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CAPInv. 740: Prinophoros

I. LOCATION

i. Geographical area	Macedonia
ii. Region	Mygdonia
iii. Site	Thessaloniki

II. NAME

i. Full name (original language)	Πρινοφόρος (IG X.2.1 260, ll. B2-3)
ii. Full name (transliterated)	<i>Prinophoros</i>

III. DATE

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

ii. Name elements	Cultic:	<i>Prinophoros</i> cult epithet of Dionysos
iii. Descriptive terms	θίασος, <i>thiasos</i>	
Note	<i>thiasos</i> : Inferred from IG X.2.1 260, l. C16.	

V. SOURCES

i. Source(s)	IG X.2.1 260 (iii AD)
Note	See also: GRA I 81; Jaccottet II no. 22
Online Resources	IG X.2.1 260 and AGRW ID 2501
i.a. Source type(s)	Epigraphic source(s)
i.b. Document(s) typology & language/script	Greek funerary inscription

i.c. Physical format(s)	Altar, with a relief of a standing, draped woman on the front side. The inscription is engraved on the moulding of the front side and on the right and left sides of the altar.
ii. Source(s) provenance	Found reused at the Church of the <i>Acheiropoietos</i> in Thessaloniki. Edson (1948: 178-80) assumed that the sanctuary of Dionysos must have been located at the <i>Acheiropoietos</i> ; see, however, Vitti 1996: 90-1.

VI. BUILT AND VISUAL SPACE

ii. References to buildings/objects	στέφανος ῥόδινος, <i>stephanos rhodinos</i> : a rose crown is to be worn by the initiates during the commemoration of the priestess Euphrosyne (Il. C1-5).
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VII. ORGANIZATION

ii. Leadership	The priestess (ἱέρεια εὐεία, <i>hierēia eueia</i>) apparently led the association of the <i>Prinophoroi</i> (Il. B1-2).
iii. Members	Members of the association are simply called μύστε, <i>myste</i> (i.e. μύσται, <i>mystai</i>), “initiates” (l. C1).
viii. Obligations	According to the terms of the endowment of Euphrosyne (IG X.2.1 260), all initiates are obliged to participate in the commemoration of the founder of the endowment, wearing a rose crown, and offering burnt sacrifices costing at least five denarii (the sacrifices presumably consisting of the same rose crowns that they were wearing during the ceremony).

VIII. PROPERTY AND POSSESSIONS

i. Treasury/Funds	On Euphrosyne's endowment, see below, VIII.iv: Endowments.
ii. Realty	The ownership of the vineyard donated by Euphrosyne (see under VIII.iv: Endowments, below) belonged to the association.
iii. Income	See under VIII.iv: Endowments, below.
iv. Endowments	The endowment of Euphrosyne involved the donation to the association of a vineyard of two plethra (Il. B6-8), the revenue from which would be used for a ceremony in her memory. The value of the sacrifices is stipulated to be no less than five denarii (Il. B11-13). In case the <i>thiasos</i> fails to observe these requirements, the endowment is to be transferred, under the same conditions, to the association of the <i>Dryophoroi</i> , and if the members of the latter also fail to observe Euphrosyne's wish, the ownership of the estate will pass to the city of Thessalonike (Il. C8-19).

IX. MEMBERSHIP

iii. Age	Children Adults
Note	It has been assumed that the stipulation of Euphrosyne's endowment that each and every one of the initiates, μικρὸς μέγας ἑκαστος (<i>mikros megas hekastos</i> , Il. C3-4) refers to the fact that children could be members as well (Perdrizet 1910: 88 n. 1; Nigdelis 2010: 15 n. 7; cf. GRA I 81); Edson 1948: 169-70 more plausibly assumes that the phrase in question simply means “all” and thus the membership of children cannot be ascertained.

X. ACTIVITIES

iv. Honours/Other activities

For the commemorative ceremony for the priestess Euphrosyne, which is part of the terms of her endowment, see above, VIII.iv: Endowments.

XI. INTERACTION

i. Local interaction

The stipulation of Euphrosyne's endowment that if the *Prinophoroi* fail to observe the ritual of her commemoration at any point in the future, the ownership of the vineyard and the use of its revenue will be transferred to another association, the *Dryophoroi*, and if the members of the latter also fail to observe Euphrosyne's wish, they will belong to the city of Thessalonike (Il. C8-19) has led to different interpretations. Edson 1948: 177 claims that the involvement of the *polis* means that both *thiasoi* were public and not private bodies. Nigdelis 2010: 15 n. 7 claims that the presence of children and the competitive relationship between the two associations qualifies them as private associations. The second part of Nigdelis' argument is valid. The competitive relationship of two very similar associations, both honouring the same god, both named after a similar ritual, both vying for donations, points to private and not public bodies. Moreover, nothing in the text points to an official status of either association. The fact that the *polis* is the arbiter -in effect- for the proper execution of the will is irrelevant to the status of the associations. Had the *Prinophoroi* been a public religious body, one would expect the ownership of Euphrosyne's estate to revert to the official cult of Dionysos, and not to the city of Thessalonike.

XII. NOTES

i. Comments

The name of the association is given in the inscription as Πρινοφόρος, *Prinophoros* (Il. B1-3: *ιέρεια οὔσα Εὐεία Πρινοφόρου hierieia ousa Eueia Prinophorou*), in the singular, obviously a cult epithet of Dionysos; given, however, that the other Dionysiac association mentioned in the same inscription (Il. C11-12) is called Δροιοφόροι, *Droiophoroi*, in the plural, one may assume that the actual name of the first association was Πρινοφόροι, *Prinophoroi*, in the plural as well (cf. Nigdelis 2010: 15 n. 7, with all earlier literature on both views; Nigdelis remains sceptical). Whether in the singular or in the plural, it is clear that the name of the association is taken from a cult epithet of Dionysos (*Prinophoros*, "he who carries the kermes-oak branch") and the relevant ritual of *dendrophoria* (Edson 1948: 176-7; Jaccottet II no. 56; Nigdelis 2010: 15 n. 7). Perdrizet's assumption (1910: 88) that the names of the *Prinophoroi* and the *Dryophoroi* may also hint to their professional identity (merchants of wood and coal) is unwarranted.

ii. Poland concordance

Poland B 58

iii. Bibliography

Edson, C. (1948), 'Cults of Thessalonica (Macedonica III)', *HTHR* 41: 153-204, esp. 165-77.
Nigdelis, P.M. (2010), 'Voluntary Associations in Roman Thessalonike: in Search of Identity and Support in a Cosmopolitan Society', in L. Nasrallah, Ch. Bakirtzis and S. Friesen (eds.), *From Roman to Early Christian Thessalonike: Studies in Religion and Archaeology*, Cambridge Mass., London: 13-47, esp. 15, n. 7.
Perdrizet, P. (1910), *Cultes et mythes du Pangée*, Paris: 88
Vitti, M. (1996), *Η πολεοδομική εξέλιξη της Θεσσαλονίκης, από την ίδρυσή της έως τον Γαλέριο*, Thessaloniki.

XIII. EVALUATION

i. Private association

Certain

Note

The terminology employed and the activities of the group (see also XI.i Local interaction) point to a private association.