

CAPInv. 1657: **hoi basilistai**

I. LOCATION

i. Geographical area	Western Asia Minor
ii. Region	Lycia
iii. Site	Limyra

II. NAME

i. Full name (original language)	οἱ βασιλισταί (Wörrle 2015: 291-292, line 7)
ii. Full name (transliterated)	hoi basilistai

III. DATE

i. Date(s)	243 - 197 BC
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IV. NAME AND TERMINOLOGY

ii. Name elements	Cultic: <i>βασιλισταί, basilistai</i> The term indicates that the group was active in the cult of the Ptolemaic rulers.
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V. SOURCES

i. Source(s)	Wörrle 2015: 291-292 (ca. 243 - 197 BC)
i.a. Source type(s)	Epigraphic source(s)
i.b. Document(s) typology & language/script	Fragment rules(?) of the association concerning sacrifices (lines 1-7) and, apparently, a membership list (lines 8-25). Greek.
i.c. Physical format(s)	Stele.

ii. Source(s) provenance

"North Bastion" of the Akropolis of Limyra.

VI. BUILT AND VISUAL SPACE

ii. References to buildings/objects

τὸ τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος ἱερόν, *to tes Artemidos hieron* (line 5)

Reference is made to the sanctuary of Artemis on the Akropolis, where the stele is to be set up.

VII. ORGANIZATION

ii. Leadership

The individual called Menyllos apparently leads the group (line 7). He seems to be identical with the Menyllos son of Nikanor, a Macedonian, who is listed first, below (line 8). Menyllos may have been the *phrourachos* head of the Ptolemaic garrison or group at Limyra.

vi. Laws and rules

The fragmentarily preserved rules which were perhaps codified by the group appear to stipulate that sacrifices performed must not be interrupted (line 1), except in the case where there is a royal impediment, *basilikon koluma* (line 2), i.e. a war or another important engagement (line 3). In this case, the *basilistai* are apparently not liable to punishment for non-performance of the sacrifices (ἀζήμυτοι(?)
ἔστωσαν, line 3).

viii. Obligations

See above VII.vi for the apparent obligation of the *basilistai* to perform sacrifices.

In lines 4-7, two individuals are chosen, apparently from among the group (Xenomenes and Zeonodotos), to take care of the inscribing and erection of the stele in question.

IX. MEMBERSHIP

i. Number

Including Menyllos, the probable leader (see above VII.ii), there are 18 members attested.

ii. Gender

Men

Note

All members of the *basilistai* are adult males and likely to have been Ptolemaic soldiers and/or mercenaries, garrisoned in Limyra.

iii. Age

Adults

iv. Status

The members come from a wide variety of areas: Macedon (2 individuals) is listed first; cities and areas in the Ptolemaic kingdom abound: Lykia and Limyra itself, Thera, Aspendos, Myra, Kalymna, Cyrene; other provenances are still more diverse: Ainis, Herakleia (which?), Akarnania, Paionia, Megara, Corinth.

For a detailed prosopographical analysis, see Wörrle 2015: 293-297.

v. Relations

Two individuals appear to be brothers, Apollonios and Anabios of Aspendos, both sons of Anabios (lines 14-15).

X. ACTIVITIES

iii. Worship

From the rules enacted by or concerning the group, lines 1-4, it seems clear that the *basilistai* engaged in regular, compulsory sacrifices. At Setis (Elephantine, Egypt), it is known that the *basilistai* met on the ninth day of every month and on the eponymous days of the rulers to perform sacrifices and libations (see [CAP Inv. 51](#)). It is possible that a similar arrangement of rites took place at Limyra too. More generally on the *basilistai*, see now the detailed discussion in Wörrle 2015: 297-299.

Deities worshipped

Ptolemaic ruler cult(?).

The precise cultic framework and deities of the group remain enigmatic to a degree, though its involvement in the cult of the Ptolemaic kings and queens is highly likely. That the inscription was set up in the sanctuary of Artemis may indicate that the goddess was also favoured by the group, though this may also simply have been a conspicuous place for recording its rules (cf. lines 4-6). On Artemis at Limyra, see Wörrle 2015: 301-302.

XII. NOTES

iii. Bibliography

M. Wörrle (2015), 'Die ptolemäische Garnison auf der Burg von Limyra im Licht einer neuen Inschrift', 291-304 in: B. Beck-Brandt et al. *Turm und Tor, Siedlungsstrukturen in Lykien und benachbarten Kulturlandschaften*, Vienna.

XIII. EVALUATION

i. Private association

Certain

Note

The *basilistai* are a well-known private cult group in the Ptolemaic period. For further instances, see here [CAP Inv. 15](#) (Thera) and [CAP Inv. 1518](#) (Paphos).