

CAPInv. 475: **hoi mystai**

I. LOCATION

i. Geographical area	Macedonia
ii. Region	Bottia
iii. Site	Edessa (?)

II. NAME

i. Full name (original language)	οἱ μύσται (EKM II 397, ll. 3-4)
ii. Full name (transliterated)	<i>hoi mystai</i>

III. DATE

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

ii. Name elements	Cultic:	<i>mystai</i> : The dedicants refer to themselves only as initiates.
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V. SOURCES

i. Source(s)	EKM II 397 (iii AD)
Note	Other editions: SEG 50: 599
Online Resources	SEG 50: 599
i.a. Source type(s)	Epigraphic source(s)
i.b. Document(s) typology & language/script	Dedication in Greek
i.c. Physical format(s)	Votive base made of local volcanic stone.

ii. Source(s) provenance	The base was discovered near a small rural funerary sanctuary 3 km. to the north of the modern village of Prophitis Ilias (Chrysostomou 2002). On the complex issue of the ancient city to the territory of which this location should be included (Edessa rather than the probably non-existent Menneis), see the commentary at EKM II 416.
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VI. BUILT AND VISUAL SPACE

i. Archaeological remains	The base was found in the vicinity of a small funerary sanctuary, most probably dedicated to Dionysos. The small temple contained a <i>thymele</i> for the sacrifices. A stone enclosure delimited the temple and four graves to the NW; immediately to the south of the enclosure, at least 19 graves were discovered. All burials seem to be dated to the third century AD, while the temple was destroyed before the end of the fourth century AD. The excavator has plausibly suggested that the graves within the original enclosure belonged to the family of the founder and / or leader of the cultic association (Chrysostomou 2002).
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VII. ORGANIZATION

ii. Leadership	A priest (ἱερεύς, <i>hierous</i> , EKM II 397, l. 2) is mentioned.
iii. Members	μύσται, <i>mystai</i> (EKM II 397, ll. 3-4)
iv. Officials	ἱερεύς, <i>hierous</i> (EKM II 397, l. 2)

X. ACTIVITIES

iii. Worship	The only source refers to a πρόποσις, <i>proposis</i> , ceremonial communal drinking most often connected with the cult of Dionysos.
Deities worshipped	Dionysos

XII. NOTES

i. Comments	Μάκις, the name of the priest, most probably derives from the Latin <i>nomen</i> Maccius (O. Salomies, in <i>AnnÉp</i> 2001, 1768).
iii. Bibliography	Chrysostomou, P. (1999-2001), 'Ταφικό ιερό μυστών του Διονύσου στη Μενήδα Βοττιαίας', <i>AAA</i> 32-34: 195-220. Chrysostomou, P. (2000), 'Το ταφικό ιερό μυστών του Διονύσου στη Μενήδα Βοττιαίας: Η ανασκαφή του έτους 2000', <i>Το Αρχαιολογικό Έργο στη Μακεδονία και Θράκη</i> 14: 455-471

XIII. EVALUATION

i. Private association	Possible
Note	The inscription by itself would not allow us to speak of anything other than a group of initiates of Dionysos. Nevertheless, the accompanying archaeological evidence allows the interpretation of the congregation as a privately founded cultic association.