1 The Queen and the City: Royal Female Intervention and Patronage in Hellenistic Civic Communities

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This article examines the interactions between the Seleukid queen Laodike III (c.240–190 BCE) and the cities of Iasos, Teos and Sardis in Asia Minor, three communities whose commemorations of her patronage have survived in the known corpus of inscriptions, along with her own letters, a rare female voice in the world of Hellenistic interstate politics. Asia Minor was a major battleground for all the Hellenistic kingdoms, including the Seleukids and a number of Anatolian dynasties, and during the third and second centuries BCE it was a patchwork of changeable royal claims to control and demands of loyalty. Cities faced repeated conquest, occupation, exaction of tribute, abandonment and recriminations, and had to secure their existence with carefully devised allegiances and constant negotiation of political status. Ideologically autonomous, but with a history of foreign rule by the Persians and now the Hellenistic kings, cities fought to survive by mustering claims to traditional rights and rallying influential elites who might intercede on their behalf. Interactions with whichever king happened to be in control were fraught with tension and manipulation as city ambassadors sought to obtain royal favour, either to endure under that king’s rule, or for protection lest the king hand them over to a rival power. In this context, Queen Laodike mediated royal goodwill, ameliorated the violence of her husband’s conquests and opened up a positive chain of communication with beleaguered cities.

Laodike’s intervention in cities centred on her patronage of women, in particular their roles as wives and mothers to sustain the demos, or civic community. Her benefactions to women had demographic and political ramifications and, in return, the cities made Laodike the focus of female ceremonial activity in public life. Participation in the Greek cities depended on family membership, and throughout the Hellenistic period it was characterised by the increasing use of fictive kinship terminology to represent the bonds between members of the civic body.¹ This paper shows that the characterisation of Laodike as benefactress par excellence, as sister-wife to Antiochos and as highly esteemed mother mirrored the identities of women in the cities she helped. Laodike’s patronage of women generated a reciprocal relationship between demos and royal dynasty, and both parties enhanced their own magnanimity and prestige by praising her
queenship. Laodike was frequently identified as Antiochos’ sister as well as his wife by all parties involved: the cities, her husband and herself. While her queenly role as mother corresponds to the role of female citizens in child-bearing, her sisterly role as consort more importantly highlights the role of women as partners of male citizens in the project of maintaining the civic community.

Laodike’s identity as queen was bound up in the display of reciprocal honours and euergetism, the system of obtaining prestige and political superiority through exchanges of honours for gift-giving with a city, either as a high-status fellow citizen or friendly outsider. Euergetism operated throughout all Hellenistic cities, increasing in importance as the Seleukid and other kingdoms grew and the political autonomy of cities decreased. A willingness to receive aid from outside and honour it with civic rights could assist cities in acquiring allies and advocates for the ongoing negotiation of their political status with the kings. 

By intervening in the affairs of cities and extending patronage, Laodike opened up channels for promoting her own queenly authority and for the cities to rise in political security by recognising her as their euergetistic champion. Iasos, Teos and Sardis found themselves under Antiochos’ claim of ruling authority and under pressure to avoid any (further) military action by him, and so used what lay at their disposal to gain favour. Honours by the cities promoted the king and queen at the royal court and announced at home their kindly temperament and rule through public inscriptions displayed in sacred or other prominent locations. Being celebrated by the cities at court helped Antiochos and Laodike keep the upper hand over powerful nobles, officials and visitors who also played the game of power politics through displays of personal prestige and friendly alliances. Publicising successful interactions with the king and queen boosted the cities’ own standing with their neighbours and was useful as a proof of loyalty towards the royal dynasty. In the language of their decrees, the cities displayed gratitude and submission to Antiochos and Laodike, and gifts of festivals, sacrifices, statues and other dedications guaranteed the reliability of these claims.

Laodike’s patronage has been characterised as a first wave in a growing tide of female euergetism through the late Hellenistic and Roman periods in Asia Minor, with the initial inroads made by means of philanthropic donations, a seemingly non-political (and therefore non-threatening) way for women to be active in public life. Others argue for a well-established tradition of female benefaction in cities, particularly in the religious sphere and attached to priestesshoods, though at the same time not accommodating how Laodike’s activity fits into it. Kron observes that Laodike’s patronage indicates a greater political involvement on the part of queens and perhaps of women more generally. Characterising Laodike’s patronage as ‘philanthropy’ and auxiliary to Antiochos III’s activities connotes a lesser degree of agency on her part and implies a less effective and less important scope of activity. In the reciprocity of honours, the power of the benefactor was revealed when cities obliged them to give, and as the cases below show, Iasos, Teos and Sardis all gave honours to Laodike that were intended to earn a large future gift from her, therefore showing their high estimation of her power and influence. Calling Laodike’s patronage of cities ‘euergetism’ more accurately reflects her engagement with civic ceremony and the authority of her queenship, and contributes to a revised understanding of women’s involvement in city life. Laodike’s identity as benefactress, sisterly consort and mother reads positively as part of a familial paradigm for female power and authority, positioning her as an able player on the field of Hellenistic politics and, through her own choices, patron of female political life.
Laodike’s interventions

Around 196 or 195 BCE, Queen Laodike addressed a letter to the citizens of Iasos, a Greek city on the Karian coast south of Miletos (see Figure 1), announcing her intention to donate a large amount of grain to the city and how she wanted the citizens to use it:

Queen Laodike to the council and the people of the Iasians, greetings. Having often heard from my brother what urgent help he continually deploys for his friends and allies, and that after recovering your city as it had fallen into unexpected calamities, he gave back to you your liberty and your laws, and in the other matters he strives to increase the citizen body and bring it to a better condition, and making it my own intention to confer some benefaction on the poor among the citizens, and a general advantage to the whole people, I have written to Strouthion the dioiketes [steward, administrator] for him to send along to the city one thousand Attic medimnoi of wheat a year, for ten years, and hand them over to the representatives of the people; you will do well, therefore, to order the treasurers to take over the wheat and sell it in fixed quantities, and to order the presidents and all the others whom you think fit, to see that they pay out the income from the wheat towards the dowries of the daughters of the poor citizens, giving not more than three hundred Antiocheian drachmai to each of the women getting married. If you remain as is right in your behaviour towards my brother and generally towards our house, and if you gratefully remember the benefactions which you have met with, I shall try to procure for you the other favours which I can think up, since I make it my intention in all matters to concur with the will of my brother; for I notice that he is extremely eagerly disposed towards the reconstruction of the city. Farewell.7

Figure 1: Map of Asia Minor.
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Iasos was built on an island in a large marsh, and according to the ancient geographer Strabo, it depended upon its fish resources, having poor soil and being unable to sustain much agriculture. He relates an anecdote about the city’s dependence upon the sea, that the Iasians abandoned even the recitals of famous musicians when they heard the bell announcing their fish market was open. Around 330 BCE, the citizens of Iasos granted freedom from taxes and front-row seats in the theatre to two citizens, the brothers Gorgos and Minnion, who had convinced Alexander the Great to restore to the city’s control the ‘Little Sea’, the nearby marsh on which their fishing relied.

In summer 197, the Romans under T. Quinctius Flaminius defeated Philip V at the battle of Kynoskephalai, effectively ceasing his power over his garrisons in Asia Minor. This made room for Antiochos III to claim Iasos, and in their own decree, the Iasians credit the king with removing the garrison of Philip’s soldiers, saying that he ‘earlier rescued our city out of slavery and made it free’. The ‘unexpected calamities’ to which Laodike refers included mistreatment by Podilos and Olympichos between 221 and 214, the occupation by Philip V and an earthquake. Laodike’s letter indicates that the Iasians suffered from a loss of freedom, lack of their traditional laws, depopulation and poverty, and it is these last two problems which she personally remedied. By addressing the needs of certain poor citizens, she aimed to increase the citizen body and ‘improve its condition’. She specifically assisted the daughters of citizens too poor to afford a dowry and so unable to marry and bear the children who would become the next generation of legitimate citizens. Laodike gave 10,000 Attic medimnoi of wheat in total, a modest gift compared to the 100,000 medimnoi of grain which Chryseis wife of Antigonus Doson gave to Rhodes in the relief effort after its earthquake in 224 BCE.

A maximum of 300 Antiocheian drachmai were to be apportioned for each dowry, and Bringmann calculates that if each medimnos of grain were sold for 6 drachmai, then twenty women could be funded to marry each year, 200 over the ten years. For a small city like Iasos, this was a significant injection of wealth with, as Laodike recognised, important ramifications for its demographic health.

On the same stone with Laodike’s letter, the Iasians inscribed a decree thanking Antiochos III and Laodike for their generosity and specifying new honours to the queen:

let (the people) elect [each year] a maiden [as priestess] of queen Aphrodite Laodike; in the formal processions let her wear a headband of mingled white; let it not be possible for the same to be priestess twice . . . make procession on the [ . . . day of] Aphrodision, on which day queen Laodike was born, and let all the . . . be present [and let the men who] are about to wed and the women who are about to wed, [after the completion of the wedding] sacrifice to queen [Aphrodite Laodike . . . according to] their means, each one . . . of the queen; let . . . all the priestesses and the [maidens about to wed] all take part in the procession.

The Iasians took to heart Laodike’s interest in the marriageability of their female citizens and required an annual public procession on the queen’s birthday of girls (parthenoi) led by her priestess. The annual procession of maidens also presented in public those older, teenage girls who were potential brides. Xenophon of Ephesos described a procession for Artemis at which marriageable parthenoi (maidens) paraded in rich clothes alongside young men (epheboi) so each group might meet their future spouses. The presence of betrothed couples at the procession commemorated Laodike’s patronage as dowry-provider, and each newly wed couple’s sacrifice honoured her as their personal benefactress. Laodike’s provision of grain was for ten years, but the Iasians tactfully omitted mention of whether they intended their honours to last beyond that period.
any case, Antiochos III was defeated by the Romans in 189 BCE and had to relinquish his territorial claim to Asia Minor, including Iasos, and Laodike’s beneficence most certainly ceased before the ten years were finished.

Around 203 BCE, Teos, a coastal city in Ionia, came under Antiochos’ authority and its citizens issued decrees honouring Antiochos and Laodike for their goodwill and benefactions. The first decree thanked the king for making the city inviolable, sacred and tax-free, and praised the queen for her benefactions and announced that marble statues of them would be set up next to the cult statue of Dionysos. The second decree announced that a bronze statue of Antiochos would be set up in their council chamber with sacrifices made for him and declared honours for Laodike above and beyond those due her as royal consort ‘for the rest of time’. The Teians set aside a special public fund to build a fountain in the agora, named after Laodike and dedicated to her. As memorial to her patronage, ‘since the queen is piously disposed towards the gods and gratefully towards mankind’, all the priests and priestesses in the city were to draw from the fountain water for libations, as were any ordinary citizens making water offerings, and brides were to draw their bathwater from it. People so using the fountain were to be dressed in white and wearing crowns. A special instruction was given to the women who collected the bridal bathwater, but the inscription is fragmented at that point, making it unclear what that was. The fact that the fountain was to be used for ritual purposes by brides accords with the evidence from Iasos that Laodike was presented as the patroness of female citizens, marriages and female participation in civic religion. As is discussed elsewhere in this volume, fountains were crucial foci of female sociability within cities and the gendering of civic space, or time periods within that space, as female (Lin Foxhall and Gabriele Neher, Lisa Nevett). The Laodikeia fountain, with its ritual and bridal users, draws attention to the feminine ceremony at the heart of civic space, kinship and ongoing political life at Teos.

The Teians were wealthy compared to the Iasians, and their expensive marble and bronze statues, fountain and crowned fountain users contrast sharply with the young priestess and annual procession of girls at Iasos. Nonetheless, like the Iasians the Teians described how Antiochos visited their city and improved its pitiable condition:

King Antiochos ... has resolved to become the common benefactor of all the Greek cities and especially of ours, and ... he was responsible for many advantages towards us, and, having come to our region, he restored the affairs to a profitable conclusion and, having stayed in our city and seen our weakness in matters both public and private, on account of the continuous wars and the size of the contributions which we paid, and wishing to favour the people ... he went into the assembly and personally granted that the city and the territory be sacred and inviolate and free from tribute.

In particular, Antiochos freed Teos from its obligation to pay tax to Attalos of Pergamon and did not replace it with tribute to himself. As for Laodike’s involvement, the Teians reported that she joined her husband in dispensing benefactions to the city; quite what she did to deserve the fountain is not specified in the extant inscriptions. The similarity between how she was honoured at Teos and Iasos, as patroness of brides, wedded couples and ritual activities, suggests that her aims in improving the citizen body at Iasos also motivated her assistance with Antiochos’ work at Teos.

The Teians enjoyed a close association with Antiochos and his court, hosting them for a period at Teos, as they are careful to mention: ‘he stayed in the city with his friends and the forces that accompanied him, making a very great display of the trustworthiness, which was his before, towards all men’. They then sent ambassadors...
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to the royal court at the king’s behest in order to confer in more detail on the ways he wanted to improve the city. At the royal court the ambassadors met Laodike, and the Teians recorded her friendly council to them along with her husband’s, including the crux of the whole exchange between king, queen and city:

in his letter he said that he had instructed the ambassadors to report to us on these matters, and the ambassadors did so; in the same manner, his sister, queen Laodike consistently shows herself eager and zealous in benefactions towards the city, and the people has received the greatest of benefits from both; in order that we too may be seen to return appropriate tokens of gratitude, in every occasion, to the king and the queen, and to surpass ourselves in the honours for them in relation to their benefactions, and in order that the people may show to all that it is generously disposed towards to the returning of gratitude.22

It was essential for the Teians to return the goodwill shown them. A reciprocal relationship with a king or queen always implied that the royal party would remain the more generous; preservation of their status required it and their material resources usually ensured it. Cities could, however, push future obligations upon the king and queen with overabundant ‘thank-you’s, which might generate another round of royal benefactions to restore the balance of grateful city and exalted royals. The Teians worked at this, returning honours beyond what was required to elevate their own prestige compared to other cities and obligate future goodwill from the king and queen.23

The intervention of Laodike and her patronage of women in this reciprocal exchange of honours have implications for the role of women in the ceremonial of civic politics. A further example of her connection with the familial aspects of city life bears this out. Sardis had a long history as a royal capital under the Lydians, the Persian Achaemenids and the successors of Alexander the Great. Seleukos I took the city in 281 from his rival Lysimachos, and it remained under Seleukid control until a local rebellion in 226 and then when Achaios used the city to rebel in 221. Antiochos besieged Achaios at Sardis from 216, taking the city in autumn 214 and the citadel sometime in the winter 214/213.24 Initially Antiochos imposed on Sardis penalties of a one-twentieth tax, a billeted garrison and confiscation of the gymnasium for his soldiers’ use; it is also quite likely that Antiochos charged the Sardians an indemnity for their support of Achaios.25 Then in March 213 he reversed his punishments, relieving the extra tax burden for three years, ordering the Sardians to rebuild and resettle in that window of time, and to speed the process he supplied wood from the royal forest, exemptions from the one-twentieth tax and restored the gymnasium.26 In June or July, Laodike wrote a letter to the citizens of Sardis:

Without a copy of the original decree, it is difficult to say securely whether the Sardians were responding directly to some benefaction by Laodike or issuing honours pre-emptively.
We might observe the hand of the queen in shaping Antiochos’s more lenient treatment of Sardis, and interpret his change of heart from imposing heavy penalties to granting material aid as evidence of her influence. In his letter to Sardis, Antiochos called the rebuilding of the city a *synoikismos*, a term which can denote the ‘reconstruction’, ‘repopulation’ or ‘reorganisation’ of a city. His donation of wood for rebuilding city structures suggests the first sense of the word is dominant. Debris fallen down the north face of the citadel, catapult balls and evidence of burning below it testify to the siege’s destructiveness, and excavations have shown that a large area of the lower city was deserted and the old Lydian agora abandoned. It appears that the *synoikismos* made Sardis smaller than before, following its original street plans but putting domestic and industrial structures into separate neighbourhoods. During the two-year siege, the people of Sardis had suffered and some of them fled, and so restoring the citizen body to healthy numbers was essential too. Antiochos’ restoration of the city gymnasion for the young citizen men, and relief from billeting soldiers, are measures to ensure a stable environment for family life and demographic improvement. It is likely that Antiochos and Laodike stayed at Sardis during 213, and their presence, as at Teos, helped advance good relations with the city, and led Laodike to develop her character as benefactress to cities. As is clear from Laodike’s patronage in later years at Teos and Iasos, she was preoccupied with the health and prosperity of the citizen family, and her experiences in post-conquest Sardis helped focus her attention on repairing damaged civic demographies and generating positive communication with cities.

The intervention of queen Laodike in cities under her husband’s rule was a response to the destruction and destabilisation wrought by his military campaigns. Beginning at Sardis, she focused upon restoring damaged populations though patronage of female citizens that enabled them to marry, raise families, and lead and participate in public ceremonies that supported the security and cohesion of the civic community. Laodike’s choice to intervene in this way generated a reciprocal relationship with the cities wherein they honoured her as sisterly consort and motherly queen, a mode of representation that enhanced her royal authority and the power of the Seleukid dynasty and reflected back upon the developing prominence of women in civic public life.

**Laodike’s queenship**

Laodike was daughter of King Mithradates II of the kingdom of Pontos and Queen Laodike, who was sister of Seleukos II and aunt of Antiochos III (see Figure 2). Laodike’s nuptials with her cross-cousin served to draw yet closer the dynastic alliance created by her mother’s marriage, a connection with ongoing appeal. Mithradates II boasted descent from one of the Seven Persians who brought Darius I to the Achaemenid throne in the sixth century BCE, the same throne which Alexander the Great later took to conquest and to which the Seleukid kings were heirs. Claims to noble Persian ancestry were common among the dynasts and kings ruling in Anatolia and the Caucasus during the Hellenistic period, and reflected a real continuity from the Achaemenid satraps over those regions, both in terms of family descent and the heritage of ruling authority. The Seleukid dynasty was a vast web of marriage connections into these noble Persian families, and Seleukid princesses married various Near Eastern rulers in order to consolidate political alliances. Stratonike, sister of Laodike
and Seleukos II, was married to Ariarathes III of Cappadocia to confirm an alliance between their fathers, Antiochos II and Ariarathes II. Antiochos III married his sister Antiochis to Xerxes of Armenia, a client king whose throne Antiochos III had restored in exchange for tribute. John of Antioch reports that Antiochis later killed Xerxes at her brother’s bidding, enabling his direct control of Armenia. Antiochos III and queen Laodike’s daughter Antiochis was married to her cousin Ariarathes IV of Cappadocia (for all see Figure 2).

Life as a princess was directed toward marriage to a king, as was the case for Laodike’s foremothers and her daughters. These royal women furthered the diplomatic strategies of their families through their marriages, by helping to ratify and reinforce political alliances between dynasties, or as in the case of Antiochis, wife of Xerxes of Armenia, to tip the balance of power in the Seleukids’ favour. Laodike’s queenly role was laid out in advance for her, through her familial history and in the precedents set for her by previous queens. A glance through the list of Seleukid princesses and queens reveals a plethora of ‘Laodikes’, all of them named after the mother of Seleukos I. Earlier Macedonian queens and royal women had been given names reflecting their royal ancestry or status as consort, and the same practice of royal (re)naming had occurred under the Achaemenids. A name associated with ancestral queenly precedent served like a title, and it is possible that our Laodike was so named in anticipation of her marriage to Antiochos III. Polybios records that she was promised to Antiochos III, ‘a virgin and aforenamed as wife to the king’, suggesting that the union and her royal personal name had been settled earlier as a package by her parents.

Both the material and figurative aspects of Laodike’s queenship came together on the occasion of her wedding to Antiochos, held at Seleuceia-Zeugma, a twin city bridging the river Euphrates (a play on words in the name ‘Zeugma,’ meaning ‘bridge’, ‘yoke’ or ‘bond’), and celebrated with great ceremony.

The Iasians set up their priestess and festival for ‘queen Aphrodite Laodike’, noting also that it was to take place in the month Aphrodision. Linking Laodike with the goddess of sex and love had precedents. Athenaeus reports a cult in Attica to Aphrodite Phila, the wife of Demetrios Poliorketes, and two of Demetrios’ mistresses also received cult as ‘Aphrodite’. Phila’s daughter Stratonike was honoured at Smyrna as Aphrodite Stratonicke, and she also was given a cult statue at Delos. When later married to
Antiochos I, Stratonike was matched with Aphrodite and Istar, the Babylonian goddess of sex and war. Stratonike also rebuilt the temple of Astarte at Hierapolis-Bambyce in Syria, confirming further the perceived link between Greek Aphrodite, Babylonian Istar and the Syrian goddess Astarte. Various Ptolemaic queens were associated with Aphrodite, as were their rivals the royal courtesans. Since Aphrodite was the goddess of both marriage and sexual power, linking her with the women in sexual relationships with kings reflected on them positively as women operating according to the conventional female roles, and with significant power to act in public life.

The cults of Laodike as practised at Iasos, Teos and Sardis were locally organised and marked the addition of sacrifices for the queen to each of those cities’ own array of divinities, heroes and other recipients of divine honours. Each city set up cult for Laodike in a manner suiting its ceremonial idiom, and in the differences we see the variety and creativity that fed the devising of civic honours and invigorated the reciprocity of prestige with the royal family. In spring 193, Antiochos III went a step further and formalised an empire-wide dynastic cult for his queen, to augment the honours already given Laodike and to institute high priestesses to oversee sacrifices for his wife and have a status on par with his own high priests. He specified that the high priestesses were to be listed along with his high priests and royal ancestors on all contracts written in their respective territories. They would also wear golden crowns bearing the queen’s portrait, a gold crown being the highest possible public honour for an individual to receive. One copy of his decree was found near Eriza, Karia, stating that the high priestess for that region was Berenike, the daughter of Ptolemaios and granddaughter of the dynast Lysimachos. The two other copies of the decree found at Nehavend and Kermanshah in western Iran indicate that the high priestess in Media was to be a Laodike. It has been suggested that she was the eldest daughter of Antiochos III and Laodike, married to her brother, the co-ruler Antiochos. Taking on a priestesshood involved significant public exposure and ceremonial responsibility, entailing obligations to spend personal money on public festivals, processions, banquets and sacrifices. This royal cult of the queen thus extended her patronage by positioning high-status and wealthy women to act as benefactresses themselves and widen the euergetistic relations binding the subjects of the Seleukids to their rulers.

**Consort and sister**

Antiochos stated in his decree for Laodike’s cult that he intended ‘to increase the honours of our sister (adelphê) . . . thinking that this was a most necessary task for us, since she not only is a loving and caring consort, but also is piously disposed towards the divine’.

In a fragmentary letter, a king Antiochos thanks the Teians for their gift of honours and crowns to himself and his ‘sister’, indicating that they will continue their goodwill towards the city. This Antiochos uses the first person singular, not the royal ‘we’ typical of Antiochos III, making it a possibility that the letter is from Antiochos the son and co-ruler, whose wife was also his biological sister (see Figure 2), otherwise this is another example of Antiochos III using ‘sister’ of his queen. Laodike called Antiochos ‘brother’ in her letters to Sardis, Teos and Iasos. Laodike and Antiochos were cross-cousins, but calling each other brother and sister characterised their ruling virtues, by playing up the attributions of loyalty, devotion and like-mindedness through a closer kinship bond. Thus he praises her as ‘loving’ and pious, and she spells out
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her sisterly queenship in her letter to the Iasians, saying ‘I make it my intention in all matters to concur with the will of my brother’. Her letter to the Sardians, ‘we will always try to produce some favour for the city’, hints at her influence on the king’s policy making, and in her letter to the Iasians she augmented his improvements, ‘making it my own intention to act in accordance with his zeal and eagerness’. For the Ptolemaic dynasty in Egypt, the adelphic royal couple was often a biological fact as well as a propagandistic depiction. Ptolemy II ushered in full brother–sister marriages in the mould of Pharaonic traditions when he married his sister Arsinoë in the 270s. Arsinoë first married Lysimachos king of Thrace and had three sons; upon his death in 281, she married her half-brother Ptolemy Keraunos who killed her two youngest sons, so she fled, arriving in Egypt, where after various manoeuvres at court (including deposing his first wife), she became queen of Ptolemy II, her full brother. Henceforth Ptolemaic royal titulature proclaimed ‘The Brother and Sister Gods’, with the female consort as ‘sister and queen’, regardless of the exact biological connection between the couple. Antiochos III himself was not adverse to brother–sister marriages, since he married his eldest son and daughter to each other, but the quiet and orderly character of that union, and of the parents’ brotherly–sisterly language towards one another, contrasts with the style of Ptolemaic self-presentation. Rather than declare an ideology of sibling divinity to their subjects, Antiochos and Laodike cultivated praise of sibling virtues from communities who were (ostensibly) free to offer honours as they wished, and whose voluntary support of the royal characterisation made Seleukid power appear even stronger, that force and diktat were not needed to achieve control.

The Hekatomnid dynasty which ruled Karia in the fourth century BCE sets a stronger pattern for full-sibling marriage and rulership in Asia Minor. The children of Hekatomnos formed two pairs of full brother–sister spouses who ruled jointly, Mausolos and Artemisia and Idrieos and Ada, and in both cases the widows ruled after their brother-husbands’ deaths, Artemisia from 353/2 to 351/0 and Ada from 344/3 to c.341/0. Carney argues that these full brother–sister marriages were directly linked to the role of Artemisia and Ada as rulers in their own right. Neither marriage produced children nor had any involvement in courtly sexual intrigues, as with the Ptolemies, and so the function of Artemisia and Ada as wives of their brothers was instead a matter of exercising their right to rule. In the Macedonian kingdom also there was a sense that dynasteia, ruling authority, passed through both the female and male lines of a family, and that royal women were sometimes equal players on the field of dynastic politics. For Antiochos and Laodike, to take up fictive sibling language in their mutual praise of each other, and to marry their eldest son and daughter to each other, fits the Hekatomnid pattern as a strategy for elevating the ruling authority of the Seleukid dynasty across its generations and genders. Making their daughter Laodike high priestess for her mother’s cult advanced her own development as consort and co-ruler with Antiochos the son, though this project came to a halt upon his death a few months later. Even though Queen Laodike was not Antiochos III’s sister, their language towards one another tapped into the older Karian precedents that defined the exercise of female rule. The citizens of Teos adopted the royal language in their own decrees for Antiochos and Laodike. In their first decree they praised the queen for showing their ambassadors goodwill like the king: ‘in the same manner, his sister, queen Laodike consistently adopts the same disposition as the king . . . and shows herself eager and zealous in
benefactions towards the city, and the people has received the greatest of benefits from both’, and they specified that their gift of marble statues are ‘of King Antiochos and his sister, Queen Laodike’.68 The ‘Teians’ second decree repeated the attestation four times, stating that each division of the city was to build its own altar of ‘King Antiochos and [his sister] Queen Laodike’ (line 11), that ‘the sister of the king Queen Laodike’ ought to receive extra honours (line 64), that the Laodikeia fountain should be dedicated to ‘the sister of King Antiochos, Queen Laodike’ (line 71), and ‘that King Antiochos and his sister, Queen Laodike, should know the gratitude of the people’ by receiving ambassadors to deliver the decree (line 107).69 The Teians either name Laodike as sister to give a specific honour to the royal couple together, as when they receive altars and statues or the ‘gratitude of the people’, or to commend her loyal queenship and honour her individually for her excellence as sisterly consort.

Laodike’s fictive sisterhood represented her role as diligent consort of Antiochos III, as either she or Antiochos chose to present it, or as the Teians wanted to show that they had perceived it. Sisterhood was part of her queenship, in particular being partner in Antiochos’ labours, mirroring his concerns and supporting his policies. ‘Sister’ was not an official title, but it was the term of address used when convenient to support the praise of Laodike as faithful consort, or to depict the king and queen as an effective ruling pair deserving of special joint honours and attention.70 Full brother–sister marriage was not normal within Greek society, but in order to preserve family lineages and lines of inheritance, half-sibling marriages were possible, or women were sometimes married to adopted brothers, or their fathers adopted their intended husbands as sons, meaning that in a legal sense, husbands and wives could call one another ‘brother’ and ‘sister’.71 Spouses who had a sibling relationship, or, like Laodike and Antiochos, took up the appearance of one, served the family with a strategy to consolidate material and political resources. Just as Laodike’s sisterhood contributed to the larger project of increasing Seleukid dynasteia, so her patronage of women enabled them to fulfil their roles within their own families and to enhance their families’ standing within the city, so improving their cities’ fortunes overall (see Claire Taylor, in this volume).

**Motherhood**

Another aspect of Laodike’s queenship particularly noted by the cities was her motherhood, and her children were often included in honours and sacrifices offered for the king and queen. The citizens of Sardis voted to give honours ‘for the king and the queen and their children’ in 213 BCE as part of their response to Laodike’s intervention in their city’s synoikism.72 The citizens of Iasos issued a similar decree for the royal family, ‘so that it should become clear to the king and to all the others what opinion the people has . . . in favour of the Great King Antiochos, Queen Laodike and their children’.73 At about the same time, in 196 BCE, an individual tribe within the Iasian demos (citizen body) issued its own decree: ‘also to have the members of the tribe offer public prayers . . . [for] advantages to happen to the Great King Antiochos and to Queen Laodike and to their children and to their city’.74 Some time between 196 and 193 BCE, the citizens of Herakleia Latmos, a city on the Asia Minor coast north of Iasos and west of Miletos, gave gifts of crowns to Laodike and her sons Antiochos, Seleukos and Mithridates (later Antiochos IV).75
Antiochos and Laodike had seven children (Antiochos, Laodike, Seleukos, Mithridates-Antiochos, Kleopatra, Antiochis and another anonymous daughter) making them the most productive royal couple of the Seleukid dynasty. They brought their eldest son into public life from an early age, and so by extending honours to the whole family group the cities compounded the prestige of their generosity and enhanced their credit in the reciprocity of honours. Thus after thanking the Herakleians for the crowns to his sons, Antiochos III, noting that ‘since we wish to show solicitude for you in the future’, increased his earlier gift of money for anointing-oil for the young men at the city gymnasium and promised royal treasury funds for repairing water pipes in the city. Prestigious honours to the royal princes incurred royal benefactions towards the young men of the city, a return matching the youth of the beneficiaries.

The eldest son, Antiochos, was made co-ruler with his father in 210, when he was ten or eleven years old. His presentation as king was a strategy to keep the throne secure in the west while Antiochos III went on campaign to restore suzerainty over the eastern empire, and Laodike must have taken on the responsibility of guarding the kingdom with her young son. Despite Antiochos the son’s young age, his royal position was very real, and he appears in charge of the heavy cavalry at the battle of Panion in Syria in 200 BCE. His marriage to his sister Laodike was made in 195 BCE, when he was about twenty-five and she one or two years younger, and the wedding probably marked her official entry to public life. Antiochos married off his other daughters in advantageous matches while they were in their early to mid-teens. Kleopatra married Ptolemy V of Egypt in the winter of 194/3 as part of a peace treaty over the contested territory of Koile Syria, and the marriage alliance had already been planned in 196. As noted above, Antiochis was married to Ariarathes of Cappadocia in 193. The fourth daughter was suggested to Eumenes II of Pergamon, who refused a marriage on the grounds that Antiochos only wanted to secure himself in Asia Minor so that he could defeat the Romans and conquer the whole region.

Antiochos’ other sons, Seleukos and Mithridates-Antiochos, first appeared as commanders in his army during his 197/6 campaign to push into Thrace, then in their late teens or very early twenties. The Roman historian Livy records that in the spring of 197 Antiochos III sent his two sons Ardyes and Mithradates ahead to Sardis with his land army. The name Mithradates appears in the inscription from Herakleia Latmos, and is identified as the personal name of Antiochos IV, and so it may be that the ‘Ardyes’ Livy mentions was the personal name for Seleukos IV. Some scholars argue that Livy confused princes for generals, but the evidence for Mithradates-Antiochos suggests not, and we know that Seleukos IV was involved in the campaign, as in 196 he was put in charge of rebuilding Lysimacheia in Thrace as a new western royal capital for his father. It is quite reasonable that Antiochos III and Laodike gave their younger sons personal names other than the standard throne names of Seleukos and Antiochos, since Antiochos the eldest son was the heir to the throne. Ardyes and Mithradates are suitable names for sons who had royal Persian ancestry through both their father’s and mother’s lines, and in accordance with Greek naming tradition, Mithradates-Antiochos was named after his maternal grandfather, Mithradates II of Pontos.

Honours to the royal children always accompanied those to Antiochos and Laodike, and the invocation of the royal family’s peaceful unity appealed for a gentler treatment by the king. The evidence suggests that most of the royal family was actually present in Asia Minor for the 197/6 campaign, and in earlier years when her
children were young, Laodike may also have brought them with her to Sardis, meaning that the cities’ honours to the whole royal family had immediate resonance. Further, the sacrifices for the royal family at Sardis were made to Zeus Genethlios, ‘Zeus of Kinship/Descent/Birthday’, in keeping with the queen’s successful production of many royal offspring, and also foreshadowing Iasos’ birthday celebration for Laodike. The honours by Sardis in 213 were given when Laodike’s children were all under the age of eight. The Sardians respectfully referred to the children as tekna, the generic Greek word for ‘offspring’, but Laodike in her letter to the citizens used a more affectionate term, paidia, ‘little children’. Intimacy with the royal family rather than the children’s ages determined the use of terms. The same pattern played out in later years when the children were grown and had taken on adult roles. In their decrees, the Iasians referred to the royal tekna, as did an Iasian tribe in its own decree, whereas at about the same time Themison, nephew of Antiochos III, made a dedication at Aigeai in Cilicia ‘for the safety of the Great King Antiochos and Antiochos the son and queen Laodike and tôn paidiôn (the children)’. A comparable inscription comes from Antioch on the Orontes, in which sacred envoys (theoroi) who had attended a festival in honour of the Seleukid dynasty at nearby Daphnai honoured their archetheoros, Theophilos son of Diogenes, a citizen of Seleukeia in Pieria, for his ‘zeal and goodwill for the Great King Antiochos and Queen Laodike and their little children (ta paidia)’. The dedication is dated to 198/7 BCE, before any of the daughters’ marriages, but at a point when all the sons must have seen some military involvement and were therefore considered adults. The use of paidia by the theoroi indicates a closer connection to the royal court and must be a result of their elevated status as sacred envoys to Daphnai, the cult centre for the Seleukid dynasty.

Calling Antiochos and Laodike ‘brother’ or ‘sister’ depicted their relationship as king and queen as praiseworthy for its mutual trust, loyalty, piety and affection, so too giving honours to the whole royal family alluded to the virtues of the parents. Because using honorific language could shape a community’s future connection to Laodike and Antiochos, selecting an appropriate term for the royal children was as important as calling the queen ‘sister’ of the king. Choice of address reflected the current connection between city and queen and could propose that an ongoing reciprocity of honours was desirable for both parties. Using kinship language in decrees also reinforced the authority of Laodike as queen, by alluding to the sphere of public ceremony in which women’s agency was most apparent, both hers and female citizens’. Dedications by women from around the Greek world often highlighted their motherly love and success at bearing children and sustaining productive and valuable family units. In a society where, even in peacetime, infant mortality was high and threatened the extinction of lineages, much less civic demography, motherhood was a crucial role and praise of it an earnest endeavour. Honouring the queen’s motherhood and her contribution through it to Seleukid dynastic power referred also to the role of women as the bearers of heirs and future citizens and nurturers of the demos.

**Female civic life and queenly intervention**

The annually elected parthenon (maiden) priestess for Laodike at Iasos shouldered the responsibility of honouring the queen by leading the girls and brides in her city and by representing in public the potential of these young women to become mothers and wives
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and so to serve alongside their citizen brothers in maintaining Iasos. If we compare her to other girl priestesses elsewhere, then she was probably from a high-status family, with access to the wealth necessary to fund the queen’s birthday celebrations and possibly give extra donations to the participants, such as their clothes for the procession. In addition, because the priestess was elected every year, we may expect that most in that generation of suitably ranked parthenoi at Iasos took a turn in the office and that, even for its short duration, the priestesshood operated as a rite of passage for girls en route to other public roles. That the Iasians instituted such a priestesshood as a way to thank Laodike for her patronage reinforced the queen’s power and beneficence as a woman more dramatically by embodying it in the parthenoi who served and gave out of their own means. The restrictions which might be placed on women’s public roles based on their status (see Lisa Nevett, in this volume) were managed at Iasos so that both elite girls, the priestesses, and poor girls, the dowry recipients, participated together in honouring the queen and serving the city.

In Aristotle’s opinion, healthy family relationships within households constituted part of the civic state, and therefore good education of women with a view to the desired nature of the civic body was essential. For, he noted, women formed half of the free population, and as girls they, like boys, would grow up to become ‘partners’ in the workings of the state. An example of education for free children including parthenoi comes from Teos in the second century BCE; Polythros the son of Onesimos gave 34,000 drachmai for the foundation of a school in the city, which was to include among its appointments three schoolteachers (grammatodidaskaloi) who would teach the boys and girls. In the priestesshood and procession of girls and young couples at Iasos, we see the city connecting Laodike’s identity as queen and benefactress with the education and introduction of female citizens to public life. The same process may be discerned at Teos, where Laodike’s fountain was designated for ritual uses by women, and specifically for marriage preparations. A number of other inscriptions from elsewhere in the Hellenistic world show that processions and ceremonial occasions themselves were important means of educating young citizen women in their ritual duties and public roles. A decree from Gambreion in Mysia dated to the late third century BCE specifies that a gynaikonomos (supervisor of women) order the female and male attendants at the Thesmophoria. At Andania in Messenia in 92/1 BCE, the gynaikonomos selected and supervised the women and maidens for the procession in the Demeter cult, ordering them according to status and married state, and ensuring they were dressed appropriately – all in white with no jewellery, make-up, elaborate coiffure or other decoration. In a similar vein, the women of Teos were to wear white when drawing from the Laodikeia fountain, by which the euergetistic relationship with Laodike reinforced the customs surrounding girls’ integration into the public sphere. Clearly Laodike’s patronage of women in the cities highlights the regular and expected presence of women in public space (see Claire Taylor, Lisa Nevett and James Davidson, in this volume), and women’s management of certain civic rituals according to customs learned and on a calendar that allocated periods of public time for female action.

Just as throughout the Hellenistic period education became more accessible to girls, so too citizen women made more forays into the public sphere and politics as benefactresses, and the regard they earned reinforced their status as ‘mothers’ and ‘sisters’ in the civic family. Archippe at Kyme in the second century BCE and Epie at Thasos in the early first century are prime examples of the way that women increasingly
‘competed’ with men in the performance of euergetism, branching out from the religious sphere to civic political life and, importantly, using their own money to do so. Throughout the Hellenistic period, as during the years of Laodike’s queenship, civic political life was uncertain and peace transitory. Amid the ever-changing shape of foreign relationships, Laodike’s identity as queen and patron of female citizens as honoured in the cities reinforced the traditional paradigm of female power, and her interventions promoted the public lives of girls, brides and women within their civic families. The work of women in the operation of their cities was essential for stability, whether they acted directly by euergetism or collectively through performance of their public duties to sustain the civic body demographically and ritually and to cultivate goodwill with outside parties.

When Laodike intervened in the affairs of Iasos, Teos and Sardis and engaged with the roles of female citizens, she defined and promoted her own queenship. Laodike’s patronage and the resulting characterisation of her as a generous and loyal sister and mother succeeded because it built upon the existing forms of female power and agency that operated in the cities. Piety, loyalty, sisterly partnership and motherhood of future political actors featured in the cities’ praise of Laodike, her own self-promotion and the specific focus of her patronage of maidens, brides and female ritual activity. Her representations as sister and mother mirrored the forms of female participation in civic life, and so when cities and female citizens commemorated her as such they reinforced and empowered both their own modes of female agency in the *demos* and enhanced the authority of the queen. Laodike’s presence in the cities, marked by the fountain and statues and by the ritual times and festival spaces created in her honour, drew attention to the public presence of women in the urban fabric. Laodike’s patronage and women’s public roles correlated in such a way to empower both parties, for her as contributor to Seleukid dynastic strength, for them as guarantors of civic stability and longevity. Kinship and familial ideology underpinned civic identity as well as Seleukid identity and power, and women manifested this in their public lives, for the good of the cities themselves, and, as led by Laodike, for a positive negotiation of status with the ruling powers.

Notes
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8. Strabo 14.2.21: only one elderly and deaf citizen was left in the visiting singer’s audience after everyone rushed to the market; when the singer thanked him for his attention the old man asked “what? Has the bell rung?” and ran off himself.


10. Livy 33.6–10; Ma, *Antiochos III*, p. 81.


13. Polybios 5.89.7.


16. *Ephesiaka* I.2.1; see van Bremen, *Limits of Participation*, pp. 146–7 for discussion of Xenophon’s passage and parthenoi as a category of females within the civic body.


33. The Cappodocian kings also claimed descent from the Seven Persians, as well as from Cyrus the Great, Diodorus Siculus 31.19.1.


35. Polyb. 8.23.4–5: Xerxes paid 300 talents, 1,000 horses and 1,000 mules for his territory and marriage.


38. See John D. Grainger, *A Seleukid Prosopography and Gazetteer* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), s.v. ‘Laodike’ nos. 1–18, pp. 47–51. For Laodike the mother of Seleukos I, after whom also many cities were named, App. Syr. 57.


40. Polyb. 5.43.3 παρθένων ὀφέλων, γυναικα τοι ταυταλει κατωνομαζεϊννυν.

41. Polyb. 5.43.3.

42. *Ilíasos* 4, ll. 80 and 83; Gauthier, *Nouvelles Inscriptions*, pp. 66–7.


46. Lucian *De des Syria*, 17; Kron, Priesthoods, Dedications and Euergetism*, p. 172.
51. *RC* 36; *IEOG* 452–3.
53. App. Syr. 4 relates that Antiochos III married his two children Antiochos and Laodike in 195 BCE; Antiochos was his co-ruler from spring 210 to his death in the summer of 193, Livy 35.15.2.
59. Francis Piejko, ‘Antiochus III and Ilium’, *Archiv für Papyrusforschung* 37 (1991), pp. 9–50, esp. pp. 36–7, argues that *adelphē* could also denote ‘kinswoman’ and be used of a cousin, meaning that Laodike’s title was not entirely ‘metaphorical’ and did refer to a blood relationship.
60. *I.Iasos* 4, ll. 29–30.
62. *I.Iasos* 4, ll. 11–12.
64. Christopher P. Jones, ‘The Decree of Ilion in Honor of a King Antiochus’, *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 34 (1993), pp. 73–92, here p. 82; for example: *OGIS* 54, 56 and 90.
70. Jones, ‘Decree of Ilion’, p. 85. Fictive kinship terms of address were occasionally directed to non-kin members of the royal court as a particular honour, e.g. Antiochos III to his chamberlain Nikanor as ‘fostered alongside me’ (*syntethrammenon hēmin*, SÉG 37, 1010, ll. 21–22), and Seleukos IV to his head of government Heliodoras as ‘brother’ (*adelphos*, IG XI, 4, 1113; H. Cotton and M. Wörle, ‘Seleukos IV to Heliodorus: A New Dossier of Royal Correspondence from Israel’, *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphie* (2007) pp. 191–205, here p. 192, l. 13).
71. Pomeroy, *Families in Classical and Hellenistic Greece*, pp. 35–6, 123.
72. Gauthier, *Nouvelles Inscriptions*, no. 2a, l. 4.
73. Ma, *Antiochos III*, no. 28, ll. 9–12.
74. Ma, *Antiochos III*, no. 27, ll. 2–5.
76. Ma, *Antiochos III*, no. 31a, ll. 8–13.
77. A. J. Sachs and D. J. Wiseman, ‘A Babylonian King List of the Hellenistic Period’, *Iraq* 16 (1954), pp. 202–11, here p. 207. The cuneiform Babylonian ‘King List’ (BM 35603) compiled some time after 175 BCE records that Antiochos’ co-rule began in year 102 of the Seleukid era, which started on 27 March 210 BCE. Antiochos was born about one year into his father’s reign, c.221 BCE; Polyb. 5.55.4.
79. Polyb. 16.18.5–16.20.11.
80. App. Syr. 4.
81. Livy 35.13.4; Polyb. 18.51.10. ‘Koile Syria’ was the name for southern Syria and Palestine, long contested by the Seleukids and Ptolemies.
82. App. Syr. 5.
83. App. Syr. 5.
84. Livy 33.19.9–10.
85. Livy 33.40.6, 41.4, 35.15.5.
87. Probably Laodike’s birthday celebration in the month Aphrodision at Iasos and the sacrifices to Zeus Genethlios on 15 Hyperberetairos at Sardis fell on one and the same day. Scarcity of month names in the evidence, and the varied names used by different cities, make it a difficult hypothesis to confirm, but the congruence of the two celebrations for Laodike, in my view, points to a single date for both. Hyperberetairos was a Macedonian month name, making Laodike’s birthday fall in the autumn; the Aphrodision month name at Iasos fits neatly with the identification of Laodike with Aphrodite, and may have been an introduction specifically in her honour. For civic and other Greek calendars, see Alan E. Samuel, Greek and Roman Chronology: Calendars and Years in Classical Antiquity, Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft I. 7 (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1972), pp. 114, 132, 143–4.
88. Gauthier, Nouvelles Inscriptions, nos 2a, l. 4; 2b, l. 14; p. 72; Ma, Antiochos III, p. 287.
89. I.Iasos 5 (decree of the tribe), l. 4, Ma, Antiochos III, no. 28 (decree of the city), l. 12.
90. Ma, Antiochos III, no. 31.
95. See van Bremen, Limits of Participation, pp. 91–4.
96. Aristotle Politics 1.1260b.
98. CIG 3562, ll. 17f.
99. IG V. 1, 1390, ll. 26–34.
100. Pomeroy, Families in Classical and Hellenistic Greece, p. 133.