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CAPInv. 823: hoipostoloi (l. hypostoloi)

I. LOCATION

i. Geographical area	Macedonia
ii. Region	Pieris
iii. Site	Trita, territory of Philippi

II. NAME

i. Full name (original language)	οἰπόστολοι (SEG 50: 618, ll. 9-11)
ii. Full name (transliterated)	<i>hoipostoloi</i> (l. <i>hypostoloi</i>)

III. DATE

i. Date(s)	iii AD
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IV. NAME AND TERMINOLOGY

ii. Name elements	Cultic:	The only discernible part of the association's name is that its members were called ὑπόστολοι, <i>hypostoloi</i> (l. 11), a term borrowed from the cult of the Egyptian Gods and probably referring to the initiates' garment (cf. CAPInv. 819).
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V. SOURCES

i. Source(s)	SEG 50: 618 (iii AD)
Online Resources	SEG 50: 618
i.a. Source type(s)	Epigraphic source(s)
i.b. Document(s) typology & language/script	Boundary stone and list of initiates in Greek

i.c. Physical format(s)	Engraved on a rock at the edge of a vineyard
ii. Source(s) provenance	In situ, at (modern) Trita in Pieris, part of the territory of the Roman colony of Philippi.

VII. ORGANIZATION

ii. Leadership	The association was presumably led by the priest Philippos (ἱε[ρ]εὺς, <i>hiereus</i> ll. 7-8).
iii. Members	The members were called οἰπόστολοι (l. ὑπόστολοι), <i>hoipostoloi</i> (l. <i>hypostoloi</i>) (see above, under IV.ii).
ix. Privileges	Apparently, the members of the association benefited from the revenue of a vineyard for their communal ceremonies.

VIII. PROPERTY AND POSSESSIONS

ii. Realty	The vineyard whose boundary stone is the only evidence for this association is said to belong to the goddess (ll. 1-3: θεᾶς Ἀλμωπίας ἄμπελος, <i>theas Almopias ampelos</i>).
iii. Income	The priest was presumably responsible for dispensing the revenue from the vineyard for the needs of the cultic practices of the association. This may be one of the reasons for the awkward syntax, with the name of the priest in the nominative and the names of the first initiates in the dative (as recipients of the revenue?), before the engraver switched back to the nominative for the last two or three names.
iv. Endowments	We have no information on how, when and by whom the vineyard whose revenue was used for the cult was donated.

IX. MEMBERSHIP

i. Number	There were at least thirteen members, including the priest.
ii. Gender	Men
Note	From what we may gather from the, admittedly very poor, state of preservation of the names, all known members were men.
iv. Status	<p>The members' onomasticon consists of an (expected for Philippi) mixture of Thracian, Greek and Roman names.</p> <p>The connection between the initiates and the region of Almopia, after which the goddess was obviously named, cannot be ascertained. According to Bakalakis 1937, the Almopians, ousted from their homeland by Alexander I in the 5th century BC (Thuc. 2.99), sought refuge in Pieris, and brought the cult of their poliad deity with them. According to Collart, on the contrary, the cult of Almopia was a recent import of the Imperial period, and the goddess should be identified with the Mother of the Gods. The surviving evidence does not allow any certainty on the actual history of the cult and on the ancestry of its devotees; what matters is that the worshipers of the goddess lay a claim to a long past, to a foreign (in respect to Philippi) land, and to a distinct ancestry, real or projected (cf. Paschidis, forthcoming).</p>

XII. NOTES

i. Comments	The various theories on the meaning of the text put forward in the past, all based on very different readings of this almost illegible document, are not mentioned here. See the bibliography for these earlier views and the texts on which they were founded.
iii. Bibliography	<p>Bakalakis, G. (1937), 'Περὶ Ἀλμώπων καὶ Ἀλμωπίας θεᾶς', <i>PAA</i> 12: 484-8.</p> <p>Collart, P. (1943), 'La vigne de la déesse Almopienne de Pangée', <i>BZG</i> 42: 9-21.</p> <p>Paschidis, P. (forthcoming), 'Civic cults and (other) religious associations: in search of collective identities in Roman Macedonia' in A. Casemier and S. Skaltsa (eds), <i>Associations in Context: rethinking associations and religion in the post-classical polis</i>, forthcoming.</p> <p>Pikoulas, G.A. (2001), <i>Ἡ χώρα τῶν Πιέρων: συμβολὴ στὴν τοπογραφία της</i>. Athens: 146-52, no. 59.</p> <p>Pilhofer, P. (2009), <i>Philippi. Band II: Katalog der Inschriften von Philippi</i>. rev. edn. Tübingen: no. 602/G647.</p>

XIII. EVALUATION

i. Private association Note	Probable A distinctive name for the group's members and the leadership of a priest are not elements enough to ensure the characterization of this group as a private association. Nevertheless, the presence of discretionary funds and, more importantly, the fact that the nature of the cult appears to dissociate the group from ordinary civic cult may point to a private association.
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