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CAPInv. 172: hoi peribomioi

I. LOCATION

i. Geographical area	Aegean Islands
ii. Region	Melos
iii. Site	Melos (ancient city)

II. NAME

i. Full name (original language)	οἱ περιβώμιοι (IG XII.3 1126, l. 1 + IG XII.3 Suppl. p. 335)
ii. Full name (transliterated)	<i>hoi peribomioi</i>

III. DATE

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

ii. Name elements

Cultic:

περιβόμιοι:

Bosanquet thinks that the *peribomioi* were the board of functionaries of Asiatic cults (Bosanquet 1898: 79; cf. LSJ⁹). He also (1898: 79) expresses the view, with some reservation though, that the *peribomioi* could have been initiates of a higher degree, enjoying the privilege to participate in sacrifices or choral dances around the altar (*peribomon*).

Poland (1909: 42) is of the view that *peribomioi* were fellow-members of an association, without ruling out the possibility that they are to be identified as cult personnel or as a looser community.

Peribomius is a personal name borne by an infamous character in Juvenal (2.16). In a scholion, *Peribomius* is identified as the *nomen archigalli* (officials in the cult of Kybele) (Bosanquet 1898: 79).

Other:

περιβόμιος (adj.): the decoration or the space around the altar (Orlandos & Travlos 1986: 204 s.v. *περιβόμιος*).

V. SOURCES

i. Source(s)	IG XII.3 1126 + IG XII.3 Suppl. p. 335 (second half of iii BC)
Note	See also: Jaccottet 2003: no. 167 Mendonni & Zoumbaki 2008: 124-6 no. 4.
Online Resources	IG XII.3 1126
i.a. Source type(s)	Epigraphic source(s)
i.b. Document(s) typology & language/script	Honorary inscription in Greek for Aurelia Euprosia by the <i>peribomioi</i> .

i.c. Physical format(s)	Marble bust of Aurelia Euposia standing on a rectangular base that carries an inscription commemorating the erection of her bust by the <i>peribomoi</i>. Draped in chiton and himation. H. 68 cm. For the bust see: LSA-2300. Schäfer 2002: 203 no. D 2. He dates the bust to the late iii AD. Datsouli-Stavridi (1981: 133-4; SEG 33: 668) dates the bust to AD 283-285, whereas Rhomiopoulou (1997: 129 no. 139) dates it to the third quarter of the iii AD.
ii. Source(s) provenance	Hall of the Mystai in Melos. The bust was found in the course of a private excavation in 1861 in the area which was later identified as the Hall of the Mystai. It was sold to the Archaeological Society of Athens in 1884.

VI. BUILT AND VISUAL SPACE

i. Archaeological remains	The bust was found in the 'Hall of the Mystai' in Traminthia on Melos. The building came to light in 1861 in the course of private excavations that revealed architectural remains and some sculptures, a female bust (Aurelia Euposia), a bust of a young man and two columns carved with reliefs (IG XII.3 1081; 1098) (Koumanoudes 1862: 274-5). Excavations in the building were resumed in 1895 by the British School of Athens (Bosanquet 1898). The building consists of an elongated hall with an E-W orientation. It measures 8.32 m wide and at least 23 m long (the exact length of the building cannot be determined as its west end is completely destroyed, though according to the restored plan it should not have exceeded much further to the west). A podium (1.50 m wide x 27 m high) runs along the long sides, whereas seven columns stood between the podium and the wall (7 columns on each long side). An opening on the east side is to be interpreted as a niche or as a door giving access to a side room. The hall was decorated with a mosaic floor, consisting of five panels depicting vine leaves, birds, a deer, a fisherman in a sea full of fish with the inscription $\mu\acute{o}\nu\upsilon\nu\ \mu\grave{\eta}\ \breve{\upsilon}\delta\omicron\rho$ (IG XII.3 1244), geometric and floral patterns. The identification of the building with a hall of mystai, i.e. initiates in Dionysiac cult, was made on the basis of the finds found in the area: - a herm of the hierophantes M. Marius Trophimos depicted with Dionysiac attributes (IG XII.3 1125) - a marble base carrying a dedication to Dionysos Trieterikos (IG XII.3 1089) - two columns with relief sculpture and inscriptions referring to <i>hieroi mystai</i> (IG XII.3 1081; IG XII.3 1098) On the basis of the finds it seems that the building was used from the mid second century to the early fourth century AD (see Schäfer 2002: 182). For the Hall of the Mystai see Bosanquet 1898; Jaccottet 2003, vol. I: 175-82. For a summary of the archaeological finds see Galli 2014: 448-52; Nielsen 2014: 116-7.
ii. References to buildings/objects	$\epsilon\grave{\nu}\ \tau\hat{\omega}\ \iota\delta\acute{\iota}\omega\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\eta\varsigma\ \epsilon\breve{\rho}\gamma\omega$, <i>en toi idioi autes ergoi</i> (Il. 3-4) The bust of Aurelia Euposia was set up $\epsilon\grave{\nu}\ \tau\hat{\omega}\ \iota\delta\acute{\iota}\omega\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\eta\varsigma\ \epsilon\breve{\rho}\gamma\omega$. This phrase indicates that Aurelia Euposia funded the construction or rebuilding of a work/ monument, where her bust was to be erected. The term <i>ergon</i> (work, monument) may refer to the Hall of the Mystai, to the entire building or part of it, which may have been built or restored by Aurelia Euposia (Bosanquet 1898: 76).

VIII. PROPERTY AND POSSESSIONS

i. Treasury/Funds	The erection of a bust for the honorand is positive evidence for the existence of a treasury of the <i>peribomoi</i> unless expenses were covered by an <i>ad hoc</i> subscription.
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IX. MEMBERSHIP

ii. Gender	Women
Note	Bosanquet (1898: 79) thinks possible that Aurelia Euposia was a member of the <i>mystai</i> .

v. Relations

In the light of the epithet *philandros*, Jaccottet (2003: 275 no. 167) followed by Mendoni & Zoumbaki (2008: 126) thinks that Euprosia's donation to the *peribomioi* was of a commemorative nature, namely in the memory of her husband who was perhaps member of the association. However, the epithet *philandros* is honorific in nature and is often encountered in Imperial honorific inscriptions (Veligianni 2001: 63).

X. ACTIVITIES

iv. Honours/Other activities

The *peribomioi* honoured Aurelia Euprosia, erecting a bust of her in her own work. Aurelia Euprosia is called φίλανδρος. As Veligianni's study has demonstrated the epithet *philandros* is often encountered in Imperial inscriptions of a public or private nature (Veligianni 2001:63).

XII. NOTES

i. Comments

Bosanquet's view (1898: 79; see IV.ii) that the *peribomioi* should be understood as a generic title that encompasses all officials of mystic cults seems questionable. Collective names that refer to an overarching board of officials of different ranks and duties are unattested to my knowledge.

ii. Poland concordance

Poland B *218

iii. Bibliography

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XIII. EVALUATION

i. Private association

Probable

Note

The word *peribomioi* in the plural is otherwise unattested.
Due to the nature of the inscription (dedication), it is unclear whether the *peribomioi* constituted an association bearing this name or they were members of an association of *mystai* in the light of two other inscriptions found in the 'Hall of Mystai' and attesting to *mystai* ([CAP Inv. 165](#); [CAP Inv. 171](#)). It is however unclear what was the relation between *mystai* and *peribomioi* (e.g. different stages of initiation in the cult of Dionysos) and similarly unclear is whether these groups formed part of a formally organised private association, whose name escapes us.