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CAPInv. 770: **synbolaphoroi** (1. **symbolaphoroi**)

I. LOCATION

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

II. NAME

i. Full name (original language)	συνβολαφόροι (TAM IV.1 76, ll. 3-4)
ii. Full name (transliterated)	<i>synbolaphoroi</i> (1. <i>symbolaphoroi</i>)

III. DATE

i. Date(s)	Inc.
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IV. NAME AND TERMINOLOGY

ii. Name elements	Cultic:	<i>symbolaphoroi</i> , see below under field XII.i: Comments.
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V. SOURCES

i. Source(s)	TAM IV.1 76 (inc.)
Note	See also: Dörner 1963: 133-4 BE 1965: no. 390
Online Resources	TAM IV.1 76 AGRW ID# 13314
i.a. Source type(s)	Epigraphic source(s)
i.b. Document(s) typology & language/script	Dedication in Greek offered as a thanksgiving to Theos Preeitos and the <i>symbolaphoroi</i> .

i.c. Physical format(s)	Altar of limestone.
ii. Source(s) provenance	The inscription was found near Şile in the area of Izmit.

VI. BUILT AND VISUAL SPACE

ii. References to buildings/objects	An altar was dedicated to Theos Preeitos and the <i>symbolaphoroi</i> .
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VIII. PROPERTY AND POSSESSIONS

ii. Realty	The altar dedicated to Theos Preeitos and the <i>symbolaphoroi</i> was presumably used by the latter in their cultic activities and might have belonged to them (cf. field XII.i: Comments).
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XII. NOTES

i. Comments	The full text of the inscription is the following: . . . λας Γοργίο[υ] [θε]ῷ Πρεϊέτω καὶ τοῖς συμβολαφόροις εὐχαριστήριον ἐπισεβάσας τὰ τῶν προγόνων (... <i>las Gorgio[u] [the]oi Preietoi kai tois symbolaphoroiis eucharisterion episebasas ta ton progenon</i>). According to Dörner (1963: 133-4), the formula ἐπισεβάσας τὰ τῶν προγόνων (<i>episebasas ta ton progenon</i>) in the end of the inscription possibly indicates that the dedication was conceived as a sign of respect for the dedicator's ancestors that played a key role in the cult of Theos Preeitos, being priests and <i>symbolaphoroi</i>. J. and L. Robert (<i>BE</i> 1965: no. 390), while admitting that the dedicator's ancestors were heavily involved in the cult of Theos Preeitos, perhaps as priests, preferred to read in the final lines of the inscription ἐπισ<κ>εβάσας τὰ τῶν προγόνων (<i>epis<k>ebasas ta ton progenon</i>), assuming a mistake on the part of the graver. According to this interpretation the dedicator had in fact repaired monuments dedicated by his ancestors. Following P. Hermann's interpretation of a homonymous group attested in a Lydian inscription (see Hermann 1962: 39 no. 27; the inscription now in TAM V.1 576: CAPInv. 816), J. and L. Robert considered that the <i>symbolaphoroi</i> were a religious group, presumably devoted to Theos Preeitos, which carried sacred symbols in processions (cf. also Lane 1976: 36; on Theos Preeitos see Ögüt-Polat and Şahin, 1985: 111). The connection between Theos Preeitos and the <i>symbolaphoroi</i> is also indicated by the fact that the dedication took the form of a thanksgiving offered to both these parties. It is thus possible that the dedicator believed that some sort of divine assistance was provided to him through the actions or the mediation of the <i>symbolaphoroi</i>.
iii. Bibliography	Dörner, F.K. (1963), 'Vorbericht über eine Reise in Bithynien und im bithynisch-paphlagonischen Grenzgebiet 1962', <i>AAWW</i> 100: 132-9. Hermann, P. (1962), <i>Ergebnisse einer Reise in Nordostlydien</i>. Wien. Lane, E. (1976), <i>Corpus Monumentorum Religionis Dei Menis III. Interpretations and Testimonia</i>. Leiden. Ögüt-Polat, S. and Şahin, S. (1985), 'Katalog der bithynischen Inschriften im archäologischen Museum von Istanbul', <i>EA</i> 5: 97-124.

XIII. EVALUATION

i. Private association	Possible
Note	While it is rather safe to conclude that the <i>symbolaphoroi</i> were a religious group involved in the cult of Theos Preeitos, whether they constituted an organized association cannot be demonstrated with absolute certainty.