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Issue X (2024)

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Citation Boyacı S. 2024, "An Honorary Inscription Recording an Elite Woman from Nysa ad Maeandrum". *Libri* X, 17-27. DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.10824787

Received Date: 08.01.2024 | Acceptance Date: 23.02.2024

Online Publication Date: 16.03.2024

Article Type: Research Article

Editing: Phaselis Research Project
www.libridergi.org



An Honorary Inscription Recording an Elite Woman from Nysa ad Maeandrum

Nysa ad Maeandrum'dan Seçkin bir Kadına İlişkin Onurlandırma Yazıtı


Sargon BOYACI *

Abstract: This article presents a new inscription discovered during the Nysa ad Maeandrum excavations in 2020. In this epigraphic document, Neikostrate, also known as Eutykhiane, a member of a noble family of Nysa ad Maeandrum, is honoured by her hometown of Nysa for her virtue and nobility. Neikostrate, the daughter of Publius Aelius Iunius Marcianus, is mentioned as descended from *archiereis* and *stephanephoroi*. Although the inscription does not directly provide information on whether Neikostrate and the mentioned member of the family fulfilled any offices in the city, the expression of “ἀρχιερέων καὶ στεφανηφόρων ἑγγόνων” which referred to sacred and eponymous offices in the inscription will provide an effective view in the evaluation of the inscription and social status of the family. Subsequently, in consideration of the fact that Nysa ad Maeandrum has remarkable epigraphical data concerning elite women, the limited information related to Neikostrate’s civic position is evaluated in the context of Nysaeen noble women.

Keywords: Nysa ad Maeandrum, Neikostrate alias Eutykhiane, Nysaeen Noble Women, *Archiereia*, *Stephanephoria*

Öz: Bu makale 2020 yılı Nysa ad Maeandrum kazı çalışmaları sırasında ele geçen yeni bir yazıtı ele almaktadır. Bu epigrafik belgede Nysa ad Maeandrum kentinin soylu bir ailesinin ferdi olan ve Eutykhiane olarak da bilinen Neikostrate vatanı Nysa Kenti tarafından erdemi ve asaletinden ötürü onurlandırılmaktadır. Publius Aelius Iunius Marcianus’un kızı Neikostrate’nin, *arkhiereia* ve *stephanephoria* üstlenenlerin soyundan geldiği belirtilmektedir. Mevcut yazıt doğrudan Neikostrate’nin ve bahsi geçen aile üyelerinin kentte memuriyet üstlenip üslenmediğine yönelik bilgi aktarmamasına rağmen, yazıttaki dini ve eponym memuriyetlere atıf yapan “ἀρχιερέων καὶ στεφανηφόρων ἑγγόνων” ifadesi yazıtın ve ailesinin toplumsal konumunun değerlendirmesinde etken olacaktır. Bu durumu takiben, Nysa ad Maeandrum kentinde soylu kadınlara ilişkin epigrafik olarak kayda değer belgelerin ele geçtiği göz önünde bulundurulduğunda, Neikostrate’nin sosyopolitik konumuna ilişkin sınırlı bilgiler Nysa ad Maeandrum kentinin diğer soylu kadınları kapsamında değerlendirilecektir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Nysa ad Maeandrum, Neikostrate Namıdiğer Eutykhiane, Nysalı Soylu Kadınlar, *Archiereia*, *Stephanephoria*

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The Inscription of Neikostrate

This honorary inscription base was found in the eastern center of the city of Nysa ad Maeandrum¹ during the excavations carried out on the eastern part of the Colonnaded Street (Street 1- *plateia*)², in the northern part of trench NY.20.KP 43 in the summer of 2020³ (Fig. 1). The inscription is carved on a block of marble, the front and back of which are formed by chiseling, and it consists of fourteen lines. The letters seem to be well-ordered. Numerous letters are completely legible, a few are not, but these few do not interfere with reading. Even though the inscription is not damaged, it was not found *in situ*, nor was any base found in the sounding at KP 43. 42. 41. where it surfaced; hence it probably was reused as *spolia*.

Findspot: Nysa ad Maendrum, situated on Colonnaded Street / *plateia* (north side of the sondage NY.20.KP 43).

Dimensions: H.: 1.17 m; W.: 0.64 m; D.: 0.50 m; L.H.: 0.04–0.05 cm.

Date: Late IInd century AD.



Fig. 1. The location of the trench where the incipition was found in the eastern part of the Colonnaded Street 1- *plateia* and Street 2, (Photo by E. Ogan) (Öztaner 2022, 111)

¹ Founded by Antiochus I Soter, the King of the Seleucid Empire in the north of the region of Caria during the Hellenistic period, Nysa ad Maendrum is one of the significant Carian cities which is located on the southern foothills of the Mesogis / Aydın Mountains, north of the Maender / Büyük Menderes River, within the borders of the modern district of Sultanhisar in Aydın. See, Str. XIV. I. 46.

² Öztaner 2022, 110–129.

³ The excavations at Nysa ad Maeandrum in Sultanhisar District in Aydın are being maintained under the directorate of Prof. Dr. Serdar Hakan Öztaner in the name of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and Ankara University with the Council of Ministers' decision no. 2016/9336 and date 03.10.2016.

Ἡ πατρίς
 Νεικοστράτην τὴν καὶ
 Εὐτυχιανὴν θυγατέρα
 4 Ποπλίου Αἰλ(ίου) Ἰουνίου
 [Μ]αρκιανοῦ ἀρχιερέων
 καὶ στεφανηφόρων
 ἐγγόνων σεμνότητο[ς]
 8 ἔνεκεν καὶ ἀρετῆς
 τοῦ βιοῦ
vacat
 ἀναστήσαντος τὸν [ἀ]γ-
 δριάντα Μαρκοῦ Αὐρηλί-
 12 ου Ἰουνίου Τρυφωσιανοῦ
 τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ
 αὐτῆς.



Her fatherland (honored) Neikostrate alias Eutykhiane the daughter of Publius Aelius Iunius Marcianus, who was descended from archiereis and stephanephoroi, due to her nobleness and virtue throughout life. Her brother Marcus Aurelius Iunius Tryphosianos had the statue erected.

L.1-3: The inscription is carved for Neikostrate alias Eutykhiane. As is seen, she has double Greek names, which were common in the numerous cities of Asia Minor largely in the Lydian, Carian, and Phrygian regions⁴. There is no doubt that Neikostrate was a citizen of Nysa ad Maeandrum since her πατρίς (homeland or fatherland) honored her. Honoring by *patris* was used widely in the city as a basic subject in various inscriptions⁵ distinct from legislative bodies like *boule* and *demos*. Also, the other Carian cities like Tralleis, Stratonikeia, and Aphrodisias, besides Nysa ad Maeandrum, honored their reputable citizens with the name of πατρίς, especially during the Roman period⁶.

L. 4-7: It seems that Roman citizenship was granted to Neikostrate's father, Publius Aelius Iunius Marcianus, during the reign of Emperor Hadrianus due to his *praenomen* and *nomen*. Even though the inscription does not mention any offices fulfilled by her father despite a fully Roman name, there is no doubt Neikostrate's ancestors had to have been in charge of being performance of offices due to the phrase “ἀρχιερέων καὶ στεφανηφόρων ἐγγόνων”.

⁴ Fraser & Matthews 2018, 161-162.

⁵ Öztaner *et al.* 2014, 231; Akdoğan Arca & Gökalp Özdil 2022c, 130-144; a similar instance was mentioned for ἡ πατρίς as “ἡ λαμπροτάτη Νυσσαίων πόλις ἡ πατρίς” (The pretty magnificent homeland of Nysaeans) during the IInd/IIIrd century AD in the Nysa ad Maeandrum. Other examples for πατρίς see: *I.Nysa* 442, 463, 515.

⁶ *I.Tralleis* 134; *I.Stratonikeia* 1027; *CIG* 2797.

This mentioned phrase is peculiarly encountered in the Didyma⁷ and Miletus⁸. As can be understood from these inscriptions, the nomination of candidates for *stephanephoria* is mentioned as πρόκριτος (selected) and ἑκούσιος (voluntary). Accordingly, it is possible that they had to follow the obligations of their ancestors to secure a civic position as a member of the elite families in their cities. However, Neikostrate's inscription is the first epigraphic evidence found regarding the members of the family. Previously, there was no documented information about them in the excavated inscriptions of Nysa ad Maeandrum.

Two offices are emphasized concerning the social status of family members in lines 4-5. Although there is no direct information about whether Neikostrate, her father, and brother held any office, considering that they originally descended from *archiereis* and *stephanephoroi*⁹, it can be said that all the members of the family were responsible for the financial services of the *polis* considering their original descent from the *archiereis* and *stephanephoroi*. As mentioned in various inscriptions, the *stephanephoria* office is responsible for organizing festivals, cults, parades, and sacrifices. Additionally, building construction and renovation were part of the financial obligations of the office of *stephanephoria*¹⁰. Recent findings show that only a small number of Nysaeans held the *stephanephoria* and *archiereia* positions in Nysa ad Maeandrum. One of the significant figures Titus Aelius Alcibiades and also Iulianus the *heliarkhos* and *grammateus*, and Iustus the son of *asiarkhes* Kydoros are the only examples known for *stephanephoria*¹¹. Titus Aelius Alcibiades especially stands out as a privileged citizen in the sense of Rome as being Nysaeans. Alcibiades, the funding city's *stephanephoria* office and the indicated "eternal *stephanephoria* (τὴν στεφανηφορίαν ἀθάνατον)" was remembered for devoting sum to the foundation by the inhabitants of Nysaeans in Rome and the annual festivities organized of Hadrian's birthday¹². Nevertheless, the only example of *archiereia* is Nysios Musenios the *nomikos* (lawyer)¹³.

L. 10-14: As it is seen, Neikostrate's brother Marcus Aurelius Iunius Tryphosianos took care of erecting the statue. Τρυφωσίανος is a common native name in Nysa ad Maeandrum. The name, with some of the epigraphic instances in which we have also encountered from the cities of Tralleis¹⁴ and Thyateira¹⁵, is frequently documented on the coins minted in Nysa ad

⁷ *I.Didyma* 219, 332.

⁸ *I.Milet* 3, 176.

⁹ *I.Nysa* 442, 519.

¹⁰ Gökalp Özdil 2008, 203; Cluzeau 2021, 208-212.

¹¹ *I.Nysa* 441, 442, 519; *AE* 2008 (2011), 568 no. 1376.

¹² Titus Aelius Alcibiades made numerous *energesia* activity in his life. He established a foundation by donating land to the Artists of Dionysus in Rome and paid for many artists to attend the annual festivities organized for Hadrian's birthday. After all this, he committed to funding the city's *stephanephoria* office, probably even after his death (*I.Nysa* 440-441). During the reign of Antoninus Pius, he attempted to aid in the reconstruction of the fire devastated Colonnaded Street during his procurator in Egypt. See for detail, Gökalp Özdil & Akdoğan Arca 2022b, 62-63.

¹³ *I.Nysa* 531.

¹⁴ *I.Tralles* 143; *CIG* 2932.

¹⁵ *TAM* V,2 952.

Maendrum. As epigraphic and numismatic sources have emerged, the name generally was preferred among the Lydian and Carian regions. However, with the typical similar Greek names Tryphon and Tryphosa¹⁶ the *femininum* form is encountered in numerous inscriptions from all over the Greek World¹⁷. Citizens named Tryphosianos stand out as members of the Nysaeian ruling class during the IIIrd century AD¹⁸. Considering that Neikostrate's brother Tryphosianos has Roman *praenomen* and *nomen* the inscription should be dated to the IInd century AD. Tryphosianos had the right to obtain Roman citizenship during the reign of Emperor Marcus Aurelius. Therefore, the inscription suggested for the reign of Emperor Marcus Aurelius can be dated as the *terminus post quem*.

Neikostrate was honoured as a noble and virtuous woman in the inscription, which allowed her to access the *stephanephoria* and *archieria* offices. By the end of the Hellenistic period, women occupied eponymous offices in numerous Asian city-states where several female *stephanephoro*i and *archieieai* were documented in Asia Minor as in Carian cities¹⁹. Even though these two offices are not considered part of the city *archai* (administrators), by the third century, since the function of offices could differ from place to place, holding sacral or eponymous offices, women also fulfilled various types of benefactions, basically money contributions²⁰. The first office *stephanephoria*²¹, changing the eponymous office from the *prytanis*²², was open to women with similar prestigious and financially burdensome offices of the

¹⁶ An inscription from Thyateria has surfaced of members of a well-established family who had the same names. One of the people having Tryphosianos name is the *equester* M. Aurelius Diadokhos Tryphosianos the son of Aurelius Moschianus and his late mother *prytanis* Aurelia Tryphosa TAM V,2 952.

¹⁷ Fraser & Matthews 2018, 429.

¹⁸ The first instance belongs to the magistrate Tryphosianos, son of Artemidoros (*grammateus*), reverse legend: ΓΡ ΤΡΥΦΩΚΙΑΝΟΥ ΑΡΤΕΜΙΔΩΡΟΥ ΝΥΣΕΩΝ and obverse design: diademed and draped bust of Otacilia Severa, wearing necklace, reverse design: Poseidon standing l., holding trident, foot on dolphin. The coin was minted during the reign of Philip the Arab. Another instance belongs to the Magistrate Aur. Tryphosianos, son of Aristandros; obverse legend: ΑΥΤ Κ ΠΟ ΛΙΚΙΝ ΒΑΛΕΡΙΑΝΟΣ; Laureate, draped and cuirassed bust right. reverse legend: ΕΠ Γ ΑΥΡ ΤΡΥΦΩΚΙΑΝΟΥ ΤΥ ΑΠΙ / ΚΤ Ν[...]ΑΕΩΝ, the coin was minted during the reign of Valerian. Regling 1913b, Nysa No. 178, 201, 203, 204; GRPC *Lydia* 270; BMC *Lydia* 65.

¹⁹ Priene 208, 4-5 (early Ist cent. BC) The first mentioned woman was Phile, daughter of Apollonios and wife of Thessalos; *ISmyrna* 731.24-25 (AD 83). The second instance concerning females is Koskonina Myrton; *IMagnesia* 158.1-9 (Roman period) see for another detail, Iuliana, daughter of Eustratos, son of Phanostrates, and wife of the high priest of Asia Alkiphron.

²⁰ Dmitriev 2005, 256; *ISmyrna* 639 (late Ist-early IInd cent. AD), 771 (c. AD 125). The iteration: *ISmyrna* 203 (imperial period), 697 (soon after AD 124), 775 (c. late Ist cent. AD).

²¹ The *stephanephoria* office, the wearing of the crown, as a symbol of religious office, is widespread in Asia Minor, see for details, Welwei 2001, 956; Gökalp Özdil 2018, 197-198; Cluzeau 2021, 208-212.

²² Sherk 1993, 279-280; Bremen 1996, 31: For the change of the eponymous official from *prytanis* to "priest" in Pergamum, which has been dated to the reign of Eumenes I, see OGIS 267 (= Welles 1934, 110 no. 23 = *IPergamon* 18). The change of the eponymous official from the *prytanis* to the *stephanephoria* in Priene has been searched – since 334/33 BC when Alexander the Great granted the city autonomy – regarding Miletus and Chios, where the same development occurred. Dmitriev 2005, 83; see Priene 2-8; *IErythrai Klazomenai* 15.20-22 (Chios or Erythrae second third of IVth cent. BC); SEG XII 390a.28-30 (c. 320 BC).

neokoria and the *hoplites* general²³.

Considering how many women occupied the office of *stephanephoria* in Nysa ad Maendrum we have just one epigraphical source at hand. Due to the inscription's fragmentary form and missing letters, it does not produce a detailed interpretation of what any Nysaeen woman performed to occupy the *stephanephoria*. However, the large, partly broken inscription has been interpreted that the *Asiarkhes* Kydoros donated for the building of the two-storey facade of the theatre as *summa honoraria* name of his children Iustus and Stratonike assuming the office of *stephanephoria*²⁴. The *Asiarkhes* Kydoros is conclusively unknown. However, a similar inscription concerning *asiarkhes* Kydoros also appeared in Tralleis²⁵. Even though we cannot assert that Kydoros and his daughter Stratonike were originally from Nysa ad Maendrum, some instances²⁶ concerning Nysaeen *asiarkhes* like Pythodoros, can provide a possible indication that they were a native family of Nysa ad Maendrum although this is not yet certain²⁷.

As it is known, the inscription's other mentioned office, the *arkhiereia*, is an essential position corresponding to the high priest. Initially, Ulpia Firmiane is epigraphically one of the instances of *arkhiereia*. She was similarly honored by her homeland (πατρις) due to her virtue and love for a husband (φιλανδρία)²⁸. We have encountered the other high priest, Iulia Heliodoris, in the inscription where her son Sacerdos Iulius Philometer was honored by the council, people's assembly, and *gerousia*. The mentioned information in the inscription showed that the entire family members were liable for any office and *leitourgia* being performed²⁹.

A Brief History of Nysaeen Noble Females

Considering its rich epigraphic documentation concerning the structure of economics and politics, Nysa ad Maendrum stands out as the ruling class from the Hellenistic period to the Late Roman period. We bear in mind that rich epigraphic documentation about the Nysaeen

²³ Dmitriev 2005, 256.

²⁴ The inscription's first line, found in fragmentary form in the theater: εν ὁ Ασιάρχης Κύδωρος ὑπὲρ στεφανη[φ]ορίας Ιούστου καὶ Στρατονείκης τῶν ἑατο[ῦ]. According to M. Kadioğlu, the theater's *proscenium* was probably erected by *Asiarkhes* Kydoros in the late Hadrianic period. This recorded construction inscription was related to the erecting of the *proscenium* (Kadioğlu *et al.* 2013, 3571).

²⁵ The inscription written on the architrave block is broken and the same form "[—]εν ἀσιάρχης Κύδωρος ὑπὲρ στεφανη[φ]ορίας" like that found on architrave blocks in theatre at Nysa ad Maendrum. Ertuğrul 2008, 87-88; *AE* 2008 (2011), 568 no. 1376.

²⁶ For another inscription concerning *asiarkhes* in the Nysa ad Maendrum, see *I.Nysa* 498.

²⁷ According to Strabo (XIV. 1. 42) Pythodoros was one of the *asiarkhai* and even though he was originally a native of the Nysa, then changed his abode to Tralleis due to "his celebrity" with only a few others conspicuously recorded as friends of Pompey Magnus.

²⁸ *I.Nysa* 515: [ί] πατρις Ούλι[π]ίαν Φιρμια[ν]ήν τὴν ἀρχι[έρε]ϊαν ἐτίμη[σεν] ἀρετῆς | [ἔνε]κα καὶ φι[λαν]δρίας.

²⁹ *I.Nysa* 519; Clerc 1887, 347 no. 2; Ramsay 1941, 25 no. 12: [Ι]ου[λι]ανοῦ χειλιάρχου καὶ στεφανηφόρου καὶ γραμματέως υἱὸν καὶ Ἰουλίαν Ἡλιοδωρίδος ἢ τῆς ἀρχιερείας | Σακέρδωτα Ἰουλιανὸν Φιλομήτορα | ὁ δῆμος καὶ ἡ βουλὴ | καὶ γερουσία καὶ ἢ οἱ νέοι ἐτίμησαν, | νεανίαν ἐπιφανῆ | γένους τε ἕνεκεν | καὶ τῆς ἐν τοῖς ἡθεσι σεμνότητος.

ruling class and elites; however, we can encounter substantial members of elite women who were expected to fulfill some significant liturgies and offices like *gymnasiarkhia*, *arkhiereia*, and *stephanephoria*³⁰. As can be seen in numerous epigraphic sources, elite women, like Aelia Doris³¹, Iulia Antonia Eurydice³², Stratonike³³, Clodia Cognita³⁴, Aelia Flavia Egnatia Capitolina³⁵, and Ulpia Firmiane³⁶, stand out in various sociopolitical climates and offices in Nysa ad Maeandrum. Following the described two examples above, except for the women holding an office, other examples show that Aelia Doriadate and Aelia Flavia Egnatia Capitolina seem to have been revealed on the inscriptions due to their husbands' civic position and reputation in the city. However, while Aelia Doriadate just seems an honored person with her husband by *boule* and *demos*, Capitolina was especially mentioned as ἀξιολογωτάτη (well worthy of mention) which is largely the indication encountered in the *caso superlativo* in the numerous inscriptions.

One of the noteworthy instances found in the discovered epigraphic sources is Clodia Cognita³⁷. According to the inscription related to Cognita, she was acclaimed for her wisdom and virtue by the council, as she demonstrated a faithful attitude towards the gods by funding the renovation of the temple. Therefore, it can be asserted that the contributions made by women could have a significant impact on financing public buildings within a *polis*. Nevertheless, Cognita, being a Roman citizen like her father, and her husband, proved her political weight in a decree that the Nysean council enforced for forbidding the *trapezonai* (the table lenders) to rent the devoted cult tables for the sanctuary of Pluto-Kore, probably due to her complaints³⁸. Another female benefactor mentioned in epigraphy from Nysa ad Maeandrum during the Roman period is Iulia Antonia Eurydice. Based on the information provided, it seems that the direct evidence concerning the life of Iulia Antonia Eurydice consists of seven epigraphic documents³⁹. These documents indicate that Eurydice was a specific noble,

³⁰ Dmitriev 2005, 179.

³¹ *INysa* 435.

³² *INysa* 422, 430.

³³ *INysa* 470.

³⁴ *INysa* 405.

³⁵ *INysa* 449.

³⁶ *INysa* 515

³⁷ According to the honorary decree Clodia Cognita and her husband Publius Veditius Demades were Roman citizens; apparently, they must have belonged to a wealthy and eminent family living at Nysa ad Maeandrum. For a detailed interpretation of the inscription see Ertuğrul & Malay 2010, 31–42; Gökalp Özdil & Akdoğu Arca 2022a, 44–45.

³⁸ As can be understood in the decree, Clodia Cognita and her family must have been uncomfortable with the profit gained by *trapezonai* with their gifts for the temple. Therefore, it was decided that the gained profit be deducted from income (Ertuğrul & Malay 2010, 32 lines 43–46: ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν καθ' ἔτος ὑπολογιθῆναι τὰς ἀξίας τῶν ἐνπειπτόνων εἰς τοὺς τραπεζῶνας) and renting transactions to be abolished by decree (Ertuğrul & Malay 2010, 32 lines 46–51: ἀπὸ δὲ τοῦ νῦν εἶναι τὰς πράξεις τῶν τραπεζῶν χωρὶς τῶ[ν ὑ]πὸ τῆς Κλωδίας ἢ τῶ[ν τέκν]ων αὐτῆς ἢ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς εἰσφερομένων τοῖς θεοῖς καὶ ἐπὶ τούτῳ διενγυᾶσθαι τὰς ὠνάς); Ertuğrul & Malay 2010, 35–36; Gökalp Özdil & Akdoğu Arca 2022a, 44–45.

³⁹ *SEG* IV 402–408; *INysa* 422–430.

descended from the royal family of Pontus, tracing her lineage back several generations to Pythodorus⁴⁰, contrary to being an ordinary wealthy citizen of Nysa ad Maeandrum⁴¹. These epigraphic documents likely provide details about her lineage, status, and perhaps other aspects of her life, offering valuable insights into her background and social standing. In this regard, it can be said that Eurydice possessed the legal and financial capacity to sponsor public services during her lifetime⁴². It is known that the only significant benefaction made by Eurydice was the rebuilding of *gerontikon* (senate-house) after her life. As can be understood from the inscriptions, even if there is no direct indication mentioned which *gerontikon* was renovated by Eurydice, due to the phrase ἐκ διαθήκης⁴³ (from the will or testament) on the inscriptions, it can be envisaged that Pythodorus, the son of Eurydice, seems to have inherited a substantial amount of money from his mother, which enabled him to renovate the *gerontikon* and further building projects as well by the time of Eurydice's death at Nysa ad Maeandrum⁴⁴.

Even if the discovered instances above with epigraphical data have involved just *leitourgia* in which women did not hold any offices for administration of the city (*arkhe*), it should be interpreted that the “Liturgization process of *arkhai*” gradually disappeared difference between *archai* and *leitourgiai* since socio-economic factors caused the Greek city-states to require heavy expenses to be performed for a service for the community of the *polis* by the time of the Late Hellenistic period.⁴⁵ Following the end of the Hellenistic period, women could occupy eponymous offices in various Asia Minor cities. Changing the financial status of the city officials with the fulfillment of priesthoods and *stephanephoria* as *leitourgiai* already in the early Hellenistic period was another favorable development. Therefore, the existing

⁴⁰ The Pythodoroi family was known as the most famous *philoromaioi* at Nysa ad Maeandrum during the First Mithradatic War (Cic. *Flacc.* 52). Even though numerous Greek city-states stood with King Mithradates VI Eupator, all members of the Pythodoroi family, like Pythodorus and Python the sons of Chairemon, supported and aided the Romans in strategy and logistics (*I.Nysa* 411, line 7-8; see also Arslan 2007, 141 ff.). After the First Mithadatic War, Pythodorus moved from Nysa to Tralleis and cemented a remarkable friendship with Pompey Magnus “because of celebrity”. After all, he occupied possession of the wealth of a king, worth more than 2,000 talents which were seized by Caesar were paid back in exchange for a bribe during the civil war process (Str. XIV. 1. 42).

⁴¹ The political and administrative restoration took place in the Pontus Kingdom after Mithradates VI Eupator was defeated by the Roman Republic. The restoration process began with the matrimony policy of Rome for the Pontus Dynast. A Laodicean family and a Nysaeon family took the lead in marriage by Roman authorities for the administration of the Pontus Kingdom (Str. XII. 3. 29). Therefore, Polemon I the son of Laodicean rhetor Zenon and Pythodoris the daughter of *Asiarkhes* Pythodoros, became part of the Pontus Dynast by way of this marriage. Sullivan 1980, 916-920; Marek 1993, 52; Thonemann 2004, 144-150; Primo 2010, 164.

⁴² Meyers 2012, 146-155.

⁴³ The following evaluated inscriptions by Rachel Meyers demonstrate that the phrase ἐκ διαθήκης was not an unusual notion in inscriptions in the Greek-speaking world, see for detail, Meyers 2012, 153. *IMylasa* 35; *CIG* 2806; *IMilet* I,3 168.

⁴⁴ Meyers 2012, 156.

⁴⁵ Oertel 1917, 5-8, 282-290, 317, 325-329, 375; Jones 1940, 339-340; Gauthier 1985, 118-119; Bremen 1996, 22; Dmitriev 2005, 17.

system allowed women to cover expenses and carry out charitable actions⁴⁶.

As a result of these epigraphical documents, it may be summarized that, on the one hand, most freeborn and noble women could bequeath their property with virtually no limitations. On the other hand, they could hold sacral and eponymous offices as a female member of wealthy families in Nysa ad Meandrum, as in many other cities. Even if part of the Nysaeen elite women who are recorded in the inscriptions seem to have not held any office in the city, it is not unusual to indicate that they were especially worthy of mention in the financial transactions and had political effect upon the city. Above all, the inscription belonging to Neikostrate does not directly prove that she held or will be able to hold any office in her city. Even if it may seem complicated to assert, we can reasonably argue that this inscription contains propaganda proposing to be introduced against Nysaeen people as Neikostrate should be known that as a female member of a wealthy family, she will be able to fulfill some significant offices and liturgies in the ongoing process. As a result, following the Romanization process of noble Nysaeans in the IInd century AD, we can indicate that our new found inscription presented a new family having Roman citizenship members relating to the assumption of sacral and *leitourgia* offices and a woman having potential in the city's socio-political life like numerous wealthy women responsible for the city's administration and finances.

⁴⁶ Dmitriev 2005, 54; *TAM* V,2 1343 (= *I.Magnesia Sipylus* 4) (IInd cent. BC); *Priene* 208 (early Ist cent. BC); *I.Sardis* VII,1 110 (funerary inscription, before 133 BC), see also no. 111: Menophila, the daughter of Hermogenos (honorific inscription, before 133 BC); *TAM* V,2 1208 (Apollonis, Ist cent. BC).

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* Abbreviations of epigraphical editions and reference works follow the "Liste des abréviations des éditions et ouvrages de référence pour l'épigraphie grecque alphabétique (GrEpiAbbr – Version 02, Janvier 2022)" developed by the *Association Internationale d'Épigraphie Grecque et Latine*.

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