

CAPInv. 1324: *he synodos he peri Theon Hypsiston*

I. LOCATION

i. Geographical area	Black Sea Region
ii. Region	North coast of the Black Sea
iii. Site	Tanais

II. NAME

i. Full name (original language)	ἡ σύνοδος ἡ περὶ Θεὸν Ὑψίστων (CIRB 1278-80, 1282)
ii. Full name (transliterated)	<i>he synodos he peri Theon Hypsiston</i>

III. DATE

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

i. Name in other forms	Θήσ[ος (<i>l. θίασος</i>) τῶν] ἀδελφ[ῶν], <i>thias[os ton] adelph[on]</i> (CIRB 1284, l. 6); ἡ σύνοδος ἡ περὶ ἱερέα - καὶ κτλ., <i>he synodos he peri hiera - - kai ktl</i> etc. (CIRB 1260, ll. 8-9; 1261, ll. 5-6; 1263, ll. 1-2; 1264 A, ll. 1-2; 1277, ll. 3-4; 1287, ll. 2-3).
ii. Name elements	Kinship-related: <i>adelphoi</i> Personal: <i>peri hiera</i> Theophoric: <i>peri Theon Hypsiston</i>
iii. Descriptive terms	θίασος, <i>thiasos</i> σύνοδος, <i>synodos</i>
Note	<i>thiasos</i> : CIRB 1284, l. 6 <i>synodos</i> : CIRB 1278-80, 1282

V. SOURCES

i. Source(s)

CIRB 1260 (AD 155).
CIRB 1260a (AD 154-171).
CIRB 1261 (AD 132-154).
CIRB 1262 (ii AD).
CIRB 1263 (f. ii AD).
CIRB 1264 (f. ii AD).
CIRB 1265 (AD 123).
CIRB 1266 (f. ii AD).
CIRB 1267 (f. ii AD).
CIRB 1268 (ii AD).
CIRB 1276 (AD 209).
CIRB 1277 (AD 173-211).
CIRB 1278 (AD 220).
CIRB 1279 (AD 225).
CIRB 1280 (AD 225).
CIRB 1282 (AD 228).
CIRB 1284 (AD 230).
CIRB 1287 (AD 244).
CIRB 1288 (f. iii AD).
CIRB 1289 (f. iii AD).
CIRB 1290 (f. iii AD).
CIRB 1291 (f. iii AD).
Possibly also
CIRB 1269 (ii - f. iii AD).
CIRB 1270 (ii - f. iii AD).
CIRB 1271 (ii - f. iii AD).
CIRB 1272 (ii - f. iii AD).
CIRB 1273 (ii - f. iii AD).
CIRB 1274 (ii - f. iii AD).
CIRB 1275 (ii - f. iii AD).

Note

Other publications:
CIRB 1260: IOSPE II 438; IGR I 916
CIRB 1260a: IOSEP II 439; IGR I 916
CIRB 126: IGRR I 915
CIRB 1262: IOSEP II 443; IGR I 915
CIRB 1264: IOSEP II 442
CIRB 1266: IOSEP II 449
CIRB 1268: IOSEP II 440
CIRB 1277: AGRW 91; IOSEP II 445; IGRR I 917
CIRB 1278: IOSEP II 446
CIRB 1279: IOSEP II 447
CIRB 1280: IOSEP II 448
CIRB 1282: IOSEP II 451
CIRB 1284: IOSEP I 453
CIRB 1287: IOSEP II 454
CIRB 1288: IOSEP II 455; IGR I 921

Online Resources

[CIRB 1260](#) and [AGRW ID 7800](#)
[CIRB 1260a](#) and [AGRW ID 7821](#)
[CIRB 1261](#)
[CIRB 1262](#) and [AGRW ID 7826](#)
[CIRB 1263](#)
[CIRB 1264](#) and [AGRW ID 7842](#)
[CIRB 1265](#)
[CIRB 1266](#) and [AGRW ID 7846](#)
[CIRB 1267](#)
[CIRB 1268](#) and [AGRW ID 7857](#)
[CIRB 1269](#)
[CIRB 1270](#)
[CIRB 1271](#)
[CIRB 1272](#)
[CIRB 1273](#)
[CIRB 1274](#)
[CIRB 1275](#)
[CIRB 1276](#)
[CIRB 1277](#) and [AGRW ID 1841](#)
[CIRB 1278](#) and [AGRW ID 7861](#)
[CIRB 1279](#) and [AGRW ID 7878](#)
[CIRB 1280](#) and [AGRW ID 7896](#)
[CIRB 1282](#) and [AGRW ID 7920](#)
[CIRB 1284](#) and [AGRW ID 7932](#)
[CIRB 1287](#) and [AGRW ID 7962](#)
[CIRB 1288](#) and [AGRW ID 7971](#)
[CIRB 1289](#)
[CIRB 1290](#)
[CIRB 1291](#)

i.a. Source type(s)	Epigraphic source(s)
i.b. Document(s) typology & language/script	<p>Greek dedications to <i>Theos Hypsistos</i>. The god is explicitly attested in CIRB 1260, 1260a (restored), 1261, 1278-1280, 1282, 1284, 1287, 1289, or simply mentioned as θεός ἐπήκοος, <i>theos epekoos</i>, in CIRB 1288.</p> <p>CIRB 1269-1275, which are very small pieces, could also belong to this series.</p>
i.c. Physical format(s)	<p>CIRB 1260: fragmentary marble stele restored from 21 joining pieces. CIRB 1260a: fragmentary marble stele restored from 13 joining pieces. CIRB 1261: fragment of the upper part of a marble stele. CIRB 1262: fragmentary marble stele; the upper part is lacking. CIRB 1263: right part of a marble stele. CIRB 1264: fragmentary marble stele restored from 5 joining pieces (A). Another minuscule fragment (B) is to be placed about the end of the text. CIRB 1265: fragment of a marble stele. CIRB 1266: fragment of the left part of a marble stele. CIRB 1267: small fragment of a marble stele. CIRB 1268: fragment of the lower part of a marble stele. CIRB 1276: fragment of a marble stele. CIRB 1277: fragmentary marble stele restored from 13 joining pieces. CIRB 1278: marble stele restored from 98 joining pieces. CIRB 1279: marble stele restored from 51 joining pieces. CIRB 1280: marble stele restored from 81 joining pieces. CIRB 1282: marble stele restored from 83 joining pieces. CIRB 1284: fragmentary marble stele restored from 32 joining pieces + 2 not joining fragments. CIRB 1287: marble stele restored from 19 joining pieces. CIRB 1288: three joining fragments of the upper part of a marble stele. CIRB 1289: small fragment of a marble stele. CIRB 1290: small fragment of a marble stele. CIRB 1291: small fragment of a marble stele. CIRB 1269-1275 are minuscule pieces of marble.</p>
ii. Source(s) provenance	<p>Nedvigovka, a village near Tanais (CIRB 1260, 1260a, 1261, 1262, 1265, 1269-1275, 1278, 1279, 1282, 1284, 1289, 1291). Tanais (CIRB 1263, 1264, 1266, 1267, 1268, 1276, 1277, 1280, 1287, 1288, 1290).</p>

VII. ORGANIZATION

ii. Leadership	One ἱερέυς, <i>hiereus</i> (Phannes St[ra]toneikou in CIRB 1260, ll. 9 and 22-24; Poplios Char[itonos(?)] in CIRB 1261, l. 6; Heges[ippos M]enestratou in CIRB 1262, ll. 2-3; an anonymous in CIRB 1263, l. 2; an anonymous in CIRB 1264, l. 1; [Lou]lios Ralchadou in CIRB 1277, l. 4; Chophrasmos Phorgabakou in CIRB 1278, l. 3 (220 AD), and 1279, ll. 3-4 (225 AD); Kallisthenes Pappou <i>ho [k]ai</i> Thyloganos in CIRB 1280, ll. 3-4; [De]metrios Apolloniou in CIRB 1282, ll. 2-3; [K]opharno[s(?)] in CIRB 1284, l. 7; Papas Chrestou in CIRB 1287, l. 3, possibly also in CIRB 1288, l. 4 [restored]).
iii. Members	θιασῶται, <i>thiasotai</i> (CIRB 1260, ll. 14-15; 1264 A, l. 7, restored; 1279, l. 9; 1280, l. 10; 1282, l. 10; 1287, l. 8; 1288, ll. 11-12; 1290, l. 1, restored); θιασεῖται, l. θιασῖται <i>thiasitai</i> (CIRB 1260a, l. 21; 1262, ll. 7-8; 1263, l. 8; 1266, l. 2; 1277, l. 10; 1278, l. 7); συνοδεῖται, l. συνοδῖται <i>synoditai</i> (CIRB 1284, ll. 13-14). One member is called φίλο[ς] τῆς [συ]νόδου, <i>philof[s] tes [sy]nodou</i> (CIRB 1277, ll. 9-10), possibly a benefactor or 'honorary member' (φιλότειμος, <i>philoteimos</i>).
iv. Officials	One πατήρ συνόδου, <i>pater synodou</i> (occurs as second, after the ἱερέυς, <i>hiereus</i>): CIRB 1261, ll. 6-7; 1263, ll. 2-3; 1277, ll. 4-5; 1282, ll. 3-4; 1288, ll. 4-5. [Πατήρ συ(?)νόδου, <i>[pater sy(?)]nodou</i> is not a likely restoration in CIRB 1278, l. 3, for this official would strangely occur among the λοιποὶ θιασῶται, <i>loipoi thiasotai</i> , and not in the staff (ll. 2-7), as it would have been normal: [- -]νόδου, [- -]nodou, is rather a broken patronym. One συναγωγός, <i>synagogos</i> (occurs either as second, after the ἱερέυς, <i>hiereus</i> , if there is no πατήρ συνόδου, <i>pater synodou</i> , or as third, after the ἱερέυς, <i>hiereus</i> , and the πατήρ συνόδου, <i>pater synodou</i>): CIRB 1260, l. 10; 1260a, l. 15; 1262, ll. 3-4; 1263, ll. 3-4; 1264 A, l. 2; 1277, l. 5; 1278, ll. 3-4; 1279, ll. 4-5; 1280, ll. 5-6; 1282, ll. 4-5; 1287, ll. 3-4; 1288, ll. 5-6. One φιλάγαθος, <i>philagathos</i> : CIRB 1260, l. 10; 1260a, ll. 16-17; 1262, l. 5; 1263, ll. 4-5; 1264 A, l. 3; 1268, ll. 2-3; 1277, l. 6; 1278, ll. 4-5; 1279, ll. 5-6; 1280, ll. 6-7; 1282, l. 6; 1284, ll. 9-11; 1287, ll. 4-5; 1288, ll. 6-7. One παραφιλάγαθος, <i>paraphilagathos</i> : CIRB 1260, ll. 12-13; 1260a, ll. 17-18; 1262, ll. 6-7; 1263, l. 5; 1264 A, l. 4; 1268, ll. 3-4; 1277, l. 7; 1278, l. 5; 1279, ll. 6-7; 1280, ll. 7-8; 1282, l. 7; 1284, ll. 11-13; 1287, ll. 5-6; 1288, ll. 7-8; 1291, l. 2. One γυμνασιάρχης, <i>gymnasiarches</i> (a civic magistrate but in this case possibly a thiasotic official): CIRB 1260a, ll. 18-19; 1263, l. 6; 1264 A, l. 5; 1268, ll. 4-5; 1277, ll. 8-9; 1278, ll. 5-6; 1279, l. 7; 1280, ll. 9-10; 1282, l. 8; 1287, ll. 6-7; 1288, ll. 9-10. One νεανισκάρης, <i>neaniskarches</i> (a civic magistrate but in this case possibly a thiasotic official): CIRB 1260a, ll. 19-20; 1263, ll. 6-7; 1264 A, l. 6; 1267, l. 3 (restored); 1268, ll. 5-6; 1277, ll. 7-8; 1278, ll. 6-7; 1279, l. 8; 1280, ll. 8-9; 1282, l. 9; 1287, l. 7; 1288, ll. 8-9. One γραμματεὺς, <i>grammateus</i> : CIRB 1263, ll. 7-8; 1264 A, l. 7; 1268, ll. 6-7. The <i>synodeitai</i> in CIRB 1284, ll. 13-14, could be members of the staff beside the <i>hiereus</i> , <i>[synagogos(?)]</i> , <i>philagathos</i> and <i>paraphil[agathos]</i> (ll. 7-13).

IX. MEMBERSHIP

i. Number	The maximum attested in the lists is 54 (CIRB 1278), to which one must add the 6 officials mentioned above. But the list being fragmentary, it is allowed to admit more than 60 members. The records provide several lists of members (names + patronymics, more or less completely preserved): 21 in CIRB 1260; 25 in CIRB 1262; 23 in CIRB 1263; at least 18 in CIRB 1264 A + 3 other ones in CIRB 1264 B; 5 in the fragmentary CIRB 1265; at least 27 in CIRB 1266; at least 10 in CIRB 1268; at least 7 in the fragmentary CIRB 1276; at least 36 in CIRB 1277; at least 54 in CIRB 1278; at least 46 in CIRB 1279; at least 41 in CIRB 1280; 46 in CIRB 1282; 6 in the fragmentary CIRB 1284 (but since the members are called [συ]νοδεῖται, <i>[syn]odeitai</i> , one might alternatively suppose that they represented only the staff of the assembly beside the other officials mentioned); 48 in CIRB 1287; at least 8 in the fragmentary CIRB 1288.
ii. Gender	Men
Note	The preserved names are male names.
iii. Age	Children Adults
Note	The presence of the youth is suggested by the mention of several νεανισκάρηαι, <i>neaniskarchai</i> .

iv. Status

City officials occur in the lists of members: an ἑλλη[ν]ἀρχης(?), *hell[enarches(?)]* in CIRB 1260a, l. 14, another one in CIRB 1262 ([ἑλλην]ἀρχης(?), *[hellen]arches(?)*, so Zavojkina 2012: 107); a στρατιώτης, *stratiotes* (CIRB 1264 A, l. 17); γυμνασιάρχης, *gymnasiarches* (a civic magistrate but in this case possibly a thiasotic official) in CIRB 1260a, ll. 18-19; 1263, l. 6; 1264 A, l. 5; 1268, ll. 4-5; 1277, ll. 8-9; 1278, ll. 5-6; 1279, l. 7; 1280, ll. 9-10; 1282, l. 8; 1287, ll. 6-7; 1288, ll. 9-10; and a νεανισκάρχης, *neaniskarches* (a civic magistrate but in this case possibly a thiasotic official) in CIRB 1260a, ll. 19-20; 1263, ll. 6-7; 1264 A, l. 6; 1267, l. 3 (restored); 1268, ll. 5-6; 1277, ll. 7-8; 1278, ll. 6-7; 1279, l. 8; 1280, ll. 8-9; 1282, l. 9; 1287, l. 7; 1288, ll. 8-9.

X. ACTIVITIES

iii. Worship

Given the dedications to *Theos Hypsistos*, worship by the group can be supposed.

Deities worshipped

Theos Hypsistos

XI. INTERACTION

i. Local interaction

The membership of several ἑλληναρχαί, *hellenarchai*, suggests close relations with the city authorities. Similarly for the presence of *gymnasiarchai* and *neaniskarchai*.

XII. NOTES

i. Comments

We can envisage close relations with the association described in [CAPIInv. 1323](#). 'About three hundred thiasotes who lived between AD 225 and 230, that is, in the best documented five years, are known by name. The total number of the inhabitants of Tanais was then 1500-2000 (to judge by the size of the city site); the number of adult males could not have exceeded 250-300. [...] But if indeed this is the case, these corporations cannot be classified as regular private cult associations of the classical world, which have never embraced the entire civic community' (Ustinova 1999: 184). We must, however, remark that the presence of several νεανισκάρχαι, *neaniskarchai*, suggests also νεανίσκοι, *neaniskoi*, belonging to the association(s), i.e. obviously not 'adult males'. Nevertheless, the number of θιασῶται, *thiasotai*, is highly remarkable. N.V. Zavojkina (2012: 268-85) registers 570 citizens in Tanais, mostly attested in the thiasotic records. Was it only one or were there more associations? The main argument against the presumption of only one association is that 'the rate of identical names in the lists, issued more or less simultaneously, is low' (Ustinova 1999: 188, with references). On the other hand, we know the case of Chophrasmos Phorgabakou, ἱερέυς, *hiereus* in AD 220 (CIRB 1278, l. 3) and 225 (CIRB 1279, ll. 3-4). It has been concluded that this important person (cf. Zavojkina 2013) was simultaneously member of at least two associations. But an alternative explanation also remains possible, i.e. that the annual office of a ἱερέυς, *hiereus*, could be reiterated. In the same year (AD 225) and in the same month (Pereitios) we have two different catalogues of θιασῶται, *thiasotai*, one (CIRB 1279) with the same Chophrasmos Phorgabakou as ἱερέυς, *hiereus*, the other one (CIRB 1280) with another ἱερέυς, *hiereus*. Moreover, all the staff (συναγωγός, *synagogos*; φιλάγαθος, *philagathos*; παραφιλάγαθος, *paraphilagathos*; γυμνασιάρχης, *gymnasiarches*; νεανισκάρχης, *neaniskarches*) differs, as well as the list of ordinary members. We can suppose that CIRB 1280 presents the staff issued just after the new elections (which would imply that the elections took place during this month). The lack of prosopographical connections between the two lists might be explained through different classes of age: CIRB 1280 could be seen as a list of young people, insofar the νεανισκάρχης, *neaniskarches*, is strangely mentioned before the γυμνασιάρχης, *gymnasiarches* (ll. 8-10; cf. CIRB 1277, ll. 7-9, and 1288, ll. 8-10). Whatever it would be, it remains extremely difficult to decide between one single and more simultaneous associations worshipping *Theos Hypsistos*. We add that about a half of the names are non Greek (mostly Iranian), which perfectly reflects the mixed character of the population in Tanais, especially in the first half of the 3rd century AD, when the non Greek names increase.

ii. Poland concordance

Poland B 120 Q (wrongly) = 121 (CIRB 1261)
Poland B 120 N (wrongly) = 122 (CIRB 1260)
Poland B 120 O (wrongly) = 123 (CIRB 1260a)
Poland B 120 R (wrongly) = 124 (CIRB 1268)
Poland B 120 S (wrongly) = 125 (CIRB 1263)
Poland B 120 T (wrongly) = 126 (CIRB 1264)
Poland B 120 U (wrongly) = 127 (CIRB 1262)
Poland B 128 (CIRB 1276)
Poland B 129 (CIRB 1277)
Poland B 130 (CIRB 1278)
Poland B 131 (CIRB 1279)
Poland B 132 (CIRB 1280)
Poland B 133 (CIRB 1282)
Poland B 137 (CIRB 1284)
Poland B 138 (CIRB 1287)
Poland B 139 (CIRB 1288)
Poland B 141 (CIRB 1289)
Poland B 142 (CIRB 1275)
Poland B 144 (CIRB 1290)
Poland B 145 (CIRB 1269)
Poland B 145 A (CIRB 1270)
Poland B 145 B (CIRB 1271)
Poland B 145 C (CIRB 1291)
Poland B 145 D (CIRB 1272)
Poland B 145 E (CIRB 1274)
Poland B 145 F (CIRB 1273)
Poland B 145 G (CIRB 1265)

iii. Bibliography

Jajlenko, V.P. (2010), *Tysjacheletnij Bosporskij Rejkh [A Thousand Year Bosporan Reich (sic)]*. Moscow: 589-90.
Ustinova, Yu. (1991), 'The *Thiasoi* of Theos Hypsistos in Tanais', *HR* 31. no. 2: 150-80.
Ustinova, Yu. (1999), *The Supreme Gods of the Bosporan Kingdom. Celestial Aphrodite and the Most High God*. Leiden, Boston, Cologne: 183-92, 203-83.
Zavojkina, N.V. (2007), 'Chastnye soobshchestva Tanaisa (104-244 gg. n.e.) [The Private Associations from Tanais (104-244 AD)]', *Problemy istorii, filologii, kul'tury* [Magnitogorsk] 17: 299-315.
Zavojkina, N.V. (2012), *Bosporskie fiasy: mezhdru polisom i monarchiej [Bosporan Thiasoi: Between Polis and Monarchy]*. Moscow: 93-120, 268-85.
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XIII. EVALUATION

i. Private association

Certain

Note

The terminology employed points to a private association.