

CAPInv. 650: **he** sp[eira]

I. LOCATION

i. Geographical area	Thrace
ii. Region	Inland Thrace
iii. Site	Philippopolis

II. NAME

i. Full name (original language)	ἡ σπ[εῖρα] (IGBulg III.1 1518, l. 3)
ii. Full name (transliterated)	<i>he sp[eira]</i>

III. DATE

i. Date(s)	241 - 244 AD
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IV. NAME AND TERMINOLOGY

iii. Descriptive terms	σπεῖρα, <i>speira</i>
Note	<i>speira</i> : IGBulg III.1 1518, l. 3

V. SOURCES

i. Source(s)	IGBulg III.1 1517 (241 - 244 AD) IGBulg III.1 1518 (241 - 244 AD)
Note	See also: IGBulg III.1 1517: Jaccottet II no. 47 IGBulg III.1 1518: Jaccottet II no. 48
Online Resources	IGBulg III.1 1517 and AGRW ID 14188 IGBulg 1518 and AGRW ID 14335
i.a. Source type(s)	Epigraphic source(s)

i.b. Document(s) typology & language/script	<p>IGBulg III.1 1517: Honorary inscription in Greek, followed by a membership list.</p> <p>IGBulg III.1 1518: Dedication in Greek of an altar to the <i>speira</i>.</p>
i.c. Physical format(s)	<p>IGBulg III.1 1517: Limestone pedimental stele with akroteria, fully preserved, though in two pieces and with an important break along the middle of the stone (h: 2.15, br. 1.12). The pediment bears the depiction of a spear and shield in relief; at the lower part of the stele an embolon is preserved. In the text (ll. 4-5) the term <i>τελαμών</i>, <i>telamon</i>, is used to describe the offering (see below, section VI.ii).</p> <p>IGBulg III.1 1518: Upper part of a rectangular limestone altar (0.64 x 0.42), bearing relief decoration on all four sides: in front a female deity (chthonic?) and a male one (possibly Dionysos) on either side of a tree, in the branches of which a smaller figure (satyre?) is depicted; in the left side, three Nymphs; in the right side, a women in front of an Hecate Triformis and at the back side, a depiction of the so-called 'Thracian Rider'.</p>
ii. Source(s) provenance	<p>IGBulg III.1 1517 was found reused at a tomb of Christian times, lying at a distance of appr. 200 m. at the west of the village of Kalugerica (former Kara Orman, district of Ćirpan).</p> <p>IGBulg III.1 1518 is known to have been found in 1906 in the area of the village, but no information available on its exact finding place.</p> <p>The site at Kalugerica is securely identified as Cillae (through inscriptions mentioning the ethnic <i>Κελληνός</i>, <i>Kellenos</i>), a <i>mansio</i> of the 'Via Diagonalis' at its section from Philippopolis eastwards. What is not certain is to which ancient city this area should be attributed. Thus Mihailov (IGBulg III.1, p. 248) attributes Cillae to Philippopolis, but Shopova 1997 and Velkov and Nikolov 1989 to Augusta Traiana.</p>

VI. BUILT AND VISUAL SPACE

i. Archaeological remains	<p>The two inscriptions cannot be attributed to any particular archaeological remain, due to later reuse (IGBulg III.1 1517) or to inadequate information regarding the provenance (IGBulg III.1 1518). For Cillae in general, see TIR Philippopolis K-35/II, s.v.</p>
ii. References to buildings/objects	<p>In IGBulg III.1 1517, ll. 4-5, the term <i>τελαμών</i>, <i>telamon</i>, is used to define the stele. For the meaning and the geographical distribution of this term, see CAPIInv. 638, section V.i.c.</p>

VII. ORGANIZATION

ii. Leadership	<p>Two persons seem to have been the most important among those mentioned in IGBulg III.1 1517: the <i>ἱερεὺς</i>, <i>hierews</i> and the <i>σπειράρχης</i>, <i>speirarches</i>. The first is mentioned as eponymous and also at the top of the membership list (ll. 5-6: <i>ἱερατεύοντος Αὐρ(ηλίου) Μουκιανοῦ Δόρζα</i>, <i>hierateuontos Aureliou Moukianou Dorza</i>, and 7: <i>Αὐρ. Μουκιανὸς Δόρζα</i>, <i>Aur. Mukianos Dorza</i>), while the second is mentioned as the person who made the dedication at the completion of his priesthood (ll. 4-5: <i>Αὐρ(ήλιος) Κλαυδιανὸς Διονυσίου σπειράρχης... ἱεροσύνης χάριν</i>, <i>Aur(elius) Klaudianos Dionysiou speirarches ... hierosynes charein</i>) and, then, second in the membership list (l. 9).</p>
Eponymous office	<p>ll. 5-6: <i>ἱερατεύοντος Αὐρ(ηλίου) Μουκιανοῦ Δόρζα</i>, <i>hierateuontos Aureliou Moukianou Dorza</i></p>

iv. Officials

IGBulg III.1 1517 offers an interesting insight into the *speira's* internal organisation. After the *ἱερεὺς*, *hiereus*, and the *σπειράρχης*, *speirarches*, the following titles occur in hierarchical order (first for men, then for women).

For the two *σεβαστοφάνται*, *sebastophantai*, of l. 11 and 13, see below.

Ναρθηκοφόρος, *Nartheophoros*, (l. 15: Αὐρήλιος Μουκιανός, *Aurelius Mucianus*), title bore by the person who was carrying the *narthex* during processions and festivities, see Slavova 2002: 141, Jaccottet 2003: 100, no. 155 and Nigdelis 2006: 121.

Ἀρχιβούκολος, *Archiboukolos*, l. 17: Αὐρήλιος Κέλερ, *Aurelius Celer*. For the possible presence of a βουκόλος, *boukolos*, as well, see below.

Ἀρχιμύστης, *Archimystes*: IGBulg III.1 1517, l. 18 and IGBulg III.1 1518 (Αὐρήλιος Ἀριστένετος, *Aurelius Aristenetos*). It is usually considered that the *ἀρχιμύστης*, *archimystes*, was the head of a group of *mystai* and that the number of *ἀρχιμύσται*, *archimystai*, in an association was an indication of the total number of devotees. Thus, [CAPInv. 1753](#) (Nicopolis ad Istrum): two *ἀρχιμύσται*, *archimystai*, in an association of appr. 110 devotees. Here only one person bears the title. See Nigdelis 2006: 108-10, with further bibliography.

Ἀρχιγάλλαρος, *Archigallaros*, l. 19: Αὐρήλιος Εὐκαρπος, *Aurelius Eukarpos*. For the etymology and the possible role of γάλλαροι, *gallaroí*, see Nigdelis 2006: 119-20. For Nigdelis, based on a gloss of Hesychius (γάλλαρος, φρυγιακὸν ὄνομα παρὰ Λάκωσι, *gallaros, phrygiakon onoma para Lakosi*), the presence of this title within an association may be interpreted as indicating 'the possible existence of syncretistic tendencies' with the cult of Cybele. For Slavova 2002: 143, the title *ἀρχιγάλλαρος*, *archigallaros* (together with γάλλαρος, *gallaros*, and ἀρχιγάλλος, *archigallos*) point to 'Cybele's *mystae* who at the same time were members of a Dionysiac mystery club as well'.

Κουρής, *Koures*, for three persons (ll. 20-22). Jaccottet, 2003: 100 prefers to see here a personal name, based on the argument that, if this was a title, then the person mentioned in l. 22 would have been a κουρής, *koures*, and a σειστημάρχης, *seistemarches*, at the same time. But the title σειστημάρχης, *seistemarches*, must be disconnected from this person and attributed to another devotee, whose name is engraved in three consecutive lines (ll. 20-22) in a second column. For the title, see Slavova 2002: 142: 'in Cillae's mystery club there were armed *mystai*-Curetes, who as Dionysus's guardians or Cybele's companions danced some kind of ecstatic dance'.

Σειστημάρχης, *Seistemarches*, ll. 20-22 (at a second column, that could have been a later addition). On stone: σειστημάρχης, *seistemarches*, Mihailov suggests tentatively συστημάρχης, *systemarches*; accepted without reservation by Slavova 2002: 142. Slavova 2002: 142, citing Diodorus 4.3.3: τὰς δὲ γυναῖκας κατὰ συστήματα θυσιάζειν τῷ θεῷ καὶ βακχεύειν, *tas de gynaikas kata systemata thysiazein toi theoi kai bakcheuein*, derives it from σύστημα, *systema*, and suggests 'head of a σύστημα, *systema*, i.e. of some mystery club's subdivision'.

Σημειοφόρος, *Semeiophoros* (l. 24: σιμιοφόρος, *simiophoros*, on the stone). For Slavova 2002: 142 he was the 'bearer of the image of the god'; Jaccottet II: 100 translates as 'porte-enseigne'.

Κρανιαρχής, *Kraniarches*, l. 23: Αὐρήλιος Κέλσος, *Aurelius Celsos*. Cf. the title ἀρχικραν(ε)άρχης, *archikran(e)arches*, at Thessaloniki and κρατηριάρχης, *krateriarches*, at Apollonia. For Chaniotis 1999: 144 and Nigdelis 2006: 117 the title may be connected to a gloss of Hesychius (κραναοίκoron, μοῖρά τις τοῦ ἱερείου, *kranaoikoron, moira tis tou hierείου*), thus being linked to the symposia organised by the associations. Slavova 2002: 142 derives the title from the word κρανία, *krania* (= spear or arrow) and considers the κρανιαρχής, *kraniarches*, as 'the head of the armed Curetes'. This interpretation is rejected by Nigdelis 2006: 117 and n. 43. For κουρήτες, *kouretes*, see above.

For women the following titles occur:

[- -]νητης, [- -]netes, in l. 29 (no suggested restitutions).

λυχνοάπτρια, *Lychnoaptria* (l. 30: Αὐρηλία Ἀρτεμιδόρα, *Aurelia Artemidora*), a title which indicate nocturnal ceremonies, see Nigdelis 2006: 123.

κισταφόρος, *kistaphoros* (l. 31)

λ(ε)ικναφόρος, *l(e)iknaphoros*, l. 32: Αὐρηλία Χιόνη, *Aurelia Chione* and l. 34 (perhaps a later addition to the stone): Ἰουλία Ἀρτεμιδόρα, *Julia Artemidora*.

Βάκχη, *Bakche*, five women bear this title (ll. 33-36).

One more title occurs for *Mucianus* son of *Dole*, whose name is engraved at l. 7, in a second column that could have been a later addition. The title has been restituted as βου[λ(εντής)], *bou[l(eutes)]*, by Mihailov (IGBulg), but Moretti (followed by Jaccottet II: 95) proposes βου[κόλος?], *bou[kolos]*.

Two more persons -whose names occur after that of σπειράρχης, *speirarches*, bear the title Σεβαστοφάντης, *Sebastophantes* (l. 11: Αὐρήλιος Στράτων and l. 13: Αὐρήλιος Ἡρώδης). These σεβαστοφάνται, *sebastophantai* (=Flamines Augusti) were priests of the imperial cult and members of Cillae's cult association.

Ἀν ἔκδικος, *ekdikos* occurs in l. 23 (Αὐρ. Ἀσκληπιάδης ἔκδικος, υἱὸς Κέλερ, *Aur. Asklepiades ekdikos*, son of *Celer*).

IX. MEMBERSHIP

i. Number	IGBulg III.1 1517 gives a list with 57 members.
ii. Gender	Men Women
Note	From the 57 persons mentioned in the album, 46 are men and 11 women; women are grouped together (ll. 29-36), apart from two cases, the first mentioned with her husband in ll. 14-15 and the second in l. 51. Men are grouped before and after.
iii. Age	Adults Elders
Note	The age of those participating in the <i>σπεῖρα</i> , <i>speira</i> , cannot be specified. But there is one certain case of father and son, for which see below, section IX.v.
iv. Status	With the exception of one person bearing the <i>gentilicium</i> Iulius (l. 34), two bearing the <i>gentilicium</i> Claudius (l. 10 and 15) and two following the Greek onomastic formula (l. 26 and 55) all other members bear the <i>gentilicium</i> Aurelius, which indicates the acquisition of Roman citizenship with the <i>Constitutio Antoniniana</i> . Cognomina are of Greek, Thracian, and Roman origin, thus pointing to a mixed onomastic environment. The name of one person (l. 53) is followed by the ethnic Σύρος, <i>Syros</i> . One person possibly a βουλευτής, <i>bouleutes</i> (but for another restitution, see above section VII.v) and one a <i>beneficiarius</i> .
v. Relations	The most certain relations are those among Aurelius Dorzas son of Mucianus (l. 24) and Aurelius Mucianus son of Dorzas (ll. 5-7) (father and son) and Aurelius Marcianus son of Pison (l. 37) and Aurelius Kenthiaros son of Pison (l. 40) (brothers).

X. ACTIVITIES

ii. Meetings and events	No particular meeting or event is mentioned in the text. But the titles bore by certain members (κρανιάρχης, <i>kraniarches</i> and those ending in -φόρος, <i>-phoros</i> , e.g. ναρθηκοφόρος, <i>narthekophoros</i>) indicate symposia and processions. Some of the activities of this <i>speira</i> should have taken place at night, as indicated by the presence of a λυχνόαπτρία, <i>lychnoaptria</i> .
iii. Worship	The group likely worshipped Dionysos and possibly Hekate, as inferred from the relief decoration on the right side of base IGBulg III.1 1518 (Hekate Triformis); cf. inscription CIL VI 261 from Rome for a <i>σπεῖρα</i> , <i>speira</i> venerating both Dionysos and Hekate and the relevant remarks of Jaccottet 2003: 99.
Deities worshipped	Dionysos and possibly Hekate (?)

XI. INTERACTION

i. Local interaction	The presence of a <i>beneficiarius</i> and possibly a <i>bouleutes</i> (see above, section VII.v) indicate a certain degree of interaction with provincial and civic authorities.
ii. Interaction abroad	Inscription IGBulg III.1 1517 was set up in honour of the emperor Gordian III and his wife. Two of the members mentioned in the text were σεβαστοφάνται, <i>sebastophantai</i> (= <i>Flamines Augusti</i>).

XII. NOTES

i. Comments

The term σπεῖρα, *speira*, points to an association devoted to the cult of Dionysos, with further connection with Hecate and Cybele (see comments above)
In IGBulg III.1 1517 no name and no descriptive term occurs for the association, though the leading official bears the title σπειράρχης.
In IGBulg 1518, the term σπεῖρα occurs, partially restored, though the reading is certain after Robert's corrections (1946): τῇ σπ[είρῃ], *tei sp[ei]rei*.
That these two inscriptions refer to the same σπεῖρα, *speira*, is ascertained by the presence of Αὐρήλιος Ἀρισταίνετος ἀρχιμύστης, *Aurelius Aristenetos archimystes* in both of them. The name Ἀρισταίνετος, *Aristainetos* (always written as Ἀριστένετος, *Aristenetos*) also occurs in inscription IGBulg III.1, 1311, but in this case there is no certainty as to whether it refers to the same person.

iii. Bibliography

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Robert, L. (1946), 'Contribution à un Lexique Épigraphique', *Hellenica* 2: 130-2.
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Slavova, M. (2002), 'Mystery Clubs in Bulgarian Lands in Antiquity', *Oath* 27: 137-49.
Velkov, V., and Nikolov, D. (1989), 'Kultovo sdrouzhenie (σπεῖρη) v Avgusta Trajana' [= 'Association cultuelle (σπεῖρη) à Augusta Trajana (Thrace)'], *Arheologija* 31/1: 16-20.

XIII. EVALUATION

i. Private association

Certain

Note

The terminology employed suggests a private association.