only one of the Ionians” to have achieved this. A Pharsalan victor in the Olympic *pankration* of the later fourth century was the “first from the land of Thessaly” to have won this particular contest; in the same period, an individual claims to be the “first of the Cretans” to have been victorious at the Nemea.¹⁶ Instances relating to individual cities are very numerous in the Hellenistic and Roman Imperial periods.¹⁷ Such claims were not necessarily only a matter of civic pride. The victory of Diotimus of Sidon at the Nemean games in the late third century B.C. was the first time a Sidonian had triumphed at a Greek panhellenic festival; competition and victory at the Panhellenic games helped to legitimise the Sidonians’ claims to Greek identity and ethnicity.¹⁸ In later periods, the same vocabulary came to be

¹⁵ *I.Didyma* 201, with L. Robert, *Opera minora selecta* II 758–765, and *Hellemica* VII (Paris 1949) 117–125.

¹⁶ J. Ebert, *Griechische Epigramme auf Sieger an gymnischen und hippischen Agonen* (Berlin 1972) no. 31, [ἄμῶνος] [Ἴώνων]; *CEG* II 794–795, πρώτος γῆς ἀπο Θεσσαλίας; Ebert no. 48, πρώτος [Κρ]ητῶν.

¹⁷ A few examples (not comprehensive): *CEG* II 862 (Κώιον πρώτος, late IV B.C.); *SEG* XI 338.7 (πρώτος Ἀχαιῶν: III B.C.); Ebert no. 68 (πρώτος Τρώων: III/II B.C.); Ebert no. 71 (Messene: III/II B.C.); *IG* XII.1 841, with *I.Lindos* 699 (πρώτον Λινδίων: II B.C.); *I.Priene* 268 (II B.C.); *Syll.*³ 1065 (πρώτος Κώιον: early I A.D.); Robert, *OMS* VII 696–706 (πρώτος Ῥοδίων: I A.D.); *I.Iasos* 107 (πρώτος Ἰασέων: late I A.D.); C. Roueché, *Performers and Partisans at Aphrodisias* (London 1993) no. 91.ii (πρώτον Ἀφροδεισιέων: II A.D.).

¹⁸ ἀστὼν γὰρ πρώτιστος ἀφ’ Ἑλλάδος ἵππικὸν [ε]ὔχος | ἀγαγεῖς εἰς ἀγαθῶν οἶκον Ἀγνηοριδῶν: *Nouveau choix d’inscriptions grecques* no. 35, with F. Millar, “The Phoenician Cities: A Case-Study of Hellenisation,” *PCPhS* 209 (1983) 54–71 (repr. *Rome, the Greek World, & the East* III [Chapel Hill 2006] 32–50).

applied to new spheres of inter-polis rivalry. In the mid-first century A.D. a Milesian declared himself to be the first and only individual from Miletus or anywhere else in Ionia to enter the Roman senate, and only the fifth from all of Asia: πέμπ[τος] μὲν ἀπὸ τῆς Ἀσίας ὅλης ἐκ τοῦ αἰῶνος εἰς σύγκλητον εἰσελθ[ών], ἀπὸ δὲ Μειλήτου καὶ τῆς ἄλλης Ἰωνίας μόν[ος] καὶ πρ[ώ]τος.¹⁹

The founders of particular cults could also claim “priority” in so doing. In the late fifth century (420/19), Telemachus was the “first” to have established a sanctuary of Asclepius in Athens;²⁰ in the early Hellenistic period, a certain Thymilos was the “first” to establish a cult of Asclepius at Cretan Lissos.²¹ The same applied to athletic contests. The earliest example is certainly a sixth-century dedication from the Athenian acropolis, set up by a college of *hieropoioi*, the “first to establish an *agon* in honour of the grey-eyed maiden,” [hoi ton a]gō[na thes]an prōto[i] glau[ro]pιδι φόρ[ει]: the *agon* here is none other than the Panathenaea.²² In the Athenian decree of 283 honouring the poet Philippides, he is said to have established a new contest in honour of Demeter and Kore, in commemoration of the recovery of Eleusis from the Macedonians in, most probably, 285/4: [ἐπί]θετον ἀγώνα κατεσκεύασεν τει Δήμη[ητρι] καὶ τει Κόρ[ει] [πρ]ώτος ὑπόμνημα τῆς τοῦ δήμου [ἐλευθερίας].²³

In all these cases, however, the chronological priority and concomitant credit are individual rather than collective. The

¹⁹ *I. Didyma* 296.7–11; see H. Halfmann, *Die Senatoren aus dem östlichen Teil des Imperium Romanum bis zum Ende des 2. Jh. n. Chr.* (Göttingen 1979) 108–109.

²⁰ In both prose and verse: [Τηλέμαχος ιδρύσατο τὸ ἱερόν καὶ τὸν βωμὸν τῷ Ἀσκληπιῷ πρῶτος] (*SEG* XXV 226.1–3); [Τηλέμαχος σε ἱέρωσε Ἀσκληπιῷ ἠδὲ ὀμβώμοις | πρῶτος ἰδρυσάμενος θυσίαις θεαῖς ὑποθήκαις] (*CEG* II 763). A fictive epigram in the Palatine anthology attributes the establishment of the cult to Sophocles: βωμοὺς τούσδε θεοῖς Σοφοκλῆς ἰδρύσατο πρῶτος (*Anth. Gr.* 6.145).

²¹ Θυμίλος ἴσαστο τόνδ’ Ἀσκληπιὸν ἐνθάδε πρῶτος (Lupu, *NGSL* 24); cf. e.g. *CEG* I 457). The style is imitated by Posidippus in an epigram on the foundation of the shrine of Aphrodite-Arsinoe-Philadelphus: ἦν ... πρῶτος ὁ ναύαρχος θῆκατο Καλλιμαράτης (*Ep.* 119 Austin/Bastianini [Ath. 318D]).

²² *IG* I³ 507 (?566/5 B.C.).

²³ *IG* II² 657.43–45.

closest parallels to the Magnesians' claim are furnished by two texts from Cyzicus. An oracle of the Pythian Apollo dating to the late third or early second century, and thus roughly contemporary with the Magnesian document, begins by stating that the Cyzicenes were the "first" city to celebrate a festival of Kore Soteira: [οἱ] ἐπιτετέλεκα[ντι ἡκατ' ἐνιαυτὸν] τὰ Σωτήρια πρῶτ[οι τὰ] Κόραι τὰ Σωτεῖραι καλῶς καὶ εὐσεβέ[ως] καὶ εὐτυχῶς. More interesting still, an epigram from the Palatine anthology claims that Cyzicus was the first city *in Asia* to build a temple dedicated to Athena: ὑψίστα Τριτωνίδι νηὸν ἔτευξεν | Κύζικος ἄδ' ἰρᾶ πρῶτον ἐν Ἀσιάδι, a claim very similar to that of the Magnesia text.²⁴ As the Magnesians were the first in Asia to establish a stephanitic contest, so the Cyzicenes were the first in Asia to have established a cult of Athena.

The new restoration provides an explanation for the otherwise peculiar fact that the Magnesians chose to recall the humiliation of 221 B.C. at all. The point was precisely to emphasise that they had been the *first* city in Asia (πρῶτοι ... τῶν κατοικούντων τὴν Ἀσίαν) to attempt to establish stephanitic games with oracular sanction. The only state in the vicinity of Magnesia to possess a crowned contest before 221 was the city of Cos, its Asclepieia having been declared stephanitic in 242.²⁵ The Hyacinthotropheia at Cnidus were not reorganised as a penteteric festival with stephanitic status until 201, the Pergamene Nicephoria not until 182.²⁶ So far as we know, the

²⁴ L. Robert, *Documents d'Asie Mineure* (Paris 1987) 156–173; *Anth.Gr.* 6.342.

²⁵ Rigsby, *Asyria* 106–153; K. J. Rigsby and K. Hallof, "Aus der Arbeit der 'Inscriptiones Graecae' X. Decrees of Inviolability for Kos," *Chiron* 31 (2001) 333–345. The rapid diffusion of crowned games in the third and second centuries is briefly invoked by Robert, *OMS* VI 710–711; in more detail, see A. Chaniotis, "Sich selbst feiern? Die städtischen Feste des Hellenismus im Spannungsfeld zwischen Religion und Politik," in P. Zanker and M. Wörle (eds.), *Stadt und Bürgerbild im Hellenismus* (*Vestigia* Beitr. 47 [1995]) 147–172; R. Parker, "New 'Panhellenic' Festivals in Hellenistic Greece," in R. Schlesier and U. Zellmann (eds.), *Mobility and Travel in the Mediterranean from Antiquity to the Middle Ages* (Münster 2004) 9–22.

²⁶ Cnidus: *I.Knidus* 220. Pergamon: Robert, *OMS* I 153–157; C. P. Jones, "Diodoros Paspas and the Nikephoria of Pergamon," *Chiron* 4 (1974) 183–205, and "Diodoros Paspas Revisited," *Chiron* 30 (2000) 1–14.

Magnesians were indeed the first community on the Asiatic mainland to attempt to have a festival upgraded to crowned status.

By 208 B.C., however, this had developed into a serious matter of prestige for the Magnesians. Between 221 and 208 a different stephanitic contest had been successfully established in Asia, at the neighbouring city of Miletus. A Milesian decree inscribed on Cos explains how the Milesians came to upgrade the Didymeia to stephanitic status. The Milesians had long celebrated a festival and games at Didyma in honour of Apollo; moreover, the city and country of Miletus had (at some indeterminate point) been declared sacred by oracular decree, in honour of the coupling of Zeus and Leto on Milesian territory. Whence, the Milesians claim, many cities, tribes and monarchs had spontaneously recognised the Milesians' inviolability, and it was, accordingly, fitting that the Milesians should act in accordance with the afore-mentioned oracles and raise the contest of the Didymeia to stephanitic status, inviting all the Greeks to share in the games. The Milesians therefore ask the Coans to recognise the contest as stephanitic and to offer the greatest rewards to victorious athletes from Cos.²⁷ The precise date of establishment of the Milesian penteteric Didymeia is unknown. In 218/7 the city of Seleuceia-Tralles voted to send *theoroi* to an annual festival of Apollo Didymeus, which suggests strongly that the penteteric festival was not yet in existence; the earliest certain reference to it comes in the context of the school-foundation of Eudemos in 206/5 (*paidonomoi* to provide an ox to Apollo "every fourth year at the Didymeia, and in other years at the Boiegia").²⁸

²⁷ *Syll.*³ 590, esp. 18–23: προσήκει δὲ τῷ δήμῳ πράσσειν τοῖς ἐξενηγεμένοις χρησιμοῖς ἀκόλουθα τὸν τε ἀγῶνα τιθέναι τῶν Διδυμείων στεφανίτην καὶ τοὺς Ἕλληνας εἰς ταῦτα παραλαμβάνειν. See W. Günther, *Das Orakel von Didyma in hellenistischer Zeit* (*IstMitt* Beih. 4 [1971]) 100–107.

²⁸ Seleuceia-Tralles: *Milet* I.3 143.9–10, with 124.21; Eudemos: *Milet* I.3 145.70–71, with *I.Didyma* 259.23–5 and *Milet* I.3 124.33, VI.1 p.178. For the chronology, M. Wörle, "Inschriften von Herakleia am Latmos I: Antiochos III., Zeuxis und Herakleia," *Chiron* 18 (1988) 421–476, at 428–437; Rigsby, *Asylia* 172–178; Chr. Habicht, "Zur Chronologie der hellenistischen Eponyme von Kos," *Chiron* 30 (2000) 303–332, at 309.

The crucial point for our purposes is that the establishment of the stephanitic Didymeia at Miletus almost certainly falls *between* the two Magnesian attempts to establish a stephanitic contest (221 and 208). During this period, relations between Miletus and Magnesia were not at their best. The settlement by Miletus of Cretan mercenaries in the Maeander delta plain in 234/3 was an act of naked aggression towards her neighbours in the delta region. A lengthy peace-treaty, dating to 196, informs us of a war between Miletus and Magnesia over the limits of their respective deltaic territories.²⁹ That Miletus should also be able to claim priority in establishing an international festival and contest was an intolerable blow to Magnesian prestige.

This, in my view, is the explanation of the absurdly elaborate dating-formula in *I.Magnesia* 16.11–16. The Magnesians are determined to prove that it was they, not the Milesians, who were the “first of those dwelling in Asia” to have received oracular sanction to establish a stephanitic *agon*. The heavy-handed dating-formula is an attempt to underline to posterity that although Miletus was the first to succeed, Magnesia had been the first to receive the green light from Delphi. If it had taken the rest of the Greek world thirteen years to come round to Apollo’s point of view, that could hardly be blamed on the Magnesians.³⁰

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²⁹ *Milet* I.3 33 (Cretans); 148 (peace treaty), with P. Baker, “La vallée du Méandre au II^e siècle: relations entre les cités et institutions militaires,” in A. Bresson and R. Descat, *Les cités d’Asie Mineure occidentale au II^e siècle a.C.* (Bordeaux 2001) 61–75. For the date, M. Wörle, “Der Friede zwischen Milet und Magnesia. Methodische Probleme einer Communis opinio,” *Chiron* 34 (2004) 45–57.

³⁰ I am indebted to Robert Parker, Scott Scullion, Kent Rigsby, and an anonymous referee for comments and criticism.