

WOMEN IN PUBLIC LIFE
IN THE ROMAN EAST:
IUNIA THEODORA, CLAUDIA METRODORA AND
PHOEBE, BENEFACTRESS OF PAUL¹

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Summary

Iunia Theodora and Claudia Metrodora were female benefactors who possessed Roman citizenship and who lived in cities of the Roman East around the middle of the first century A.D. Both used their wealth and high social standing to assist their fellow citizens and to improve the circumstances of their lives. Claudia Metrodora displays the characteristics of a civic patron by the manner in which she financed festivals and buildings associated with her native city and with the religious league of the Ionian cities. Iunia Theodora lived at Corinth during the period of Paul's activity in that region. Her activity is described as relating to political and, possibly, commercial patronage. She is described by a cognate of the word προστάτις, the term which is applied to Phoebe with respect to the church at Kenchreai and to Paul himself (Rom. 16:1-2). The inscriptions relating to these two female benefactors permit an exploration of the ways in which wealthy women might exercise patronage in a civic or wider spheres.

I. Introduction

Within the New Testament, in Acts and in the various epistles, momentary glimpses are given of local figures who were connected

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with the growth of the early church in the towns and cities which Paul visited. Usually the reference to such figures is only in passing but it is clear that some at least of these were among the aristocratic leaders of their communities, who assisted by means of their social position, or in material ways. As examples one might mention the asiarchs of Ephesus who are called the friends of Paul in Acts 19:31,² and also Dionysius the Areopagite in Athens, who is found in Acts 17:14. But such references are not limited to men as might have been expected. Among the women who appear is Phoebe, named as a deaconess of the church in Kenchreai, in Romans 16:1-2.³ She is of special interest because she is also described as the benefactress, or patroness (προστάτις), of the Christian community in the city.

Many translators of the passage where Phoebe is mentioned, however, have doubted the appropriateness of the word *προστάτις*, preferring as an alternative *παραστάτις*, or helper, which occurs in a less well-attested textual tradition.⁴ Unfortunately no details are given of her activities in the epistle, and thus there was little restraint on those translators who felt that the high social status of a *prostatis* was an unlikely role for a woman in Graeco-Roman society. However, as personal patronage was a well-established social institution in the first century, it is possible to gain some analogous insight into Phoebe's activities by considering contemporary epigraphic evidence for other influential female 'patrons'.

Although a broad range of epigraphic evidence exists for female benefactors, the information about two in particular, Iunia Theodora and Claudia Metrodora, is useful in this context because it is possible to discover from the inscriptions at least part of what such a designation involves. Furthermore, these two women lived around the mid-first century in Greek cities of the Roman Empire, and therefore belong completely to the world in which Paul was working.

² R.A. Kearsley, 'The Asiarchs' in *The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting 2: The Graeco-Roman Setting*, ed. D.W.J. Gill, and C. Gempf (Grand Rapids/Carlisle: Eerdmans/The Paternoster Press, 1994), 363-76.

³ Cf. Acts 16:14-15 (Lydia of Thyatira) with G.H.R. Horsley, *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity 2* (Sydney: Ancient History Documentary Research Centre Macquarie University, 1982), 27-29; see also Acts 17:4, 12 (leading women at Thessalonike).

⁴ For a discussion of this matter, see E.A. Judge, 'Cultural Conformity and Innovation in Paul: Some Clues from Contemporary Documents', *TynB* 35 (1984), 20-21.

II. Iunia Theodora

The inscriptions referring to Iunia Theodora all come from a single stele which was found near Corinth by a French archaeological team in 1954.⁵ The stele was found associated with a Roman tomb of the late Empire, but it had clearly been reused. Its original context is unknown. The five inscriptions, whose texts and translations are appended below represent the following: (1) a decree of the koinon (federal assembly) of the Lycians (*ll.* 1-14); (2) a letter of the council and people of the Lycian city of Myra to Corinth (*ll.* 15-21); (3) a decree of the city of Patara in Lycia (*ll.* 22-41); (4) a letter of the Lycian koinon to Corinth introducing a second decree (*ll.* 42-69); (5) a decree of the council and people of the Lycian city of Tel-messos (*ll.* 70-85).

The continuous numbering of the lines of the five separate documents is explained by the fact that they were arranged on the stele in two columns without any break between them. It is unlikely that they all belong to the same date, however, and they were probably collected and inscribed on the stele at the time of Theodora's death.

The date at which Theodora lived must be gained by inference from the reference in *l.* 58 to exiles from Lycia whom she helped. The year 43 represents the time when Lycia was formed into a Roman province during the reign of Claudius, and, according to Suetonius (*Life of Claudius*, 25.9), there was a certain amount of civil discord at the consequent loss of freedom. This has been identified as the reason why Lycian exiles were seeking shelter with Iunia Theodora.⁶ But A.D. 57 might also be considered as a likely occasion for this to have happened. In that year, the Lycian federal assembly prosecuted the former governor of the province, Titus Clodius Eprius Marcellus for extortion.⁷ The Lycians lost the case, probably due to the ex-governor's influence in Rome, and some of the accusers were forced into exile. Since, in these inscriptions, it is only the League, the body

⁵ D.I. Pallas, S. Charitonidis, and J. Venencie, 'Inscriptions lyciennes trouvées à Solômos près de Corinthe', *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 83 (1959), 496-508 = *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* 18 (1962), no. 143.

⁶ Pallas *et al.*, 'Inscriptions lyciennes', 505-506; L. Robert, 'Décret de la Confédération Lycienne à Corinthe', *Revue des études anciennes* 62 (1960), 331-32.

⁷ Tacitus, *Annals*, 13.33.4; discussed by D. Magie, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor I* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950), 533.

which prosecuted Marcellus, that gratefully acknowledges her help, Iunia Theodora may have been the refuge to whom such exiles fled.

The inscriptions are unanimous in presenting Iunia Theodora as a resident of Corinth (*ll.* 1-2; 22-23), but there are ambiguous indications about her citizenship. At *ll.* 13, 22, 63, 67, 72 she is called a Roman, while at *l.* 17 she is called a citizen of Corinth. It has been suggested that Iunia was in fact Roman rather than Greek, and that she belonged to the group of Roman business people, or *negotiatores*, resident in Corinth.⁸ Such groups were to be found in many Greek cities in the Roman period. But, as Theodora is a Greek name, not a Latin one, and it was a common habit of Greeks who were Roman citizens (or at least used the *tria nomina*)⁹ to combine their new Roman names or name (in this case, Iunia) with their original personal name (here, Theodora), the conclusion that she was a woman of a Greek family or the product of a marriage between a Roman and a woman of a prominent local family, is more likely.¹⁰

The description of Iunia Theodora as a Roman, then, is to be explained by the desire to display publicly the possession of Roman citizenship. There is a very good parallel for such a use of the designation *Romaïos* in an inscription honouring a certain Tiberius Claudius Agrippinus, who was of a prominent and indisputably local family in Lycia. Moreover, in addition to being called a Roman, this man was described as a citizen of three Lycian cities (Patara, Xanthos and Myra) as well.¹¹ Multiple citizenship was not unusual in the Greek part of the Roman empire and can be documented by many other inscriptions. It is probable that Theodora, likewise, held

⁸ Pallas *et al.*, 'Inscriptions lyciennes', 503; A.J.S. Spawforth, 'Roman Corinth: The Formation of a Colonial Elite', in *MELETHMATA: Roman Onomastics in the Greek East: Social and Political Aspects*, ed. A.D. Rizakis (Paris: de Boccard, 1996), 172; R. Van Bremen, *The Limits of Participation* (Amsterdam: Giebens, 1996), 165, n. 78.

⁹ Many used the Roman nomenclature without full legal entitlement to it: P.R.C. Weaver, 'Where have all the Junian Latins gone? Nomenclature and Status in the Early Empire', *Chiron* 20 (1990), 275-305. Such people, however, were chiefly of freed status.

¹⁰ An example is provided by the Plancii of the Pamphylian city of Perge (M.T. Boatwright, 'Plancia Magna of Perge: Women's Roles and Status in Roman Asia Minor' in *Women's History and Ancient History*, S.B. Pomeroy ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 253-54.

¹¹ A. Balland, *Fouilles de Xanthos VII: Inscriptions d'époque impériale du Létéon* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1981), 167, no. 65 = *Tituli Asiae Minoris II*, fascicle 2, no. 495, *ll.* 6-7: [P]ω[μ]αίων καὶ Παταρέα καὶ Χάνθι[ον] καὶ Μυρέα.

multiple citizenship.¹² That is, in addition to being a Roman citizen, Theodora was a citizen of Corinth, and also of one or more cities in Lycia since her primary loyalty was clearly to Lycia. This is shown especially by her sheltering the Lycian exiles in their time of trouble, her connection with the Lycian League and the individual cities at an official level (which will be discussed further below), and by the fact that she had made the Lycian nation one of the beneficiaries in her will (*ll.* 7-8).¹³ The bequest is most probably to be interpreted as a gift of estates owned by Theodora in Lycia.¹⁴

A second heir of Theodora's was a man named Sextus Iulius (*ll.* 53-54) and he, too, is described as a Roman. Unfortunately, his cognomen, where the Greek name (if any) is likely to occur, is not recorded, but his close relationship to Lycia is revealed by the federal assembly's recognition of him as its agent (*ll.* 11-12: ὁ φροντιστῆς ὑμῶν) in the engraving of its honorary decree for Theodora. This relationship surely points to Sextus Iulius being a Lycian citizen and, since he was also Theodora's heir, his origin provides support for the view that Theodora, too, was a native of Lycia. The kind of close and long-lasting relationship between themselves and Theodora and Sextus Iulius to which the Lycian federation and the cities refer, as well as the vocabulary they use, is typical of the local institution of euergetism throughout Asia Minor in the late Hellenistic and Roman periods.¹⁵

¹² That a woman of the mid first century A.D. could possess multiple citizenship is shown by the inscription honouring a female athlete who was a citizen of Tralles in Caria, and of Corinth: H.W. Pleket, *Texts on the Social History of the Greek World. Epigraphica* vol. II (Leiden: Brill, 1969), 26, no. 9. T. Rajak, and D. Noy, 'Archisynagogoi: Office, Title and Social Status in the Greco-Jewish Synagogue', *Journal of Roman Studies* 83 (1993), 85, challenge the nature of women's citizenship in the cities of the Roman East. This is a related issue which has an important bearing on the debate over women office-holders in Asia Minor.

¹³ The activity of the benefactress of Perge, Plancia Magna, shows that the possession of Roman citizenship did not necessarily lessen local loyalties; see, e.g., Boatwright, 'Plancia Magna of Perge', 249-56.

¹⁴ Robert, 'Décret de la Confédération Lycienne à Corinthe', 330; cf. M. Adak, 'Claudia Anassa—eine Wohltäterin aus Patara', *Epigraphica Anatolica* 27 (1996), 135, for another Lycian benefactor who bequeathed landed property; on that occasion, to the city of Patara.

¹⁵ Cf., e.g., for decrees: B.W. Winter, *Seek the Welfare of the City: Christians as Benefactors and Citizens* (Grand Rapids/Carlisle: Eerdmans/The Paternoster Press, 1994), 26-33; R.A. Kearsley, 'A Civic Benefactor of the First Century in Asia Minor', *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity* 7 (Sydney: Ancient History Documentary Research Centre Macquarie University, 1994), 233-41. For word studies: L. Robert, *Hellenica XIII* (Paris: Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1965), 39-40; G.H.R. Horsley, *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity* 3

The reasons for the gratitude of the Lycians to Theodora are, in brief, her concern for, and care of, all Lycians coming to Corinth whether on private or official business.¹⁶ She extended to them hospitality in her own home, especially on their arrival in the city, and she actively assisted them in their various needs (*ll.* 18-19, 28-29, 50, 75-76). On some particular occasion, as we have seen above, she sheltered and cared for certain exiles from Lycia (*l.* 58), an action for which the League assembly was obviously especially appreciative.

A second aspect of Theodora's activity was the use of influence in official circles on behalf of the Lycians, especially among members of the Roman provincial government (*ll.* 5, 52). The Greek word used, οἱ ἡγεμόνες, is a general term for the Roman authorities, but it could be used to refer specifically to governors also. The implication is that Theodora exerted herself to gain for the Lycians the goodwill not only of the Roman governor and officials in Corinth, but also perhaps of other governors or procurators passing through on their way to take up posts in Lycia itself.

The actions attributed to Iunia Theodora in this inscription are by no means unparalleled in themselves. Such actions are widely attested from II B.C. until the early imperial period in a variety of Greek states.¹⁷ The fact that Iunia as a woman carried out these functions is unusual however. Were it not that an inscription of a later period records that a woman of the city of Histiaea performed offices 'normally taken on by male benefactors, doing her best to imitate them...', thus indicating that the boundary between male and female in public life was not entirely inflexible, the reality of the claims made for Theodora might reasonably be doubted.¹⁸

(Sydney: Ancient History Documentary Research Centre Macquarie University, 1983), 41-42; S. Llewelyn, *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity* 8 (Sydney: Ancient History Documentary Research Centre Macquarie University, 1998), 109-113. Van Bremen, *The Limits of Participation*, 165, n. 78, however, believes the language of the decrees point to a Roman origin for Theodora.

¹⁶ A feature of Iunia Theodora's activity which relates her to Hellenistic custom according to Robert, 'Décret de la Confédération Lycienne à Corinthe', 326-27, n. 3. For a different view, see Van Bremen, *The Limits of Participation*, 164, n. 73.

¹⁷ See the evidence cited by Robert, 'Décret de la Confédération Lycienne à Corinthe', 327-30, from, e.g., Pergamon, Delphi and Miletos, and esp. 329, for another Lycian benefactor who was the host and friend of Roman officials.

¹⁸ For full text, see Pleket, *Texts*, 33-34, no. 21 = *SEG* 24 (1969), 1112. For this translation, see Van Bremen, *The Limits of Participation*, 9; the text is discussed by her on 297-99.

The sort of matters concerning Lycians in Corinth were probably largely commercial, although perhaps not exclusively so. As a very mountainous region, Lycia depended mainly on sea-trade for its links with other states in antiquity. Fortunately, Lycia had a series of excellent harbours around the coast and it is noteworthy in this connection that the three cities which are individually named in the Theodora inscriptions are all coastal ones. According to Acts 27:5, Paul put in to the harbour port of Myra on his way west to Rome.

The wealth of Lycia came mainly from the products of its forests in the mountains: pine, cypress, and a special variety of cedar used for ship-building. The region around Telmessos also exported a wine which was popular in Italy. To a lesser extent, Lycia was known for its fishing industry, goats' hair for rope, a variety of chalk and the juice from the roots of a certain thorny bush which was thought to have medicinal value; and also its saffron.¹⁹ Corinth was a commercial centre because of its position on the Isthmus.²⁰ Boats were often not unloaded, but simply dragged across the man-made slipway. It was, likewise, important as the political capital of the province of Achaëa. And, perhaps most importantly for the activity of Iunia Theodora, it was also a nodal point for the movement of all who travelled between Rome and its eastern provinces. Rather than sail the risky course around the southern tip of the Peloponnese, most traffic between Italy and the Aegean would call in at Corinth, disembark there and cross to the Aegean by land. Thus Corinth was a vital spot to have an agent to represent the interests of Lycia; and it was in this way that Theodora earned the gratitude of the Lycian nation. She was honoured by decrees of the federal assembly, and also by various gifts for her funeral (*ll.* 10-12; 63-66).²¹ Such gifts were normally reserved for federal officials of the league who were retiring after their term of office, but they were also awarded to other important people who had benefited the nation in some way. In addition, individual cities were moved to write at an official level to

¹⁹ Magie, *Roman Rule*, 516ff. On the timber of Lycia, see R. Meiggs, *Trees and Timber in the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 46, 414.

²⁰ Cf. Spawforth, 'Roman Corinth', 171-72.

²¹ The gift of saffron for Theodora's funeral (*l.* 64) simply reflects the tendency of wealthy Greeks to imitate Roman funerary customs; cf. Robert, 'Décret de la Confédération Lycienne à Corinthe', 341-42. Such a gift, therefore, was designed as a compliment to Theodora, in the same way as the designation of her as a Roman elsewhere in the inscriptions.

Corinth praising Theodora (Myra: *ll.* 20-21; Patara: *ll.* 40-41), because of the manner in which she had benefited their citizens.

Insofar as the advantages the Lycian federation and individual cities received were of a commercial and political nature Iunia Theodora differs from the typical profile of a female civic patron. Instead of providing public buildings and financing the celebration of civic and religious activities,²² she developed a highly individual kind of patronage at a physical distance from her homeland. But, so as to set Theodora's activity in a broader context, brief reference may be made to an inscription from the inland city of Kibyra in the province of Asia: 'The *demos* and the Roman businessmen here honoured with a golden crown Tateis, daughter of Diogenes originally called Zosas, in remembrance.'²³ This honorific inscription suggests that, although their activities are not as fully documented as those of Theodora, other women were operating in the commercial sphere and were gaining the gratitude of the interested parties.

In all the inscriptions honouring her, and in all her actions on behalf of the Lycians, Theodora stands alone.²⁴ There is no sign of father, or husband either, guiding or controlling her actions.²⁵ On the contrary, her nearest male relative, if such indeed he is, is Sextus Iulius, and he is said to be supported by her, and to imitate her (*ll.* 53-56).²⁶ The fact that he is her heir, without apparently being a son

²² Cf. Adak, 'Claudia Anassa', 127-34; Boatwright, 'Plancia Magna of Perge', 249-56; J. Nollé, 'Frauen wie Omphale?', in *Reine Männersache? Frauen in Männerdomänen der antiken Welt*, M.H. Dettenhofer ed. (Böhlau: Cologne/Weimar/Vienna, 1994), 236-52.

²³ Ὁ δῆμος καὶ οἱ πραγματευόμενοι ἐνταῦθα Ῥωμαῖοι ἐτίμησαν χρυσοῦ στεφάνῳ Τάτειν Διογένους φύσει δὲ Ζωσᾶ μνήμης ἕνεκα. Text and translation: N.P. Milner, *An Epigraphical Survey in The Kibyra-Olbasa Region Conducted by A.S. Hall* (The British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara Monograph 24; London: British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara, 1998), 26-27, no. 54.

²⁴ This may seem unlikely in light of the legal and literary sources' emphasis on the modest behaviour fitting for females. However, as Boatwright, 'Plancia Magna of Perge', 257-58, points out, the epigraphic evidence frequently contradicts the, perhaps, largely idealised image of women, especially for the cities of Asia Minor.

²⁵ Greek and Roman law coexisted in the Greek cities of Asia Minor in the early imperial period: see, A. Lintott, *Imperium Romanum: Politics and Administration* (London/New York: Routledge, 1993), 156-60. Thus, it seems probable that, although they gained special status in their local communities by possession of the Roman citizenship, it was as women living according to Greek law and custom rather than as Romans that Iunia Theodora and other female benefactors participated in public life.

²⁶ The importance of continuity of family traditions of benefaction is repeatedly expressed in the inscriptions from Patara in honour of Claudia Anassa for example: Adak, 'Claudia Anassa', e.g. 129, no. 1 *ll.* 14-16 and also

or other close relative, serves to emphasise Iunia Theodora's independence for it is at this point, particularly, that the name of a male child might have been expected.²⁷ On each occasion when there were official, public acknowledgements of her benefactions to the Lycian people, Theodora is simply represented as acting alone. It must be assumed, nevertheless, because of her Roman citizenship, and the wealth which permitted her to exercise such lavish hospitality, that she was a member of a prominent and wealthy family. Her father's *praenomen*, Lucius, a Roman name, is to be found in *ll.* 16-17.

At the time of her activity on the Lycians' behalf, Theodora not only appears to be acting independently, she is living a very public life circulating freely within the high-ranking, predominantly male world of government and commerce in Corinth. Nevertheless she is described by the people of Patara in their letter to Corinth as living 'modestly' (*l.* 24). The Greek word used, σωφρόνως, may be translated literally as living 'chastely'. Thus, Theodora may have been either widowed or unmarried.²⁸ But the word is more frequently used with the meaning of 'moral virtue'. It is most often found in grave epitaphs of females in a specifically domestic context to describe a woman who had performed her familial responsibilities to husband and children impeccably. It may also be used to refer to males as well as to females when applied to benefactors who, in a city's mind, had been single-minded in their devotion to the common good. Such, for example, was true in the case of the first century benefactor of Ephesus, Marcus Antonius Albus: ἡ βουλὴ καὶ ὁ δῆμος στεφανοῦσι Μάρκον Ἀντωνίων Μάρκου υἱὸν Φαβία Ἄλβον διηνεκῶς προστάτην γεγονότα τοῦ τε ἱεροῦ τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος καὶ τῆς πόλεως, βιώσαντα σωφρόνως καὶ κοσμίως (The council and the demos crown Marcus Antonius Albus, the son of Marcus, Fabia tribe, who was, unceasingly, patron of the temple of Artemis and of the city, who

inscriptions nos. 2, 3, 4 (pp. 130-31). There, as almost invariably elsewhere in Asia Minor, women, typically a wife or daughter, imitate a male relative, typically the husband, brother or father: see R. Van Bremen. 'Women and Wealth' in *Images of Women in Antiquity*, A. Cameron and A. Kuhrt ed. (Beckenham Kent: Croom Helm, 1982), 241, n. 69.

²⁷ This apparently unusual feature of Iunia Theodora's life is also now documented for Claudia Anassa, another Lycian benefactor: see Adak, 'Claudia Anassa', 136.

²⁸ As Robert, 'Décret de la Confédération Lycienne à Corinthe', 329 appears to have concluded.

lived devotedly and fittingly).²⁹ The meaning of σωφρόνως with reference to Iunia Theodora, therefore, is likely to bear a similar implication given the lack of a reference to her family, and given that it was used in the text of a civic decree. The immediately-following word φιλολύκιος, describing her as a ‘lover’ or ‘good friend of the Lycians’ also suggests that the city of Patara wished to convey a sense of mutual obligation which was as binding in the public sphere as a familial relationship in a domestic context.

III. Claudia Metrodora

Claudia Metrodora was from the island of Chios which lies just off the west coast of Asia Minor not far from Ephesus. The Chiot texts referring to her, mostly in a very fragmentary state, are the remains of three civic decrees in six fragments, each appearing to honour Metrodora;³⁰ a private honorific decree made by certain individuals to a third person during Metrodora’s second term of office as *stephanephoros*, the highest magistracy of the city (no. 1 below);³¹ and part of a fourth honorific decree for Metrodora, this time possibly erected by the federation of Ionian cities rather than Chios (no. 2 below).³² From Ephesus, there is a building inscription bearing her name (no. 3 below).³³

Like Iunia Theodora, Claudia Metrodora appears to have lived around the middle of the first century for the emperor Nero’s name is found in one of the civic decrees.³⁴ Again, like Iunia Theodora, Metrodora is a Greek woman who, according to her use of the *nomen* Claudia, holds Roman citizenship. She is clearly also a citizen of Chios since she holds magistracies there.

²⁹ H. Engelmann, D. Knibbe, and R. Merkelbach ed., *Die Inschriften von Ephesos (Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien 13)*; Habelt: Bonn, 1980) III, no. 614C, ll. 19-24; dated in accordance with R. Meriç, R. Merkelbach, J. Nollé, and S. Sëahin, *Die Inschriften von Ephesos (Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien 17/1)*; Habelt: Bonn, 1981), VII, 1, no. 3023.

³⁰ L. Robert in ‘Inscriptions de Chios du Ier siècle de notre ère’, *Études épigraphiques et philologiques* (Paris: Champion, 1938), 128-33.

³¹ Robert, ‘Inscriptions de Chios’, 133-34.

³² J. & L. Robert, ‘Bulletin épigraphique’, *Revue des études grecques* 69 (1956), 152-53, no. 213.

³³ R. Meriç, R. Merkelbach, J. Nollé, and S. Sahin, *Die Inschriften von Ephesos (Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien 17/1)*; Habelt: Bonn, 1981), VII, 1, no. 3003.

³⁴ Frag. A, l. 9: Robert, ‘Inscriptions de Chios’, 128-30.

Her achievements in public life mainly involved the holding of magistracies within Chios and, linked with her public offices, were major benefactions to the city as a whole. It is in this context that Metrodora achieved fame and honour. Because of the expense involved in holding magistracies and official positions in the Greek cities at this time, continual willingness to do so attracted the gratitude of the citizens, and frequently resulted in such honorary decrees as inscription no. 2 below. Payment for the honour of office by the incumbent was often obligatory in the Roman period, and the more prestigious the office, the greater the cost to the bearer. In addition, a tradition of rivalry grew up and led to office-holders competing with each other in generosity. Amounts far beyond the minimum required were frequently spent therefore.³⁵

Despite the fragmentary nature of the inscriptions, and the fact that only the centre of the lines is preserved in many cases, the fragments of the three civic decrees reveal Metrodora's promises of expenditure, as well as the fact that these were even surpassed. Metrodora's generosity and goodwill towards the city is acknowledged. Her magnanimity took various forms. She gave a sumptuous banquet for the city, and included even visitors to the city in her munificence; undertook the direction of the imperial games as agonothete;³⁶ held the office of gymnasiarch four times, and, on two occasions, for the festival of the Heraklea games she distributed oil to the whole city. It is also recorded that Metrodora was agonothete of the combined Heraklea Kaisareia and Romaia festival on more than one occasion (no. 2, ll. 2-6). All these benefactions are praised in turn, but as the donation of the public bath complex is referred to in each of the civic decrees it must have been of outstanding importance to the life of her native city.³⁷ Metrodora appears to have financed both the construction and, according to one of the civic decrees,³⁸ the adornment of this building. Such a magnificent gift is most likely to have been associated with the holding of the highest office of the city, that of *stephanophoros* which Metrodora held not once, but twice (no. 1, ll. 2-4).

³⁵ Cf. the better preserved example of this type of inscription in Kearsley, 'A Civic Benefactor', 233-36.

³⁶ Frag. A, ll. 14-16, 18, 20, 23; Robert, 'Inscriptions de Chios', 128-30; frag. C, l. 3; Robert, 'Inscriptions de Chios', 131.

³⁷ Frag. A, ll. 10, 21; frag. B, l. 4; frag. C, l. 12; frag. F, l. 3; Robert, 'Inscriptions de Chios', 128-33.

³⁸ Frag. B, l. 4; Robert, 'Inscriptions de Chios', 130.

The extension of Metrodora's reputation beyond Chios is revealed by her election as *basileia* of the federation of the thirteen Ionian cities (no. 2, ll. 6-8). The function of the Ionian league in the Roman period appears to have been purely religious and no longer political,³⁹ but the title *basileia* was clearly still of very great prestige. The text of this formal decree which honours Metrodora as *basileia* of the Ionians, closes by referring to her virtue (ἀρετή) and noble conduct (καλοκαγαθία) towards the league (no. 2, ll. 11-12). The Greek vocabulary used here is, once again, reminiscent of the domestic sphere rather than the public one. Just as in the case of Iunia Theodora and the Lycians, the relationship between Metrodora and the body she has benefited is being characterised not merely in formal terms, but in language usually reserved for the closest personal relationships.⁴⁰

When Metrodora's family connections are studied her prominent public role is explained, both within Chios and beyond. Her relatives are to be found in at least two other cities of Asia Minor, themselves holding prominent positions. The combination of information from one of the civic decrees⁴¹ and from inscription no. 2 (l. 2), reveals that Metrodora was the natural daughter of Claudius Calobrotus, but had been adopted by a certain Skytheinos. The latter was a Chiot and, no doubt, an important member of the community since Metrodora played such a public role there after her adoption. It is documented elsewhere that Metrodora's brother, Tiberius Claudius Phesinus, was also adopted by Skytheinos.⁴² As the siblings' natural father, Claudius Calobrotus, lived in Teos (no. 4 below), and certainly the family's influence there continued—Claudius Phesinus' daughter, Tryphaena, was a benefactor of that city⁴³—it looks as though there was a political alliance between these leading families of the two neighbouring cities.

Metrodora, apparently, acted alone in her public life in Chios but she is to be found married in Ephesus although, unfortunately, her

³⁹ On the Ionian League in its earliest period, see C. Roebuck, 'The Early Ionian League', *Classical Philology* 50 (1955), 26-40; for the Roman period, see Magie, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor*, 65-67, 866-69, 871-72.

⁴⁰ See note 16 above.

⁴¹ Frag. A, l. 5: Robert, 'Inscriptions de Chios', 128-30.

⁴² *Inscriptiones Graecae* II, 2, J. Kirchner ed. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1935), no. 2802 (Athens); *Fouilles de Delphes* III, fasc. 4: *Inscriptions de la terrasse du temple et de la région nord du sanctuaire*, R. Flacière ed. (Paris: de Boccard 1954), 285, no. 253.

⁴³ *Inscriptiones Graecae ad Res Romanas Pertinentes* IV, G. Lafaye ed. (Paris: Leroux, 1927), no. 1571.

husband's name is not preserved in the inscription. In Ephesus, as in Chios, Metrodora (this time with her husband) is acting as a public benefactor in a very liberal manner (no. 3). There is no way of knowing the relative chronology of the Chiot and Ephesian inscriptions as both can be dated only broadly to Nero's reign (A.D. 54-68). It seems likely, however, that marriage was the reason for Metrodora's presence in Ephesus and that her public activity there was somewhat later than that in Chios.

Claudius Phesinus, Metrodora's brother, also took a prominent role in the city of Ephesus. Inscription no. 5 is a dedication by the people of Aizanoi to the first neokorate temple of the provincial imperial cult in Ephesus. It was made when Phesinus was high-priest (ἀρχιερεύς) of the provincial imperial cult there. He, thus, achieved the pinnacle of success for his family by holding such an office in the capital city of the province of Asia.

The apparent ease with which Metrodora, and her brother moved between the cities of Chios, Teos and Ephesus is typical of other leading families in the Greek East during this period. Multi-citizenship made it possible, and it was not uncommon for the wealthy to own estates within the territories of in several different cities. There was also frequent intermarriage between the various local aristocratic élites,⁴⁴ and, of course, adoption was another recourse for making alliances. The cities, in turn, welcomed newcomers who were potential office-bearers and benefactors. With all these possibilities in mind, Iunia Theodora's presence in Corinth, even if she is a Lycian by birth, should not seem unusual.⁴⁵

IV. Phoebe

The life of Metrodora exemplifies the prominent public roles open to wealthy women, and the possibility of holding important public office.⁴⁶ The activities of Theodora serve to underline the fact that

⁴⁴ See, e.g., R.A. Kearsley, 'Asiarchs, Archiereis and Archiereiai of Asia: New Evidence from Amorium in Phrygia', *Epigraphica Anatolica* 16 (1990), 74-77.

⁴⁵ Cf., also, Aurelia Glykia who is described as a citizen of Tabala dwelling in Sardis (Ταβαλῖς κατοικοῦσα ἐν Σάρδεσι): W.H. Buckler, D.M. Robinson, *Sardis* VII, 1. *Greek and Latin Inscriptions* (Brill: Leiden, 1932), 136, no. 165.

⁴⁶ Van Bremen, 'Women and Wealth', 236, suggests that positions which involved travelling, deliberating, or voting, remained closed to women but it seems wise to keep an open mind since, for example, the names of three

even without holding a formal position, a wealthy woman was able to achieve public recognition and to use her wealth and influence to obtain most satisfactory results for her dependents.

To return to Phoebe then, there appears to be no reason on grounds of sex alone to deny her the role of the benefactor of Paul and the Christians living in Kenchreai.⁴⁷ A general similarity in her role to that of Theodora at Corinth on behalf of the Lycians, for instance, may well be indicated by the appearance in the decree of Telmessos of the form προστάσιαν (*l. 77*). This is closely related to the Greek word προστάτις, used to describe Phoebe in Romans.⁴⁸

Although a lack of information prevents any exploration of Phoebe's social and family background, nevertheless the evidence of the inscriptions discussed above indicates that women of wealth could and did hold influential positions in the society of Paul's lifetime, and that the title *prostatis* and cognate words designated such actions. Paul had friends and benefactors of the highest rank and status in Ephesus.⁴⁹ A similar situation has also been suggested to be true for Corinth.⁵⁰ In the light of this and of the textual tradition which described Phoebe as *prostatis*, it is reasonable to assume that in Kenchreai it was, indeed, as Paul said; Phoebe was a benefactor and patron of the Christian believers there, and of himself when present.

women appear among the membership of the *gerousia* of Phrygian Sebaste: reported in Van Bremen, *The Limits of Participation*, 56, n. 60.

⁴⁷ Kenchreai was the Aegean port of Roman Corinth and as such was a pivotal point in East-West trade and the movement of people. Archaeological investigations there have recovered the remains of harbour installations of I B.C.-A.D. I (R. Scranton, J.W. Shaw, and L. Ibrahim, *Kenchreai. Eastern Port of Corinth I: Topography and Architecture* (Leiden: Brill, 1978), 34.

⁴⁸ For discussion of προστάσις and attestations of cognate words in inscriptions and papyri, see G.H.R. Horsley, *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity* 4 (Sydney: Ancient History Documentary Research Centre Macquarie University, 1987), 241-44; G.H.R. Horsley, *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity* 5 (Sydney: Ancient History Documentary Research Centre Macquarie University, 1989), 149. For a possible προστάτις of a Jewish association at Aphrodisias, see also J. Reynolds, and R. Tannenbaum, *Jews and Godfearers at Aphrodisias* (Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society Supplement 12; Cambridge: Cambridge Philological Society, 1987), 5 *l.* 9, 8, 101; cf. M.H. Williams, 'The Jews and Godfearers Inscription from Aphrodisias—A Case of Patriarchal Interference in Early 3rd Century Caria?', *Historia* 41 (1992), 300.

⁴⁹ See n. 2 above.

⁵⁰ D.W.J. Gill, 'Acts and the Urban Elites' in *The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting 2: The Graeco-Roman Setting*, ed. D.W.J. Gill, and C. Gempf (Grand Rapids/Carlisle: Eerdmans/The Paternoster Press, 1994), 110-13.

Inscriptions in honour of Iunia Theodora¹

1. A decree of the federal assembly of the Lycian cities

Ἔδοξε Λυκίων τῶι [κοινῶ]ι. Ἐπεὶ Ἰουνία Θεοδώρα κατοικουῖσα ἐν Κορίνθῳ γυνὴ καλὴ καὶ ἀγαθὴ καὶ εὖνους τῶι ἔθνει διὰ παντὸς ἐνδείκνυται τὴν ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἔθνους σπουδὴν
4 καὶ φιλοτειμίαν καὶ τοῖς καθ' ἓνα Λυκίων καὶ κοινῶς ἅπασιν συμπαθῶς διακειμένη πλείστους τε τῶν ἡγουμένων φίλους κατεσκεύακεν τῶι ἔθνει, συναλαμβανομένη περὶ πάντων τῶν μάλιστα διηκόντων ἅπασι Λυκίοις, διὰ τε ἧς τέθειται διαθήκης ἐνδέδεικται τὴν εἰς τὸ
8 ἔθνος ἀρέσκειαν, καλῶς δὲ ἔχον ἐστὶν καὶ τὸ ἔθνος τὰς προσηκούσας αὐτῇ ἀποδοῦναι μαρτυρίας, δεδόχθαι Λυκίων τῶι κοινῶι ἀποδεχέσθαι καὶ ἐπηνέσθαι Ἰουνίαν Θεοδώραν στέφανόν τε αὐτῇ χρυσοῦν, ὅταν εἰς θεοὺς ἀφίκηται, ἀποστεῖλαι· μεριμνήσει δὲ ὁ φροντιστής ἡμῶν Σέξτος Ἰούλιος καὶ ἐπιγράψαι ἐπιγραφὴν τήνδε· Λυκίων τὸ κοινὸν Ἰουνία Θεοδώρα Ῥωμαία γυναικὶ καλῇ καὶ ἀγαθῇ καὶ εὐνόωι τῶι ἔθνει.

It was decreed by the federal assembly of the Lycians: since Iunia Theodora, living in Corinth, a fine and worthy woman, and devoted to the nation, continuously shows her zeal and her munificence towards the nation and (4) being full of goodwill both to individual Lycians and to all in general has gained for the nation the friendship of many of the authorities, employing her assistance in all areas which most directly interest all the Lycians; (and) by the will which she has drawn up shows her desire to (8) please the nation; (it is) fitting therefore that the nation in its turn return to her these appropriate testimonies. The assembly of the Lycians is pleased to state its approval and praise of Iunia Theodora, and to send her a gold crown for the time when she will come into the presence of the gods. (12) Our agent Sextus Iulius has equally been busy seeing to the engraving of the following inscription: 'The federal assembly of

¹ D. Pallas *et al.*, 'Inscriptions lyciennes trouvées à Solômos près de Corinthe', *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 83 (1959), 496-508; *SEG* 18 (1962), 143 with supplements at ll. 54-55, 64-65, 74-75 by L. Robert, 'Décret de la Confédération Lycienne à Corinthe', *Revue des études anciennes* 62 (1960), 331, n. 1; 332; 326, n. 3 = *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* 22 (1967), no. 232; *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* 23 (1968), no. 176; *contra* Robert G. Klaffenbach, 'Miscellanea epigraphica', *Klio* 48 (1967), 54, n. 3 proposes κρατε[ύοντα] at l. 55. Line 65: ...αὐτὴν] τιμῆσαι... (Kearsley).

the Lycians to Iunia Theodora, a Roman, fine and honourable woman and devoted to the nation.’

2. A letter from the Lycian city of Myra to Corinth

Μυρέων ἡ βουλὴ καὶ ὁ δῆμος Κορινθίων ἄρχουσι χαίρειν. Πλείστοι τῶν ἡ-
 16 μετέρων γεγονότες ἐν τοῖς καθ’ ὑμᾶς τόποις ἐμαρτύρουν Ἰουνία Λευκί-
 ου Θεοδώρα τῇ πολεΐτιδι ὑμῶν τὴν εὖνοιαν καὶ σπουδὴν ἣν εἰσενήνε-
 κται ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν, προνοουμένη διὰ παντὸς τῶν ἡμετέρων καὶ παρα-
 γενομένων εἰς τὴν πόλιν ὑμῶν· ἡμεῖς οὖν ἀποδεχόμενοι αὐτὴν ἐφ’ ἣ
 20 ἔχει πρὸς τὴν πόλιν εὖνοιά ἔχομεν ἐν τῇ πλείστη καταλογῆι, ἐχρεΐ-
 ναμεν δὲ καὶ ὑμῖν γράψαι, ὅπως εἶδητε τὴν τῆς πόλεως εὐχαριστίαν.

Greetings from the council and people of Myra to the magistrates of Corinth. Many of (16) our (citizens) who travelled in your territory testified concerning a citizen of yours, Iunia Theodora, daughter of Lucius, and the devotion and zeal which she used on their behalf, occupying herself continually for our people particularly at the time of their arrival in your city; this is why, according her our approval for (20) her loyalty to the city, we hold her in the greatest esteem, and have decided at the same time to write to you as well in order that you may know of the gratitude of the city.

3. A decree of the Lycian city of Patara

Ἔδοξε Παταρέων τῷ δήμῳ. Ἐπεὶ Ἰουνία Θεοδώρα Ῥωμαία τῶν κατοι-
 κουσῶν ἐν Κορίνθῳ, γυνὴ τῶν ἐν πλείστη τειμῇ καθεστηκειῶν, ζῶ-
 24 σα σωφρόνως καὶ φιλολύκιος οὔσα καὶ ἀνατεθεικυῖα τὸν ἑαυτῆς βίον
 εἰς τὴν πάντων Λυκίων εὐχαριστίαν, πολλὰ καὶ πλείστοις τῶν ἡμετέ-
 ρων πολειτῶν ἐπ’ εὐεργεσίαν παρέσχηται καὶ τὸ ἑαυτῆς μεγαλοπρε-
 πὲς τῆς ψυχῆς ἐνδεικνυμένη ἐξ εὖνοίας οὐ διαλείπει ξένην τε ἑαυ-
 28 τὴν πᾶσιν Λυκίοις παρεχομένη καὶ τῇ οἰκίᾳ δεχομένη καὶ μάλιστα τοῖς
 ἡμετέροις πολεΐταις οὐ διαλείπει ὑπερτιθεμένη τὰς εἰς πάντας χάρι-
 τας, δι’ ὃ καὶ πλείστοι τῶν πολειτῶν ἡμῶν καταστάντες ἐπὶ τῆς ἐκκλη-
 σίας διαμεμαρτύρηκαν αὐτῇ· καθήκειν οὖν καὶ τὸν ἡμέτερον δῆμον
 32 εὐχάριστον ὄντα ἐπαινεῖσαι τε τὴν Ἰουνίαν καὶ διαμαρτυρησαί αὐτῇ
 ἣν ἔχει παρὰ τῇ πατρίδι ἡμῶν ἀποδοχὴν καὶ εὖνοιαν καὶ ὅτι παρακαλεῖ
 αὐτὴν προσεπαύξειν τὴν εἰς τὸν δῆμον εὖνοιαν, εἰδυῖαν ὅτι καὶ ὁ δῆμος
 ἡμῶν πρὸς οὐθὲν ἐνλείπει τῆς εἰς αὐτὴν εὖνοίας καὶ χάριτος, πάντα δὲ
 36 πράξει τὰ πρὸς ἀρετὴν αὐτῇ καὶ δόξαν διήκοντα· δι’ ὃ, τύχῃ ἀγαθῇ, δεδῶ-
 χθαι ἐπηνέσθαι αὐτὴν ἐπὶ πᾶσιν τοῖς προγεγραμμένοις· ἵνα δὲ καὶ αὐτῇ Ἰου-

νία καὶ ἡ Κορινθίων πόλις ἐπιγνώ τὴν ἐκ τῆς πόλεως ἡμῶν εἰς αὐτὴν εὐ-
 νοιαν καὶ τὸ γεγονός αὐτῆ ψήφισμα, τὸν γραμματέα τῆς βουλῆς τοῦδε
 40 τοῦ ψηφίσματος τὸ <δε> ἀντίγραφον σφραγισάμενοι τῆ δημοσίᾳ σφραγεῖ-
 δι πέμψασθαι πρὸς τὸν Κορινθίων δῆμον.

The people of Patara have decreed since Iunia Theodora, a Roman, living at Corinth, a woman of the greatest honour, (24) living modestly, who is a friend of the Lycians and has dedicated her life to earning the gratitude of all the Lycians, has bestowed numerous benefits also on many of our citizens; and, revealing the generosity of her nature, she does not cease, because of her goodwill, from offering hospitality to (28) all the Lycians and receiving them in her own house and she continues particularly to act on behalf of our citizens in regard to any favour asked—so that the majority of our citizens have come before the Assembly to give testimony about her. Therefore, our people (32) in gratitude agreed to vote to commend Iunia and acknowledge her generosity to our native city and her goodwill, and to invite her to extend her loyalty to the people in the certainty that in its turn our people will not show any negligence in its devotion and gratitude to her, and (36) will do everything for the excellence and glory she deserves. This is why, with good fortune, it was decreed to commend her for all the aforesaid reasons. So that Iunia herself, and the city of Corinth at the same time, may be aware of the loyalty of our city to her, and of the decree passed for her, the secretary of the council sends (40) to the people of Corinth this copy of the present decree after having sealed it with the public seal.

4. A letter of the Federal Assembly to Corinth introducing a second decree in favour of Iunia Theodora

Λυκίων τὸ κοινὸν καὶ οἱ ἄρχοντες Κορινθίων ἄρχουσι, βουλῆ, δῆμῳ χαί-
 ρειν. Τοῦ γεγονότος ψηφίσματος φιλανθρώπου καὶ στεφανώσεως χρυ-
 44 σῶ στεφάνῳ καὶ ἀναθέσεως εἰκόνοσ εἰς ἀποθέωσιν μετὰ τὴν [ἀπ]α[λ]λα-
 γὴν Ἰουνίᾳ Θεοδώρᾳ κατοικουσίᾳ παρ' ὑμεῖν ἐξαπεστάκαμεν ὑμεῖν τὸ ἀν-
 τίγραφον σφραγισάμενοι τῆ δημοσίᾳ σφραγεῖδι ὅπως ε[ἶ]δητ[ε] τα[ῦ]τα].
 Ἔδοξε Λυκίῳ τῷ κοινῷ · ἐπεὶ Ἰουνία Θεοδώρα κατοικοῦσα ἐν [Κορ]ίν-
 48 θῶ γυνὴ καλὴ καὶ ἀγαθὴ καὶ εὖνους τῷ Λυκίῳ ἔθνεϊ διὰ παν[τὸ]ς ἐν-
 δέδεικται τὴν ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἔθνους σπουδὴν καὶ φιλοτεμίαν πᾶ[σι] τοῖς
 παρεπιδημήσασιν ἰδιώταις τε καὶ [πρ]έσβεσιν τοῖς ἀ[πο]στελλομ[έν]οις
 ὑπὸ τε τοῦ ἔθνους καὶ ἰδίᾳ κατὰ πόλιν συ[μ]παθῶς διακειμ[έν]η ἡρέσ-

- 52 κευται πάσιν συνκατασκευάζουσα τοὺς ἡγ[ε]μόνα[ς ε]ὔνο[υστάτο]υς
 ἡμεῖν γείνεσθαι ἀρεσκευομένη τούτοις κατὰ πάντα πρόπον τό[ν τε δ]ιά-
 δοχον αὐτῆς Σέκτον Ἰούλιον Ῥω[μαῖ]ον ἄνδρα ἀγαθὸν ὄ[ν]τ[α καὶ τῆ ὑ]-
 περβαλλούση εὐνοία κρατέ[οντα καὶ] σπουδῇ πρὸς τὸ ἔθνος [ἡμ]ῶ[ν σ]τοι-
 56 χούντα τῇ ἄνωθεν Ἰουνίας πρὸς ἡμᾶς εὐνοία· ᾧ κατὰ τὸν [αὐτὸν] και-
 ρὸν πεμφθήσεται ἢ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἔθνους Λ[υ]κίων ψήφισμα Ἰο[υνία Θεοδώ]ρα
 ἔτι δὲ καὶ πλείστους τῶν ἡμε[τέρ]ων ἐκπεσόντας ὑπεδ[έξατο μεγα]λο-
 μερῶς, διὰ τε ἧς τέθεται διαθήκ[ης ἐν]δέδ[εικ]ται τὴν [ἐαυτῆς εὐνοι]αν·
 60 καλῶς δὲ ἔχον ἐστὶν καὶ τὸ κοινὸ[ν ἢ ἡμῶν ἐφ' οἷς ἐπιμένο]υσα *ca.* 5 εὖ
 ποιεῖ ἀποδίδοναι αὐτῇ μαρτυρία[ς καὶ χ]άριτας· δεδόχθαι Λ[υκίων τῶ κ]οι-
 νῶ ἀποδεδέχθαι καὶ ἐπηνέσθαι [ἐπὶ πᾶσι] τοῖς προγεγ[ραμμένοις Ἰου]νί-
 αν Θεοδώραν Ῥωμαίαν κατοικοῦ[σαν ἐ]ν Κορίνθῳ στέφανόν τ[ε] αὐτῇ [χρυ]-
 64 σοῦν ἀποστείλαι καὶ κρόκου μνάς πέντε [ἄ]ς [ἀ]ποθ[έσθαι ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ ἵνα ἐν ἐ]-
 τοίμῳ ἔχη, ὅταν εἰς θεοὺς ἀφικνῆται, κα[ὶ αὐτὴν] τ[ιμῆσαι εἰκόνι γραπτῇ ἐ]-
 πιχρῶσῳ καὶ ἐπιγράψαι ἐπιγραφήν τῇ[νδε]· Λυκίων τὸ κοινὸν καὶ οἱ ἄρχοντες]
 Ἰουνίαν Θεοδώραν Ῥωμαίαν κατοικοῦσαν ἐν Κορίνθῳ [ἐτίμησαν στεφά]-
 68 νῳ καὶ εἰκόνι γραπτῇ ἐπιχρῶσῳ γυναι[κα κα]λῆν καὶ [ἀ]γαθῇ[ν κ]αὶ ε[ὐνοον]
 διὰ παντὸς τῶι ἔθνει φιλοστοργίας ἔνεκεν κα[ὶ *ca.* 10] Εἰσιλλ[*ca.* 3-4].

Greetings from the federal assembly of the Lycians and the Lycian magistrates to the magistrates, the council and the people of Corinth. By an honorific decree made in favour of Iunia Theodora, living among you, it is voted to grant her both the crowning with a (44) golden crown and the offering of a portrait for her deification after her death, and we have sent you a copy (of the decree) sealed with the public seal so as to inform you at the same time.

It was decreed by the federal assembly of the Lycians: since Iunia Theodora, living in Corinth, (48) a fine and honourable woman and devoted to the Lycian nation, has not ceased to show her zeal and generosity towards the nation and is full of good will to all travellers whether private individuals or ambassadors sent by the nation or by various cities, and has procured the gratitude (52) of all of us by assuring the friendship of the authorities which she seeks to win by every means, and making well-disposed her heir Sextus Iulius, a Roman, a good man also behaving with surpassing goodwill and with zeal towards our nation, imitating (56) the devotion of Iunia towards us which was mentioned above. To that man will be sent on the same occasion the decree of the Lycian nation in honour of Iunia Theodora. Since also very many of our people in exile were welcomed by her with magnificence, and that by the will she has

made she shows her loyalty, it was decided therefore that, in its turn, (60) our assembly make testimony on her behalf and register its gratitude for her continual benefits,...it pleases the Lycian federal assembly to give honour and praise for all the above-mentioned reasons to Iunia Theodora, a Roman, living at Corinth, and to send her a crown of gold (64) and five minas of saffron to be set aside in her house in order that she may have it in readiness when she will reach the presence of the gods and to honour her with a portrait painted on a gilt background and engraved with the following inscription: 'The federal assembly of the Lycians and the Lycian magistrates have honoured with a crown (68) and a portrait painted on a gilt background Iunia Theodora, a Roman, living at Corinth, a fine and honourable woman and constantly devoted to the nation by reason of her affection.'

5. A decree of the Lycian city of Telmessos

"Ετους τεσσαροκοστοῦ, ἐπὶ ἱερ(έ)ως Διονυσοφά[ν]ου το[ῦ ca. 1-2] A[ca. 12-13 ἔδοξε]

Τελμησέων τῇ βουλῇ καὶ τῶι δήμῳ, πρ[υ]τάνεω[ν ca. 2-3] O[ca. 16]

- 72 γνώμη. Ἐπὶ Ἰουνία Θεοδώρα Ῥωμαία γυνὴ ὑπάρχουσα [α ἐν πλείστη εὐνοί]-
α τοῦ τε κοινοῦ τῶν Λυκίων καὶ τῆς πόλεως ἡμῶν πο[λ]λά[ς ca. 5 εὐεργεσί]-
ας τετέλεκεν τῷ τε κοινῶι καὶ τῇ πατρίδ[ι ἡ]μῶν, [κατοικοῦσα δὲ ἐν τῇ Κορινθί]-
ων πόλει τοὺς παρεπιδημοῦντας Λυκίων καὶ τῶν πολ[ειτῶν ἡμῶν ca. 7 δέχε]-
76 ται τῇ ἰδίᾳ οἰκίᾳ παρεχομένη αὐτοῖ[ς πάν]τα[ca. 23]
τῶν παραγεινομένων προστασίαν [ἐν]δ[εικνυμένη ca. 17]
ιδίας φιλοδοξίας καὶ ἐκτενείας. Α... O [ca. 2-3] ΑΘ[ca. 17· καλῶς]
δὲ ἔχον ἐστὶν καὶ τὴν πόλιν ἡμῶν ἀποδοῦναι α[ὕτῃ τὴν καθήκουσαν μαρτυ]-
80 ρίαν, τύχη ἀγαθῇ, δεδόχθαι Τελμ[ησ]σ[έων] τῶ[ι] δήμῳ[ι ἀπ]ο[δεδέχθαι καὶ ἐ]-
πληνῆσθαι ἐπὶ πᾶσι τοῖς προγεγραμμένοις Ἰουνίαν Θ[ε]οδώραν [τὴν προγε]-
γραμμένην, παρακαλεῖν τε αὐτὴν μένουσαν ἐπ[ὶ] τῆς αὐτῆς ὑποσ[τάσεως]
ἀεὶ τινος ἀγαθοῦ παραίτιαν γείνεσθαι πᾶσιν ἡμῖν εἰδυῖαν ὅτ[ι καὶ ἡ πόλις]
84 ἡμῶν εὐχάριστος ὑπάρχουσα ἀποδώσι αὐτῇ ἄλλιν τὰς καθηκο[ύσας]
μαρτυρίας.

In the fourth year, when Dionysophanes, son of...was priest, the council and people of Telmessos decreed, the proposal of the prytaneis...: (72) Since Iunia Theodora, a Roman, a benefactress of the greatest loyalty to the Lycian federation and our city has accomplished numerous...benefits for the federation and our city

and, dwelling in the city of the Corinthians (76) welcomes in her own house Lycian travellers and our citizens,...supplying them with everything...; displaying her patronage of those who are present...of her own love of fame and assiduousness..., it is decreed that our city in its turn testify to her according to her deserts; (80) by good fortune, it pleases the demos of Telmessos to give honour and praise for all the above reasons to the abovementioned Iunia Theodora and to invite her, living with the same intentions, to always be the author of some benefit towards us, well knowing that in return our city (84) recognises and will acknowledge the evidence of her goodwill.

Inscriptions in honour of Claudia Metrodora

1. An honorific inscription from Chios when Claudia Metrodora was stephanephoros²

Οἱ πολέμαρχ]οι καὶ ἐξετασ[ταὶ οἱ]
 [ἄρξαντες ἐ]ν τῷ ἐπὶ στεφανη[φό]-
 [ρου Κλαυδ]ίας, Σκυθείνου θυ-
 4 [γατρὸς, Μητ]ροδώρας τὸ β' (ἐνιαυτῷ) στεφα-
 [νοῦσι τ]ὸν ἑαυτῶν συνάρ-
 [χοντα Λε]ύκιον...

The polemarchs and the financial officials who held office in the second stephanephorate of Claudia Metrodora, daughter of Skytheinos, crown their co-archon, Lucius...

2. An inscription from Chios honouring Claudia Metrodora³

-----Κλαυδί-
 [αν Σκυθείνου θυ]γατέρα [Μητροδώραν] γυμνασιαρ-
 [χήσασαν τε]τράκις καὶ δις ἀλείψασαν τήν
 4 [πόλιν κατὰ τ]ήν τῶν Ἑρακλήων ἀγῶνων πανή-
 [γυριν τρ?]ῆς ἀγανοθετήσασαν τῶν Ἑρα-
 [κλήων Ῥωμ]αίων καὶ Καισαρήων καὶ βασιλεύσα-

² L. Robert, 'Inscriptions de Chios du 1er siècle de notre ère', *Études épigraphiques et philologiques* (Paris: Champion, 1938), 133-34.

³ J. & L. Robert, 'Bulletin épigraphique', *Revue des études grecques* 69 (1956), 152-53, no. 213.

[σαν τοῦ τρισκα]ιδεκαπολειτικοῦ τῶν Ἰόνων
 8 [κοινοῦ, φ]ιλοδοξοῦσα[ν περ]ὶ τὴν πόλιν
 [-----φ]ιλόπατριν [καὶ ἰ]έρεϊαν δι[τά]
 [βίου Σεβαστ]ῆς θεᾶς Ἀφροδίτης Λιβίας
 ἀρετῆς ἔνεκα καὶ καλοκαγαθί-
 12 ας τῆς εἰς ἑαυτόν.

...for Claudia Metrodora, daughter of Skytheinos, gymnasiarch (4) four times (who) twice distributed oil to the city on the occasion of the festival of the Heraklea games; agonothete three (3) times of the Heraklea Romaia and Kaisareia; queen of the thirteen cities of the Ionian (8) federation, being desirous of glory for the city,...a lover of her homeland and priestess for life of the divine empress Aphrodite Livia, by reason of her excellence and admirable behaviour (12) towards it.

3. A bilingual building inscription from Ephesos naming Claudia Metrodora⁴

Dianae · Ephesiae · Divo Clau[di]o Neroni Claudio Caesari Augusto [[Germa]νηϊκό]
 (leaf) Agri[ppi]nae · Aug[ustae] civita[ti] Ephesiorum
 [-----cum Claudia Metro]dóra · uxor[e]

[Ἀρτέμιδι Ἐφεσίᾳ, θεῶ Κλαυδίῳ, Νέρωνι Κλαυδίῳ Καίσαρι Σεβαστῶ
 [[Γερμανικῶ]], (leaf) Ἀγριππείνῃ Σ[ε]βαστῆ τῷ Ἐφεσίων δήμῳ]
 [-----ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων κατασκευάσας ἀνέθηκεν (leaf) σὺν
 Κλαυδίᾳ Μητροδώρᾳ τῇ γυναικί.

For Ephesian Artemis, the deified Claudius, Nero Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus, Agrippina Augusta, and the people of Ephesos,...erected (this building) at his own expense and dedicated it together with his wife Claudia Metrodora.

⁴ J. Keil, 'Inchriften', *Forschungen in Ephesos* III (Vienna 1923), 94-95, no. 3; R. Meriç, R. Merkelbach, J. Nollé, and S. Sahin ed., *Die Inschriften von Ephesos (Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien 17/1)*; Habelt: Bonn, 1981), VII, 1, no. 3003.

4. Inscription from Teos mentioning Claudia Metrodora's brother and father⁵

Τι. Κλαύδιον
 Καλώβροτον
 Κλαύδιος Φη-
 4 σεΐνος τὸν
 πατέρα...

For Tib. Claudius Calobrotus, his father, Claudius Phesinus...

5. A dedicatory inscription from Ephesos in the provincial high priesthood of Claudius Phesinus⁶

Αὐτοκράτορι
 θεῶι Καίσαρι
 Σεβαστῶι Οὐεσπασιανῶι
 4 ἐπὶ ἀνθυπάτου Μάρκου
 Φουλίου Γίλλωνος
 ὁ δῆμος ὁ Αἰζανειτῶν
 ναῶι τῶι ἐν Ἐφέσῳ τῶν
 8 Σεβαστῶν κοινῶι τῆς Ἀσίας
 διὰ Κλαυδίου Μενάν-
 δρου πρώτου ἄρχοντος
 ἐπὶ ἀρχιερέως τῆς Ἀσίας
 12 Τιβερίου Κλαυδίου Φησεΐνου

For the divine Emperor, Caesar Augustus Vespasian (4) in the proconsulship of Marcus Fulvius Gillo, the people of Aizanoi (made this dedication) (8) to Asia's common temple of the Augusti in

⁵ C. Börker, and R. Merkelbach with H. Engelmann, and D. Knibbe ed., *Die Inschriften von Ephesos (Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien 12;* Habelt: Bonn, 1979), II, 38.

⁶ C. Börker, and R. Merkelbach with H. Engelmann, and D. Knibbe ed., *Die Inschriften von Ephesos (Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien 12;* Habelt: Bonn, 1979), II, no. 232. The name of Domitian was erased in ll. 1-3 after the *damnatio memoriae* decreed by the Roman senate and it was replaced with that of his father, Vespasian; four further lines were erased at the end of the inscription and not replaced. For discussion of this and related inscriptions, see S.V. Friesen, *Twice Neokoros: Ephesus, Asia & the Cult of the Flavian Imperial Family* (Brill: Leiden, 1993), 29-41.

Ephesos, through the agency of the first archon, Claudius Menander, when Tib. Claudius Phesinus was high-priest of Asia.