

CAPInv. 554: **synmystai Abarsakenoi**

I. LOCATION

i. Geographical area	Western Asia Minor
ii. Region	Bithynia
iii. Site	Pylai

II. NAME

i. Full name (original language)	συνμύσται Ἀβάρσακηνοί (I.Apameia und Pylai 103, ll. 4-5)
ii. Full name (transliterated)	<i>synmystai Abarsakenoi</i>

III. DATE

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

ii. Name elements	Cultic:	<i>synmystai</i>
	Ethnic:	<i>abarsakenoi</i> refers to inhabitants of Abarsakos, apparently a settlement in the region of Pylai (see Şahin and Sayar 1982: 49; <i>BE</i> 1983: no. 424; Corsten in I.Apameia und Pylai 103, p. 110).

V. SOURCES

i. Source(s)	I.Apameia und Pylai 103 (iii AD)
Note	See also: Şahin and Sayar 1982: 49-50 no. 5 SEG 32: 1259 GRA II 100 AGRW 96

Online Resources	I.Apameia und Pylai 103 AGRW ID# 56
i.a. Source type(s)	Epigraphic source(s)
i.b. Document(s) typology & language/script	Funerary inscription in Greek for Dion and his homonymous father
i.c. Physical format(s)	Pedimental stele with relief depicting a funerary banquet in which participated a seated women and two men lying on a couch (one of them holding a wreath).
ii. Source(s) provenance	The inscription was found at Yalova (Pylai).

IX. MEMBERSHIP

ii. Gender	Men
Note	Dion and perhaps his homonymous son are the only known members of the group.
iii. Age	Children Adults
Note	The word <i>παῖς</i> , <i>pais</i> (l. 1), used to define the younger Dion who died at the age of 15, has been considered as an indication of the participation of children to the <i>symmystai Abarsakenoi</i> (see Şahin and Sayar 1982: 49; Corsten in I.Apameia und Pylai 103, p. 110). This is highly probable but caution is needed: In fact there is no absolutely clear proof that the younger Dion was an actual member (or even a candidate for full-membership after the completion of his <i>ephebeia</i> , as Corsten suggested).

X. ACTIVITIES

iv. Honours/Other activities	The group of <i>symmystai Abarsakenoi</i> erected a funerary inscription for Dion and his homonymous son, styled as <i>παῖς</i> , <i>pais</i> (l. 1) and <i>φιλαβάρσακος</i> , <i>philabarsakos</i> (ll. 1-2). The latter term suggests services and benefactions rendered by the younger Dion (probably via his father) to the community of Abarsakos, to which the honouring <i>symmystai</i> belonged.
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XII. NOTES

i. Comments	The name of the group suggests the performance of Mysteries.
iii. Bibliography	Ascough, R.S., Harland, P.A., and Kloppenborg, J.S. (2012), <i>Associations in the Greco-Roman World: A Sourcebook</i> . Berlin. Şahin, S. and Sayar, M.H. (1982), 'Fünf Inschriften aus dem Gebiet des Golfes von Nikomedeia', <i>ZPE</i> 47: 43-50.

XIII. EVALUATION

i. Private association	Probable
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Note

Şahin and Sayar 1982: 49-50 suggested that the term *synmystai Abarsakenoi* corresponded not to a single association but to a group of members of various cult association which performed mysteries in Abarsakos and decided to honour their sponsor(s) (cf. SEG 32: 1259). However, both Corsten (in I.Apameia und Pylai 103, p. 110) and Ascough, Harland and Kloppenborg (2012: no. 96) considered *synmystai Abarsakenoi* to be a single cult association. Although the terminology used does indicate that we have here a single group of fellow-initiates, whether this was an association organised in a permanent and durable way or simply a group of initiates taking an *ad hoc* decision to honour Dion father and son cannot be demonstrated with absolute certainty.