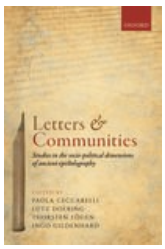

Letters and Communities: Studies in the Socio-Political Dimensions of Ancient Epistolography

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CHAPTER

5 Letters and Decrees: Diplomatic Protocols in the Hellenistic Period

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Abstract

During the Hellenistic period, royal correspondence constituted a challenging mode of diplomacy for *polis* communities. The chapter offers a case study of how one such community, Magnesia on the Maeander, responded to the challenge. The dossier in question concerns the request of acceptance of a new contest for Artemis Leukophryene, first celebrated in 208 BCE, which Magnesia addressed to all of the Greek world. The answers from kings, leagues, and cities make it possible to compare different 'discursive styles', in particular the contrastive ideologies of power instantiated in the royal letter and the city-decree. In addition, Ceccarelli shows how the way in which they were set up in the agora of Magnesia affords insights into the Magnesians' own perception of these acts of international diplomacy—and how they used the responses to project an image of a political community that was both internally cohesive and well connected with the outside world.

Keywords: royal correspondence, city-decrees, international diplomacy, Hellenistic period, Magnesia on the Maeander, inscriptions and polis ideology

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1. Introduction

The medium may not (always) *be* the message (*pace* McLuhan)—but it certainly is a significant part of it; and the choice of medium (which by definition implies a preference for one over potential others) constitutes a significant factor in communication. In the context of the present volume, my principal heuristic interest is in the (royal) letter as a format of interstate communication in the Hellenistic age and its ideological connotations—in comparison and contrast to other genres employed for diplomatic ends (in particular the city-decree) and both from the point of view of the sender and that of the receiving community. Both letters and decrees can be used in the context of official communications between two 'authorities' (*poleis*, kings, *ethne*, sanctuaries, or associations). They both can contain performative utterances: cities, kings, and other political entities grant privileges, take decisions, or utter directives, the illocutionary force of which depends on their power to give orders, while its satisfactory completion rests on their acceptance by the receiving community.[1] Moreover, both royal letters and city-decrees function as instruments of self-presentation: through specific linguistic choices, kings or cities project an image of their own choosing.

That we are able to study these diverse 'languages of power' is due to the fact that many cities decided to
p. 148 generate an epigraphic record. It is important to ↳ realize that the act of preserving a permanent representation of an event or document on stone is only the last stage in a drawn-out process that involves a complex sequence of decision-making and diplomatic activity. In the world of the Greek city-states of the classical and Hellenistic periods, interstate exchanges were, as a general rule, conducted by embassies, which relied on both oral and written modes of discourse.[2] While the ambassadors interacted face-to-face with their interlocutors, they also tended to bring along pieces of writing that would aid them in their negotiations, such as a city-decree, a royal letter, or other supporting evidence. In their address to the community or king, the ambassadors would comment orally on such written records, possibly basing their rhetorical performance on a pre-formulated script.[3] Their aim at any rate was to return with a written document, which tended to take the form of either a decree or a letter (or both) and frequently manifested traces of its diplomatic genesis in both oral and written acts of communication.[4] Such official 'charters' constituted authoritative points of reference: they were preserved in the city-archive and in many instances also recorded on stone for public display.

The surviving evidence enables us to explore some of the strategies by which the political actors of the Hellenistic world constructed and asserted their authority and the different 'political styles' they evolved for this purpose. Such an exploration requires attention to the porosity (or lack thereof) between different types of institutional discourse—and recognition of the multifaceted and reciprocal nature of communication (or, indeed, projection of authority).[5] More specifically, the correspondence that emanated from (say) the Seleukid court participated in both an 'outward-looking' discourse of power addressed to the cities and an internal one, to do with the court bureaucracy; and each discourse presupposed and articulated a distinct form of royal
p. 149 authority.[6] For ↳ their part, the recipients of royal letters (such as cities) had a range of options in responding to and interacting with such documents, including, not least, the decision as to whether or not to record the missive on stone and thus make it part of the cityscape.[7] Thus, while my focus will be mainly on interstate communication, the last part of the chapter also looks at what diplomatic activity (and its epigraphic record) contributed to the life of a *polis*.

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2. The ‘Archive’ of Magnesia on the Maeander on the Institution of the Leukophryena

I have chosen to focus on one specific body of evidence for the present case study: it concerns a request that the citizens of Magnesia on the Maeander made in 208/7 BCE, to have their festival for Artemis Leukophryene (Artemis ‘of the white brows’) accepted as equal in status to the Pythian games and to have their city acknowledged as sacred and inviolable.[8] The Magnesians addressed their request to the entire Greek-speaking *oikoumene*; and answers came from kings (Attalos I, Antiochos III and his son Antiochos, Ptolemy IV, Philip V), leagues (e.g. the Aetolian and the Acarnanian league), and cities (too numerous to list—overall, more than 165 respondents are epigraphically attested).[9] From a sociological point of view, we here capture the (petrified) voices of various different types of political actors that shaped Hellenistic history, enabling us to compare and contrast the diverse discursive styles (and genres) they adopted to assert themselves in the context of
p. 150 international diplomacy. That we are able to study these diverse ‘languages of power’ is due ↳ to the fact that the citizens of Magnesia decided to preserve a record of the documents in the form of a public inscription in their agora. The diplomatic dossier that the Magnesians put on ostentatious display in the centre of their city therefore not only yields precious insights into the genres (and their discursive protocols) that shaped interstate interactions in the Hellenistic world; the monumental exhibit also illustrates how a *polis* during this period perceived and managed its official correspondence—and deployed it for purposes of collective self-assertion and promotion within the wider context of the Greek *oikoumene*.

We are unusually well informed about the events that surrounded the institution of the games in honour of Artemis Leukophryene because one of the inscribed texts, the so-called ‘sacred history’ of Magnesia, offers a remarkably detailed account (though not without some strategic ambiguities) of what happened.[10] The inscription relates how at some point in the last quarter of the third century BCE the citizens of Magnesia, following a divine manifestation of the goddess Artemis, decided to send an embassy to Delphi to consult the oracle about the possibility of instituting games in honour of Artemis Leukophryene. The oracle responded, in the format traditional for Delphi, that ‘It is more agreeable and better (λώ]ιον εἶμεν καὶ ἄμεινον, l. 7) for those who honour Apollo Pythios and Artemis Leukophryene and recognize the city and country of the Magnesians as sacred and inviolable’.[11] As a result, the Magnesians voted, in 221 BCE, to establish a stephanitic contest for Artemis, in which the competitors vied for crowns (*stephanoi*)—a prestigious status, which depended on its acceptance by other cities;[12] at the same time, they would also ask for recognition of their inviolability. The date of this decision is secure; the inscription pinpoints it with meticulous care and sets the decision in a wider, international context (*I.Magnesia* 16 = Rigsby (1996) no. 66, ll. 11–17):

> in the year when Zenodotos was *stephanephoros*, Thrasyphon archon in Athens, the year after the victory at the Pythian games of [name lost] from Boeotia as cythara-singer, and one year before the Olympic games in which Hegesidamos of Messene won the pancration for the third time, first of those dwelling in Asia they voted to establish a stephanitic contest.[13]

p. 151 This same text tells us that there was a delay in the execution of the plan (παρηλκύσθησ[αν], l. 24);[14] eventually, fourteen years later, in 208/7, under the stephanephorate of Moiragoras, the Magnesians,

> remembering their ancestral [friendships], revealed also to others what had been prophesied; and, in Moiragoras’ year, they established a penteteric stephanitic contest, equal to the Pythia, giving a crown worth fifty gold staters. (ll. 26–9)

This is one of three documents in the dossier that locate the decision of the Magnesians in a larger historical context. While this text recounts the events leading to the successful establishment of the penteteric festival, the other two are a story of the foundation of Magnesia (*I.Magnesia* 17) which reaches back into mythical times,

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emphasizing the long sojourn of the Magnesians in Crete before a divine oracle sent them to Asia Minor; and a (fabricated) decree of the *koinon* of the Cretans offering them help on that occasion (*I.Magnesia* 20).[15]

Clearly, the Magnesians thought carefully about the various aspects of their decision, and composed this set of documents to support their request, possibly already with the intent to inscribe the documents that testified to the acceptance of the games as well as (in most cases) the recognition of inviolability. The actual setting up of the inscriptions probably coincided with the second celebration of the games in 203 BCE;[16] but the plan to generate an epigraphic record of the city's diplomatic efforts, to be put on display in the marketplace, seems to have been an important element of the project from the start—and will have been broadcast as such by the
p. 152 ambassadors the Magnesians sent out. This can be inferred from the wording of the decree (*I.Magnesia* ↳ 64 = Rigsby (1996) no. 114) that an unknown city returned in reaction to the Magnesians' request. The statement at l. 21 ὅπως τὸ ψήφισμα τόδε ἀν]αγραφῇ ἐν τῇ στοᾶι αὐτῶν ('that this decree may be inscribed in their stoa') seems to presuppose rather precise knowledge of what the Magnesians intended to do with the responses they hoped to receive.[17] As we shall see later, the assumption that the Magnesians decided already in the planning phase where to inscribe the answers brought back by the ambassadors allows us to make sense of the distribution of the texts on the walls of the agora. It was indeed probably in connection with the upgrading of Artemis' cult that the Magnesians initiated a monumental reshaping of their city centre, with the erection of an impressive temple to Artemis, work of the famous architect Hermogenes, on a site directly linked to the agora, which was itself newly redesigned.[18]

Other features of the epigraphical dossier also show that the Magnesians went about their diplomatic efforts with an extraordinary degree of planning and care, not least to ensure recognition across the entire Greek world. Each embassy, usually composed of three envoys, was sent out to cover a specific geographical area.[19] Thus, there must have been a decree, now lost, or perhaps never inscribed, consisting of the various decisions of the Magnesians that concerned such questions as to which groups were to be sent to which places, what exactly they were supposed to announce, where the different responses would feature in the inscription overall, and so on. Upon arrival at their destination, the ambassadors will have handed over the decree with which the people of Magnesia decided to seek recognition of inviolability (*asylia*) for their city and acceptance of their games, and possibly other documents as well, such as the collections of oracles and works of local historians and poets mentioned more than once in the answers; and they will have delivered speeches, either impromptu or pre-scripted, in which they tailored the request to their specific audience.[20] Their efforts to achieve
p. 153 recognition of the Leukophryena proved ↳ highly successful: eventually, the Magnesians received at least 165 answers to their request. They did not inscribe all of them, however: in at least sixteen instances, the names of cities are appended to the answer of another city that took a similar decision, without it being possible for us to know in what terms exactly these additional cities had couched their answer.[21] Furthermore, some inscriptions —by the most likely estimate about one-third of the original set—have been lost.[22] This leaves us with sixty-five surviving documents. Of these, some are too fragmentary to yield anything of value; but those sufficiently preserved show that five kings (Antiochos III and his son Antiochos, Ptolemy, Attalos, and Philip V) responded with letters (Philip's letter is lost, but a decree from the city of Chalcis refers explicitly to his letter); the leagues and cities sent back decrees, with two cities (Argos, and an unknown one: the text is too lacunose for it to be possible to determine its origin) sending back a covering letter accompanying their decree; finally, one city may have answered through a letter only.[23]

Some of these answers share remarkable similarities in the wording used; Chaniotis has explained these similarities as reflections of the original decree presented by the Magnesians to the various cities.[24] The closeness between the decree sent by the Magnesians and the responding documents is one instance of the widespread practice in the Greek world of using the diplomatic overture of the other partner as a basis for one's answer.[25] Not all Greek *poleis* 'spoke' the same diplomatic idiom, and the royal idiolect followed its own distinct protocols altogether; in such instances of dialogic diplomacy these languages interacted and to some degree merged with one another. Indeed, an important consequence of the practice of reusing formulations of the

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other partner lies in the fact that expressions typical of the language of one city or political actor would enter
p. 154 into the language of the other, thus creating ↳ in the long run a common diplomatic and juridical language.[26] For present purposes, however, discursive differences between genres, especially letters and decrees, are just as important as the phenomenon of idiomatic assimilation.

3. The Answers: Letters and Decrees

Let us see how diplomatic activity looks in the dossier from Magnesia. I shall analyse the royal letters first, and then contrast them with select decrees. This sequence corresponds to the way these texts were put on display. While it is impossible to reconstruct the exact place of all documents, beyond the fact that they were all displayed in the south-west corner of the agora of Magnesia, one detail about location is clear: the royal letters were placed at the beginning of the dossier, in the vicinity of the inscriptions that contain the historical account of the episode, the mythical history of Magnesia, and the fake Cretan decree (respectively, *I.Magnesia* 16, 17, and 20).[27]

All royal letters open with the same, standardized greeting formula: 'King Attalos (or Antiochos, or Ptolemy) to the council and the people of the Magnesians, greetings', Βασιλεὺς Ἄτταλος (Ἀντίοχος, Πτολεμαῖος) Μαγνήτων τῆι βουλῆι καὶ τῶι δήμωι χαίρειν. Right after the greeting formula, Attalos I's letter (*I.Magnesia* 22 = Rigsby (1996) no. 68) moves to the preamble (ll. 3–13):

> Πυθίων καὶ Λυκ[ο]-| μήδης οἱ παρ' ὑμῶν ἀνεκόμι-||5 σαν πρός με ψήφισμα, καθ' ὃ πα[ρα]-| καλεῖτε τὸν ἀγῶνα ὃν τίθετε | τῆι Ἀρτέμιδι τῆι Λευκοφρυην[ῆι] | μουσικὸν καὶ γυμνικὸν καὶ ἱπ-| πικὸν ἀποδέξασθαι στεφανίτ[ην] ||10 ἰσοπύθιον, καὶ αὐτοὶ διελέχθησ[αν] | ἀκολούθως τοῖς γεγραμμένο[ις]| ἠξίουν δὲ καὶ τὰς ὑπ' ἐμὲ πόλει[ς] | ἀποδέξασθαι ὁμοίως·
>
> Pythion and Lycomedes, your envoys, brought me the decree according to which you ask me to accept as crowned and isopythian the musical, athletic and equestrian contest which you celebrate for Artemis Leukophryene; and they themselves spoke in keeping with the text, and asked that the cities under me also accept likewise.

Motivation and decision follow (ll. 13–24; the end of the text is lost):

> θεωρῶ[ν δὲ] | τὸν δῆμον μεμνημένον τῶν [ὑπ' ἐ]-||15 μοῦ γεγενημένων εἰς αὐτὸν εὐ-[εργε]-|| σιῶν καὶ ὁμιλοῦντ' ἀεί μοι...[c.5]-| νως, τόν τε ἀγῶνα ὥσπερ παρα[καλεῖ]-| τε ἀποδέχομαι καὶ ἀπαρχὴν ἐγ[ὼ προσέτα]-| ξα δοῦναι, καὶ αἱ
> p. 155 πόλεις δὲ αἱ π[ειθόμε]-||20 ναι ἐμοὶ ποιήσουσιν ὁμοίως· [ἔγραψα] | γὰρ αὐταῖς παρακαλῶν· κ ↳ α[ὶ ἐν τοῖς ἄλ]-| λοις δὲ καθ' ὅσον ὁ δῆμος [αἰτεῖται] | [συνα]υξήσω τὸν ἀγῶνα [..c.8...] | [.c.5.] τὴν π[.....c.18.....]
>
> Seeing that the people are mindful of my past benefactions to them and always behave....towards me, I accept the contest as you ask and have given orders to give a first fruits sacrifice, and the cities which obey me will do likewise; for I have written to them requesting it. And in all else, insofar as your people ask, I shall join in increasing the contest....

The Magnesians' petition to the king may have included a request for inviolability (*asylia*); but strikingly, the letter makes no reference to it: Attalos does not include it in his grant and also passes over the matter in silence in his summary of both the decree and the accompanying speech of the ambassadors. The king only agrees to the request to have the games recognized, for reasons to do with his own past actions—more specifically, his record of benefactions—and the way the Magnesians responded to his generosity previously. But he amplifies his recognition of the games by promising to ensure that the cities under his sway will do so as well. Indeed, the letter stresses this aspect of royal power twice: in the recapitulation of the envoys' request (thereby broadcasting the fact that the Magnesians officially acknowledge and appreciate the supra-poliadic authority

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of the king) and then again in Attalos' own statement. As such, the king, in granting a city a request, simultaneously advertizes his power to enforce obedience in matters of interstate diplomacy—an ingenious way of combining the role of benefactor and power-broker. This raises the question as to whether the cities under Attalid control referenced the royal dispensation in their own replies to the Magnesians. The political situation of Asia Minor at this time is far from clear; but Teos and Colophon, among the cities whose answer we have, seem to have been under Attalid control. As it happens, their acceptances are simply recorded by having their names appended to the very detailed and fulsome decree of Clazomenae (*I.Magnesia* 53 = Rigsby (1996) no. 102), together with the names of ten other Ionian cities, which make up the full complement of the original Ionian Dodekapolis (Hdt. 1.142). Clazomenae accepted the games and granted inviolability, and we must assume that the cities who voted 'in a similar way' did so too; but we cannot know exactly how Teos and Colophon phrased their decision. It is, however, interesting to see that, for whoever decided on the way in which the responses were arranged in the public inscription (presumably the Magnesian redactors who prepared the texts for final inscription), the traditional Ionian grouping here took precedence over royal geography. A few other cities under Attalid control, such as Tralles, granted the Magnesians the desired status of inviolability, but at a later date, without making reference to the earlier royal statement.[28]

p. 156 The letters sent by Antiochos III and his son Antiochos are closely comparable to that of Attalos. They too can be divided into five main parts (greetings, preamble, motivation, decision, and farewell) and contain similar instances of epistolary posturing. Thus, after the greetings, the letter of Antiochos III (*I.Magnesia* 18 = *RC* 31 = Rigsby (1996) no. 69 = Rougemont (2012) no. 51) recapitulates the arrival of the envoys and their request in a preamble that consists of the following sentence (ll. 3–16):

> Δημοφῶν καὶ Φιλίσκος καὶ Φέ-| ρης οἱ παρ᾽ ὑμῶν πεμφθέντες πρὸς ||5 ἡμᾶς θεωροὶ ἕνεκεν τοῦ ἐπαγγεῖ-| λαι τὸν ἀγῶνα καὶ τἆλλα ἃ ἐψήφισ-| ται ὁ δῆμος συντελεῖν τῆι ἀρχηγέ-| τιδι τῆς πόλεως Ἀρτέμιδι Λευκοφρυ-| ηνῆι, συμμείξαντες ἐν Ἀντιοχείαι ||10 τῆς Περσίδος τό τε ψήφισμα ἀπέδω-| καν καὶ αὐτοὶ διελέχθησαν μετὰ σπου-| δῆς ἀκολούθως τοῖς κατακεχωρισμέ-| νοις ἐν τῶι ψηφίσματι, παρακαλοῦντες | ἀποδέξασθαι στεφανίτην ἰσοπύθιον ||15 τὸν ἀγῶνα ὃν τίθετε τῆι θεᾶι διὰ πεν-| [τ]αετηρίδος.
>
> Demophon, Philiskos, and Pheres, sent by you to us as sacred envoys to announce the contest and everything else which the people have voted to accomplish for the patron goddess of the city, Artemis Leukophryene, having met with us in Antiochia in Persis gave us the decree and spoke with enthusiasm in accordance with what is recorded in the decree, inviting us to acknowledge as crowned and isopythian the contest that you hold for the goddess every four years.

In certain respects, Antiochos' letter is more expansive than that of Attalos. For instance, it gives precise information of where the king met with the ambassadors and describes the arrival of the envoys in loving detail through a combination of long participial constructions and verbs in the indicative mood. But the main elements are in principle the same: we have the names of the envoys, and their actions are described by the same or similar verbs in the aorist indicative: ἀνεκόμισαν ('they brought', 'gave') in Attalos' letter has its equivalent in ἀπέδοκαν ('they gave') here; and both royal letters feature διελέχθησαν ('they spoke'). In light of the refusal of Attalos to engage with the likely request of the Magnesians' envoys to grant their city inviolable status (*asylia*), the vague gesture of Antiochos to 'everything else which the people have voted', which contrasts sharply with his precision in other matters, looks like a deliberate strategy of avoidance: the king passes over in silence those elements of the petition which he is unwilling to endorse—while dwelling on those he is happy to approve, such as the, from his point of view unproblematic, establishment of the stephanitic contest, which does not require any particular commitment on his part at all.

p. 157 A second sentence sets out his motivation and decision, before the usual formulaic greeting that closes the letter (ll. 16–28):

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> ἔχοντες οὖν ἐξ ἀρχῆς π[ερὶ] | τοῦ δήμου τὴν φιλανθρωποτάτην διάλ[η]- | ψιν διὰ τὴν εὔνοιαν ἣν τυγχάνει ἀποδε- | δειγμένος ἐμ πᾶσι τοῖς καιροῖς εἵς τε ἡ- ||20 μᾶς καὶ τὰ πράγματα καὶ βουλόμενοι φα- | νερὰν ποιεῖν τὴν ἑαυτῶν προαίρεσιν ἀπο- | δεχόμεθα τὰς ἐψηφισμένας παρ᾽ ὑμῶν τ[ι]- | μὰς τῆι θεᾶι, πρόκειταί τε ἡμῖν συναύξειν | ταῦτα ἐν οἷς ἂν ὑμεῖς τε παρακαλῆτε καὶ ||25 αὐτοὶ ἐπινοῶμεν. γεγράφαμεν δὲ καὶ | τοῖς ἐπὶ τῶν πραγμάτων τεταγμένοις, | ὅπως καὶ αἱ πόλεις ἀκολούθως ἀπο- | δέξονται. ἔρρωσθε.
>
> As we have had from the beginning the most friendly opinion of your people because of the goodwill that the people keep showing in all occasions both towards ourselves and towards the state, and as we want to show clearly our line of policy, we accept the honours voted by you to the goddess, and we propose to join in increasing them in whatever way you may invite us and we ourselves may think of. We have moreover written to those in charge of affairs, so that also the cities may accordingly accept. Fare well.

Just like Attalos, albeit using different words, Antiochos motivates his decision in terms of an earlier royal disposition and personal convenience. And like Attalos, Antiochos emphasizes that he undertook to write to his administrators, whose task it was to ensure that the cities in his reign likewise approve of the Magnesians' diplomatic mission. ('Those in charge of affairs' refers to the huge bureaucratic apparatus that was tasked with administering the Seleukid empire and registers persistently in our surviving evidence.) Yet there are important differences in nuance. Whereas Attalos had made a point of writing to the cities that are under his control, Antiochos only states that his administration will take care of 'the cities', refraining to adopt the idiom of command and obedience. Attalos showed no scruples in spelling out the existing hierarchies of power, though arguably the grandiose vagueness opted for by Antiochos is just as effective in conveying royal control.[29] Another aspect that enhances the impression of distant grandeur is the vague accusative object of ἀπο- | δεχόμεθα ('we accept', i.e. 'the honours voted by you to the goddess'). Forms of ἀποδέχομαι occur in all of the royal letters and the same verb is also used by the cities in their replies, which suggests that each of the interlocutors here reflects the wording of the Magnesians' decree; but Attalos is more precise both in describing the contexts that will be established (musical, athletic, and equestrian), and his own actions (he will give orders to offer a first fruits sacrifice).

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The same envoys that addressed Antiochos also met with his son; his answer (*I.Magnesia* 19 = *RC* 32 = Rigsby (1996) no. 70) features the familiar greeting formula, followed by the same combination of participles depending on indicatives (ll. 2–15):

> Δη- | μοφῶν καὶ Φιλίσκος καὶ Φέρης οἱ πα- | ρ᾽ ὑμῶν πεμφθέντες πρὸς τὸν πατέ- ||5 ρα θεωροὶ ἕνεκεν τοῦ ἐπαγγεῖλαι | τὸν ἀγῶνα καὶ τἆλλα ἃ ἐψήφισται | ὁ δῆμος συντελεῖν διὰ πενταετη- | ρίδος τῆι ἀρχηγετίδι τῆς πόλεως | Ἀρτέμιδι Λευκοφρυηνῆι ἀπέδωκαν ||10 καὶ τὸ πρὸς ἐμὲ ψήφισμα καὶ διελέχθη- | σαν μετὰ σπουδῆς ἀκολούθως τοῖς | ἐν τούτωι κατακεχωρισμένοις, παρα- | καλοῦντες ἀποδέξασθαι στεφανί- | την ἰσοπύθιον τὸν ἀγῶνα ὃν τίθετε τῆι ||15 θεᾶι.
>
> Demophon, Philiskos, and Pheres, the sacred envoys sent by you to my father in order to announce the contest and the other honours that the people have voted to celebrate every four years for the patron goddess of the city, Artemis Leukophryene, gave me also the decree addressed to me and have spoken with enthusiasm in accordance with what is recorded in it, inviting me to accept as crowned and isopythian the contest which you dedicate to the goddess.

The stated reason for action is his father's (the king's) decision, expressed with a participial sentence, this time in genitive absolute (ll. 15–24):

> ἔχοντος οὖν τοῦ πατρὸς περὶ | τοῦ δήμου τὴν φιλανθρωποτάτην δι- | [άλη]ψιν καὶ ταῦτα ἀποδεδεγμένου, θέ- | [λων κ]αὶ αὐτὸς ἀκολουθεῖν τῆι προαιρέ- | [σει αὐτ]οῦ, νῦν τε ἀποδέχομαι τὰς ἐψη- ||20 [φισμένα]ς ὑφ᾽ ὑμῶν τιμὰς τῆι θεᾶι καὶ | [τὸ λ]ο[ιπ]-οὸν πειράσομαι κατακολουθῶν | [τῆι τοῦ] πα[τρ]ὸς ὑφηγήσει συναύξειν ὑμῖν | [ἐν οἷς ἄ]ν παρακαλῆτε ἢ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐπινοῶ. ἔρρωσθε.

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> Therefore as my father has the most friendly opinion of your people and has accepted your request, desiring myself to follow his policy, I accept now the honours voted by you to the goddess, and in the future I shall try, following the example of my father, to aid you in increasing them in whatever way you invite me or I may think of. Farewell.

Clearly Antiochos while writing his answer had present his father's letter, one of whose sentences he quotes; he behaves exactly as Antiochos III expected 'those in charge of affairs' to behave. The Seleukid kings' way of expressing motivation, which in terms of form and language avoids the strong causality implied by ἐπειδή ('since') in favour of a participial construction, and which in terms of content tends to appeal to an earlier royal
p. 159 decision, results in keeping the handling of the affair within the royal family.[30] More generally, all of these ↳ letters present the kings as free from any constraints (the Seleukid ones more markedly so than that of Attalos) and able not only to recognize the honours granted by Magnesia to the Magnesians' own goddess, but to ask dependent cities to do so as well. In the case of the Seleukids, the heavy hint at the series of functionaries that made up the Seleukid bureaucratic machinery in the letter of the father finds an answer in the son's explicit reference to his father's earlier acceptance as the reason for his action.

The last sufficiently preserved royal letter of the dossier comes from Ptolemy IV (*I.Magnesia* 23 = *RC* 33 = Rigsby (1996) no. 71). The stone was found exposed to the elements and is badly worn: much of the text is lacunose or restored, with at times somewhat problematic restorations;[31] but the overall content still emerges with sufficient clarity to enable us to spot some surprising features. Here is the text, as printed by Rigsby:

> οἱ] παρ' ὑ-| μῶν ἀποστα[λέντες] πρεσβ[ευ]-||5 ταὶ Διοπείθ[ης...*c.*10…] | καὶ Ἰθαλίδης [.*c.*6..]δήμο[υ] | τὸ ψήφισμά [μοι] ἀπέδωκαν ἐν ᾧι | [.*c.*5.]τω[…*c.*10…]ων π[…] | [ἀγ]ῶνα τῷ[ν Λευκοφρυηνῶν κ]ατὰ τὸν ||10 χρησμὸν τοῦ [θεοῦ ὃν συν]τελε[ῖτε] | τῆι Ἀρτέμιδ[ι τῆι Λευκοφρυ]ην[ῆι καὶ] | περὶ [τοῦ] νομί[ζειν τὴν πόλι]ν κ[αὶ τὴν] | χώραν ἱερὰν κα[ὶ ἄσυλον· παρεκλήθην δὲ] | καὶ ἐγὼ ἀπο[δέξασθαι τὸν ἀγῶν]α σ[τε]-||15 φανίτην [ἰσ]οπ[ύθιον ταῖς τιμ]αῖς οἷ-| [ο]ν ἡμῖν ἐπ[ηγγέλκατε αὐ]τόν· [οἱ δὲ παρ'] | ὑμῶν ἀπο[π]εμ[φθέντες καὶ α]ὐτοὶ δ[ιελέ]-| χθησαν μετὰ πά[σης σπ]ουδῆς [καὶ κατὰ] | τἆλλα ἐν τ[ῶι ψηφίσματι περὶ ὧν εἶχον] ||20 [τ]ὰς ἐντολὰς. [ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν τόν τε ἀγῶνα] | [στ]εφανίτην καθά[περ ἠξι[ο[ῦτε] ἀπο-| [δέ]δεγμαι καὶ τ[……*c.*18……] | […]χο[.*c.*4.]λο[…..*c.*19……] | [.*c.*5.] ὑμᾶς κ[……*c.*20……] ||25 [—]

> The envoys sent by you Diopeithes…and Ithalides…gave me the decree in which…the contest of the Leukophryena which in accordance with the oracle of the god you celebrate for Artemis Leukophryene, and concerning the fact of considering the city and its land holy and inviolable; I was myself asked to accept the contest as crowned and isopythian, as you have proclaimed it to us. Your envoys also spoke themselves with great eagerness about those other points of the decree about which they had instructions. And I therefore have accepted the contest as crowned, as you asked, and….

After the usual greetings, which follow the format of other royal correspondence, the letter recounts the arrival of the embassy and the handing over of the decree. Because of the lacuna, the number of the ambassadors—
p. 160 two or three—that visited Ptolemy is uncertain; it is also unclear whether they were identified ↳ simply with their name, or also with the name of their fathers.[32] The procedure followed is however by and large the same. The next part (ll. 7–13, which offers a detailed summary of the content of the decree) features a peculiarity. Uniquely among the preserved royal responses, the preamble of Ptolemy's letter includes a reference to the oracle and the request of inviolability for the city and its territory. The main verb of the subsequent sentence is restored; but if we accept Welles' restoration [παρεκλήθην δὲ] καὶ ἐγώ, 'I in particular was invited' (as does Rigsby), then we are still in the summary of the decree, which at this point evidently contained a request to the king to accept the contest.[33] Ptolemy's decision follows: yet, unlike in the other royal letters, there is no motivation clause. All we get is a simple 'Therefore' and the statement that the king has 'accepted the contest as crowned, as you asked'. There were at least two more lines of text, but they are now lost beyond recovery. Scholars tend to

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assume that Ptolemy here recognized Magnesia as inviolable. The reason for this assumption is that the king would not have referred explicitly in the preamble of his letter to a decree concerning the inviolability of the city if he had not been willing to grant it. It is true that it would not have been very diplomatic to mention a request without then granting it—and indeed none of the other kings, who presumably received similar decrees, make any mention of *asylia*, studiously avoiding the impression that their generosity has limits. Nonetheless, there is some textual evidence that, despite appearances, Ptolemy was no exception, at least in Welles' and Rigsby's version of the text. Yes, Ptolemy duly acknowledges the general request for inviolability in his summary of the document he received; but he emphasizes that for his part, he was asked only to recognize the games as crowned. And when he then moves on to summarize the oral proceedings, his wording becomes far more circumspect, very much in line with what we find in the other royal letters. Just like the other kings, he has no difficulties in approving the stephanitic contests, and he is happy to do as he has been asked. But then he veers off into vagueness, in a rhetorical manoeuver reminiscent of what we have seen in Antiochos' letter: 'those other points of the decree' that inspired the envoys' oratory at court might have included the issue of *asylia*, but Ptolemy does not spell this out explicitly, and one may therefore wonder whether he was in the end willing to grant it. The letter continued for at least three more lines: it could thus have contained the grant
p. 161 of *asylia*; but Ptolemy might also have closed his letter, ↳ as the other kings did, by referring to other cities under his power, or by mentioning a special contribution.

To sum this up: the royal letters open, as is normal for letters, in the third person, with a greeting by the king (that is, of an individual who presents himself as king) to a community, the council and the people of the Magnesians, whom he configures as his addressees. Magnesia may have been under the control of one of these kings in 208—but nothing in the wording of any of these letters makes the status of the city clear.[34] After the greeting, the letters switch to a first person narrative, recounting the arrival of the ambassadors, the handing over of the decree and documents, and the speeches of the ambassadors. Three out of the four surviving royal letters mention the names of the envoys only, without further specification. A comparison with the larger corpus of Hellenistic royal letters shows that this is the normal practice: royal letters tend to function on a 'first name' basis.[35] The next step is the motivation. Again, in line with the epistolary practice of the Hellenistic royal chanceries, this is presented in such a way as to emphasize the freedom of the king, whose decisions are not bound by any external considerations (Ptolemy even goes so far as to entirely omit the motivation). Finally, the decision: all royal letters use a form of the verb ἀποδέχομαι in the first person (singular or plural), with Attalos and the Seleukids opting for the present indicative, Ptolemy for the perfect indicative. Two of the kings (and Philip V as well, as we shall see), while making very generic statements, use the opportunity to draw attention to their influence over other cities also at this point.

Let us now look at a representative range of answers from the leagues and cities. The Magnesians sent envoys all over the *oikoumene*; the dossier thus contains replies from leagues, from 'old' cities, such as those on the Greek mainland or Sicily, and from 'new' foundations, such as the Seleukid cities in the East.

A good place to start is the decree that constitutes the response from Athens.[36] In 208/7 BCE, when the envoys
p. 162 from Magnesia arrived, Athens was ↳ free and neutral and the decree reflects the political culture of the democratic city-state. It opens in the standard fashion of an Athenian decree, that is, with the name of the archon and the tribe exercising the prytany (the presidency of the council), followed by the name, the patronymic, and the demotic of the secretary (Archikles son of Charidemos, of Erchia), the specification that this is a decree of the council (βουλῆς ψήφισμα, l. 3), the date, and the information that the council met in the council-house and that the decree was put to vote by the president of the committee, one Eubios son of Nikanor of Phaleron. As tends to be the case, the text spells out the institutional setting in which the decision was taken with great precision and clarity.[37] The proposal follows, presented by a precisely named individual, Agathokles son of Diophanes of the deme Dekeleia. Introduced by ἐπειδή ('whereas', 'since'), it retraces the decision of the Magnesians on the Maeander, 'being familiars and friends of the Athenian People' (l. 7: οἰκεῖοι καὶ φίλοι), to fund a sacrifice and games for their goddess Artemis, and so to send sacred envoys, again named with precision

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(Apollophanes son of Aischylos, Euboulos son of Anaxagoras, and Lycomedes son of Charisios, ll. 11–12), 'who have renewed the pre-existing familiarity and friendship between the cities' (ll. 12–13: τήν τε προυπάρχουσαν ταῖς πόλεσιν οἰκειότητα καὶ φιλία). The ambassadors, Agathokles' proposal continues, have urged that the competition be accepted (ἀποδέξασθαι) as crowned and equal to the Pythian, and that their city and territory be declared inviolable, as ordered by the oracle (ll. 15–20). The motion of the council follows, introduced by a hortatory clause:

> so that the People may be seen at every opportunity to be honouring the divine and fostering connections and friendship with the Magnesians, for good fortune, be it resolved by the Council (δεδόχθαι τεῖ βουλεῖ, ll. 22–3) that the *proedroi* allotted for the forthcoming Assembly shall put these matters on the agenda, and submit the opinion of the Council to the People, that it seems good to the Council that the People should accept (ὅτι δοκεῖ τεῖ βουλεῖ δέχεσθαι τὸν δῆμον, ll. 25–6)… the truces and sacrifice and competition…, and that their city and territory shall be sacred and inviolable…, and to praise the Magnesian people….(27–37).

The usual clauses concerning inscription of the document and expenditure close the text.

The same envoys who addressed the city of Athens also saw representatives of the Phocian league and the Boeotian league and visited the cities of Chalcis and Eretria. These diplomatic efforts produced responses somewhat different from that of the Athenians.

p. 163 The decree sent by the Phocian league (*I.Magnesia* 34 = Rigsby (1996) no. 84) starts *in medias res*. First comes a heading, 'From the *koinon* of the Phocians'. Similar headings precede also most of the other civic documents of the dossier inscribed on the agora of Magnesia: evidently the Magnesians decided to add them when they inscribed the texts. Here, the heading is immediately followed by an extended motivation (ll. 3–15):

> Since (ἐπειδή) the Magnesians on the Maeander, being familiars and friends of the Phocians (οἰκεῖοι ὄντες καὶ φίλοι Φωκέων), have sent a decree and the envoys Apollophanes son of Aischylos, Euboulos son of Anaxagoras, and Lycomedes son of Charisios, who having presented themselves to the *koinon* have renewed the familiarity and friendship…'.

What follows are an exhortation and the decision: 'so that the league of the Phocians too' may appear desirous to increase the honours for the gods, 'remembering the familiarity and friendship towards the Magnesians, be it resolved by the Phocians to recognize the contest…, and that their city and territory be sacred and inviolable' (δεδόχθαι Φωκεῦσι ἀποδέξασθαι τὸν ἀγῶνα…καὶ τὰν πόλιν αὐτῶγ καὶ τὰγ χώραν ἱερὰν καὶ ἄσουλον εἶμεν, 14–18). Further specifications follow, concerning the prizes to be awarded to the victors and the sacrifices to be made; the ambassadors, again very precisely named, receive praise; and finally, the text mentions a decision to inscribe the decree and display it in the temple of Athena Kranaa, and to insert it among the laws. Like the Athenians, the Phocians spell out the names of their visitors from Magnesia with precision and echo the language of the request in their answer; but in line with their habit not to identify the proposers of decrees, Phocian names are entirely absent from the inscription—very much in contrast to the Athenian investment in nomenclature and other identity markers.[38]

The decree of the league of the Boeotians (*I.Magnesia* 25 = Rigsby (1996) no. 73) is again preceded by a heading ('From the *koinon* of the Boeotians'). Then the text proper begins. After mention of the Boeotian archon, the motivation clause, probably introduced by ἐπειδή, 'since' (part of the text is here lost), relates the arrival of the Magnesian ambassadors, who are identified by name and patronymic, and gives details of their presentation, which seems to have followed closely what was written in the decree (ll. 4–7 and again l. 15); in particular, we see that the ambassadors mentioned the sacrifice, the games, and the status of inviolability. The answer of the league is almost entirely lost, but we can still make out that the motion formula was introduced by the perfect infinitive passive δεδόχθαι, 'be it resolved', and that infinitives followed.

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Before or after presenting their request to the Phocians and the Athenians, the same envoys also visited the cities of Chalcis and Eretria in Euboea, which were both under Antigonid control in 208. The two cities sent
p. 164 rather different ↳ answers (*I.Magnesia* 47 and 48 = Rigsby (1996) nos. 97 and 98). The Chalcis decree opens with a statement of the *strategoi*, the board of generals, which leads into a decision by the council and the people:

> The generals said (οἱ στρατηγοὶ εἶπαν): since (ἐπειδή) the king Philip wrote to the council and the people concerning the Magnesians on the Maeander, who being related (συγγενεῖς) to the Macedonians asked that the contest they organize for Artemis Leukophryene be recognized as crowned, that he himself had acceded, and that also the citizens would do well to accept the men sent about this (ll. 1–8); and since following that (ἀκολούθως δὲ καί) the men chosen by the Magnesians to announce the contest, Apollophanes son of Aischylos, Euboulos son of Anaxagoras, and Lycomedes son of Charisios presented themselves, gave the decree, recounted both the appearance of the goddess and the services rendered by their city to the Greeks, and exhorted the citizens to increase the honours voted to Artemis Leukophryene, accepting the request (ἀποδεξαμένους) (ll. 8–17); concerning this (περὶ τούτων) be it resolved by the council and the people: to accept the contest of the Leukophryena, which the Magnesians on the Maeander have set up for Artemis Leukophryene, as crowned and isopythian, as the sacred ambassadors sent by them announce, and that the same prizes be given to those of the citizens of Chalcis who win in these games as those which it is required by law to give to those who win in the Pythian games, and to send ambassadors from the city, whenever they organize the contests of the Leukophryena, and to give the *aparche* prescribed by the law to the ambassadors from Magnesia.

Chalcis foregrounds, as motivation for her acceptance, a letter by the king, whose main points are summarized by the *strategoi*. Their summary shows that the Magnesians had used the (mythical) kinship between Magnes and Macedon to support their request to Philip; and that Philip had promised, exactly like Attalos and Antiochos, to write to the cities under his control. This part is followed by a short summary of the requests advanced directly by the ambassadors. The decision follows, couched in the usual terms, without any further reference to the king's wishes.[39] This is a rather short decree, and it conspicuously omits any reference to inviolability; it also omits any reference to a friendship between Magnesia and Chalcis.

Eretria however, which at the time was also under Macedonian control, sent a long and detailed decree, whose
p. 165 motivation, introduced by ἐπειδή, has a twin ↳ focus: on the one hand, the arrival and speech of the sacred envoys (ll. 1–11), who renewed the preexisting familiarity (οἰκειώτης), mentioned the epiphany of the goddess and the services rendered by the ancestors of the Magnesians to the Greeks, and requested that the Eretrians accept the contest as crowned and isopythian and that their *polis* be recognized inviolable and sacred, as the god of Delphi himself stated; on the other, the ancestral habit of the Eretrians to behave respectfully towards the divine and in particular towards Artemis, and to maintain the existing familiarity (οἰκειώτης again) towards the Magnesians (ll. 11–14). This detailed motivation is followed by an even more detailed series of decisions, introduced by the enactment formula 'concerning this, it was decided by the council and the people' (περὶ δὲ τούτων ἔδοξεν τῆι βουλῆι καὶ τῶι δήμωι), followed by infinitives: to accept the contest as equal to the Pythian games, to consider the city and the land sacred and inviolable, according to the oracle of the god, and to send sacred envoys and a sacrifice to the games; but also to praise the people of Magnesia for their piety towards the god, to crown the ambassadors and grant them and their descendants a number of privileges, and finally that the decree be inscribed on a stele and set up in the temple of Apollo Daphnephoros in Eretria. At the bottom, after the heading 'in the same manner accepted', is added the subscription of another Euboean city, Histieia.

Conspicuously, there is no mention of a royal letter here; also conspicuously, and unlike Chalcis, Eretria grants inviolability to the city and the territory; again unlike Chalcis, the familiarity between the two peoples is mentioned more than once.[40]

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Two other cities under Macedonian control wrote back, Gonnoi, whose decree has survived (*I.Magnesia* 33 = Rigsby (1996) no. 83), and Phalanna, whose answer was appended to the decree of Gonnoi. In its decree, Gonnoi seems to assume that the city and territory of Magnesia are already inviolable, and that at issue is the increase in honour deriving from the upgrade of the games; both Gonnoi and the Magnesian envoys (Diagoras son of Cratinos, Zopyros son of Hermonax, and Diotimos son of Lycomedes) repeatedly emphasize the friendship and kinship (φιλία καὶ συγγένεια l. 5; φιλίαν καὶ οἰκειότητα l. 15) existing between the cities as the reason for their decision; no references are made to a letter of Philip V.[41]

p. 166 Much has been made of the difference between these answers.[42] Chalcis may indeed have been under closer royal control: the fact that the *strategoi* open their answer with a reference to the royal intervention cannot be disregarded. But however that may be, two points are worth highlighting. First, Chalcis's reference to a letter of Philip shows that the Magnesians asked Philip V as well, and that the king answered, even if his answer is lost; and the answer must have been roughly similar to those sent by Antiochos III and Attalos I, at least in terms of asking the cities that were under his control to comply with the Magnesians' request, in line with his own response. Secondly, the fact that Chalcis did not grant *asylia* while Eretria did and while Gonnoi took it to be already an established fact can be interpreted as implying that Philip's answer was couched in the same, rather generic terms as those of the other kings, leaving space for interpretation.[43]

Let us test this hypothesis by looking at the reactions of the Seleukid cities, and in particular at the decree of Antiochia in Persis (*I.Magnesia* 61 = Rigsby (1996) no. 111). This city was visited at the same time and by the same ambassadors that visited Antiochos III (see the letter of Antiochos, *I.Magnesia* 18, ll. 9–10, discussed above, pp. 156–7); the king was thus in the area as the city was being addressed. The text is preceded by a heading: 'From the Antiocheis of Persis'. Then, the decree itself begins, with the dating and enactment formulae (ll. 1–10):

> When Herakleitos son of Zoes was priest of Seleukos Nikator and Antiochos Soter and Antiochos Theos and Seleukos Kallinikos and King Seleukos and King Antiochos and his son King Antiochos, in the first half-year, decisions of the sovereign assembly (δόγματα ἐκκλησίας κυρίας) submitted (to the archive) by Asklepiades son of Hekataios son of Demetrios, secretary of the council and of the assembly, on 28 of the month Pantheos. It was decided by the assembly (ἔδοξε τῆι ἐκκλησίαι) on the proposal of the *prytaneis*.

p. 167 The royal presence is heavily felt in the prescript: at Antiochia the eponymous magistrate is a priest of the dynastic Seleukid cult, so that all Seleukid kings are listed in order until the current incumbent and his son. But at the same time, it is clear that these are decisions of the sovereign assembly, registered by a secretary named with great precision.[44] This part is followed by a long, very full narrative motivating the decision: introduced by the standard conjunction ἐπειδή ('whereas'), it begins by stating that the Magnesians are kinsmen and friends (συγγενεῖς ὄντες καὶ φίλοι) of the people (of Antiochia) and that they have performed numerous distinguished services for the Greeks, both formerly, at the time of Antiochos I Soter, when they accepted to participate in the foundation of Antiochia in Persis (ll. 10–20), and now, when having received an oracle they are proclaiming it 'throughout the whole of Greece', admitting all deserving men to share in their libations and participate in the contests they are instituting in honour of their benefactress (Artemis; ll. 20–30). And so, the text continues (ll. 30–9):

> They have sent as ambassadors Demophon son of Lykideus, Philiskos son of Philios and Pheres son of Pheres, who approached the council and the assembly, handed over the decree from the people of Magnesia, and after renewing their kinship and friendship (τὴν συγγένειαν καὶ τὴν φιλίαν) spoke at length about the apparition of the goddess and the services provided by the people of Magnesia to many of the Greek cities, and invited us to recognize the competition which they celebrate in honour of Artemis Leukophryene as crowned, in accordance with the oracle of the god.

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This is all a long sentence, part of the motivation, and governed by the initial ἐπειδή, 'whereas'. Another long sentence follows, which focuses on the Antiocheis' own willingness, while adding further reasons for the decision (ll. 40–7):

> The people in its reverence for the gods it shares with the Magnesians and its wish to increase its goodwill towards their kinsmen, and as many other cities have previously voted [the same decisions]..., believes it a matter of great importance not to overlook any suitable opportunity for displaying privately [to each individual and] publicly to all the zeal which it continuously displays for the interests of the people of Magnesia.

This could have been the right place to mention the desire of the king; and yet, the chance is passed over. The text moves to the decision, marked by the motion formula (δεδόχθαι τῆι βουλῆι καὶ τῶι δήμωι), and followed by a string of infinitives (ll. 47–67):

> With good fortune, be it resolved by the council and the people: to praise the Magnesians for their
> p. 168 piety towards the gods and for their friendship and goodwill ↳ (φιλίας καὶ εὐνοίας) towards King Antiochos and the people of Antiochia and because making good use of their own advantages and of the prosperity of the city they preserve their ancestral constitution, and that the priests should pray to all the gods and goddesses that their constitution remains forever with the Magnesians for their good fortune; to accept the sacrifice, the religious festival, the truce, [and the contest as crowned on an equal rank to the Pythia], the musical, [the athletic and equestrian contests which] the people of Magnesia celebrate in honour of Artemis Leukophryene because of the ancestral [...] [and to send sacred ambassadors to Magnesia who will sacrifice to Artemis Leukophryene for the safety [of the king and of both] cities....

This is the only extant decree from Antiochia in Persis, so we cannot know whether the request of the ambassadors exerted an influence on the form in which the text was conceived.[45] But it is clear that even if the Antiocheis (or their prytanes) were aware of the royal letter, as they must have been, they still chose to answer as a *polis*, emphasizing in their motivation their kinship with the Magnesians, and making reference to earlier recognitions by other *poleis* rather than to the king's own.[46] Nonetheless, interestingly, in the central part of the decree, when announcing their decision, the Antiocheis praise the Magnesians for their respect of the gods, 'for their friendship and goodwill towards King Antiochos and the people of Antiochia', and for preserving their ancestral constitution. Put differently, they situate the city within three concentric circles, moving from a divine or cosmic frame of reference to the royal, supra-poliadic level, before concluding with a specific focus on the political culture and constitution of the individual city. The three levels ideally operate in harmony, but they are nevertheless distinct. We may here capture the specific perspective of a new, royal foundation, neatly poised between two countervailing forces—perhaps reflecting their origins in a royal *fiat*, the Antiocheis foreground good relations with the king and themselves as a royal foundation; but their subsequent reference to the preservation of *polis*-tradition seems an endorsement of the ideology of the city-state with its emphasis on independence and distinctiveness. Tellingly, perhaps, and unlike most other cities, they do not grant *asylia* and do not mention the matter at all.

The other cities certainly under Seleukid control (Laodicea on the Lycus and three other cities, *I.Magnesia* 59, 60, 75 + 80 and 81 = Rigsby (1996) nos. 109, 110, 125, and 126 respectively) again answered in different ways. Laodicea sent a long decree (to which a list of at least five other cities was appended), which granted
p. 169 inviolability, and did not refer to the king (at least in the part we have; ↳ much of the long decree is lost or lacunose); the second, unknown city mentioned the king twice (ll. 9 and 19), possibly referring explicitly to his instructions (l. 23), and while it certainly recognized the contest as crowned, it may not have granted *asylia* (there is at any rate no reference to it in what we have); Antioch (in Pisidia?) mentions φιλία, οἰκειότης, and συγγένεια, but may not have granted inviolability (the text is lacunose), and does not seem to have made

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references to the king; the same applies to the last document, a very fragmentary inscription from another Antiochia.[47]

4. A Shared, Common Language?

In our dossier, royal letters and decrees from leagues and cities share the same primary communicative purpose: they both address the same request by the Magnesians, and react to it in very similar terms. They also share a common diplomatic language, made up of references to goodwill, friendship, kinship, and reciprocal respect of the other's wishes. This language forms the common ground between royal letters and decrees: even if it is formulaic, or rather *because* of its formulaic nature, it is a meaningful language that sets up the conventions according to which a dialogue between the king and the *poleis* may take place.[48] And yet, even beyond the issue of content (request for inviolability granted or passed over in silence), differences between the royal idiom and the *polis* language are also noticeable, both in terms of syntactical construction and lexical choices.

A notable feature of the decree, whether coming from a *polis* or a league, is the fact that the decision is presented through the use of a third or impersonal past form of the verb δοκέω (the aorist indicative ἔδοξε for the enactment or resolution formula, or the perfect infinitive δεδόχθαι for the motion) followed by infinitives, rather than through imperatives, although imperatives would also have been possible (and do occur occasionally).[49] A
p. 170 decree is a narrative written in the third person, and in the past; it does not have an explicit ↳ addressee, even though it is meant to address specific issues/requests. The use of the past in the resolution formula has been discussed more than once: its purpose is that of presenting the text as the transcription of an act of the past, endorsed by the entire community, an effect reinforced by the use of the third person, which eliminates confrontation.[50] At the same time, not all is impersonal: there is room for a lot of details in the motivation clause, very often introduced by ἐπειδή, which at the opening of a decree gives the reason for the decision.[51] And individuals may actually be present in *polis* decrees. In specific official positions, they mark the civic time; furthermore, they may start the procedure, and they may make amendments.[52] The importance of individuals within the *polis* finds a reflection in the fact that everyone named in a decree is also, at least from the fourth century onwards, identified very precisely by the father's name and/or the demotic, depending on the *polis*.[53] In the answers to the request of the Magnesians sent by the *poleis* and leagues, there is an overwhelming tendency to identify the ambassadors from Magnesia with precision as well, through their own and their father's name.[54] If we restore the individuals to their rightful place, we find that a decree is a decision taken in the past by a collective body, possibly on the initiative of a named individual whose proposal was also made in the past (εἶπε), for a reason indicated through a clear motivation clause, in the context of a time shaped by the participation of specific individuals with a history, a family, a place in the political process.

p. 171 But why the use of infinitives to express the decision taken? In a recent study, Allan has pointed out that the use of the *infinitivum pro imperativo* can be explained in connection with the idea of 'procedure': the infinitive in the place of an imperative refers to the 'appropriate action that is to be carried out as a part of the conventional or social procedure (*script, frame*) which is evoked in the discourse or by the extra-linguistic situation of the interlocutors'.[55] Importantly, and unlike the imperative proper, 'the imperatival infinitive does not involve a direct appeal of the speaker to the hearer'. Similarly, in her recent study of the forms of directives in ancient Greek, Denizot, while offering a complex picture, emphasizes the procedural value of the infinitive, and argues that 'the directive infinitive…can be explained through its own value, which allows one to emphasize the process and the circumstances of this process rather than the agents responsible for carrying out this process.'[56] This is why infinitives are so appropriate for decrees; this is also why, of course, infinitives *pro imperativo* cannot find a place in a letter, where the addressee (and the sender) are strongly present.

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Conversely, the royal decisions or recommendations are expressed in royal letters through the first person, in indicative present or past tenses, futures, or also through aorist imperatives: the royal letter is much freer than the decree in what concerns the use of tenses and moods.[57] The decisions, given in the first person, are clearly the king's, although members of the king's entourage or ambassadors may also be mentioned, and they are expressed through all sorts of verbs, with the notable exception of any forms of δοκέω, which almost never
p. 172 appear.[58] The motivation is kept vague, and is only introduced by ἐπειδή ↳ in very rare instances, when the reason is an earlier decision of the king himself, of his ancestors, or of earlier kings: the king is free from external constraints.[59] As a rule, Hellenistic kings much prefer simple statements of fact with verbs in the indicative; long participial constructions; or διὰ τό with infinitive, the latter defined by Schubart, in a landmark article on the style of the Hellenistic chanceries, as 'die beliebteste Kanzleiform des Kausalsatzes'.[60] Just like decrees, royal letters may name associates, envoys, or members of the court; but they tend to refer to these individuals simply by their name, omitting their patronym or origin. Bikerman explained this feature as resulting from the royal use of the letter-format, i.e. of a personal type of communication.[61] Indeed, the letter-form presupposes an exchange between people who know each other and are part of the same community. But the format might easily have been modified to include the patronyms and/or origin of the persons mentioned in the letter, as tends to be the case in the letters sent by cities.[62] Argos for instance sent back to Magnesia a covering letter to accompany its decree (*I.Magnesia* 40 = Rigsby (1996) no. 90), and in its letter it named the envoys with precision, giving also their father's names. If this was not done in royal letters, the reason must be that this lack of precision suited the kind of image the king wanted to project: that of the head of an extended 'household' where people are thoroughly familiar with one another. The choice of the epistolary format and the lack of personal details combine in presenting the king and the persons named in the letter as belonging to one and the same community, even constituting, at least notionally, a large 'family'. Seemingly privileged individuals are 'brought within' the royal orbit, but their new identity as persons on familiar terms with the king also entails a loss of their individuality: past identity markers (such as descent) become unimportant and do not register. The contrast between the Seleukid royal letters and the decree of Antiochia in Persis is here
p. 173 especially telling. The royal letter refuses to acknowledge the genealogical ties that connect members ↳ of the court-society (or even simply ambassadors to the court) to a specific *polis*: the relationship with the king overrides and overpowers even aspects of an individual's identity that other formats of communication, practised by other political actors, obsessively cultivate. The absence of patronymics in the royal correspondence thus also signals to the recipients in the city-state the disquieting presence of a supra-poliadic power that redefines the identities of those individuals who come within its orbit. Finally, and fittingly, the time-frame in royal letters is only given by the date added at the end by the chancery (in regnal years, or in years of the Seleukid era: in both cases, a self-referential time): as far as the letter is concerned, the name of the king is the time-frame, together with references (relatively frequent, on the whole) to earlier actions of the king's ancestors, whether named or not.[63]

Thus, royal letters differ markedly from the city-decrees, in how they express motivation, in how they express decision, and in their overall deictic structure, and this across all Hellenistic chanceries. Moreover, there are also some differences in the kind of lexicon they employ. There is for instance a striking lexical difference in the way decrees and royal letters use the vocabulary of φιλία (friendship). While the *poleis* writing to the Magnesians emphasized their mutual relationship of friendship (φιλία), as well as familiarity (οἰκειώτης) and kinship (συγγένεια), the kings tend to avoid speaking of φιλία towards a *polis*.[64] As Paschalis Paschidis has shown, this is part of a larger pattern, linked to the normative egalitarian implications of φιλία. The bond between the king and his φίλοι, even though in fact unequal, can be described through the vocabulary of mutual friendship, because this is functional in the context of the Hellenistic court: it reflects the dynamic and conflictual nature of court politics. But what works for the relationship between the king and his φίλοι (and for the relationship between *poleis*) does not work in the same way for the relationship between a king and a *polis*: here, the implications of equality are felt as both inappropriate and unhelpful. Friendship thus becomes monodirectional, and the king appears simply as the recipient of a *polis*'s friendship, as in the decree of
p. 174 Antiochia in Persis discussed above (pp. 166–8), ↳ where the Antiocheis first renew their kinship and

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friendship (συγγένεια καὶ φιλία) with the Magnesians, and then praise them for their friendship and goodwill (φιλία καὶ εὔνοια) towards King Antiochos and the people of Antiochia.[65]

To sum this up: in the simplest terms, a letter can be viewed as an oral message, couched in writing (hence the flexibility in the way it is written).[66] As such, it is a natural choice for a king for making a pronouncement on any given issue. It would also convey the impression of the presence of the king, of his παρουσία, through his words.[67] But the royal letter gives orders only to subordinates; when writing to the cities, it suggests.[68] Because of the familiarity presumed by epistolary dialogue, however, (and I speak of dialogue, because a letter implies or invites a response and is thus, in the iconic formulation of ancient epistolary theory, 'half of a dialogue' even though the cities do not answer or answer in a different language), the letter nevertheless succeeds in implying that the addressed community is part of a larger constellation at the centre of which is the king. Thus, in the discourse of the letter, cities, just as individuals, are drawn into the king's entourage—even though the idiom employed ensures that a certain distance is retained on both sides.

The choice of the letter-form, then, might come naturally to a person in a position of sole authority, given that it has a named sender, who figures prominently as an 'I'. It always has an addressee—either a person, typically a subordinate, or a community. By having a specific addressee, the royal letter acknowledges the existence of that specific community—which has sent ambassadors, decreed a crown, keeps being zealous for the good of
p. 175 the kingdom: ↳ the royal letter, because it is a letter, can directly address a specific group, and can produce an image of the kind of community it would like to address, in a way that a decree cannot. In fact, one of the reasons for the necessity of envoys to accompany the texts of the city-decrees and to expand on them may well be the fact that the decree is a singularly 'introverted' form of speaking: unlike the letter it does not have an explicit addressee; rather, it looks backwards and inwards, not towards an intended recipient but to a process of communal decision-making, which may concern other communities, as is the case with the decrees recognizing the Magnesians' crowned contest and inviolability, but does not directly address them. Ambassadors are thus required, in order to transmit the decision to the implicit addressee,[69] or a covering letter, such as the one sent by Argos, together with a decree, on the occasion of the request of the Magnesians (*I.Magnesia* 40 = Rigsby (1996) no. 90). The fact that the decree involves neither an explicitly configured sender nor a recipient is surely part of the reason why the Magnesians added headings to the decrees: παρὰ Κερκυραίων ('From the Corcyreans'), παρὰ τοῦ κοινοῦ τῶν Βοιοτῶν ('From the *koinon* of the Boeotians'), παρὰ Ἀντιοχέων τῶν Περσίδος (From the Antiocheis of Persis). There was no need to do so in the case of the royal letters—they feature a very strongly configured sender who addresses himself to the community of the Magnesians.

To put this differently: any decree primarily represents the *polis* to itself. The letter functions differently: it is an instrument of presenting the self (or a specifically chosen image thereof) to someone else and, in the case of the royal correspondence, to affirm the king's presence elsewhere; and it is also a means of 'putting the other in their proper place', to shape the receiving community according to the views and preferences of the sender.

5. At the Receiving End

How did the Magnesians view the letters and decrees they received? As we saw, they embraced both letters and decrees, though they made choices: they did not inscribe all answers; rather, in at least sixteen instances they simply appended the names of cities that had taken a similar decision to the answer of a city.[70]

As for order and location: the inscriptions were located in the south-west corner of the agora, facing towards its
p. 176 centre. This is a significant location: ↳ here, in the space between the end of the West stoa and that of the South stoa, was one of the two main entrances to the agora (the other one being at the south-east corner), looking directly across the agora onto the temple of Zeus Sosipolis, and behind it onto the opening in the East stoa, which gave access to the *temenos* of Artemis Leukophryene; the prytaneion of the city was also located here.[71] The inscriptions were all placed inside the West stoa; some of them (the texts numbered by Kern from 16

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to 34, that is, the document narrating the decision to upgrade the festival of Artemis, the mythical history of Magnesia and the fake decree of Crete, the royal letters, and a few other decrees of leagues and cities) occupied the Pilaster wall ('Pfeilerwand') that closed the West stoa to the south; the remaining texts (Kern nos. 35 to 87) were inscribed on the southern half of the back wall of the West stoa.[72] All these texts were inscribed at the same time, in elegant letters made more visible on the white marble by colour, probably to herald the second games of 203 BCE.[73] The exact place of each inscription cannot always be reconstructed, but one detail about location is clear: the royal letters were placed at the beginning of the dossier, together with the texts narrating the decision of the Magnesians, their mythical history, and the fake Cretan decree.

Moreover, some of the texts received a special treatment. According to Kern, most of the documents were inscribed in letters of an average size of 1 cm, with an interlinear space of 0.5 cm. However, *I.Magnesia* 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, and 24, that is, the royal letters and the invented Cretan decree, located on the Pilaster wall, were inscribed more carefully, in bigger letters, measuring 1.5 cm, and with an interlinear distance of 1.5 cm.[74] The
p. 177 letter of Antiochos III ↳ occupied part of a block, and continued on another block; the letter of Antiochos, the eldest son and co-regent of Antiochos III since 209 BCE, was inscribed directly underneath the letter of his father. Then came the fake decree of the Koinon of the Cretans, recounting the decision taken by the Cretans (in a mythical time preceding the Ionian colonization) to aid in the foundation of Magnesia. To this text was probably attached *I.Magnesia* 21, a list of Cretan cities, inscribed in smaller letters. To the left of this list was the letter of Attalos I; two further documents, now very fragmentary, were also inscribed in the same kind of writing: the letter of Ptolemy IV Philopator, and the letter (probably) sent by Philip V (*I.Magnesia* 24 = Rigsby (1996) no. 72), of which only the opening survives, βασιλ[εύς...], carved in the same large letters as the incipits of the other royal letters.

The special collocation of these texts and the particular care given to their inscription—it is worth noting that the first letter of the word 'basileus' is, for each text, outstanding to the left, so as to highlight each new beginning—mark this as a special group, even though these documents were received at different moments (they were brought back by different envoys).[75] This special status corresponds, I suggest, to a rather convoluted passage of the text in which the Magnesians narrate the background of their decision to institute the festival, a text that was also inscribed on the Pilaster wall, although its exact location on it is uncertain. At the end of the foundation document of the Leukophryena (*I.Magnesia* 16 = Rigsby (1996) no. 66, ll. 28–33), the Magnesians state that:

> στεφανηφορουῦντος δὲ Μοιραγόρου τὸν στεφαν[ίτην ἀγῶνα] | [ἰ]σοπύθιον, στέφανον διδόντες ἀπὸ πεντήκο[ντ]α χρ[υσῶν, ἔθεσαν,] || 30 ἀποδεξαμένων τῶμ βασιλέων [κ]αὶ τῶν ἄλλ[ων Ἑλλή]νωμ, | πρὸς οὓς ἐπρέσβευσαν, κατὰ ἔθνη καὶ πό[λεις ψηφισα]-| [μ]ένων, τιμᾶν Ἄρτεμιν [Λε]υκοφρυηνήν κα[ὶ ἄσυλον εἶναι] | [τ]ὴμ Μαγνήτωμ πόλιν καὶ χώραν διὰ τὴμ παρα[ίνεσιν τοῦ] | [θε]οῦ καὶ τὰς ὑπαρχούσας πρὸς πάντας αὐτ[ῶν φιλίας] ||35 [κα]ὶ οἰκειότητας ἐκ προγόνωμ Μάγνησ[ιν —].
>
> In the stephanephorate of Moiragoras they proclaimed the crowned (contest) equal to the Pythian, giving a crown of 50 gold staters, recognition having been given by the kings, and the other Greeks to whom they sent embassies having voted by nations and cities to honour Artemis Leukophryene and
p. 178 that the city and territory of the Magnesians be inviolable because of the advice of the god and ↳ all the friendships existing towards them and kinships with the Magnesians since the ancestors.[76]

The acceptance by the kings is mentioned first, and set apart, from that of the nations and cities.[77] And yet, these royal letters, so prominently inscribed, say very little directly to the Magnesians, and much more about the kings themselves and their power. The kings vaguely acknowledged honours; and, much less vaguely, stated that they had written to the cities they controlled, to ask that they accept on similar terms. As we saw, there are some variations here, but the main point is surely that most letters end with a muscular declaration that the other *poleis* will grant what the kings have granted. Antiochia in Persis, who was visited at exactly the

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same time by exactly the same Magnesian ambassadors, replied in far greater detail in their answering decree than Antiochos III in his letter; but the decree was still inscribed with the others, on the back wall of the West stoa. Clearly, for the Magnesians, there were the royal letters, however unspecific, and then the rest.

The Magnesian venture was a huge success:

> The response was overwhelmingly positive. At least five rulers, Attalos, Antiochos III and his son, Ptolemy IV and Philip V, emphatically supported the request of the Magnesians and influenced accordingly the cities under their control; and at least 151 Greek *poleis* and federal states complied with the Magnesians' request. Their resolutions show that they followed the Magnesians in all points, operating with exactly the same presuppositions and thought-patterns. And indeed, the Magnesians obtained that the memory of what they had done, and their present celebrations, were enshrined in the 'private' memory of other cities, who inscribed this within their answers.[78]

p. 179

At the same time, the prominent place accorded to the royal letters, when the kings had not asked for inscription, shows that the campaign for the recognition of the Leukophryena was a huge success also for the Hellenistic kings; a royal letter, even when very vague, was clearly cherished more highly than the decrees of other *poleis*.[79] And just as the language of the royal letters set them apart from the city-decrees, so the Magnesians reserved a special corner of their agora for them.

The kings required that the letters they sent to their subordinates, or those concerning personal affairs, or larger policies, be inscribed; they did not ask for letters addressed directly to the cities to be inscribed, but many of them were inscribed none the less.[80] Why were the cities willing, or even keen, to inscribe a royal letter? Some argue that the city accepted the words of the king in part to integrate them into its own political culture, thereby gaining some purchase on royal discourse;[81] others, that the written words of a powerful king could convey the impression of providing stability and security in a world that kept changing. The two explanations are clearly not mutually exclusive. Here at Magnesia, at any rate, the words of the kings, displayed together with the identity myth of the *polis* and its Cretan endorsement, certainly helped to authorize the Magnesians' 'intentional history'. Moreover, by putting everything on the walls of their agora, Magnesia created an interconnected model of political life in the ancient Mediterranean. The city thereby imagined itself as the privileged centre of a far-flung and polycentric international community, made up of different entities and agents employing different idioms of power. In this community, the kings are prominently on display, to be sure; yet on the wall of Magnesia the seemingly omnipotent 'I' of the royal correspondence features in a qualifying perspective, appearing as one among several others and sharing a common space with city-decrees.

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Notes

1 For a recent study of directives in ancient Greek, see Denizot (2011). She points out that directives in epigraphical texts raise specific problems which are not found in literary texts; for instance, in inscriptions directives are mostly in the third person, while in literary texts they appear mostly in the second person (48); she bases her study on a literary corpus, to which she adds the Gortyn law and the Athenian decrees passed between 400 and 350 BCE. Ma (2000) offers a splendid analysis, based on speech-act theory, of the letters concerning the Maccabees.

2 Detailed discussion in Rubinstein (2013). On institutional networks and the *poleis*, and the role of the travelling decrees in creating a symbolic and cognitive map, see Ma (2003); Massar (2006); Mack (2015).

3 Ambassadors had a certain freedom (which the expression *autokratores* is sometimes used to emphasize), but its extent was limited. See Heuss (1934) 26–7 (mentioning Andoc. 3.33; Xen. *Hell*. 2.2.19, 5.3.26; Thuc. 5.45.1); Mosley (1973) 21–38; Magnetto (2013); and Sosin (2009), the last with specific reference to the degree of freedom exercised by the various embassies sent by Magnesia on the Maeander for the institution of the Leukophryena.

4 Instances in Bencivenni (2010) 153 n. 14; Rubinstein (2013).

5 'Political styles': Hariman (1995). Language and ideology: Bertrand (2001) 11, who quotes R. Barthes, *Le degré zéro de l'écriture* (Paris 1953) 22, to underscore the fact that the writing of each political system simultaneously comprises both the nature and the appearance of power: 'L'écriture, étant la forme spectaculairement engagée de la parole, contient l'être et le paraître du pouvoir, ce qu'il est et ce qu'il voudrait qu'on le croie.' Both thus stress that the linguistic analysis of political discourse opens a window on the ideology on which the respective system rests.

6 Bertrand (2006). Kings could of course choose different formats for communication, such as *prostagmata* or *diagrammata* (Bencivenni (2011); Capdetrey (2006) and (2007) 335–58, with focus on the Seleukids; Mari (2006), and this volume (Chapter 4), with focus on the Antigonids); the various Hellenistic chanceries made different choices. In what follows I shall focus exclusively on letters.

7 See again Capdetrey (2006); Bencivenni (2010); and below. Boffo (2013) includes a detailed study of the presence of the kings in the archives of the *polis*.

8 On the very ancient cult of Artemis Leukophryene at Magnesia (it went back to the archaic period), see Gehrke (2001) 289–90; for a discussion of Magnesian identity and self-perception, set in the broader Carian context, see Carless Unwin (2017) 76–81.

9 The *asylia* dossier of Magnesia on the Maeander was first published by Kern (1900) as *I.Magnesia* 16–87; it has been reedited by Rigsby (1996) nos. 66–131. It comprises sixty-five documents: a chronicle of the steps that led to the institution of the festival (*I.Magnesia* 16 = Rigsby (1996) no. 66); a history of the mythical foundation of the city, and a fictional Cretan decree linked to it (*I.Magnesia* 17 and *I.Magnesia* 20, both omitted by Rigsby); and the decrees and letters of kings, cities, and *koina* acknowledging the festival (*I.Magnesia* 18–19, 22–64, 66, 68–82, 84, to which other documents were later added: see Chaniotis (1999) 54–5). It is usually assumed that approximately one-third of the documents are now lost; two documents we know only from copies in Delphi (the decrees of the Aetolians and of Delphi, Rigsby (1996) nos. 78 and 79). The historical context has been recently discussed by Thonemann (2007) and Sosin (2009) (see also Carless Unwin (2017) 177–87); earlier important discussions include Ebert (1982); Dusanic (1983); Chaniotis (1999); Gehrke (2001); Slater and Summa (2006). In what follows I accept Sosin's demonstration that there was only one round of requests, in 208/7 BCE.

10 '*Magnetum historia sacra*': Dittenberger, *Sylloge* 557 (= Kern, *I.Magnesia* 16 = Rigsby (1996) no. 66). For a discussion of the genre of 'sacred histories' and their connection with 'intentional history', see Dillery (2005), esp. 519–22 for Magnesia.

11 *I.Magnesia* 16 = Rigsby (1996) no. 66, 7–10.

12 Acceptance was necessary, since the prize for victory was to be given by the city of the victor, unlike in the case of moneyed games. On stephanitic prestige, see Slater and Summa (2006); Thonemann (2007).

13 I here follow the text of Thonemann (2007). Lines 16–17 have a complex history: Kern assumed that the Magnesians had attempted to establish a crowned contest, and accordingly restored [στεφανί]-| την at the end of l. 16. This was contested by Ebert (1982), who on the basis of the subsequent remark that it is normal to upgrade festivals from argyritic to stephanitic (ll. 22–4), restored the text to mean that the Magnesians had initially (in 221 BCE) decided to set up a 'moneyed' (ἀργυρίτης) contest, limited to the Greeks of Asia, which they later decided to upgrade to crowned status, opening it to all Greeks. This interpretation, accepted by Rigsby (1996) 187–8, has been contested by Slater and Summa (2006) 278–84, who have convincingly proposed to return to [στεφανί]-| την; Thonemann (2007) 154–5 has further improved the text, proposing to read at ll. 16–17 πρῶτ[οι στεφανί]-| την ἀγῶνα θεῖναι τῶγ κατοικούντων τὴν Ἀσίαν [ἐψηφίσαν]-| το, 'first of the Greeks who live in Asia they decided to establish a stephanitic contest' (rather than: 'they decided to establish a stephanitic contest, initially—πρῶτ[ον]—among the Greeks who live in Asia', as Slater and Summa 2006). For the (restored) third victory in pancration, see Ebert (1982) 201–2; Ebert's restoration removed the necessity of dating the engraving of the text *post* 200 BCE. As pointed out by Thonemann (2007) 153 and 158–60, the emphasis on the

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date is meant to support the Magnesians' claim to have been the first of all Greeks of Asia to think of establishing a stephanitic penteteric contest.

14 The delay has been traditionally interpreted as implying a first round of invitations and requests, in 221 BCE, which failed to gain widespread acceptance, leading thus to a second round of requests, in 208 BCE, which was successful. Sosin (2009) now argues that there was only one round of invitations, in 208 BCE, and that the delays were internal to Magnesia, and not due to diplomatic failure.

15 On *I.Magnesia* 17, see Carless Unwin (2017) 213–16 (text and translation) and 169–88 (discussion). On *I.Magnesia* 20 see Chaniotis (1999) 61–4; Gehrke (2001) 292–4; Carless Unwin (2017) 178–80. *I.Magnesia* 21, a list of eight Cretan *poleis*, may have been appended to this invented text, as it was found in its vicinity, or to the decree of a Cretan city.

16 On the date at which the texts were inscribed, see Ebert (1982) 202 and 216; Gehrke (2001) 288 n. 7.

17 The same 'advance knowledge' of the precise place of inscription is in evidence in *I.Magnesia* 67, the covering letter accompanying a honorific decree of the Cnossians for two Magnesians, Theogeiton and Iophon (a text that has nothing to do with the *asylia* dossier). Cf. Rigsby (1996) 185. (Note however that Rigsby (1996) nos. 109 b18 and 125 b10 ask the Magnesians to place the inscription in the temple of Artemis Leukophryene, something that Rigsby explains with reliance on formula.)

18 On the temple, which was to become the third largest of Asia Minor, see Hoepfner (1997) 110–13; Gehrke (2001) 289–90. The agora, which gave access to the temple's enclosure through a propylon in its east stoa, measured an impressive 26,000 m^2 (including the space under the porticoes): Humann, Kohte, and Watzinger (1904) 5 and 107; Sielhorst (2015) 242–6.

19 Sosin (2009) 394, table 2 lists eight groups of ambassadors whose names are mentioned in more than one acceptance document, and sixteen other groups attested only once: thus, at least twenty-four groups of ambassadors travelled across the Greek world to solicit responses to the Magnesian request.

20 References to collections of oracles, poets, and decrees are present in the answers of four cities visited by Embassy IV, Same, Ithaca, Corcyra, and Epidamnos (*I.Magnesia* 35.8–10, 36.9–10, 44.14–16, and 46.13–16 = Rigsby (1996) nos. 85, 86, 94, and 96; Illyrian Apollonia, visited by the same ambassadors, refers only to past benefactions of the Magnesians); the decree of Epidamnos adds also a reference to the work of a local historian. See Chaniotis (1999); Gehrke (2001) 290–1; Sosin (2009); and Rubinstein (2013) for a larger picture of interstate diplomacy.

21 Lists of cities that voted in the same way are appended to the following documents: *I.Magnesia* 21, 28, 31, 32, 33, 35, 38, 39, 41, 44, 48, 50, 52, 53, 59, 61, for a total (partial, because many of the lists are incomplete at the bottom) of 101 cities; cf. Chaniotis (1999) 55 n. 12; Rigsby (2001). The groupings were made by the redactors in Magnesia, on the basis of indications from the envoys: Roy (2003) 125–6.

22 Rigsby (1996) 80; Chaniotis (1999) 54–5 n. 12.

23 Argos: *I.Magnesia* 40 = Rigsby (1996) no. 90; unknown city: *I.Magnesia* 69 = Rigsby (1996) no. 117 (only two lines of text remain, so that it is difficult to ascertain whether this was a covering letter or a self-standing letter); letter by unknown city: *I.Magnesia* 71 = Rigsby (1996) no. 119. These two fragmentary letters from cities should be added to the list of letters from cities in Ceccarelli (2013) 365–79.

24 Chaniotis (1999) 55–60, and the appendices 2 and 3 (65–9).

25 Chaniotis (1999) 51–2, who labels this practice 'Empfängerformular'.

26 Chaniotis (1999) 52, a point that remains valid even if Sosin (2009) has shown that there is, in the wording of the answers received by the Magnesians, room for variations: in particular, not all cities summarized the requests of the Magnesians in the same way—which implies that the cities formulated their answer not just with reference to the decree, but to the oral presentation of the ambassadors as well, which may have featured considerable variation.

27 See discussion below.

28 Around 208 BCE Tralles would have been called Seleukia; it reverted to its name after Antiochos' defeat: see Cohen (1995) 265–8, with Ma (2002) 48. Tralles's answer (*I.Magnesia* 85, Rigsby (1996) no. 129) was inscribed at the same time as the decrees of two other Attalid cities (names lost), one of which (*I.Magnesia* 87 = Rigsby (1996) no. 131) postdates 159 BCE, as the city receives the announcement 'for the safety of King Attalos Philadelphos' and of the entire royal family, its own and that of Magnesia; there is no mention of *asylia* here. The decree of another Attalid city (*I.Magnesia* 83 = Rigsby (1996) no. 128), which conspicuously mentions the king (Eumenes II), and appears to omit inviolability, is also slightly later than the rest of the dossier.

29 The ambassadors may or may not have asked Antiochos to write. Either way, the king's actions come across as sovereign and high-handed: Ma (2002) 157. The decision of the Acarnanian league, that its member cities elect *thearodochoi* (*I.Magnesia* 31 = Rigsby (1996) no. 81 ll. 31–4), has a similar result ('Presumably this is the same as ordering them to recognize the crowned games', Rigsby (1996) 207); but the way the decision is presented is very different.

30 The very rare instances of kings motivating their actions in a clause introduced by ἐπειδή turn out to give as reason a decision of the ancestors/predecessors, as in Welles (1934) no. 15, a letter sent by an Antiochos to Erythrai, or an earlier

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decision of the king himself, as in the letter sent by Eumenes II in *c*.188 BCE to the inhabitants of Toriaion (*SEG* 47.1745, 40–1: ἐπειδὴ συνκεχωρήκαμεν ὑμῖν πολιτεί̣αν τε | καὶ γυμνάσιον, βουλόμεθα φανερὸν ποιῆ[σα]ι…, 'since we have given to you the status of *polis* and a gymnasion, we want to make clear our inclination…'). Discussion and further examples in Ceccarelli (2013) 306–7 and (2017). In her recent discussion of the Borsippa cylinder of Antiochos I, Stevens (2014) 78–9 shows how, even in a medium heavily conditioned by tradition, the free agency of the king is emphasized.

31 Welles (1934) 132 considers that 'the letter of Ptolemy, though perhaps suffering from its extensive restorations, is not a smooth or as skillful a composition as those of Antiochos and his son'; negative comments on the style of this letter are frequent in scholarship, but indeed it may well be the restorations that are faulty.

32 Three or even four names in the nominative could have occupied the lacunae at ll. 5 and 6; alternatively, two ambassadors might have been designated here, with the name of their fathers as well: Diopeithes son of…, and Ithalides son of –demos. Ithalides is an unparalleled name: Rigsby (1996) 198.

33 Welles (1934) 149. Independently of this restoration, the following statement that the envoys spoke with zeal on the various aspects that were touched upon in the decree, ll. 17–20, supports the interpretation that at ll. 13–14 we are still within the summary of the decree.

34 For Rigsby (1996) 194, 'Magnesia was certainly on some terms an Attalid city in 208'. Mastrocinque (1979) 154–6 infers from the grant of *asylia* which he attributes to Ptolemy that the city was under Ptolemaic control—but *contra* see Dusanic (1983) 23–4, who makes a strong case for collaboration between Macedonians, Cretans, and Magnesians; Fraser thought it was Seleukid—it had certainly been Seleukid under Antiochos Hierax (see Rigsby (1996) 194 for references). Ma (2002) 47 and 261 n. 5 is probably right in suggesting that the city was independent (or under nominal Seleukid control); see also Carless Unwin (2017) 181–8 (political allegiance of the city uncertain).

35 See Ceccarelli (2017) for a discussion of the Seleukid corpus; more generally J. and L. Robert (1983) 114–15; and Ma (2002) 141 and 207–8. The Antigonid letters too seem to conform to this pattern; see Mari, this volume (Chapter 4, nn. 37–40).

36 *I.Magnesia* 37 = Rigsby (1996) no. 87; the latest edition is *IG* II^{3} 1 1170. I do not enter here into the question of the non-match between the Athenian tribal cycle and the date of the mission/date of the month: see Rigsby (1996) 216–17.

37 Rigsby (1996) no. 87, ll. 1–6. The entire document is translated by S. Lambert (whom I follow here) at <https://www.atticinscriptions.com/inscription/IGII31/1170>. This is a probuleumatic decree, where the council has a first hearing and then the assembly approves. On the form of the Athenian decree, see Rhodes (1972) 64–81; Rhodes with Lewis (1997) 11–61; Lanérès (2000), with particular focus on fifth-century Athenian decrees and laws.

38 Rhodes with Lewis (1997) 144–5.

39 Giannakopoulos (2012) 55–7 stresses that the second part of the decree (where the decision is taken) refers only to the request of the ambassadors and not at all to the king; he thus sees in the construction of the decree an attempt at both enhancing the status of the king and emphasizing the freedom of the *polis*'s decision. Indeed, as he says, reference to the king does not necessarily imply subordination: the choice of the Delphians to inscribe the letter sent by Seleukos II in support of Smyrna's request of *asylia* around 246 BCE, when they were certainly not Seleukid subjects, shows that reference to a royal letter might be made for all sorts of reason, including the prestige of being involved in such a mediation. Conversely, lack of reference to a king need not imply that the king did not support the request: see Ma (2002) 260–5, on the *asylia* of Teos.

40 Besides the two passages where οἰκειώτης indisputably appears (ll. 5–6 and 13), ll. 1–2 of the Eretria decree have been restored by Kern (and Knoepfler (2001) 262 for what concern the first part of l. 1) to include a reference to οἰκειώτης and φιλία as well: ο[ἱ] σ[τ]ρατηγοὶ [καὶ οἱ πρόβουλοι εἶπαν· ἐπειδὴ] Μάγ[ν]ητες | οἱ ἐπὶ Μαιάνδ[ρου φίλοι καὶ οἰκεῖοι ὑπ]ά[ρχοντες….

41 Formally, the decree presents enactment and motion formula (ἔδοξεν τῆι πόλει τῆι Γοννέων l.3, and δεδόχθαι τῆι πόλει l. 16); the motivation is introduced with ἐπειδή (l. 4). On Antigonid interference in the requests of *asylia* made by Cos in 242 BCE and Kyzikos in *c*.180 BCE, see Mari this volume (Chapter 4, nn. 58–9).

42 In earlier scholarship, absence of reference to *asylia* in the answers has been interpreted as *refusal* to grant it, dictated by political reasons. The assumption of two different rounds of requests by the Magnesians, one in 221 and one in 208 BCE, helped explain some problematic cases of granted and non-granted *asylia* which did not seem to fit the political pattern. But the discrepancy between Chalcis and Eretria could not be explained with that assumption (hence Knoepfler's assumption (2001: 360–5) that Eretria must have been independent from the Macedonians). Out of an extremely long bibliography, I single out here Giannakopoulos (2012), who offers an updated discussion. In arguing for only one round of requests by the Magnesians in 208 BCE, Sosin (2009) 337–85 deals with the issue of the occasional absence of recognition of *asylia* by arguing that the recognition (or its absence) depended on the type of address made by the envoys, who might have omitted to specify this aspect, and that anyway such a recognition should be considered as 'understood' and part of 'all the other privileges' granted.

43 For a different explanation, see Giannakopoulos (2012), who points out that Philip V was probably at Chalcis when the embassy arrived, and suggests that the king may not have written to Eretria, because he knew they would accept anyway.

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This is possible, but seems rather feeble.

44 With the name of his father and grand-father. We have here an 'archival docket', referring to the moment in which the records were transmitted to the archive: Rigsby (1996) 260.

45 Not only is this the only decree from Antiochia in Persis (whose exact location is actually disputed: see most recently Rougemont (2016)); this is also one of the fullest decrees from a Seleukid city (Rigsby (1996) 259), at any rate from those in the East. Cf. Rhodes with Lewis (1997) 454–60; Rougemont (2012) no. 53.

46 This aspect (Antioch's assertion of a civic and Hellenic identity independent of the Seleukid king) is emphasized by Kosmin (2013) 233–7.

47 On the position of Laodicea on the Lycus, see Ma (2002) 157, 159; for Antioch in Pisidia, Capdetrey (2007) 108–9, 121, 239–40.

48 Ma (2002) 182–94: against those who consider this language of euergetism a stereotyped language devoid of any significance, Ma points out that the stereotypes are what makes the exchange between king and city possible—and as we shall see, there is space for variations. Bertrand (2006) interestingly emphasizes the potential for variations. Hofmann (2015) follows Welles (1934) xlii–xliii in thinking that the royal letter was modelled on the city-decree, but in so doing downplays the peculiarities of the two languages.

49 Whether the infinitives are self-standing or depending on a verbal form such as ἔδοξε or εἶπε is here unimportant; discussion in Denizot (2011) 307–8. Lanérès (2000) 154 thinks that the infinitives in her corpus of Attic decrees depend on the aorists ἔδοξε (of the enactment formula) or εἶπε (of the proponent), which can be implied.

50 On the impersonal writing of decrees, see Dover (1981); Bertrand (1990); Rhodes with Lewis (1997) 4–5 for a quick description of the Hellenistic form of the decree, 11–61 for a detailed analysis of the Athenian decree and its evolution, 65–472 for a catalogue of all the forms taken in the Greek world by decrees, and 550–63 for a general discussion of the form decision-making took in the rest of Greece. The format remained impersonal even where the diplomatic style was different: at Argos we find for instance ἀλίαι ἔδοξε τελείαι, followed by month and day, name of chairman of the council, name of the secretary, substance of decree, and name of proponent at the end (Rhodes with Lewis (1997) 67–71). See also Osborne (1999) for the performance aspect; Ceccarelli (2013) 298–300; and Hatzopoulos (2013) with reference to Macedon.

51 In decrees this is simply a marked tendency: out of the twenty-nine decrees in our dossier where the motivation is sufficiently preserved, twenty-one introduce it by ἐπειδή, while eight (the decrees sent by the Achaean league, the Acarnanian league, Argos, Sicyon, Corinth, Same, Apollonia, and Syracuse) use a construction with genitive absolute.

52 For a nuanced picture, distinguishing areas of the Greek world 'with a strong tradition of anonymity' (e.g. the Peloponnese) and others, such as Athens or Boeotia, where proposals are attributed to named individuals, see Rhodes with Lewis (1997) 491–7.

53 Gauthier 2005; see also Knoepfler (2001) 309–10 for a discussion of the move from the indication of the simple name of the *rogator* (the *nudum nomen*) to a more detailed nomenclature of *rogator* and, if present, *relator*—a move that in Samos and Miletos took place at the end of the fourth century.

54 Five exceptions among the documents where the names are sufficiently preserved: Rigsby (1996) nos. 67 (Aetolian league), 91 (Sicyon, *I.Magnesia* 41—the only extant decree of Sicyon; Rhodes with Lewis (1997) mention further only two unpublished letters, post 146 BCE and, with a question mark, *IG* IV 436, a thanksgiving voted by the council), 99 (Delos, *I.Magnesia* 49), 104 (Rhodes, *I.Magnesia* 55), 106 (Cos, *I.Magnesia* 57), and 131 (unknown Attalid city, *I.Magnesia* 87).

55 Allan (2010) 225. Although Allan focuses mainly on Homeric Greek, with a short excursus on Herodotus, he gives some examples of legal language attested in inscriptions: his conclusions can be fruitfully extended to our documents.

56 Denizot (2011) 392: 'l'infinitif directif…s'explique par sa valeur propre, qui permet de mettre l'accent sur le procès et les circonstances de ce procès plutôt que sur les agents chargés de réaliser ce procès'. Similarly, Allan (2010) 208–9 emphasizes the fact that the infinitive, because of its lack of agreement with a person, does not evoke a particular agent.

57 Kings convey their decisions or recommendations with expressions such as καλῶς οὖν ποιήσετε, 'you shall do well', or imperatives of whatever has to be done (send, tell, erect…); when the letter is addressed to a subordinate, σύνταξον οὖν ('take care, then, that…'), with infinitive or also with ὅπως and subjunctive, is frequent; συνχωρέω (in the aorist or the perfect) is regularly used for grants (together with δίδωμι), while forms of κρίνω are used to express a judgement. See Welles (1934) lxvi–lxvii and lxx–lxxii; Virgilio (2010), (2011) 37–55; Virgilio (2013).

58 On royal decision-making: Savalli-Lestrade (2003); Hatzopoulos (2013), particularly important on the issue of the tension between the two contrasting conceptions of political decision: an individual, authoritative one (cf. Latin *censeo*), and a subjective, collective one, expressed by δοκέω or ἀνδάνω. On the avoidance of forms of δοκέω in royal letters: Ceccarelli (2013) 304–6, Ceccarelli (2017). Only five out of seventy-five royal letters collected in Welles (1934), and none of the royal documents in Lenger (^{2}1980) use a form of δοκέω; of these five instances, two are in letters by Antigonos Monophthalmos (that is, they are early); one is used by Eumenes II to summarize a decision taken by a *polis*; the remaining two do not concern an official decision. Of the documents found since the publication of the *Royal Correspondence* and of the *Corpus des ordonnances des Ptolémées*, none, as far as I can tell, presents a decision with δοκέω: see Ceccarelli (2017). The

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possibility of the kings using forms of δοκέω is disputed by Bertrand (2001); but there would have been no obstacles to the use of periphrases such as those attested in Hdt. 2.148; Thuc. 1.125, 8.79; and Xen. *Hell*. 1.1.36, 3.2.19. Texts such as the decree from Seuthopolis by Berenice and her sons (*SEG* 42.661) and the decree by Maussollos and Artemisia (*I.Labraunda* ii. 40) show that kings could have appropriated the form of the decree; see Rhodes with Lewis (1997) 544; Ceccarelli (2013) 300–3.

59 All references in Ceccarelli (2013) 306–7, Ceccarelli (2017).

60 Schubart (1920) 332; see also 334: 'geradezu als Ausnahme erscheint es, wenn er [sc. der Bericht] im Stile der Volksbeschlüsse durch einen Satz mit ἐπεὶ oder ἐπειδὴ eigeführt wird'. In our dossier, both Attalos I and Antiochos III express their motivation for writing with statements in the indicative; Antiochos' son used a participial construction with genitive absolute; Ptolemy entirely omitted motivation. For the construction with διὰ τό + infinitive see for instance the letter of Ptolemy to Miletos (Welles (1934) no. 14, dated to *c*.262 BCE).

61 Bikerman (1938) 193.

62 Collection and discussion of letters from *poleis* in Ceccarelli (2013) 311–30 and appendix 3.

63 The control over time of the Hellenistic king, discussed in Savalli-Lestrade (2010), is inscribed into his own letters and into his dealings with his subjects.

64 The royal letters to Magnesia do not make any reference to φιλία: the two Seleukids mention the φιλανθρωποτάτη διάληψις (most benevolent opinion) and the προαίρεσις (affection) that Antiochos III has towards Magnesia (a consequence of the εὔνοια, goodwill, towards him and his affairs demonstrated in all occasions by the Magnesians), while Attalos I simply notices that the people remember his own benefactions and behave kindly (φιλοφρόνως) towards him. As for the decrees, out of thirty-nine sufficiently preserved inscriptions, twenty-eight mention φιλία, or state that the Magnesians are φίλοι, sometimes more than once (e.g. in the motivation and again in the motion clause); twenty-seven mention (also) οἰκειότης, familiarity; and thirteen speak of συγγένεια, kinship (for the distribution of the terms φιλία, οἰκειότης, and συγγένεια in the dossier of Magnesia, see Gehrke (2001) 295 with n. 48, and the table in Sammartano (2008/9) 120–7, with extended discussion; also Stavrianopoulou (2013) 181–91).

65 Paschidis (2013), with many more nuances than I have presented here. Another instance of the rich rewards that a detailed study of the language used by kings can bring is Lombardi's (2013) analysis of the semantic evolution of the term διάθεσις: Lombardi concludes that Antiochos III was probably responsible for the semantic shift from an initial rather vague meaning ('arrangement, condition') to a specific one of 'disposition', of the city towards the king, and vice versa (274–5).

66 On the connection between oral message and letter, see Ceccarelli (2013) 17–18, 102–24.

67 A striking passage of a letter of Eumenes II to the residents of Toriaion, who have come with the request of being granted the status of *polis*, betrays, in its formulation, the importance of the 'words' of the king. This is the first letter sent to them by the king, in which he still addresses them as 'residents' of Toriaion (τοῖς κατοικοῦσι), and proceeds to make concessions; in the conclusion of the letter, the king states: 'Concerning the fact of considering you a *politeuma*, I have myself pronounced it so in the opening of my other letter' (*SEG* 47.1745, ll. 34–5). The letter he refers to has been inscribed next on the stone; it is addressed not, as this one, to the *residents* of Toriaion, but to the *council and the people* of Toriaion; the royal pronouncement (π[ρ]οσ[π]εφώνηϰ[α]) simultaneously constitutes and presuppose their new status as a *polis* community and thereby validates the grant. The first letter opens: Βασιλεὺς Εὐμένης Τοριαιτῶν τοῖς κατοιϰοῦσι | χαίρειν· (ll. 2–3); the second: Βασιλεὺς Εὐμένης Τοριαιτῶν τῆ βουλῆι καὶ τῷι δήμωι | χαίρειν (ll. 39–40). Significantly, the envoys of the people of Toriaion are defined, in the first letter, ἄνδρες (l. 3) rather than πρεσβευταί, as usual when the envoys come from a city. On the effectiveness of the king's words, see Müller (2005) 356; Bencivenni (2010).

68 Or better, at any rate for the letters of Antiochos III and Attalos I concerning the *asylia*: the letters agree to a request; but they imply orders to the other *poleis*.

69 Hence the clauses, so frequent at the end of honorific decrees, concerning the choice of ambassadors who will bring the decree to the city of the honorand, and further explain about the honours granted.

70 See above, n. 21.

71 South-west entrance: a street *c*.8.70 m. wide, see Humann, Kohte, and Watzinger (1904) 110. The prytaneion was built at the same time as the South stoa of the agora: Miller (1978) 112–15; Emme (2013) 99–102 and 338–9, with figs 54–5. View across the agora, and then on the temple of Artemis (*skenographia*): Hoepfner (1997) 110–13, with fig. 1a.

72 Rigsby (1996) 185: 'along the southern and western walls of the agora colonnade, facing in upon the agora', is imprecise. Detailed description of the monumental structure of the 'Pilaster wall' in Humann, Kohte, and Watzinger (1904) 112–16, who note that work on the agora began at this corner; Kern (1900) xxx–xxxi and 11–12, with pl. II; Hesberg (2009) 28–31; Carless Unwin (2017) 177–8.

73 Traces of brown colour on marble: Kern (1900) xxx; date: Ebert (1982) 216. As we saw (above, pp. 151–2 and n. 17), location must have been decided in advance of the missions.

74 Kern (1900) 12; Welles (1934) 140; Rigsby (1996) 185. The other texts located on the Pilaster wall (but engraved in smaller characters) are: a decree of the Boiotian league (*I.Magnesia* 25 = Rigsby (1996) no. 73); unknown city (*I.Magnesia* 25c =

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Rigsby (1996) no. 74, inscribed below the preceding one); a decree from Larisa? (*I.Magnesia* 26 = Rigsby (1996) no. 75); a fragmentary decree from an unknown city, and to its right, a decree from Calydon (*I.Magnesia* 27 and 28 = Rigsby (1996) nos. 76 and 77); and a group, whose relative position can be ascertained, formed by the decree of an unknown city, and under it, a decree of the Acarnanian league (*I.Magnesia* 30 and 31 = Rigsby (1996) nos. 80 and 81), then a long decree of the Epirote League, a decree from Gonnoi, and a decree of the Phocian league (*I.Magnesia* 32, 33, and 34 = Rigsby (1996) nos. 82, 83, and 84). For the presentation of the other texts (those on the long back wall), see Hesberg (2009) 28–31 and figs 5/5b; Carless Unwin (2017) 177–8.

75 The documents coming from the cities are usually preceded by a heading 'παρὰ τῶν δείνων' (the Corcyreans, Epidamnians, etc.), indicating the provenance. In the case of the royal letters, the first line takes on the function of a heading. It is worth noting that in the case of *I.Magnesia* 17 (the history of the foundation of Magnesia, also inscribed on the Pilaster wall) the redactors took care to align the sections quoting the oracles to the left of the rest of the text, 'outdenting' them (Carless Unwin (2017) 213): the same strategy was adopted to highlight the beginning of the royal letters and the oracular responses.

76 At l. 30 I accept Slater and Summa's (2006: 290) text τῶν ἄλλ[ων Ἑλλή]γωμ, instead of Kern's overlong τῶν ἄλλ[ων Ἑλλήνων ἁπάν]τωμ. Ebert (1982) proposed τῶν ἄλλ[ων ἁπάν]τωμ, which is accepted by Rigsby (1996) 186; but the emphasis in numerous documents of the dossier on the services offered by the Magnesians to 'the Greeks' (cf. Rigsby (1996) nos. 73.11; 79.10; 81.14; 82.16; 84.10; 85.8, 21; 86.8; 112.10; 113.13 88.12; 89.15; 93.15; 94.14; 95.23; 96.12; 97.14; 98.8; 102.20; 103.13; 105.7; 107.122; 108.7; 111.13, 21, 37; 115.7; 129.16; 130.6), which surely reflects the presentation of the Magnesian ambassadors themselves, renders a reference to 'other Greeks' plausible here.

77 Ebert (1982) 209 and n. 30 stresses that although the cities may use indifferently ψηφίζομαι and ἀποδέχομαι to express their decision (cf. for cities deciding with ἀποδέχομαι *I.Magnesia* 32.50; 39.48; 48.35), in the case of kings, voting is not in question. His translation (1982) 210, brings out well the difference: 'nachdem zuvor die Könige ihre Zustimmung erteilt und auch die anderen alle, zu denen sie Gesandtschaften geschickt hatten, in ihren Bünden und Städten beschlossen hatten,…', as does Welles's (1934) 146 translation. I thus disagree with recent attempts to understand the sentence as one of generalized acceptance, as e.g. in Rigsby (1996) 186–7 ('with the approval of the kings and all the other Greeks to whom they sent ambassadors, who voted by nation and city to honour Artemis'); Sumi (2004) 80; Slater and Summa (2006) 291; and Sosin (2009) 371 ('with the kings and the other Greeks to whom they sent embassies accepting, having voted by nations and cities to honor Artemis Leukophryene').

78 Gehrke (2001) 294–5; cf. Stavrianopoulou (2013) 190–1.

79 According to Sumi (2004) 80, the Magnesians fail to acknowledge the role of the kings, whose intervention is 'passed over in silence'. I find this hard to accept, in light of the evidence for specific placement of the royal documents, and of the very clear statement at the end of *I.Magnesia* 16; Sumi himself (2004: 81) acknowledges that the letters of Antiochos III and his son were placed in prominent position. See Boffo (2013) for instances of 'royal institutional priority' (e.g. 223 for the granting of access to the assembly 'after the religious and the royal affairs' in Samos, Ephesos, Bargylia, and Calymna).

80 Bencivenni (2010) and (2014) 147–51 has pointed out that the king never imposes (or even recommends) publication of his letters to the cities, whether subject or independent ones; the decision to inscribe the documents rests with the latter, in a striking departure from the practice of Greek cities, who, in their honorific decrees, typically ask that the honours be announced in the other city, and that the text be inscribed in a prominent location. This of course implies that our documentation is very much skewed: only favourable letters will have been inscribed.

81 Bertrand (1990), (2006).

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