

STEVEN J. FRIESEN

ASIARCHS

aus: Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik 126 (1999) 275–290

© Dr. Rudolf Habelt GmbH, Bonn



## ASIARCHS

During the twentieth century most historians of the Roman imperial period have concluded that Asiarch was another title for men who served as highpriests of Asia.<sup>1</sup> One reason for the longevity of the identification theory is the acceptance by scholars of anecdotal argumentation in defense of the theory. In this article, I employ a different method. Rather than relying on striking individual pieces of evidence, I also look for the patterns in the broad corpus of data. This systematic approach shows that the identification theory is wrong. Magie's conclusion that Asiarchs were a special category of agonothete is more likely. His schematic handling of the subject can be developed and supported more thoroughly in a way that explains the appeal of the identification theory, and that takes into account a great deal of evidence that is overlooked by proponents of the identification theory.

The article begins by examining the arguments used to support the identification theory. The second section deals with the historical scenario that has been devised to explain the identification theory. The article concludes with a section that develops further the case that Asiarchs comprised a special category of agonothete.

### Arguing the Identification Theory

While there is widespread support for the identification theory these days,<sup>2</sup> sustained arguments that lay out the case for this conclusion are rare. The last significant exposition was by Jürgen Deininger.<sup>3</sup> In his monograph on provincial councils of the Roman Empire, Deininger defended the probability of the identification of Asiarchs with provincial highpriests of Asia. In the course of his exposition he mar-

---

The following abbreviations are used:

Bremen: R. van Bremen, *The Limits of Participation: Women and Civic Life in the Greek East in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods* (1996).

Deininger: J. Deininger, *Die Provinziallandtage der römischen Kaiserzeit von Augustus bis zum Ende des dritten Jahrhunderts n. Chr.* (1965).

Dig.: T. Mommsen, P. Drueger, and A. Watson (eds. and trans.), *The Digest of Justinian* 4 vols. (1985).

Friesen: S. Friesen, *Twice Neokoros: Ephesus, Asia, and the Cult of the Flavian Imperial Family* (1993).

Herz: P. Herz, Asiarchen und Archiereiai: Zum Provinzialkult der Provinz Asia, *Tyche* 7 (1992) 93–115.

Magie: D. Magie, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor to the End of the Third Century After Christ* 2 vol. (1950).

Quass: F. Quass, *Die Honoratiorenschicht in den Städten des griechischen Ostens: Untersuchungen zur politischen und sozialen Entwicklung in hellenistischer und römischer Zeit* (1993).

Robert: L. Robert, *Les gladiateurs dans l'Orient grec* (1970).

Rossner: M. Rossner, Asiarchen und Archiereis Asias, *StudCl* 16 (1974) 101–142.

Wörle: M. Wörle, Neue Inschriftenfunde aus Aizanoi I, *Chiron* 22 (1992) 337–370.

The research for this article was made possible in part by support from the National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Stipend program and from the Research Council of the University of Missouri–Columbia. I am also grateful for responses by Werner Eck, Eugene Lane, and Harry Pleket to an earlier draft of this study. They saved me from several sins of omission and of commission, but they should not be held responsible for the arguments or conclusions that remain.

<sup>1</sup> I use the words “highpriest” and “highpriestess” to translate the one-word titles ἀρχιερεύς and ἀρχιέρεια respectively. “Highpriest of Asia” should be understood to include also the title “highpriest of Rome and Augustus” from Pergamon (see below, n. 12, and Friesen 79–81). The highpriest of Asia was the highest official in the imperial cult institutions of the province of Asia.

<sup>2</sup> Among the supporters of the identification theory are: J. A. O. Larsen, *Representative Government in Greek and Roman History* (1955) 118–19, 222 n. 33; G. Bowersock, *Augustus and the Greek World* (1965) 117; Rossner; F. Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World (31 BC – AD 337)* (1977) 386–87; R. Merkelbach, Der Rangstreit der Städte Asiens und die Rede des Aelius Aristides über die Eintracht, *ZPE* 32 (1978) 288 = *Philologica* (1997) 146; Herz; Wörle 370. For reviews of minority opinions from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, see Magie 2.1298–99 fn. 61; Deininger 43–44. Kearsley is one of the few recent scholars to argue against the identification theory; see below, n. 72.

<sup>3</sup> Deininger, esp. 41–50.

shalled five types of arguments for the identification theory. The first two are insubstantial and the other three actually work against the theory. The underlying problem is that his arguments were founded on pieces of the epigraphic evidence rather than on a systematic analysis of all the available evidence. Deininger's five arguments follow with assessments of their strength.

1. References to provincial temples in Asiarch titles. Deininger claimed that references to provincial imperial cult temples in a title like "Asiarch of the temples in Ephesos"<sup>4</sup> suggest that an Asiarch was a highpriest of the temples.<sup>5</sup> A glance at other inscriptions from the region demonstrates that this argument is not convincing. The γραμματεὺς τῆς Ἀσίας ναῶν τῶν ἐν Ἐφέσῳ ("secretary of Asia of the temples in Ephesos"), and the πανηγυριαρχήσαντα ναῶν τῶν ἐν τῇ λαμπροτάτῃ Περγαμηνῶν [μητρ]οπόλει<sup>6</sup> ("one who served as panegyriarch of the temples in the most illustrious metropolis of the Pergamenes") certainly had responsibilities in provincial imperial cults, but the references to temples hardly mean that these men were the highpriests of those temples. The fact that provincial temples are mentioned in some titles does not indicate that Asiarchs held the provincial highpriestly offices, but only that their service was related in some way to those temples.

2. Examples from other provinces. This second argument was used by Deininger and by others.<sup>7</sup> The differences between provinces should have been recognized, however, in light of the fact that the Asiarchate was an office held by men,<sup>8</sup> while both Lycia and Macedonia had female officeholders known as Λυκιάρχισσα<sup>9</sup> and Μακεδονιάρχισσα<sup>10</sup> respectively. Neither is it wise to suppose that the provincial imperial cult institutions were organized in a uniform fashion in various regions. Titles of officials could vary: after the mid first century CE Asia had "highpriests of Asia" while Macedonia had a "highpriest of Augustus."<sup>11</sup> Moreover, the titles within a province like Asia show signs of changing over time.<sup>12</sup> Regional differences and temporal evolution should not be ignored.

Furthermore, this practice of drawing inferences about the situation in Asia based on data regarding different provinces involves circular reasoning. National titles built on the root -άρχης are attested for many provinces, but the best documentation comes from Asia. So the example of Asia and the Asiarchs is used as a model for the situation in other regions.<sup>13</sup> Yet in order to defend the identification theory for Asiarchs, it is necessary to appeal to the situation in another province, which has itself been extrapolated from the evidence for Asiarchs.<sup>14</sup> Even Deininger, who tended to homogenize the organization of the various provinces,<sup>15</sup> admitted that there could be regional variations between provinces.<sup>16</sup> This sort of

<sup>4</sup> E.g., IvE 7,1.3017.

<sup>5</sup> Deininger 42.

<sup>6</sup> R. Kearsley, Asiarchs: Titulature and Function. A Reappraisal, *StudCl* (1988) 63.

<sup>7</sup> Herz focused especially on alleged parallels in the institutions of other provinces.

<sup>8</sup> The single exception in the approximately 300 epigraphic references to Asiarchs is a funerary inscription of poor quality for Marcia Claudia Iuliane and her husband that refers to them jointly as Ἀσιάρχαι IvSmyrna 1.386 = IGR 4.1481. Since this is the only reference to a woman as Asiarch and there is no special feminine form of the title, I conclude that this reference was either a mason's error or an extra honor accorded to her in death.

<sup>9</sup> TAM 2.188–189.

<sup>10</sup> Kanatsulis 64–65.

<sup>11</sup> AE 1971 #430, l. 9–11.

<sup>12</sup> The first provincial cult in Asia was led by a "highpriest of goddess Rome and of Emperor Caesar Augustus". With the introduction of a second provincial cult in Asia during the first half of the first century CE, the standard title eventually became "highpriest of Asia" or "highpriestess of Asia", Friesen 79–81.

<sup>13</sup> Deininger 42–43.

<sup>14</sup> E.g., Herz 100–101.

<sup>15</sup> Deininger tends to assume a uniform structure for the provincial councils and then uses this assumption to fill in the many gaps so that the result is a uniform picture. For examples, see his comments on Bithynia (60–61), Cilicia (83), and Crete (84–85).

<sup>16</sup> E.g., his section on Lycia (69–73).

reasoning – appealing to the data from poorly-attested provinces in order to explain the situation in Asia for which there is abundant evidence – is methodologically indefensible and ultimately misleading.

3. Married to highpriestesses of Asia. Scholars have noted that some highpriests of Asia and some Asiarchs are known to have been married to highpriestesses of Asia, and concluded that this supported the identification theory. When the logic is laid out clearly, it does not inspire confidence: if 1) some Asiarchs were married to provincial highpriestesses; if 2) some highpriests of Asia were married to provincial highpriestesses; and if 3) the male titles were very similar; then Asiarch and highpriest of Asia must be two titles for the same office.<sup>17</sup> Proponents of the identification theory admit that some of the evidence does not fit this pattern, so spouses who do not have the right provincial titles or who have the wrong number of titles are said to be exceptions that can be explained away. Perhaps the husband was a highpriest of Asia before his marriage, or maybe the wife in question was highpriestess of Asia with her father or brother or former husband.<sup>18</sup> A systematic analysis of these cases, however, shows the danger of the anecdotal approach and produces strong evidence against the identification theory.

In the hundreds of epigraphic references to these offices we can isolate a total of 31 couples in which both husband and wife are attested and in which at least one of them has the title highpriest of Asia, highpriestess of Asia, or Asiarch.<sup>19</sup> Of these 31 couples, only 16 share titles in accordance with the identification theory.<sup>20</sup> The 15 exceptions to be explained away – nearly half the evidence – include six cases where one spouse has no highpriesthood title at all.<sup>21</sup> There are another six cases where one spouse only held a local highpriestly title while the other spouse held a provincial highpriesthood or Asiarchate title.<sup>22</sup> Finally, there are three more cases where the spouses have different numbers of provincial offices.<sup>23</sup> If half of the couples are exceptions to the identification theory, then the theory needs revision.

Strong evidence against the identification theory emerges when we move from a general analysis of the 31 couples to a more detailed comparison of officeholding of wives of Asiarchs and wives of

---

<sup>17</sup> The discussion was complicated by disagreements about female participation in the provincial highpriesthoods. The earlier consensus about highpriestesses of Asia was that they did not serve as functioning highpriestesses but rather received this honorary title because they were married to a provincial highpriest or Asiarch. The evidence for this “honorary highpriestess” position was so slender that scholars were reduced to arguing that no provincial highpriestess could be proven not to have been married to a highpriest or to an Asiarch (Deininger 154; Rossner 102). The majority opinion has recently shifted: it is agreed that the women had sacrificial duties and the debate now centers on whether a woman could have served in a provincial imperial cult without her husband or some other male relative (R. Kearsley, *Asiarchs, Archiereis, and the Archiereia of Asia*, [1986]; Herz esp. 100–12; Wörrle 368–70; Bremen, esp. 114–41).

<sup>18</sup> For example, Bremen 118–119.

<sup>19</sup> The statistics in this article are documented and can be verified using the database which I have constructed using all the known references to Asiarchs, highpriests of Asia, and highpriestesses of Asia. The database can be searched on the Worldwide Web at <http://www.missouri.edu/~religsf/officials.html>. In this article, numbers in square brackets (for example, [#252]) refer to the catalogue number of the individual in the database.

<sup>20</sup> Eleven wives of highpriests of Asia with same number of terms as highpriestess of Asia: IvE 3.721 [#12]; Wörrle 351 #2b [#63]; IvMag 158 [#64]; IGR 4.1571 [#117]; IGR 4.784 [#129]; IGR 4.1238 [#143]; TAM 5,2.944 [#164]; IGR 4.1244 [#343]; IGR 4.1325 [#352]; IGR 4.908 [#354]; IGR 4.1423 [#504]. Five wives of Asiarchs with same number of terms as highpriestess of Asia: IvE 7,2.4343 [#413]; IvE 3.637 [#158]; IvE 2.430 [#471]; MAMA 8.517b [#353]; IvE 3.728 and 729 [#355].

<sup>21</sup> Four wives of Asiarchs who have no highpriestess titles of their own: Milet 1,9.164-65 #339 [#67]; IGR 4.17 [#216]; IvE 7,1.3033 [#405]; IGR 4.1247 [#431]. One highpriest of Asia whose wife has no highpriestess titles: AE 1994, p. 501. One husband of a highpriestess of Asia without highpriest titles of any sort: IvE 3.689 [#126], improved by Wörrle 368-70. IvE 5.1553 [#747] is probably another exception, but I have not included it because the husband is not explicitly mentioned.

<sup>22</sup> Two husbands of highpriestesses of Asia who were only local highpriests: CIG 2823 [#127]; IvE 3.681[#235]. Four wives of Asiarchs who were only local highpriestesses: IvDid 249 = LBW 2.244 [#147]; IGR 4.156 [#205]; IGR 4.1075 [#231]; IvE 2.424a, and 5.1601e [#416].

<sup>23</sup> TAM 5,2.954 is a particularly blatant example. The inscription provides information on two generations of exceptions: a mother [#357] and daughter [#161] who both held more highpriesthoods of Asia than did their respective husbands. See also IvE 3.715 [#720]

provincial highpriests. Even though we do not have information about most of the wives of these men, the examples where we do have information display an important pattern.<sup>24</sup> The chart below summarizes the evidence and makes clear that the patterns of service were different for the wives of these two kinds of male officials. Eleven out of 14 wives of highpriests of Asia had the same number of provincial highpriesthoods as their husbands, suggesting that there was a pattern of husband and wife serving together in these offices: 79% of the examples where the wife of a highpriest of Asia is known follow this pattern, and there are only three exceptions. The evidence for wives of Asiarchs is quite different. Only 5 out of 16 wives of Asiarchs served as highpriestess of Asia for the same number of times that their husbands were Asiarchs. In the case of Asiarchs, 69% of the couples (11 out of 16) do not conform to the expectations of the identification theory.

Chart 1: Officeholding for wives of Asiarchs and wives of highpriests of Asia

	Wives of highpriests of Asia <sup>25</sup>	Wives of Asiarchs <sup>26</sup>
Total number of wives mentioned	14	16
Highpriestess of Asia, same number of terms of service as husband	11	5
Exception: Local highpriestess only <sup>27</sup>	1	4
Exception: Highpriestess of Asia, but different number of terms of service <sup>28</sup>	1	3
Exception: No highpriestess title at all	0	4
Total exceptional cases <sup>29</sup>	3 (21%)	11 (69%)

What are we to make of this information? The patterns in officeholding are so different for the wives of Asiarchs and the wives of highpriests of Asia that we must conclude that the two male offices were distinct. We should also note that the offices listed for the wives of Asiarchs are in general somewhat less prestigious, focusing especially on local affairs rather than provincial or imperial matters. This suggests that the office of Asiarch was also less prestigious than the office of provincial highpriest.

<sup>24</sup> In this case we are dealing with 28 couples since the four highpriestesses of Asia whose husbands were neither Asiarch nor highpriest of Asia are excluded. Two of the 28 wives were married to men who were both Asiarchs and highpriests of Asia so these two women are included in both categories. Hence, Chart 1 draws upon 30 examples involving 28 couples (two wives counted twice).

<sup>25</sup> There are 50 cases where a highpriest of Asia is known but we do not have information about his wife. Another 33 attestations of highpriests of Asia are so fragmentary that they are not included in these statistics.

<sup>26</sup> 55 Asiarchs are known from the epigraphic record whose wives are unknown. There are also 33 fragmentary references to Asiarchs that are not included in these statistics.

<sup>27</sup> Iulia Lydia Laterane [#416], wife of Tib. Cl. Ariston of Ephesos (IvE 2.424a), is included in both columns because her husband is attested both as Asiarch and as highpriest of Asia.

<sup>28</sup> Aurelia Hermonassa [#161], wife of M. Aur. Diadochus (TAM 5,2.954 = IGR 4.1233) is included in both columns because her husband is attested as Asiarch and as highpriest of Asia.

<sup>29</sup> Marcia Claudia Iuliane [#239] from IvSmyrna 1.386 is not included in these calculations because of the uncertainty surrounding her title; see above, n. 8. If included she would probably be an exceptional case (wife of Asiarch with no highpriestess title).

4. Men with both titles. Several men are called both Asiarch and highpriest of Asia in the extant epigraphic evidence. Deininger rightly concluded that the example of C. Iulius Philippos was not convincing,<sup>30</sup> but Deininger made Tiberius Iulius Reginus one of his two most important arguments.<sup>31</sup> The reason for his importance is that Reginus is attested more than once, and he is called both ὀρχιερεὺς β' ναῶν τῶν ἐν Ἐφέσῳ<sup>32</sup> (“twice highpriest of the temples in Ephesos”) and ἀσιάρχης β' ναῶν ἐν Ἐφέσῳ,<sup>33</sup> (“twice Asiarch of the temples in Ephesos”). These titles and their epigraphic contexts are so similar that Deininger considered them to be crucial evidence in favor of the identification theory.<sup>34</sup> The similarity is deceptive, though. Scholars have focused on Reginus using anecdotal methods, and have arrived at systemic conclusions without using systematic methods. Reginus should be understood in the context of all 71 men who are multiply-attested as Asiarchs and/or provincial highpriests. Using systematic methods, it becomes clear that Reginus does not provide an argument for the identification theory; he is an unusual example of a man who held two highpriesthoods and two Asiarchates.

This can be established in the following manner. The multiply-attested officials include the names of Reginus and 70 other men: 12 men are attested with both titles; 15 are attested only as highpriests of Asia; and 44 are attested only as Asiarchs.<sup>35</sup> The 12 men known by both titles are attested a total of 51 times: 25 times as Asiarchs and 26 times as provincial highpriests. For these men, then, the appearance of one title or the other in the epigraphic record is random; in other words, each title appears about 50% of the time. According to the identification theory, all 71 men could be called either Asiarch or highpriest of Asia. Thus, if the identification theory is true, then this same approximate percentage should characterize the whole group of multiply-attested men; i.e., each title should be found in approximately half of the 232 references to multiply-attested men. Such is not the case, though. Of the 232 references to 71 multiply-attested officials, 73% are to Asiarchs (169 references) and only 27% are to highpriests of Asia (63 references).

The logical conclusion from these patterns of attested titles is that Asiarch and highpriest of Asia were not synonymous titles and did not refer to the same office; they appear randomly only for the small group of men who held both offices.<sup>36</sup> Reginus was one of 12 men known to us by name who held both offices. Another 15 men comprise the group who only served as highpriests of Asia, and 44 men served only as Asiarchs. The only alternative to this explanation is to claim that the identification theory is true in spite of the fact that 59 of the 71 multiply-attested men represent an unexplained exception to the theory.

These statistics allow us to go further. They show that Asiarchs were more numerous than highpriests of Asia, and they suggest that the Asiarchate was somewhat less prestigious than the provincial highpriesthoods. The slightly lower social status of the Asiarchate is confirmed by an examination of Roman citizenship among the officials during the period 100–212 CE.<sup>37</sup> During this period of time

<sup>30</sup> For details, see Magie 2:1300 fn. 61; Friesen 101.

<sup>31</sup> Deininger 44.

<sup>32</sup> IvE 5.1605, 1611.

<sup>33</sup> IvE 4.1130. His titles in IvE 3.692 and 4.1105a are almost identical.

<sup>34</sup> Deininger 44; followed by L. R. Taylor, *The Asiarchs*, in F. J. F. Jackson and K. Lake (eds.), *The Beginnings of Christianity*, part 1: *The Acts of the Apostles* (1933) 258. Rossner does not make special reference to the case of Reginus.

<sup>35</sup> Documentation is provided in the appendix to this article, and on the Worldwide Web at <http://www.missouri.edu/~religsf/officials.multiples.html>.

<sup>36</sup> Magie 1.450 and 2.1300 fn. 61 sensed the problem represented by the group of men attested with both titles but he did not develop the argument in a compelling manner.

<sup>37</sup> These dates were chosen in order to provide an appropriate period of time for the comparison of citizenship. The starting date of 100 CE is necessary because the availability of citizenship to provincials changed dramatically between the Augustan and Flavian periods; and because there are several references to highpriests and no references to Asiarchs before the late first century. The comparison ends with the first quarter of the third century because after this time Roman citizenship was universal for free persons.

92.6% of the highpriests of Asia known to us by name were Roman citizens (25 of 27 men).<sup>38</sup> The level of Roman citizenship among Asiarchs appears to have been slightly less during this same period: 88.9% of the Asiarchs known to us by name were Roman citizens (32 of 36 men). The difference in percentages is not great, but since we are dealing with 63 examples from a small sector of the wealthiest families in the province during a relatively brief timespan, the statistics provide an important supporting argument. The highpriesthoods of Asia tended to draw from the highest levels of the provincial elite; the Asiarchate was available to these men and to other elite males who were not quite so highly-placed in the social hierarchy.

If we return to the example of Reginus, one honorary inscription for him actually provides strong evidence against the identification theory. An inscribed base for a posthumous statue of Reginus began with standard phrases describing the city of Ephesos and then continued:

. . . ἡ βουλὴ καὶ ὁ δῆμος  
 ἐτείμησαν  
 Τιβέριον Ἰούλιον Ῥηγεῖνον  
 Τιβ. Κλ. Μελίτωνος  
 ἀρχιερέως τῆς Ἀσίας υἱόν,  
 δις ἀσιάρχην τῆς Ἀσίας  
 ναῶν τῶν ἐν Ἐφέσῳ,  
 ἐν πᾶσι φιλότιμον γενό-  
 μενον περὶ τὴν πόλιν,  
 καὶ καταλιπόντα τὴν θεὸν  
 κληρονόμον·  
 τὴν ἀνάστασιν τοῦ  
 ἀνδριάντος ποιησα-  
 μένης τῆς πόλεως  
 ἐκ τῶν ἱερῶν προσό-  
 δων.<sup>39</sup>

. . . the boule and the demos honored Tiberius Iulius Reginus – son of Tib. Cl. Melito, highpriest of Asia – twice Asiarch of Asia of the temples in Ephesos, who was lavish in everything regarding the city, and who left the goddess (as his) heir. The raising of the statue was done by the city from the sacred revenue.

It is highly unlikely that an inscription honoring father and son would use two different titles in consecutive phrases of the same inscription to indicate the same office which they both held. If the inscription makes a precise distinction in the number of terms served by each man, then it is dubious to claim that no distinction is made by the appearance of two different titles.<sup>40</sup>

5. Modestinus's reference to the Asiarchate. According to Deininger, the second important piece of evidence for the Asiarchate was literary – a small section from the Digest of Justinian. This text merits examination since it is cited in nearly all discussions regarding Asiarchs and because it has been the source of a good deal of confusion. In the middle of a long section on who could claim exemption from being appointed as tutor, the third century jurist Modestinus was quoted as follows.

<sup>38</sup> These numbers are based on whether or not the coins and inscriptions included a nomen or praenomen. If a lacuna prevents us from knowing whether an inscription included nomen or praenomen, I have not included it in the calculation. I assume 1) that an inscription would normally record Roman citizenship if a man possessed it; and 2) that possible exceptions (i.e., a man who was a Roman citizen but it was not recorded) are not statistically important because this would affect Asiarchs and highpriests of Asia equally.

<sup>39</sup> IvE 3.692 l. 5–20.

<sup>40</sup> For a similar example, see also IvE 3.626.



Ἔθλους ἱερωσύνη, οἶον Ἀσιαρχία, Βιθυνιαρχία, Καππαδοκαρχία, παρέχει ἀλειτουρησίαν ἀπὸ ἐπιτρόπων, τοῦτ' ἔστιν ἕως ἂν ἄρχῃ.<sup>41</sup>

A priesthood of a nationality, such as an Asiarchate, Bithyniarchate, (or) Kappadokarchate, confers exemption from the role of tutor, that is while (one is) serving.

Notice that Modestinus did not employ the technical term ἀρχιερεὺς Ἀσίας. Neither is there reference to a *koinon* of any province, a common temple of a province, or any facet of a provincial imperial cult, even though this legal writer lived in the first half of the third century when these were viable and distinguished institutions. Moreover, Modestinus used ἱερωσύνη (priesthood) rather than ἀρχιερωσύνη (highpriesthood), which would have been a denigration of the status of the provincial imperial cult institutions.<sup>42</sup> The Modestinus reference does not provide clear support for the identification theory; it only appears to support the theory if one is already predisposed to read Modestinus in this way. A better interpretation of the Modestinus passage is proposed in the final section of this article. Other problems with the identification theory need to be addressed first.

6. Two other important arguments were made by Rossner that are not found in Deininger.<sup>43</sup> Rossner noted that Asiarchs sponsored animal and gladiator fights which, according to Robert, are typical activities related to imperial cults.<sup>44</sup> Since the festivals mentioned in connection with these two kinds of officials were – or could have been – provincial games, Rossner concluded that the two titles must be identical.

Several points need to be made in response to this idea. First, there are clear examples of men sponsoring gladiator battles who have no connection to Asiarchates or to the provincial highpriesthoods.<sup>45</sup> The most important example is T. Aruntius Neikomachos of Temenothyrae Flaviopolis. The tomb of Neikomachos was dedicated by his gladiators who honored him and his wife in an inscription that has been preserved. The inscription only cites a municipal highpriesthood for Neikomachos and points out that he was a descendant of provincial highpriests of Asia. Neikomachos was clearly neither an Asiarch nor an official in the provincial imperial cults. Gladiators do not necessarily indicate any connection to the provincial imperial cults of Asia, nor to the Asiarchate.<sup>46</sup>

Second, the epigraphic evidence shows that Asiarchs and highpriests of Asia had different kinds of involvements with gladiators. There are seven Asiarchs and two highpriests of Asia connected to gladiators. Each of the seven Asiarchs was a patron of a familia of gladiators.<sup>47</sup> The two highpriests of Asia, on the other hand, are not said to have supported groups of gladiators; they were praised for supporting a particular competition. Moreover, in the case of the highpriest Ti. Cl. Menander, the inscription

<sup>41</sup> *Dig.* 27.1.6.14, with Deininger's reading ἱερωσύνη in place of ἱεραρχία; and Βιθυνιαρχία for Βιθυναρχία (44, n. 5). Magie agreed with Deininger's textual decisions (2.1299 n. 61). My translation.

<sup>42</sup> For example, notice the distinction that is maintained between a priesthood of Artemis and a highpriesthood of Asia in IvE 3.617 (see also the reconstructed text of 7.2.4343); or between a highpriesthood of Asia and a priesthood of Aphrodite and Agrippina in IvMag 158.

<sup>43</sup> Rossner summarized several arguments and added some of her own. Only two of these deserve comment here. A third argument was an alleged distinction between local and provincial Asiarchs, which comes from a questionable reading of coins from Stektorion (ColWad 6505; SNGCop Phrygia 692). These and some similar unpublished coins are being reevaluated (personal correspondence, H. Pleket). In the meantime, note that Münsterberg (*Die Beamtennamen auf den griechischen Münzen* [1985] 171) read these coins as references to Demetrius as "founder of the native city", and not as a reference to a local highpriesthood. This would invalidate Rossner's argument as well as my comment on this Asiarch in Friesen 97–98.

<sup>44</sup> Rossner 103–104; Campanile 20 agreed, mentioning only gladiators. Cf. L. Robert 270–75, who discusses the general connection of gladiatorial battles with imperial cults. Robert did not associate them only with provincial imperial cults, which makes this argument less useful for the identification theory than Rossner and Campanile suggest.

<sup>45</sup> IGR 4.103 (Mytilene); 759 (Sungurlu); 857 (Laodicea); 1377 (Thermae Theseos); 1453 (Smyrna); 1680 (Pergamon).

<sup>46</sup> K. Hopkins, *Murderous Games*, in K. Hopkins, *Death and Renewal* (1983) 1–30, esp. 7–14.

<sup>47</sup> IvE 4.1171; 1182 (also 5.1620); 5.1621; 7.2.4346; IGR 4.156 (Kyzikos); 1075 (Kos); 1454 (Smyrna).

explicitly states that the gladiator battles were not a part of his highpriesthood of Asia; they were part of a municipal festival when a statue was raised in his honor in his hometown.<sup>48</sup> The example of Reginus is especially instructive in this regard because he is known by both titles, Asiarch and highpriest of Asia. When he is named as the patron of a familia, the appropriate title is Asiarch.<sup>49</sup> This demonstrates a strong connection between Asiarchs and gladiators, and suggests no necessary connection between the highpriesthoods of Asia and gladiators. Support for familiae of gladiators turns out to be another distinction between the two offices.

7. No man is called both Asiarch and highpriest of Asia in the same inscription. In defense of the identification theory, Rossner pointed out that no individual has both titles in any single inscription or coin, which suggests that the titles refer to the same office.<sup>50</sup> This feature of the epigraphic record is only surprising if one assumes that the identification theory is correct. The statistics about multiply-attested men presented above showed that the number of men who held both offices was relatively small and so the fact that both titles are not used for these men is not a strong argument; there are only 51 inscriptions known to us where both titles might have been appropriate. Moreover, if the identification theory is true, then there is no apparent reason why both titles would appear in the Reginus inscription cited above in reference to two different men. This would suggest some sort of distinction between the titles which the identification theory has not explained.

Furthermore, there are men who are called both Macedoniarch and provincial highpriest of that province in single inscriptions.<sup>51</sup> The Macedonian evidence requires us either 1) to note that the provinces varied in their definitions of the *-ἀρχης* offices, which invalidates an important pillar of the identification theory; or 2) to reject the argument of Rossner and Campanile about the use of both titles in one inscription referring to one man. In either case, the identification theory for Asiarchs is undermined.<sup>52</sup>

### Explaining Two Titles

One final problem with the identification theory needs to be addressed. No satisfying answer has been given to explain why two titles would be required for one and the same office. Deininger proposed a historical scenario to show how the two titles might have come to be used for the same office and this hypothesis has been accepted – more or less – by proponents of the identification theory.<sup>53</sup> Deininger hypothesized that Asiarch was the title for the leader of Asia's koinon during the late Republican period. When the koinon instituted a provincial cult for Augustus in 29 BCE, the leader of the koinon (allegedly the Asiarch) must have become the highpriest of this cult and so became known exclusively as highpriest of Asia. This lasted for about 150 years. Then in the early second century CE the title Asiarch seems to have reemerged and to have displaced highpriest of Asia on coins and inscriptions.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>48</sup> IVE 7,2.4354 (Hypaipa). IVE 6.2061 II is not as explicit but it appears that the gladiator battles are not a part of the highpriesthood in this case either.

<sup>49</sup> IVE 5.1621.

<sup>50</sup> Rossner 104, followed by Campanile 20–21.

<sup>51</sup> AE 1971 #430 l. 9–11; #431 l. 6–8.

<sup>52</sup> Similarly, IVE 3.627 states that M. Aur. Mindius Matidianus Pollio [#215] served three times as Bithyniarch and once as highpriest of Asia. The identification theory provides no reason for the choice of these titles for one man in one inscription.

<sup>53</sup> The scenario is given tentative support by Rossner (106–107) and Campanile (18, 20–21).

<sup>54</sup> Deininger did not realize that “highpriest of Asia” is only attested beginning in the second quarter of the first century CE (Friesen 79–80), and so his hypothesis would have to be even more complicated. First “Asiarch” would be supplanted by “highpriest of Rome and Augustus” around 29 BCE. Then “highpriest of Rome and Augustus” would be replaced by “highpriest of Asia” in the mid first century CE. Around 100 CE “Asiarch” would come back into fashion for no apparent reason. Then in the fourth century, the disappearance of provincial imperial cults would have caused yet another redefinition of the office of Asiarch.

This hypothesis is demonstrably false in two ways. First, Deininger’s claim that the Asiarch title pushed the highpriestly title into the background in the second century CE is wrong.<sup>55</sup> A chart of the actual situation shows that this was not the case and helps us better understand the differences between the two offices. The following two charts summarize the extant evidence for attestations by half-centuries.<sup>56</sup>

Table 2a: Attestations of Provincial Highpriesthoods and of Asiarchates

	100-51	50-1 BCE	1-50 CE	51-100	101-150	151-200	201-250	251-300	301-350	351-400	no date	Total
Highpriesthoods	0	6.25	9.75	27.5	40.25	46.75	32	3.5	0	0	8	174
Asiarchates	0	0	0	3	33.5	94	103.5	15.5	2.5	1	11	264

Table 2b: Percentages of Attestations by Half-Centuries

	100-51	50-1 BCE	1-50 CE	51-100	101-150	151-200	201-250	251-300	301-350	351-400	no date	Total
Highpriesthoods		3.6%	5.6%	15.8%	23.1%	26.9%	18.4%	2%			8%	100%
Asiarchs				1.1%	12.7%	35.6%	39.2%	5.9%	1%	0.3%	7%	100%

What these tables demonstrate is that the public usage of highpriesthood titles remained fairly constant in Asia from Augustus to the mid third century; they were not eclipsed by the title Asiarch. The total number of highpriesthood attestations increases over the course of time because of the growing number of provincial cults in Asia and because of the expanding “epigraphic habit” that peaked around the end of the second century CE.<sup>57</sup> It is impossible to be exact in the matter, but overall it appears that Deininger’s historical reconstruction was wrong on this count: the use of highpriesthood titles is fairly constant from the Augustan period to the mid third century.

The chart also allows us to compare the two patterns of attestations for the titles. The same basic curve characterizes both titles during the imperial period, but there are some important distinctions. Asiarch titles begin to appear in the public record later, starting in the late first century CE. Their growth is more rapid and yields a greater total. The documentation for both offices declines in the third century,<sup>58</sup> but references to Asiarchs persist longer – all the way into the late fourth century.

Deininger’s hypothetical scenario in defense of the identification theory is also disprovable on quantitative grounds. It is mathematically impossible that Asiarchs were the leaders of Asia’s koinon. Between the years 76 CE and 275 CE, 200 annual leaders of the koinon would have been required. If all the attestations of Asiarchs between the years 76 and 275 CE are examined, we can account for 158 Asiarchates with named individuals.<sup>59</sup> Thus, the surviving evidence from the Roman imperial period would record an astonishing 79% of the koinon leaders by name for the two centuries following 75

<sup>55</sup> Deininger 50.

<sup>56</sup> Calculations in this chart are based on attestations, not on numbers of individuals. Highpriestesses and highpriests are counted as separate highpriesthoods. Some of the dates for particular attestations overlap the half-centuries on the chart. In these cases the attestations are recorded as 0.5 reference in each of two categories, 0.25 and 0.75 in each of two categories, or 0.25 in two categories and 0.5 in another, depending on the approximate date for that piece of evidence. Exact duplicate coins or inscriptions are counted only once because they represent only one choice to use one title or the other.

<sup>57</sup> R. MacMullen, *The Epigraphic Habit in the Roman Empire*, *AJPh* 103 (1982) 233–46, esp. 244.

<sup>58</sup> Provincial highpriesthoods existed at least through the end of the third century. The absence of epigraphic documentation is due at least in part to the political and economic difficulties of that century.

<sup>59</sup> I include here the erased Asiarch of IvE 2.523 on the assumption that the person probably does not appear in the other named inscriptions because he would have been erased in those as well.

CE.<sup>60</sup> According to the identification theory, however, we must also include the 57 highpriesthoods known from this period because the titles are alleged to be equivalent.<sup>61</sup> The result is absurd: the extant sources would preserve the names of 215 office-holders for 200 terms of office.<sup>62</sup> An Asiarch could not have been the leader of Asia's koinon. Deininger's historical scenario must be abandoned.<sup>63</sup>

To sum up, the theory that identifies Asiarchs and highpriests of Asia has very weak support. The arguments tend to be anecdotal, circular, and/or tendentious. The historical scenario devised to explain why there should be two titles for one office is demonstrably false on purely quantitative grounds. But then what did these men do to deserve such a title?

#### Identifying the Asiarchate

In the course of evaluating the identification theory several decisive arguments against the theory emerged. The strongest of these are: the titles used for multiply-attested male officials; the different patterns of office-holding among wives of Asiarchs and wives of highpriests; and the different functions of Asiarchs and highpriests in relation to gladiators. To these arguments we must add two more.

One additional argument is gender. The identification theory provides no explanation for the fact that even though women served as highpriestesses of Asia together with their highpriest husbands,<sup>64</sup> these same women were not called Asiarchs at all. Gender did not enter the discussion earlier because earlier scholars tended to assume that highpriestess of Asia was an honorary title with no actual participation in sacrificial rituals.<sup>65</sup> Now that scholars tend to conclude that highpriestesses of Asia played a role in the provincial cults, it is incumbent on proponents of the identification theory to explain the discrepancy. If Asiarch is equivalent to highpriest of Asia, then why were highpriestesses of Asia not accorded the title Asiarch?

A second additional argument for distinguishing the offices of Asiarch and highpriest of Asia can be made on the basis of the media used for the texts. Deininger claimed that there was no distinguishable difference between the activities of Asiarchs and highpriests of Asia in relation to coins, but his claim is wrong.<sup>66</sup> The artifacts preserved from antiquity refer to highpriests of Asia 129 times and to Asiarchs 269 times.<sup>67</sup> Four references to highpriests of Asia are preserved on coins (= 3.1%); the overwhelming

---

<sup>60</sup> There are references to at least 29 more Asiarchates from this period which have no name attached and are not included in this discussion. Most of these 29 would probably not overlap with the named Asiarchs. If the 29 are included in the calculations, we would have attestations for 84% of the Asiarchates during these two centuries.

<sup>61</sup> I have not included undatable individuals whose names suggest they lived in this period, nor the borderline cases of Sardis 7,1.44 and TAM 5,2.968 which are perhaps earlier than 75 CE. The men known to have held both titles are counted only once.

<sup>62</sup> Magie 2.1300–1301 fn. 61 suggested a similar argument but did not develop it in this way. He also had less evidence at his disposal.

<sup>63</sup> This also disproves the proposal of Herz, who suggested that the titles represented two distinct functions of one office (highpriest of Asia referred to the sacrificial imperial cult responsibilities and Asiarch alluded to the responsibilities for leading the koinon). His claim that Asiarch referred to the individual's function as leader of the koinon was suspect anyway: in the hundreds of attestation there is no clear reference to an Asiarch in a text from the koinon.

<sup>64</sup> For example, IvE 3.721; Wörrle 351 #2b (Aizanoi).

<sup>65</sup> See above, n. 17.

<sup>66</sup> Deininger 49.

<sup>67</sup> Named and unnamed officials are included in this calculation. I have assumed for the purposes of this comparison that references to highpriests or to Asiarchs without preserved names do not duplicate other existing references, but I have omitted the four attestations that might duplicate specific known references (highpriests: IvE 1,1.17 line 68; 2.240; 3.626; Asiarchs: Mionnet Sup 7.359 #192). Exact copies (i.e., multiple copies of the same coin or duplicate inscriptions) count only once because these represent a single independent attestation. I have also omitted literary references because they are not relevant to this comparison (highpriests: Philostratus, Vit.Soph. 1.515; Asiarchs: Strabo 14.1.42).

majority are known to us through inscriptions.<sup>68</sup> Asiarchs, however, are named much more frequently on municipal coins (84 out of 269 references = 31.2%), and one Asiarch is known from a lead weight recovered from Smyrna.<sup>69</sup> This diversity of media can only be explained as an indication that the two offices had distinct functions.<sup>70</sup> The Asiarchs mentioned on municipal coins probably paid for the minting of these coins,<sup>71</sup> but the differences in media at least reflect an important difference in spheres of responsibility. Asiarchs were associated primarily with the functioning of cities, not with the affairs of the provincial koinon.

The first two sections of this article also allowed us to isolate certain distinctive aspects of the Asiarchate. During the second and third centuries there were many more Asiarchs than highpriests of Asia, as we have seen from the comparisons of multiply-attested men and from the chronological distribution of attestations of all the male officials (chart 2a, above). The fact that Asiarchs were more numerous; that there was a slightly lower percentage of Roman citizens among them; and that their wives tended to serve in somewhat lower status offices than did the wives of highpriests led to the conclusion that the highpriests of Asia held a more prestigious office. Finally, we noted that at least some Asiarchs supported groups of gladiators, while highpriests of Asia are only known to have supported competitions in which gladiators performed.

If that was the extent of our knowledge, we might conclude that Asiarchs were involved primarily in the support of troupes of gladiators. When all of the other evidence is taken into account, though, it appears that Magie's conclusion best explains the range of evidence at our disposal: an Asiarch was an official with responsibilities for certain kinds of festivals in the cities of Asia.<sup>72</sup> The case can be made in the following manner.

The range of institutions associated with Asiarchs is fairly wide and our definition of the Asiarchate must take this into account.<sup>73</sup> We have already noted the connection to gladiators. Another important piece of information is the fact that several Asiarch titles included references to imperial cult temples of the province of Asia. Magie cited the example of a certain Macarius from Miletus, which adds yet another kind of datum.<sup>74</sup> The activities of Macarius were commemorated in five epigrams sometime between the mid third and mid fourth centuries. The inscription explicitly notes that in return for his Asiarchate he repaired some baths and gained the highest fame in the city.<sup>75</sup> It would make no sense for

---

<sup>68</sup> Marcus Claudius Valerianus [#336] and G. Iu. Cleon [#428]. The only provincial highpriest known from a coin minted by the province is Alexander son of Cleon [#6].

<sup>69</sup> IvSmyrna 2,1.791

<sup>70</sup> Magie (1.450) was probably correct when he noted that the numismatic evidence suggests that the responsibilities of Asiarchs were related more closely to the cities than to the province.

<sup>71</sup> So Magie 1.451.

<sup>72</sup> Magie 1.449–451; 2.1298–1301. Kearsley also argued against the identification theory and proposed that Asiarchs were municipal magistrates. Kearsley, in *The Asiarchs of Cibrya Again: The Roman Presence in Southern Asia Minor 1st cent. B.C. – 1st cent. A.D. and its Impact on the Epigraphic Record*, *Tyche* 11 (1996) 129–155, defends the proposal and provides references to her main work on the topic. For responses to the magistracy proposal, see Friesen 110–112; and Bremen 119–121.

<sup>73</sup> The issue is made more complicated by two enigmatic titles. One is found on a statue base for the family of Septimius Severus and mentions a certain Tib. Cl. Attalos Melior Kle[---] who was [ἀσιάρχου τοῦ πρυτάνεως καὶ γραμματέως τοῦ δήμου κατὰ τὸ αὐτό, “[Asiar]ch of the prytanis and grammateus of the the demos at the same time” (IvE 7,2.4109). The other inscription provides a date by reference to an Asiarch: [. . . ἐπὶ τῆς Λ. Αὐφιδίου Εὐφῆ]μου ἀσιάρχου γραμματείας, [when L. Auphidios Euph]emos as the Asiar[ch of the grammat]eia (IvE 7,1.3001 [2]). Both of these inscriptions are fragmentary and difficult to interpret. The first might make more sense with the reconstruction, [ἑστιού]χου τοῦ πρυτάνεως καὶ γραμματέως τοῦ δήμου κατὰ τὸ αὐτό, “[hestiou]chos of the prytanis and grammateus of the demos at the same time”, but I see no better reconstruction for the second title.

<sup>74</sup> Magie 1.450. The question regarding which inscriptions show “Asiarchs in action” is debated. In this context I simply cite an example. For comments on general principles, see Friesen 111–112.

<sup>75</sup> Milet 1,9.164–65 #339 a 5, b 4. One hexameter is missing.

Macarius to do this for Miletus if his service had been a provincial highpriesthood and had been granted by the koinon. Rather, the inscription indicates that the Asiarch Macarius held a municipal liturgy.

What do gladiators, provincial temples, and bath buildings have in common? They all are associated with sacred games of various kinds. This is precisely the connection that is found in the last known reference to Asiarchs – an imperial rescript to the proconsul of Asia that was sent between 372 and 378.<sup>76</sup> The rescript has been preserved in Latin and Greek. The contents concern the organization of games in Asia that are to be held in four metropoleis of the province. The proconsul had earlier suggested to the emperor that men from smaller cities be allowed to sponsor the games in Ephesos, either in the role of Asiarch or alytarch. The imperial rescript accepted the proconsul's proposal but stipulated that men from other cities who served as Asiarch in Ephesos were not to neglect their native cities as they moved up in provincial and imperial service. From this bilingual pair of inscriptions it is clear Asiarchs were associated with games put on by cities that had regional significance, for it was considered a liturgy of the four largest cities in Asia at that time.<sup>77</sup>

This understanding of the nature of the Asiarchate helps us make sense of the quote from Modestinus cited above. In context, the Modestinus quote is best understood to be dealing with agonistic festivals. The quote is found in a section dealing with people who are exempt from serving as tutors. A quote from Ulpian about athletes precedes the statement by Modestinus about Asiarchs and provides the logical connection.

Ulpian writes in his sole book on the *Duties of the Tutelary Praetor*: “Athletes have exemption from tutelage if they have been crowned in the sacred games.” A priesthood of a nationality, such as an Asiarchate, Bithyniarchate, (or) Kappadokarchate, confers exemption from the role of tutor, that is while (one is) serving. Tutelage is neither a public nor a remunerated *munus*, but a private one; nor is it considered a provincial *munus* to administer a tutelage.<sup>78</sup>

The reason Asiarchs were mentioned at all was because of the preceding reference to the exemption of athletes in the sacred games. Some of these festivals were sponsored by Asiarchs who also received similar exemptions. Once exemptions were established for athletes and Asiarchs, it was then necessary to clarify that tutelage itself was not a municipal or provincial duty as the exemptions might suggest, but rather a private one.

If this was the case, then why did Modestinus use the term “priesthood”? The first thing to note is that there was no generic technical term for this kind of official across several provinces. The fact that Modestinus had to explain what he meant with examples – Asiarchate, Bithyniarchate, Kappadokiarchate – means that the term ἕθνους ἱερωσύνη would not have been immediately clear to his intended audience. It may be that the offices based on the name of a province plus -άρχης were too varied to have a precise general term. In any event, all ancient festivals and competitions were carried out in honor of specific gods and goddesses. The man (and occasional woman) who sponsored such events was also responsible for procuring the proper sacrifices, and often for leading the sacrificial rituals. Thus, in such cases there was considerable overlap in the duties of an agonothete and a priest.<sup>79</sup> Modern distinctions between sports and religion, or between sacred and secular, are irrelevant to these materials.

This understanding of the Asiarchate explains why the identification theory has had such a long life. In some cases there was an indirect connection between the highpriesthoods and the Asiarchate, and this indirect connection of the two offices was mistaken for an identification of the two offices. For example, a matched pair of statue bases from Thyatira honors the couple M. Aur. Diadochus and his wife Aurelia

<sup>76</sup> IVE 1a.43.

<sup>77</sup> Even though this is a late fourth century text, it probably reflects the earlier situation in broad terms. The office of Asiarch may have gone through an evolution of some sort (cf. W. Liebeschuetz, *The Syriarch in the Fourth Century*, *Historia* 8 [1959] 114–115). However, it is easier to conclude that Asiarchs were always organizers of competitive festivals than to conclude that they had been highpriests of Asia but later became organizers of festivals.

<sup>78</sup> Translation adapted from *Dig.* 27.1.6.13–15, vol 2, facing p. 783–84.

<sup>79</sup> Quass 303–317, esp. 315.

Hermonassa. The base that held the statue of Diadochus records that he was highpriest of Asia and municipal highpriest at the same time.<sup>80</sup> The base for his wife's statue says he was Asiarch and municipal highpriest at the same time.<sup>81</sup> An anecdotal reading of these inscriptions would suggest that Asiarch and highpriest of Asia meant the same thing since both were said to be undertaken while he was municipal highpriest. A systematic appraisal of all the Asiarch and highpriesthood inscriptions shows this was impossible and suggests a more appropriate reading. The base for Diadochus indicates that he received special permission from the emperor to add gladiatorial games to his provincial highpriesthood both in Pergamon and in his native city of Thyatira.<sup>82</sup> The gladiatorial contest was not a necessary part of his highpriesthood and accounts for the title Asiarch in his wife's inscription. Thus his highpriesthood of Asia and his Asiarchate were simultaneous and separate.<sup>83</sup>

This interpretation of an Asiarch as a special category of agonothete has been neglected in part because of misunderstandings regarding the athletic competitions in Asia. One problem has been a general misunderstanding of the κοινὰ Ἀσίας, the provincial games of Asia. Moretti established long ago that these were not associated with the provincial imperial cults in any way, but his documented conclusion has generally been ignored.<sup>84</sup> This has in turn diverted attention away from the fact that the highpriest of Asia was not responsible to provide the games associated with a particular provincial cult. For example, we know the names of the four annual highpriests of Rome and Augustus for the provincial temple at Pergamon between the years 5–2 BCE. One of these is also called the agonothete for life of the games for Rome and Augustus, which establishes that the agonothesia was a separate office and that some other highpriests did not serve in this capacity.<sup>85</sup> Another example is provided by the imperial cult temple established at Ephesos in the late first century for the Flavian emperors. In this case, the city of Ephesos established Olympic games in honor of Domitian which were abolished when Domitian was assassinated and condemned by the Roman Senate.<sup>86</sup> The temple continued functioning but the games came to an end. It is possible that Asiarchs served as the patrons of the κοινὰ Ἀσίας, or of the games associated with provincial imperial cults. The current state of our knowledge, however, does not allow us to go further and claim that this is probable. Agonothetes of other important regional festivals are also possible candidates, such as those for Artemis at Ephesos, those for Apollo at Didyma, or perhaps those of the Ionian League of 13 Cities.<sup>87</sup>

Some Asiarchs were clearly associated with provincial imperial cult agonistic festivals, though, as shown by the presence of provincial temples in some official titles. This indirect connection of some Asiarchs to provincial imperial cults gave rise to the mistaken theory that identified Asiarchs with highpriests of Asia. Systematic investigation of the available evidence shows that this identification theory is impossible. The best conclusion about the duties of Asiarchs is that they comprised a special category of agonothete. Systematic evaluation of all the evidence shows multiple connections between Asiarchs and

<sup>80</sup> TAM 5,2.950 l. 2–6.

<sup>81</sup> TAM 5,2.954 l. 12–15.

<sup>82</sup> TAM 5,2.950 l. 7–12: . . . τιμηθέντα ὑπὸ τοῦ θειοτάτου Αὐτοκράτορος Μ. Αὐρ. Σεουήρου Ἀλεξάνδρου Σεβαστοῦ συνάψαι τὰς ἀρχιερωσύνας τοῖς ὄξεσιν ἐν ἑκατέραις ταῖς πόλεσιν κτλ. It is always difficult to tell why something is not included, but the omission of Diadochus's provincial highpriesthood title in TAM 5,2.954 may have been out deference to his father-in-law who was also mentioned but who only served as Asiarch and not as highpriest of Asia. In any event, this pair of inscriptions causes severe difficulties for the identification theory because it records two generations of women who were both highpriestesses of Asia twice while their respective husbands only served once as Asiarch/highpriest of Asia.

<sup>83</sup> The case of Reginus, who served twice as Asiarch and twice as highpriest of Asia, may have been similar to that of Diadochus.

<sup>84</sup> L. Moretti, KOINA ΑΣΙΑΣ, *Rivista di Filologia* NS 32 (1954) 279–280.

<sup>85</sup> Sardis 7,1.8 lines 75, 83–84, 89–90, 99–101. The gymnasiarchate of these games for the provincial imperial cult appears to have been a municipal liturgy; IGR 3.454.

<sup>86</sup> Friesen 137–140.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. BM Ionia 16 #1–2.

festivals. These festivals were municipally-based but had regional importance,<sup>88</sup> which explains the presence of “Asia” in the title Asiarch. It is still not clear whether they were appointed by cities or by the koinon.<sup>89</sup> There is enough evidence, however, to dispense with the identification theory, and to begin the task of reevaluating the public life of Asia and other provinces during the imperial period in light of these conclusions.

#### Appendix: Multiple, independent attestations of Asiarchs and of highpriests of Asia

This chart records all the men known by name to have served as highpriest of Asia and/or as Asiarch whose terms of service are recorded in more than one artifact. The purpose of the chart is to determine whether there is a pattern to the attestations that can be used to support or refute the identification theory. My conclusion is that the pattern of attestation is strong evidence against the identification theory. Among the 12 men called both Asiarch and highpriest of Asia in our sources, the appearance of one title or the other appears randomly. When all 71 men are included, the attestations are not random but mostly of Asiarchs (73%). This implies that in regard to the 59 men who are multiply-attested with only one title, the authors of the inscriptions did not have a choice as to which title could be used. The 59 men had only served in one office, not in both, and hence there was no choice available. The alternative to this conclusion is to hold to the identification theory but to acknowledge that 59 of the 71 men comprise a startling exception to the theory.

Men whose names we do not know are excluded because we can not be sure if they are attested more than once. Multiple examples of the same coin and identical copies of the same inscription are counted only once since these only represent one independent attestation and would artificially inflate the numbers in favor of my conclusion.

The Friesen database can be searched at <http://www.missouri.edu/~religsf/officials.html>.

Name of Official	Attestations as Asiarch	Attestations as Highpriest of Asia	Total Attestations	Catalogue number in Friesen database
<b>12 MEN WHO HELD BOTH TITLES</b>				
Ti. Cl. Aristion	4	7	11	252
Ti. Iu. Reginus	6	3	9	448
Pu. Vedius Antoninus Sabinus	4	1	5	324
M. Ulpius Appuleius Eurycles	1	4	5	506
C. Iu. Philippus	1	3	4	444
Aur. Athenaeus	2	1	3	175
M. Aur. Diadochus	1	2	3	203
T. Fl. Iulianus (I)	2	1	3	372
Pu. Ael. Zeuxidemus	1	1	2	140
Carminius Claudianus	1	1	2	227
M. Iu. Aquila	1	1	2	424
Cn. Pompeius Hermippus	1	1	2	466
<i>TOTAL FOR THIS SECTION</i>	25	26	51	

<sup>88</sup> This would fall into the category of what Quass calls a city’s external politics (der außenpolitische Bereich).

<sup>89</sup> I suspect that they were at least confirmed by the koinon because IvE 1a.43 (lines 5 and 19) refers to them as being adorned with the crown of Asia, which would require formal action from the koinon.



Name of Official	Attestations as Asiarch	Attestations as Highpriest of Asia	Total Attestations	Catalogue number in Friesen database
<b>15 MEN KNOWN ONLY AS HIGHPRIESTS OF ASIA</b>				
T. Fl. Montanus	0	4	4	380
Timaeus	0	3	3	120
Ti. Cl. Phesinus. <sup>90</sup>	0	3	3	314
Ti. Cl. Socrates	0	3	3	329
M. Cl. Valerianus	0	3	3	336
C. Iu. Cleon	0	3	3	428
Apollonius of Aizanoi	0	2	2	16
Cl. Dometinus	0	2	2	149
M. Aur. Mindius Matidianus	0	2	2	215
Cl. Mithridates	0	2	2	307
Ti. Cl. Pardalas	0	2	2	313
M. Cl. Valerianus Terentullianus	0	2	2	337
Fl. Menophantus	0	2	2	379
M. Ulpius Appuleius Flavianus	0	2	2	507
Ulpius Aristocrates	0	2	2	508
<i>TOTAL FOR THIS SECTION</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>37</i>	
<b>44 MEN KNOWN ONLY AS ASIARCHS</b>				
M. Fulvius Publicanus Nicephorus	11	0	11	410
Domitius Rufus	10	0	10	347
M. Aur. Tertius	6	0	6	221
Corn. Vettenianus	6	0	6	344
Pu. Ael. Trypho	5	0	5	139
L. Iu. Apolinarius <sup>91</sup>	5	0	5	420
Aur. Daphnus <sup>92</sup>	4	0	4	201
Ti. Cl. Dynatus <sup>93</sup>	4	0	4	270
Domitius [ ]	4	0	4	346
T. Fl. Clitosthenes Iulianus (II)	4	0	4	366
Fl. Priscus (I)	4	0	4	404
T. Fl. Pythion	4	0	4	405
Menander	3	0	3	72
Severus	3	0	3	116
Aur. Ael. Attalianus	3	0	3	132
C. Arruntius Maternus	3	0	3	155
Aur. Damas	3	0	3	179
Aur. Demetrius	3	0	3	202
M. Cl. Fronto	3	0	3	271
Ti. Cl. Polemo	3	0	3	320

<sup>90</sup> IVE 2.240 is not included. The lacuna could have referred either to Ti. Cl. Pheseinus or to Ti. Cl. Aristion. In either case, it would not substantially affect these statistics.

<sup>91</sup> Two of the attestations are certain; three are not.

<sup>92</sup> IVE 7.2.4343 is not included because the lacuna requires the title to be completely reconstructed.

<sup>93</sup> IVE 3.643b is not included because the fragment is too small to be of use.

Name of Official	Attestations as Asiarch	Attestations as Highpriest of Asia	Total Attestations	Catalogue number in Friesen database
Cl. Pollio	3	0	3	321
Pu. Veditius Antoninus Sabinianus	3	0	3	323
Cl. Zeno	3	0	3	339
Flavius?	3	0	3	360
M. Fl. Dometianus	3	0	3	369
Alexander	2	0	2	7
Aurelius	2	0	2	30
Ael. Apion	2	0	2	130
Pu. Ael. Artemidorus	2	0	2	131
Pu. Ael. Martialis	2	0	2	133
Pu. Ael. Piger	2	0	2	135
Ael. Zoilus	2	0	2	141
L. Aufidius Euphemus	2	0	2	159
Aur. Attalus	2	0	2	176
M. Aur. Manilius Alexander	2	0	2	209
Ti. Cl. Aristas	2	0	2	251
Ti. Cl. Deioterianus	2	0	2	262
Ti. Cl. Tatianus Iulianus	2	0	2	330
Fl. Craterus	2	0	2	367
C. Iu. Iulianus Tatianus	2	0	2	436
Iu. Pollio	2	0	2	445
L. Aurelius	2	0	2	455
L. Rupillius Alexander	2	0	2	470
Carminius Claudianus	2	0	2	509
<i>TOTAL FOR THIS SECTION</i>	<i>144</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>144</i>	

University of Missouri–Columbia

Steven J. Friesen