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A New Honorific Inscription from Magnesia ad Maeandrum

Magnesia ad Maeandrum'dan Yeni bir Onurlandırma Yazıtı

Tolga UZUN*

Abstract: This study presents a newly discovered inscription from Magnesia ad Maeandrum, found in 2021 and dated to the late 1st century CE or early 2nd century CE. The text preserves the public actions of a woman named Tryphosa, who honoured the memory of her husband Democharis through gestures of civic generosity and religious responsibility. The *boule* and the *demos* honoured Democharis for his inherited civic standing, the dignity of his character and his service as *agoranomos*. After his death, Tryphosa, identified as his wife and as a priestess, undertook several initiatives that affected the civic community at large. She set up a monument in his honour, financed distributions of olive oil in the gymnasium and provided funds for the *philosebastos boule* in accordance with his instructions. The inscription places commemoration, religious office and civic benefaction within the same public setting and makes clear that Tryphosa was the central figure in turning the memory of Democharis into visible civic action.

Keywords: Tryphosa, Democharis, Oil, *Agoranomos*, Priestess, Magnesia ad Maeandrum

Öz: Bu çalışma, Magnesia ad Maeandrum'da 2021 yılında bulunmuş ve MS 1. yüzyılın sonları ile 2. yüzyılın başlarına tarihlenen yeni bir yazıtı tanıtmaktadır. Metin, Tryphosa adlı bir kadının, eşi Demokharis'in hatırasını kent yaşamına dokunan hayır işleri ve dinsel sorumluluk çerçevesinde nasıl yaşattığını göstermektedir. *Boule* ile *demos*, Demokharis'i ailesinden gelen yurttaşlık itibarı, karakterinin saygınlığı ve *agoranomos* olarak yürüttüğü görevi nedeniyle onurlandırmaktadır. Onun ölümünden sonra, hem eşi hem de rahibe olarak tanımlanan Tryphosa, kenti doğrudan ilgilendiren çeşitli girişimlerde bulunmaktadır. Kocasının anısına bir anıt diktirmiş, *gymnasion*'larda zeytinyağı dağıtımını finanse etmiş ve onun vasiyeti doğrultusunda *philosebastos boule* için maddi kaynak sağlamıştır. Yazıtı; anma geleneğini, dini makamı ve kamusal hayırseverliği aynı kamusal çerçeve içine yerleştirmekte ve Tryphosa'nın, Demokharis'in hatırasını görünür bir kamusal eyleme dönüştürmede merkezi figür olduğunu açıkça ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar sözcükler: Tryphosa, Demokharis, Yağ, *Agoranomos*, Rahibe, Magnesia ad Maeandrum

Introduction

This article publishes a new honorific inscription from Magnesia ad Maeandrum, dated to the late 1st century CE or early 2nd century CE in which a woman named Tryphosa commemorated her husband Democharis and recorded a series of benefactions for the civic community. The text is noteworthy because it brings together posthumous commemoration, priestly status and material support for public institutions within a single inscription. Democharis is presented in the language of civic honor through his lineage, character and service as *agoranomos*, but it is Tryphosa who gives that honor a public afterlife. She set up the monument at her own expense,

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provided oil for the citizens in the gymnasia and made a distribution to the φιλοσεβάστος βουλή in accordance with her husband's instruction. The inscription therefore offers more than a general example of female visibility in public life. It shows how the memory of a deceased civic figure could be carried into the institutional life of the city through the actions of his wife.

Recent scholarship has made clear that women in Roman Asia Minor could play visible roles in civic and religious life, especially where family standing, wealth and priestly office overlapped¹. As E. Hemelrijk² and R. van Bremen³ have shown in different ways, female benefaction was often tied to the public standing of the household and to forms of civic participation shaped by private expenditure. Tryphosa stands within a civic world in which women could become publicly visible through priestly office, family standing and benefaction⁴. Comparative material from cities such as Ephesus⁵, Teos⁶, Smyrna⁷, Perge⁸ and Aphrodisias⁹ points to similar configurations, in which women, often serving as priestesses, combined commemoration, ritual duty and civic benefaction. In this respect, honorific inscriptions for women in the Greek cities of the Hellenistic and Roman periods consistently frame female visibility through socially sanctioned roles such as priesthoods, benefactions and familial status, thereby embedding women's public presence within established civic norms¹⁰. In the Imperial period, honorific culture in the Greek cities rested on a reciprocal logic, cities depended on the resources of wealthy families and benefaction was repaid with public recognition¹¹. Within that setting, women could appear not at the margins of civic life but in roles that linked religious office, expenditure and family prestige. What makes this inscription distinctive is that Tryphosa's benefactions are tied closely to the commemoration of Democharis while also being presented as acts carried out by her. Commemoration is not confined here to the private sphere, but is articulated through the gymnasium and the *boule* as two central institutions of civic life. This article examines the ways in which Tryphosa's benefactions inscribe the commemoration of Democharis within the public and institutional framework of Roman Magnesia.

¹ Foley 1992; Hawley & Levick 1995; van Bremen 1996; Hemelrijk 1999, 2015, 2021; Kraemer 2004; Schultz 2006; Connelly 2007; Nelson 2007; James & Dillon 2012; MachLachlan 2012; Hemelrijk & Woolf 2013; Kirbihler 2019; Rantala 2019; Ancona & Tosuvala 2021; Ellison *et al.* 2021; Siekierka *et al.* 2021; Dirven *et al.* 2023; Gilles *et al.* 2024; Stavrianopoulou 2024.

² Hemelrijk 2015, 112–130.

³ van Bremen 1996, 53–56.

⁴ Stavrianopoulou 2024, 343–344.

⁵ *I.Ephesos* 989; Kirbihler 2019, 24–31.

⁶ *IGR IV*, 1571.

⁷ *I.Smyrna* 640, 644.

⁸ *I.Perge* 118, 123, 159, 163, 196.

⁹ *I.Aphrodisias* 2007, 12. 29. col. II.

¹⁰ Siekierka *et al.* 2021, 44–72, 98–125.

¹¹ Siekierka *et al.* 2021, 98–135.

The Inscription of Democharis and Tryphosa

Inventory No: 2021/67.

Dimensions: H.: 152 cm; W.: 57 × 77 cm; D.: 66 cm; L. H.: 2.5 cm.

Date: Late 1st century CE – early 2nd century CE, based on the use of minuscule letter forms and ligatures.

The inscription is carved on a marble statue base with two dowel holes on the upper surface. The back face is left unworked and the right side remains unprofiled, while the front and left sides are carefully finished. The upper portion of the front face is broken, though a corner acroterion is preserved on the left. The block was found during excavation work in the western part of the Artemision between the south stoa and the propylon. It is erected in front of the late fortification wall near its finding spot.

- ή βουλὴ καὶ ὁ δῆμος
 ἐτείμησαν Δημόχα-
 ριν τρίς διὰ τε τὰς ἐκ προ-
 4 γόνων φιλοτειμίας
 καὶ διὰ τὴν τοῦ ἦθους
 σεμνότητά, ἔτι καὶ
 ἀγορανομήσαντα φι-
 8 λοτείμως Τρυφῶσα
 Τροφίμου ἱερῆ τὸν ἐ-
 αὐτῆς ἄνδρα ἐκ τῶν
 ἰδίων ἀνέστησεν^v
 12 καὶ ἔθηκε ἔλαιον^w
 τοῖς πολεῖταις ἐν τοῖς
 γυμνασίοις, ἔδωκεν
 τὲ καὶ τῇ φιλοσεβάστ[ω]
 16 βουλῇ διανομὴν καθὰ
 ἐνετείλατο αὐτῇ^v
 vac. Δημόχαρις vac.

vacat



The council and the people honoured Democharis, son and grandson of Democharis on account of love of honour inherited from his ancestors and the dignity of his character and also because he served as agoranomos with zeal. Tryphosa, daughter of Trophimos, priestess, set up (the statue of) her husband at her own expense and she provided oil for the citizens in the gymnasia; she also gave a distribution to the Philosebastos Council, as Democharis had instructed her.

L: 1-4: The opening lines introduce Democharis within the formal conventions of a civic decree, where identification through the father's name is required. In such documents precision in naming is essential, particularly when the same personal name recurs within a family¹². The reference to φιλοτιμία ἐκ προγόνων places him within a line of inherited civic conduct. In this context, φιλοτιμία denotes not simply individual ambition, but a recognised disposition toward civic service and public distinction¹³. The term τρις, in turn, serves to distinguish him from homonymous relatives as the third bearer of the name¹⁴. The inscription thus situates Democharis within a framework of familial continuity¹⁵, a setting in which Tryphosa's later commemorative and benefactory actions are likewise embedded¹⁶. The name Democharis is well attested at Magnesia ad Maeandrum¹⁷. No direct evidence, however, allows the person honoured in this inscription to be linked securely with any of the other known bearers of the name. Since Democharis here appears without Roman nomenclature, it is likely that he had not yet obtained Roman citizenship¹⁸. This makes an identification with the later Democharides attested in the epigraphic record improbable. For the present, therefore, the safest conclusion is to treat the Democharis of this inscription as a different individual, despite the broader circulation of the name within the city.

L: 5-8: The inscription describes Democharis in terms of σεμνότης, presenting him as someone whose conduct carried dignity and public respect¹⁹. The term appears as an abstract substantive

¹² Woodhead 1959, 56-59.

¹³ Theodorou 2023, 278-285.

¹⁴ *I.Boubon* 72=SEG 48, 1568: ...Αὐρήλιοι Τρωΐλος Θόαν | τος τρις...; *MAMA VI* 157: ...Αὐρ(ηλίου) Ἄντων[εῖνου υἱὸν] | Σεβαστὸν Γερμα | νικὸν Σαρματικὸν | Βρεταννικὸν Μέγισ | τον Εὐσεβῆ Εὐτυχηῆ | Ἀμμιανὸς Τυδέως | τρις τοῦ Ἀττάλου...; *I.Iasos* 117: ἡ βουλή καὶ ὁ δῆμος τὸ | ἄγαλμα Κυδίου τρις Νεῖ | κωνος...; *JÖAI* 8, 166. 3. 1: ...Κολλεῖνα Μάξιμος καὶ Μένανδρος τρις τοῦ | Ἀσκληπιάδου καὶ Ἀλέξανδρος Ἀθηνόδωρου τοῦ | Ἀλεξάνδρου Ἀθηνόδωρος καὶ Ἀλέξανδρος τρις...

¹⁵ Gauthier 1985, 27-45.

¹⁶ van Bremen 1996, 53-56, 87-90.

¹⁷ *LGPN VA*. 127-128.

¹⁸ *I.Magnesia* 169: The Democharis attested here is recorded with Roman civic nomenclature, which clearly indicates that he was a Roman citizen. The inscription belongs to a chronological horizon close to that of the text discussed here, and is therefore significant in showing that the name Democharis was in use among high-status family circles at Magnesia ad Maeandrum. This proximity, however, is not sufficient to justify a direct identification of the two individuals.

¹⁹ Montanari 2015, 1904: σεμνότης -ητος, ἦ; Diggle *et al.* 2021, 1262.

and is stated directly as a reason for honour, naming a quality readily recognised within civic life²⁰. Comparable substantive uses are attested at Magnesia and in other cities of Asia Minor²¹. In the inscription, this quality is placed in clear relation to public responsibility. His service as *agoranomos* places this personal bearing in a public setting, where character and office appear side by side²². In the cities of Roman Asia Minor, the office of the *agoranomos* was closely tied to the regulation of market activity and the management of urban provisioning and its holder operated under sustained public visibility²³. Epigraphic evidence indicates that *agoranomoi* were responsible for supervising transactions and enforcing market standards and that they intervened in periods of supply pressure or economic strain²⁴. At Magnesia ad Maeandrum, an *agoranomos* is honoured for arranging extensive discounted sales (παραπράσεις) of various goods and for providing oil at reduced prices during a period described as critical for supply²⁵. Comparable interventions are attested at Thyateira, where an *agoranomos* expended large sums on the subsidized distribution of oil²⁶ and at Tralleis, where *agoranomoi* are praised for having served φιλοτείμως while providing oil or dedicating resources from their own means²⁷. The same formulation recurs at Termessos²⁸, Synnada²⁹ and Pompeiopolis in Paphlagonia³⁰, attesting to a consistent pattern of agoranomic activity in the 2nd and early 3rd centuries CE. Such interventions are especially visible in festival settings, where παραπράσεις in the macellum and the distribution of oil at reduced prices are associated with moments of supply strain³¹. More broadly, from the later Hellenistic period onward, the provision of oil remained a major concern of the cities and came to occupy a central place in gymnasial benefaction as well³². It is important to note that, particularly in periods of shortage, the office of the

²⁰ McLean 2005, 82-87.

²¹ *I.Magnesia* 163: ...υἰὸν πόλεως, φιλόπατριν διὰ τε τὴν | τῶν ἡθῶν σεμνότητα καὶ τὴν ἀπὸ προ | γόνων εὐγένειαν...; 113: ...τῆ περὶ ἑαυτὸν ἐν πᾶσι σεμνότητι, προσ | ενεχθεῖς φιλανθρώπως πᾶσι τοῖς πολεΐταις...; Aphrodisias: *MAMA VIII* 514: ...τὴν ἀνυπέρ | βλητον τοῦ βίου | σεμνότητα...; Ephesus: *SEG* 34, 1106: Τιβ(έριον) Κλαύδιον Χαρεῖνον | διὰ τε τὴν ἡθῶν σεμ[νό] | τητα...; Balbura: *IGR* 3, 473: ...ἐπαίνου διὰ τὴν τοῦ βίου [σεμ] | νότητα...; Sardis: *SEG* 39, 1291: ...περὶ πάντα σεμ<ό> | τητα τειμηῆσαι ἰκόνι γραπτῆ ἐνόπλω | ἐπιχρῶσφ...

²² Gauthier 1985, 67-72.

²³ Zuiderhoek 2009, 71-78; Heller 2011, 298-303.

²⁴ Quaß 1993, 231-259.

²⁵ *I.Magnesia* 179: ...τὸ ἐξ ἔθους ἐπὶ ἡμέρα διδόμενον | ἔλαιον παραπράσεις τε ποιήσαντα | ἐν τῷ μακέλλω παντὸς...

²⁶ *TAM V* 2, 942: ...ἀγορανομήσαντα φιλοτί | μως καὶ εἰς τὸν ἐπευων | σμόν τοῦ ἐλαίου πολλὰ ἀνα | λώσαντα...

²⁷ *I.Tralleis* 77: ... ἀγορανομήσαντα φιλο|τείμως, ἀναθέντα δὲ ἐκ τῶν | ιδίων...; *I.Tralleis* 90: καὶ | δι' ὄλου τοῦ ἔτους πρῶτον | καὶ μόνον φιλοτείμως | ἀγορανομήσαντα | καὶ θέντα ἔλαιο<ν> | ἡμέρας πέντε...

²⁸ *SEG* 57, 1438: ...ἀγορανομήσαντα φιλοτείμως...

²⁹ *MAMA IV* 15: ...ἀγορα|νομήσαν | τα φιλοτεί|μως...

³⁰ Marek 2003, 139 no. 12: ...ἀγορα | νομήσαντα φιλοτεί | μως...

³¹ Theodorou 2023, 174-175.

³² For the varieties of oil used in gymnasial contexts, see also Fröhlich 2009.

agoranomos was often assumed by members of the local elite, whose economic capacity enabled them to respond to urban needs. In the early 2nd century CE, for example, Claudia Berenike and Tib. Claudius Charidemos Titianus are both attested as serving as *agoranomoi ἐν δυσκόλοις καιροῖς*, highlighting the close connection between elite status and intervention in times of crisis³³. Both individuals, together with their families, clearly belonged to the upper strata of the civic elite, representing the wealthiest and most influential segment of the city. By contrast, Democharis appears to have belonged to a less prominent segment of the bouleutic class and the absence of Roman citizenship in the case of both Democharis and Tryphosa may suggest that their benefaction was carried out on a more limited scale³⁴. This contrast suggests that Democharis and Tryphosa belonged to a less affluent segment of the *boule* and acted within more limited economic means. It also recalls the uneven distribution of wealth and benefactory capacity within civic elites. Against this background, the office of the *agoranomos* could acquire wider importance when the provisioning of the city became urgent. A comparison with other provisioning offices, especially the *sitonia*, helps clarify its limits³⁵. The *agoranomos*' involvement in the supply of grain or oil was not consistently defined as a core responsibility. In several cities the presence of *sitones* indicates that food provision and market oversight continued to function as distinct spheres of responsibility³⁶. In places such as Magnesia, the *agoranomos*' interventions, particularly when they concerned a wide range of goods during festivals or other exceptional moments, reflect immediate needs rather than a permanent redefinition of the office³⁷.

L. 8-11: The inscription makes clear from the outset that the monument was set up by Tryphosa at her own expense and that she herself undertook the act of erection. As noted above, the case of Flavia Berenike from the same city offers a close parallel, since her inscription likewise presents a woman directing her own resources toward major public works and long-term civic benefactions³⁸. In both cases, personal wealth is translated into visible and lasting interventions in civic space, strengthening public institutions and shaping the shared life of the community³⁹. Tryphosa is identified as the wife of Democharis and is further described with the title *ιερέη*, indicating that she held a formally recognized priesthood. The restriction of her formal identification to the patronymic in the honorific clause suggests that she was a widow⁴⁰. The

³³ Adak 2025, 66-67, 76-77.

³⁴ For the internal differentiation of the bouleutic class and the varying economic capacities of civic elites: Zuiderhoek 2009, 55, 134-137.

³⁵ Theodorou 2023, 306; Strubbe 1987.

³⁶ Strubbe 1987, nos. 2, 4, 7, 9-12, 14, 16, 31-35, 38; Strubbe 1989, 105; Theodorou 2023, 179-180.

³⁷ Theodorou 2023, 180-181.

³⁸ Capelle 2021, 420.

³⁹ Siekierka *et al.* 2021, 125-142.

⁴⁰ Siekierka *et al.* 2021, 61.

use of *ἱερῆ* instead of *ἱέρεια* suggests that local Ionic epigraphic habits remained meaningful in the public language of the city⁴¹. The discovery of the inscription in the immediate vicinity of the Artemision⁴² raises the possibility that she was connected with the cult of Artemis Leukophryene⁴³, the central deity of Magnesia. Such an association is plausible in contextual terms, yet it requires caution. This restraint is characteristic of the local epigraphic habit. In other inscriptions from Magnesia⁴⁴, priestesses of Artemis are normally identified with explicit reference to the goddess or to the Artemision. The lack of any cult-specific qualifier here therefore suggests either a deliberate avoidance of specification or an assumption that Tryphosa's priestly role was already familiar to the intended audience, shifting the focus from the cult itself to her public standing and her agency in commemorating Democharis.

The name Tryphosa is not unusual in the Greek East and appears regularly in urban inscriptions⁴⁵. At Magnesia ad Maeandrum, the present text marks the fourth attestation of the name in the local corpus⁴⁶. None of the earlier occurrences can be linked with the woman who commemorates Democharis and they offer no basis for reconstructing familial connections. The repetition of the name reflects local naming practice rather than identifiable kinship. Tryphosa appears with a priestly title and is explicitly presented as the person who erected the monument. The inclusion of her father's name, Trophimos, follows the formal conventions of civic inscription, where individuals are identified through established patterns of public designation⁴⁷. A similar perspective applies to the name Trophimos, which is well attested in Magnesia ad Maeandrum in a variety of contexts, ranging from funerary inscriptions to documents concerned with property and registration. In one grave text, burial rights are reserved for a grandson named Trophimos and for his descendants⁴⁸; in another group of texts, parcels of land are defined "from the register of Trophimos," situating the name within the sphere of ownership and civic administration⁴⁹. None of these occurrences can be securely linked to Tryphosa's father and the evidence does not allow the reconstruction of kinship ties among the different bearers of the name. The reference therefore situates Tryphosa within a familiar local naming pattern. What distinguishes her is not the name itself, but the roles and

⁴¹ *I.Magnesia* 215a; *I.Ephesos* 492, 894; *SEG* 4, 568, 33. 936, 61.946; *I.Priene* 170, 172, 173.

⁴² Adak 2025, 58.

⁴³ *Ksen. Hell.* 3. 2. 19, 4. 8. 17; *Str.* XIV. I. 11. 40; *Ath. Deip.* 4. 173.

⁴⁴ *I.Magnesia* 98: ...τῆς | ἱερείας τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος τῆς Λευκοφρυηνῆς...; *I.Magnesia* 178: ...θυγατέρα Χαριδημίδα | ἱέρειαν Ἀρτέμιδος Λευκοφρυηνῆς ἱερατεύσα|σαν...; *I.Magnesia* 195: ...[ἱ]έρεια ἐγένετο Ἀρ|[τέμι]δος Λευκοφρυ[ηνῆς —]...; *I.Magnesia* 196: ἱέρεια ἐγένετο Ἀρ|τέμιδος Λευκοφρυη|νῆς...

⁴⁵ *LGPN* VA. 438; VC. 430.

⁴⁶ *I.Magnesia* 160: Τιβέ|ριον Παγκρατίδου Τρυφῶσα...; 303: Τρυφῶσα Ἀβασκάντου ἀνδρ[ἱ]...; 304: ...Τρυφώσης τῆς Μητροδῶ | ρου τοῦ Ἐρμολάου...

⁴⁷ Augier 2017, 55-56.

⁴⁸ *I.Magnesia* 300, 311.

⁴⁹ *I.Magnesia* 122b.

actions recorded in the inscription, especially her priestly office, her marriage to the honorand and her responsibility for erecting the monument at her own expense in accordance with Democharis' instruction.

L. 12-18: The closing clauses move beyond commemoration and show Tryphosa acting in the civic sphere. Her gift of oil to the citizens in the gymnasia and her distribution to the φιλοσεβάστος βουλή place her intervention in two central settings of urban life, the gymnasium and the *boule*. The supply of oil formed part of a familiar pattern of benefaction in Asia Minor⁵⁰ and in this case its significance is shaped by local circumstances. At Magnesia, the epigraphic record makes clear that the availability of oil could become problematic during the Imperial period⁵¹. The emphasis on ἀδιαλείπτως suggests that continuity of supply could not be assumed. The procurement, storage and distribution of oil were vulnerable to harvest conditions, price fluctuations and practical constraints. By stressing that oil was available without interruption, by day and by night, the inscription treats regular provision as something that had to be secured. The emphasis falls on preserving stability in a system liable to disruption. Although responsibility for oil was more often associated with the gymnasiarch, the *agoranomos* could also take on this role in particular circumstances⁵². The epigraphic evidence instead suggests that when *agoranomoi* undertook this task, they did so in exceptional circumstances or as an additional, voluntary burden that exceeded the normal expectations of the office⁵³. In such cases, the *agoranomos* intervenes directly in market conditions, lowering prices and securing supply. The stress on abundant oil sold far below the market rate suggests that these measures responded to unusual pressures⁵⁴. Oil could become a critical resource in periods of strain and its distribution affected everyday economic life in the city. Rising commercial demand likely intensified shortages as urban consumption and market circulation

⁵⁰ Zuiderhoek 2009, 89.

⁵¹ *I.Magnesia* 163, 6-8: ...γυμνασιαρχήσαντα ἐ|νιαυτὸν λαμπρῶς, ἀδιαλείπτως θέντα τὸ ἔ|λαιον ἡμέρας τε καὶ νυκτός...

⁵² *Akraiphia*: *SEG* 15, 330, 54-64: τήν τε ἀγορανο|μίαν καὶ τήν εἰς τὸ ἄλιμα ἐπιμέλειαν, καὶ | τοῖς μὲν εἰθισμένοις ἀτάκτως ὑπουργεῖν | τῇ πόλι καπήλοις τε καὶ μαγείροις καὶ ἀρτοκό|ποις ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων ἐπήρκεσαν δόντες τοῖς | μὲν ἀρτοκόποις σῖτον, τοῖς δὲ λοιποῖς ἀργύ|ριον εἰς τὴν ἐνιαύσιον χρῆσιν ἄτοκον, δι' ὧν | ἡμῖς τῆς ἀνελλιποῦς εὐωνίας μετελάβο|μεν τὸ τε ἄλιμμα λαμπρῶς καὶ μεγαλοψύ|χως παρέσχον, ἀλίφο[ν]τες ἐλαίω μὲν | ἐφθῶ πεπληρωμένω τῆς τῶν ἀρωμά|των ἀφθονίας θέντες καὶ λευκὸν εἰς τ[ῆν; *Thyateira*: *TAM* V 2. 942, 13-15: ...καὶ εἰς τὸν ἐπευωνι|σμὸν τοῦ ἐλαίου πολλὰ ἀνα|λώσαντα...; *I.Didyma* 248, 7-9: ... φιλοδο[ξ]ως ἀ|γί[ορα]νομησαι καὶ ποιῆσαι ἐ[υ]ωνι[σ]μοὺς σείτου καὶ ἐλαίου...; *I.Laodikeia Lykos* 82, 5-8: ... ἀγορανομήσαντά τε πολυτε|λῶς καὶ ἐκατέρους τοὺς θερμοὺς περιπάτους καύσαντ[α] | πρῶτον καὶ μόνον, ἀλείψαντά τε ἐν ταῖς ἐπίσημοις ἡμέ|ραις παρ' ἑαυτοῦ κατὰ μῆνα...

⁵³ Theodorou 2023, 216-218; Mitchell 2005, 96-97.

⁵⁴ *I.Magnesia* 179, 15-23: ...ἀλείψαντα | τὴν πόλιν τῷ τῆς ἀγορανομίας χρό|νῳ πλείοσιν ἡμέραις, ὑπὲρ ὧν ἡμερῶν | δόντα καὶ τῇ φιλοσεβάστῳ γερουσίᾳ | τὸ ἐξ ἔθους ἐπὶ ἡμέρᾳ διδόμενον | ἔλαιον παραπράσεις τε ποιήσαντα | ἐν τῷ μακέλλῳ παντὸς εἴδους ἐν ταῖς | ἐ<ο>ρταῖς ἐν τῷ τῆς ἀγορανομίας ἀ|υτοῦ καιρῷ...

increased⁵⁵. In this context, Tryphosa's action suggests that oil was not easily obtainable at the time. Supplying a gymnasium required substantial funds and even limited damage to olive groves could have serious economic consequences⁵⁶. The destruction of only two mature olive trees—whether through cutting or burning—meant for a farmer the permanent loss of at least 10–20 kilograms of olive oil per year, an amount corresponding roughly to the annual consumption of a single person⁵⁷. Under conditions of poor harvest or environmental damage, the cost of securing enough oil for public use would have risen sharply and regular access could not be taken for granted. In most cases, the oil seems to have been locally produced, since references to harvest failure and rising prices point to local supply pressures rather than to long-distance import⁵⁸. It is likely that when Tryphosa made this benefaction the city was facing difficulties in the supply of oil, whether due to harvest shortfall, environmental factors or instability in the market. Her action should be understood against this background. Providing oil for the gymnasia addressed a clear and immediate need within daily urban life, where consumption was constant and any disruption would have been quickly felt⁵⁹. Such an intervention required considerable resources and suggests a moment in which access to oil had become problematic in Magnesia. This is not an isolated situation. A Hadrianic inscription preserves a decree of the *gerousia* stating that the oil allocated to its members by the city was no longer sufficient, leading the body to finance additional purchases from the revenues of its own lands⁶⁰. The text makes clear that supply had been disrupted and that the situation required a structured response. A comparable concern appears in a 1st century CE inscription, where an *agoranomos* restored availability by supplying oil in large quantities at below-market prices⁶¹. These cases show that oil could at times become difficult to obtain and that both civic bodies and individuals stepped in when this happened. Her provision of oil seems to have addressed a need that concerned the wider population of the city. At the same time, the inscription records a *διανομή* made to the *φιλοσεβάστος βουλή*⁶². The *διανομή* directed to the

⁵⁵ Mitchell 2005, 93–95.

⁵⁶ Quaß 1993, 206–207.

⁵⁷ Amouretti 1986, 183.

⁵⁸ Mitchell 2005, 97–98.

⁵⁹ Zuiderhoek 2009, 39.

⁶⁰ *I. Magnesia* 116: ...τὸ δὲ περισσ | εὔσα<v> μετὰ τὸν ἐνιαυτὸν τοῦ ἀλείμματος ἐκ τούτων τῶν πόρων ἀργύριον διανέ<ι>με<ι>v {διανέμειν} τὸν <v>ραμματῆ <τῆ >τρια<κ>άδι τοῦ Ἄρτε<μι>σιῶ<v>ος μη|νός, μὴ πλέον? ἐπονομάζον<τ>α τὴν διανομὴν γυμνασιαρχικὴν, <τ>ὸ<v> δ' ἴ<v>διον | λόγον ἀποτίθεσθαι τούτων τῶν προσόδων καὶ ἐξόδων...

⁶¹ *I. Magnesia* 179: ...τῆς ἀγο|ρανομίας παραπωλήσαντα ἔλαιον | ἀφθόνως ἔλατον παραπολὺ τῆς | ἐνεστῶσης τειμῆς ἐν ἐσπευμένῳ | τῷ περὶ τὸ ἔλαιον καιρῷ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆ ἀνα|στάσει τοῦ ἀνδριάντος δόντα διανο|μὴν τῆ φιλο[σ]εβάστω βουλή καὶ θέν|τα πάλιν ἔλαιον τῆ πόλει ἐν τοῖς γυμνα|σίοις...

⁶² Very similar example from Nysa: *SEG* 4, 419: ...διανο|μὴν τῆ φιλοσεβάστω βουλή καὶ θέν|τα πάλιν ἔλαιον | τῆ πόλει ἐν τοῖς γυμνα|σίοις...

boule marks a distinct form of benefaction addressed to one of the city's institutional bodies. Here the term refers to a monetary distribution⁶³. The reference to the *boule* as φιλοσεβάστος⁶⁴ places this act within the formal language of civic and imperial order.

ἐντέλλεσθαι⁶⁵ as a Formula in Funerary and Honorific Inscriptions

The words καθὰ ἐνετείλατο αὐτῇ Δημόχαρις attribute the initiative for the benefaction to Democharis. Tryphosa is presented as carrying out an instruction left by her husband. The verb ἐντέλλεσθαι conveys a clear and deliberate directive rather than a casual request. Similar formulations are found in comparable contexts across a wide geographical range. At Kibyra, a monument is set up “for his brother Troilos together with Troilos’ wife Tate, as Masas instructed”⁶⁶. At Arycanda, a memorial is erected “for father and mother, as Aristainete instructed through her will”⁶⁷. In Phrygian Eumeneia, a heroon is dedicated “for Aurelius Alexandros son of Menekrates, as he instructed in his testament”⁶⁸ while in Alabanda a similar phrase closes a commemorative text “as she instructed, in memory”⁶⁹. Within this usage, Tryphosa’s actions follow instructions left by Democharis during his lifetime. In documentary inscriptions, ἐντέλλομαι appears in matters of succession, burial and property, where it marks a decision meant to be carried out later. The verb connects a future act to an earlier directive. In one example, an heir receives an inheritance together with the obligation to carry out specific provisions, so that fulfilling the instruction becomes part of the legal arrangement itself⁷⁰. Elsewhere, the command is explicitly grounded in the deceased’s own efforts and resources, with named individuals charged to act accordingly, so that later actions are framed as the continuation of a project already initiated⁷¹. Another example combines the language of command, authorization testamentary instruction, treating the directive as binding and excluding alternative courses of action⁷². In such cases, ἐντέλλομαι does not convey a vague

⁶³ Some examples: *I.Magnesia* 116, 179; *I.Stratonikeia* 1025; *I.Ephesos* 1151; *I.Didyma* 111, 279, 381; Miletos: *SEG* 34, 1175; Aphrodisias: *MAMA* VIII 497; Iotape: Hagel & Tomaschitz 1998, 122 no: Iot 1A; and also *Zuiderhoek* 2009, 164-165.

⁶⁴ Cooley 2012, 172; *I.Magnesia* 119, 122, 156, 179, 193.

⁶⁵ *LSJ* s.v. ἐντέλλω: -mostly in Med., -τελοῦμαι: to enjoin, command, τί τιτι Hdt. 1. 47. etc., ἐντέλλεσθαι ἀπὸ γλώσσης to command by word of mouth, Hdt. 1. 123.

⁶⁶ *SEG* 48, 1640: ...καθὼς | ὁ Μασας ἐνετείλατο.

⁶⁷ *I.Arykanda* 111: ...πατέρα καὶ μητέρα τὸ μνημεῖον καθὼς ἐνετείλατο ἡ Ἀρισταινέτη διὰ τῆς διαθήκης...

⁶⁸ *SEG* 6, 219: ...καθὼς ἐνετ | εἶλατο ἐν τῇ δια | θήκη...

⁶⁹ *MDAI* 1899, 92-93: ...καθὼς | ἐνετείλατο | ν μνίας χάριν.

⁷⁰ Attaleia (in Lydia): *TAM* V 2. 828B=*SEG* 15, 747B: ...ὁς ἂν γένηταιί μου [κ]λη | ρονόμος ἐντέλλο | μαι αὐτῶ τ<η>[ρ]ε<ι>ν(?) [ἐ]λαί | οθεσίαν...

⁷¹ Eumeneia in Phrygia: *SEG* 29, 1400=Robert, *Hellenica*, 429-435: ...ἀπὸ τῶν | ἐμῶν καμάτων | καὶ ἐντέλλομε | Φρονίμη καὶ Μά|ξιμαν τὰς ἀδελ|φάς μου τεθῆνε | μ<οῦ>νας...

⁷² Elaiussa Sebaste: Heberdey & Wilhelm *Kilikien*, 54. 123: ... κατ' ἐντολήν καὶ διαθήκην Ἀρίου τοῦ | ἀνδρὸς ἐντέλλομαι καὶ κελεύω | καὶ διατά|σομαι μηδένα ἕτερον τεθῆναι εἰς τὸ μνη|μα...

wish but an instruction meant to be carried out after death. The action that follows is presented as the fulfillment of an obligation rather than a voluntary gesture. The inscription indicates that Democharis had already set in motion a response to shortage before his death and that Tryphosa completed it. Her benefactions follow his directive and give effect to it in the public sphere. Through these arrangements, Democharis' civic role continues after his death, now carried out by his wife. The monument and the distributions both preserve his memory and implement the measures associated with his name. Tryphosa provides the means and performs the act and the inscription records how a private instruction takes shape as public action.

Conclusion

This inscription from Magnesia ad Maeandrum brings together commemoration, public office, priestly status, and benefaction within a single civic text. Democharis is honoured for inherited civic standing, personal dignity, and service as *agoranomos*, while Tryphosa appears as the person who turned his memory into a set of visible acts addressed to the city. She erected the monument at her own expense, supplied oil to the gymnasia, and made a distribution to the φιλοσεβαστὸς βουλή in accordance with his instruction. The value of the inscription lies in the way it places these actions within the institutions of the city. The gymnasium and the *boule* are not incidental settings. Tryphosa's role is central. The inscription identifies her as wife and priestess, but it also records her as the person who financed and executed the acts in question. In this respect, the text does not present female presence as symbolic or secondary. It records a woman acting in a recognized civic framework, through expenditure, religious standing, and commemorative initiative. At the same time, the inscription does not detach Tryphosa's actions from Democharis. Her benefactions are explicitly tied to his commemoration and to the instruction he left behind. The provision of olive oil to the gymnasia and the distribution to the φιλοσεβαστὸς βουλή place her actions within key settings of civic life⁷³. Although both acts are presented as fulfilling Democharis' instructions, they take visible form within the city's institutions⁷⁴. The inscription renders visible, within a single commemorative record, the continuation of a dead man's civic standing in urban life through the benefactions of a woman.

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⁷³ Papakonstantinou 2019, 4-5; Kirbihler 2019.

⁷⁴ Price 1984, 170-180.

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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 03, Septembre 2024)” developed by the *Association Internationale d'Épigraphie Grecque et Latine*.

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