

Author: MARIO C.D. PAGANINI

CAPInv. 1483: U-EGY-041

I. LOCATION

i. Geographical area	Egypt
ii. Nome	Alexandria (L00)
iii. Site	Alexandria

II. NAME

i. Association with unknown name	U-EGY-041
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III. DATE

i. Date(s)	180 - 116 BC
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IV. NAME AND TERMINOLOGY

iii. Descriptive terms	πολίτευμα, <i>politeuma</i>
Note	<i>politeuma</i> : Letter of Aristeeas 310

V. SOURCES

i. Source(s)	Letter of Aristeeas 310 (mid II BC)
i.a. Source type(s)	Literary source(s)
i.b. Document(s) typology & language/script	Epistolary narrative in Greek about the story of the translation of the Bible into Greek (The Septuagint) by order of Ptolemy II.

VII. ORGANIZATION

ii. Leadership	If we accept that the present text attests to the existence of the Jewish <i>politeuma</i> of Alexandria, it is possible that the ἔθνιάρχης, <i>ethniarches</i> mentioned by Strabo <i>FGr.Hist.</i> II A91 F7 (recorded by J. <i>AJ</i> 14.114) was in fact at the head of the <i>politeuma</i> of the Jews of Alexandria in the late Ptolemaic period. On this see Honigman 2003.
iv. Officials	The passage refers to οἱ πρεσβύτεροι ... τῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ πολιτεύματος, <i>hoi presbyteroi ... ton apo tou politeumatatos</i> : these may well have been the officials of the Jewish <i>politeuma</i> of Alexandria.

XII. NOTES

i. Comments	Other terms such as πλῆθος, <i>plethos</i> and ἔθνος, <i>ethnos</i> are employed in the text, but these generally refer to the whole body of the Jewish community resident in Alexandria and not specifically to those belonging to the <i>politeuma</i> .
iii. Bibliography	Honigman, S. (2003), 'Politeumata and ethnicity in Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt', <i>AncSoc</i> 33: 61-102.

XIII. EVALUATION

i. Private association	Possible
Note	It is possible that the Jewish <i>politeuma</i> of Alexandria had originally formed a private association gathering Jewish immigrants from a military background. Its functions and importance may have increased with the passing of time to a pseudo-civic organisation.
ii. Historical authenticity	The authenticity of the passage and of the existence of a Jewish <i>politeuma</i> of Alexandria has been debated. However, on the basis of parallel evidence for Jewish <i>politeumata</i> of Egypt (in particular that of Heracleopolis, cf. CAPInv. 1370) it is possible that (some members of) the Jewish community of Alexandria decided (and were granted permission) to gather in a <i>politeuma</i> .