

CAPInv. 1488: **hyakinthioi**

I. LOCATION

i. Geographical area	Peloponnese with Adjacent Islands
ii. Region	Lakonia
iii. Site	Aigiai

II. NAME

i. Full name (original language)	ἠακίνθιοι (Waterhouse 1961: 175)
ii. Full name (transliterated)	<i>hyakinthioi</i>

III. DATE

i. Date(s)	vi - v BC
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IV. NAME AND TERMINOLOGY

ii. Name elements	Heroic:	<i>Hyakintioi</i> : The name is derived from that of the hero Hyakinthos, a mythological lover and victim of Apollo.
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V. SOURCES

i. Source(s)	Waterhouse 1961: 175, fig. 27 (VI-V BC)
Note	See also: Van Effenterre 1994: 292 no. 76.
i.a. Source type(s)	Epigraphic source(s)
i.b. Document(s) typology & language/script	Dedication in Greek. The text is retrograde in Lakonian script. Since the inscription is not to be read with certainty, several readings, restorations and interpretations of the text have been suggested, see XII.i: Comments.

i.c. Physical format(s)	The inscription is incised on the rim of a bronze bowl.
ii. Source(s) provenance	Found in the region between Koutoumon and Limni.

IX. MEMBERSHIP

ii. Gender	Men
Note	Depending on how the inscription is read, the members might have been young men, see XII.i: Comments.

X. ACTIVITIES

iii. Worship	<p>The name of the group indicates some connection with the hero Hyakinthos who perhaps received some kind of worship on the part of the Hyakinthioi.</p> <p>If the entirely different reading and interpretation of the text suggested by Van Effenterre and Ruzé (1994: 292-3) is correct, then the dedication of the <i>Hyakinthioi</i> to Athena, <?Αθάνα<i>ι τᾱι ἀποροῖκο<i> (<?Athana>ai tai aporoiko<i> or <?Αθάνα<i>ι τᾱι ἀγοροῖκο<i> (<?Athana>ai tai agroiko<i>, perhaps to be identified with Athena Agrotera) indicates a worship of the goddess.</p>
Deities worshipped	Hyakinthos or Athena (?)

XII. NOTES

i. Comments

Perhaps we have to recognize in Hyakinthioi a group of *neoi* who place themselves under the patronage of Hyakinthos, see Moreno 2008: 36-7.

On archive material including useful notes and correspondence of the first editors of the text see [Poinikastas](#).

The correspondence of the first editors with Arthur Beattie shows, that he suggested the following reading of the text: $\eta\upsilon\alpha\kappa\iota\nu\theta\iota\omega\iota\ \alpha\nu\epsilon\theta\epsilon\nu\ \text{A}\iota\tau\alpha\iota\ \alpha\pi'\ \text{F}\omega\iota\kappa\bar{o}$ (*hyakinthioi anethen Aitai ap' woiko*). He interprets it thus as a dedication to Apollo Hyacinthos by a group called Aitai (cf. [CAPInv. 771](#)). The object of the dedication, the bronze bowl bearing the inscription, should have come in this case from the furnishing of a house ($\alpha\pi'\ \text{F}\omega\iota\kappa\bar{o}$, *ap' woiko*) which would be the centre of their activity. The name of the group is associated by Beattie with the word $\text{A}\epsilon\iota\tau\alpha\varsigma$ (Grammat. Bekkeri 348.2: $\text{A}\epsilon\iota\tau\alpha\nu\ \epsilon\tau\alpha\iota\rho\nu$. *Aristophanes de ton eromenon*, *Aeitan ton hetairon*. *Aristophanes de ton eromenon*) and suggests that the group was perhaps associated with the worship of Apollo and Hyacinthos and meant "the mourners of Hyacinthus".

The text is read as $\text{Y}\alpha\kappa\iota\nu\theta\iota\omega\iota\ \alpha\nu\epsilon\theta\epsilon\nu\ \acute{\alpha}\iota\tau\alpha\iota\ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\rho\iota\kappa\bar{o}\varsigma$ (*Hyakinthioi anethen aitai agroikoi*) by Gallavotti (1978: 183-94), followed by Cartledge 1981: 31 n. 18 and Cartledge 2001: 208 n. 18, and interpreted as a dedication of a *thiasos* "all'eromenos che dimora in campagna", namely to Hyakinthos. Parker 1989: 169 n. 41 interprets the text as a dedication of the *eromenoi* to Apollo/Hyakinthos. See also Jeffrey 1990: 447 no. 51a, $\eta\upsilon\alpha\kappa\iota\nu\theta\iota\omega\iota\ \alpha\nu\epsilon\theta\epsilon\nu\ \text{A}\iota\tau\alpha\iota\ \acute{\alpha}\pi'\ \text{F}\omega\iota\kappa\bar{o}$ (*hyakinthioi anethen Aitai ap' woiko*), taking into account that $\acute{\alpha}\iota\tau\alpha\varsigma$ (*aitas*, from $\acute{\alpha}\iota\omega$, *aiō*) is a doric word meaning "a beloved youth".

Van Effenterre and Ruzé 1994: 292 prefer an entirely different reading and interpret the text as a dedication of the *Hyakinthioi* to Athena, $\langle\text{?A}\theta\acute{\alpha}\nu\rangle\alpha\iota\ \tau\acute{\alpha}\iota\ \acute{\alpha}\pi\rho\iota\kappa\bar{o}\langle\text{?}\rangle$, $\langle\text{?A}\theta\alpha\nu\rangle\alpha\iota\ \tau\acute{\alpha}\iota\ \acute{\alpha}\pi\rho\iota\kappa\bar{o}\langle\text{?}\rangle$ or $\langle\text{?A}\theta\acute{\alpha}\nu\rangle\alpha\iota\ \tau\acute{\alpha}\iota\ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\rho\iota\kappa\bar{o}\langle\text{?}\rangle$ ($\langle\text{?A}\theta\alpha\nu\rangle\alpha\iota\ \tau\acute{\alpha}\iota\ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\rho\iota\kappa\bar{o}\langle\text{?}\rangle$), who is perhaps to be identified with Athena Agrotera according to Van Effenterre and Ruzé).

Few things are known about Aigiai, the provenance of the inscription in question. It is identified with the site Palaiochora, near Limne, in south Laconia. Strabo 8.364 and Pausanias 3.21.5 identify the *polis* Aigiai of the Classical period with the homeric Augeiai (B 583). Since Waterhouse and Hope Simpson (1961: 114, 173, 175) did not locate prehistoric remains in this area, they doubt the identification of the site with the homeric Augeiai. Pausanias mentions Aigiai as a *polisma* where there was a lake, called "Lake of Poseidon", where a temple and a statue of Poseidon were to be seen.

Another sanctuary was excavated, which is not to be identified with that of Poseidon, see Bonias 1998. It is a rural sanctuary dedicated mainly to the cult of Artemis and secondarily to a heros called Timagenes. It is unknown, whether the bowl bearing the inscription comes from this sanctuary. The reading of the inscription is not certain and cannot be checked, as the bowl is now lost. It is thus not certain that the text is a dedication of a group called *Hyakinthioi* to Aitai, given that according to other interpretations it could also be a dedication to Apollo Hyacinthos by a group called Aitai. In this case it is to be stressed that a group called Aitai is further attested in an inscription from Sparta (cf. [CAPInv. 771](#)). Should we regard the possibility that the word derives from Aigiai, taking into account that "g" can be omitted between two vowels?

iii. Bibliography

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XIII. EVALUATION

i. Private association

Possible

Note

The uncertain reading of the inscription does not allow any unity of the scholars on its interpretation. It is thus difficult to decide, whether the *Hyakinthioi* are a private association. It is moreover difficult to decide, whether the text should be read as $\text{Y}\alpha\kappa\iota\nu\theta\iota\omega\iota$, *Hyakinthioi* or as $\eta\upsilon\alpha\kappa\iota\nu\theta\iota\omega\iota$, *hyakinthioi*; this reading would impose a totally different interpretation, see and XII.i: Comments, above.