

CAPInv. 38: he ton geouchon synodos

I. LOCATION

i. Geographical area	Egypt
ii. Nome	Menelaïtes (L07)
iii. Site	Psenamosis

II. NAME

i. Full name (original language)	ἡ τῶν γεούχων σύνοδος (I.Prose 40, ll. 14, 29-30)
ii. Full name (transliterated)	<i>he ton geouchon synodos</i>

III. DATE

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

i.	Name in other forms	οἱ συγγέωργοι ἔχοντες δὲ τὰς κτήσεις περὶ Ψενάμωσιν τοῦ Βερενίκης νομοῦ, <i>hoi syngeorgoi echontes de tas kteseis peri Psenamosin tou Berenikes nomou</i> (I.Prose 40, ll. 3-4)	
ii.	Name elements	Geographical:	<i>Psenamosis tou Berenikes nomou</i>
		Status-related:	<i>geouchoi</i> <i>syngeorgoi</i>
iii.	Descriptive terms	σύνοδος, <i>synodos</i> κοινόν, <i>koinon</i>	
	Note	<i>synodos</i> : I.Prose 40, ll. 5, 9, 14, 18, 29-30, 31, 33, 43. <i>koinon</i> : I.Prose 40, ll. 15, 16, 30, 42, 44.	

V. SOURCES

i. Source(s)	I.Prose 40 (ii-i BC)
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Note	Other editions of the text: SB IV 7457; Breccia, <i>BSAA</i> 24 (1929): 66–7 no. 5; SEG VIII 529; I.Delta I 445–62; SEG XX 510; AGRW 287.
Online Resources	I.Prose 40 TM 6460 AGRW ID 668
i.a. Source type(s)	Epigraphic source(s)
i.b. Document(s) typology & language/script	Series of decrees in Greek by the association honouring their benefactor Paris for the gift to the association of the land on which to build a <i>gymnasion</i> and <i>oikos</i> and further donations in money. The inscription consists of three main parts: 1. I.Prose 40 ll. 1-19 record the decisions which had been taken in a meeting on 11th of Thoth of the 15th year of reign of an unmentioned Ptolemaic King, in which Paris was honoured with membership of the association, two statues (to be crowned on eponymous days), place of honour in banquets for life, one day of celebrations per year, and a commemorative inscription; 2. ll. 20-32 record the decisions passed by the association in the month of Phaophi of the 18th year of reign, i.e. three men who would be chosen by Paris were to be welcomed into the association; 3. ll. 32-49 record honours passed in the 20th year of reign of the same unmentioned ruler, establishing two extra days of celebration in Paris' honour (for which Paris had given the money himself) one in Psenamosis and one at Alexandria, a portrait of him to be commissioned at Alexandria, the granting of the priesthood of the association to him for life, his exemption from fines and contributions to the association, his right to have double portion of sacrificial meats, and the promise for funerary offerings on Paris' tomb.
i.c. Physical format(s)	Stele

VI. BUILT AND VISUAL SPACE

ii. References to buildings/objects	The association built and owned a γυμνάσιον, <i>gymnasion</i> (I.Prose 40, ll. 6, 7, 10, 22, 25) and an οἶκος, <i>oikos</i> (ll. 6, 7, 10, 22, 25): they were the main premises where the association met, performed sacrifices, held banquets and drinking-parties, and set up statues (εἰκόνες, <i>eikones</i> : ll. 10, 17, 25, 47) for their benefactor. The association must have also had a meeting place in Alexandria, where they decided to set up a portrait (εἰκὼν γραπτή, <i>eikon grapte</i> : l. 35) of their benefactor and celebrate him once a year in the month of Thoth when they met and held a banquet (ll. 34-36). A στήλη, <i>stèle</i> (l. 45) was to be set up against the πυλὼν, <i>pylon</i> (ll. 13, 29) of the τέμενος, <i>temenos</i> (ll. 45-46). The <i>temenos</i> belonged to the properties owned by the association and probably formed part of the complex of the <i>gymnasion</i> and <i>oikos</i> .
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VII. ORGANIZATION

iv. Officials	The association had at least one ἱερεὺς διὰ βίου, <i>hiereus dia biou</i> (I.Prose 40, l. 40). We do not have further information about other officials.
Known practice of appointment	The title and office of <i>hiereus dia biou</i> is given as honour to the association's benefactor.
viii. Obligations	The association's benefactor is granted the honour of being ἀζήμιος, ἀσύμβολος, ἀνεπιμηνιεύτος, ἀλειτούργητος, and ἀνεῖσφορος (<i>azemios, asymbolos, anepimenieutos, aleitourgetos, and aneisphoros</i> , I.Prose 40, ll. 40-41). This proves that regular members were subjected to contributions for feasts, monthly fees, liturgies, and levies (as well as potential fines).

VIII. PROPERTY AND POSSESSIONS

i. Treasury/Funds	The association administered money donated to them and probably kept record of it. Cf. VIII.iii 'Income'.
ii. Realty	The association owned a γυμνάσιον, <i>gymnasion</i> (I.Prose 40, ll. 6, 7, 10, 22, 25) and an οἶκος, <i>oikos</i> (ll. 6, 7, 10, 22, 25). A τέμενος, <i>temenos</i> (ll. 45-46) also formed part of the association's properties.

iii. Income

The association's benefactor is granted the honour of being ἀζήμιος, ἀσύμβολος, and ἀνεπιμηνιέντος (*azemios*, *asymbolos*, and *anepimenieutos*, I.Prose 40, ll. 40-41): the association therefore had a system of fines which could be imposed on regular members in case of wrong-doing, as well as regular contributions for feasts and monthly fees.

The association was given a donation of 1,000 silver dr. which were lent: every year the association collected 200 silver dr. of interest, which were used to cover the expenses for two days of celebrations in honour of the association's benefactor (ll. 37-39).

IX. MEMBERSHIP**i. Number**

The association had at least 29 members (I.Prose 40, l. 19).

ii. Gender

Men

iii. Age

Adults

iv. Status

The members of the association shared the characteristic of being land-owners or fellow-farmers, who had their properties around the village of Psenamosis in the western Delta, not far away from Alexandria. It is not unlikely that they were Alexandrians: cf. also Braunert 1964: 87.

The association's benefactor Paris bore the honorific title of συγγενής, *syngenes* of the King (I.Prose 40, ll. 5, 14, 20, 29): a role in the Ptolemaic administration and a connection to the Court can only be wondered. He was most probably a landowner; certainly a rather rich individual who owned land in the village (he owned at least the plot of land which he donated to the association).

vi. Proper names and physical features

Paris συγγενής, *syngenes*

X. ACTIVITIES**i. Assemblies**

The assembly of the association is called συναγωγή, *synagoge* (I.Prose 40, ll. 2-3). We have no further information about it.

ii. Meetings and events

The association met at least twice a year (in Pharmouthi and in Mesore at the vintage) in the village of Psenamosis, and once (in Thoth) at Alexandria, to celebrate their benefactor Paris (I.Prose 40, ll. 34-37). The main activities of the association are: sacrifices to the Royal House (ll. 7-8, 11-12, 26-27), banquets (ll. 12, 17, 27, 35-36), crowning of the benefactor's statues/portraits (ll. 10-11, 17, 26, 35, 41-42), and drinking parties (ll. 17, 42, 44).

iii. Worship

The association regularly sacrificed to the Royal House (I.Prose 40, ll. 7-8, 11-12, 26-27).

The association promised to bring the customary offerings for the dead to the benefactor's tomb and to offer him a special crown during the festivals of the dead (ll. 42-44).

Deities worshipped

Royal House
Ptolemies
King

iv. Honours/Other activities

The association honoured Paris because he donated the land on which to build the *gymnasion* and *oikos* for the associations; he furthermore gave other donations in money to the association. The honours granted to him are several: he was made member of the association; two statues of him were commissioned to be placed in the *gymnasion* and in the *oikos*, a portrait was commissioned to be placed (in the association's club-house?) at Alexandria; statues/portraits were crowned during the eponymous days; Paris was given place of honour for life during the association's banquets; three days in his honour were celebrated by the association (two days in Psenamosis, one day at Alexandria); a commemorative inscription recording the gift of land by Paris was commissioned for the entrance; Paris was given the privilege of naming three men who would be welcomed into the association as a gift; Paris was made priest of the association for life and exempt from fines, contributions for feasts, monthly fees, liturgies, and levies; during the banquets Paris was given double portion of the sacrificial meats (if absent, they were brought to him, and his statue crowned); customary offerings for the dead would be brought to Paris' tomb and a special crown would be offered during the festivals of the dead. All the honours were to be inscribed on stone to be placed at the entrance of the τέμενος, *temenos*.

XI. INTERACTION

i. Local interaction

The association met at least once a year at Alexandria to celebrate their benefactor: they probably had a club-house there too (I.Prose 40, ll. 34-35).

It is not unlikely that the members of the association were in fact Alexandrians who had (part of?) their estates and spent part of the year in the village of Psenamosis: cf. also Braunert 1964: 87.

The association honoured Paris, a well-to-do man (quite probably a landowner), who bore the honorific title of *syngenes* of the King and was probably involved in the Ptolemaic administration (if not even connected to the Court). He quite probably had a connection with Alexandria too.

XII. NOTES

i. Comments

The village of Psenamosis is said to be part of the nome of Berenike, which should correspond to the later 7th Lower nome Menelaïtes.

The inscription has been variously dated to the second or first century BC: to the second century BC by PP s.v. Paris; to the first century BC by I.Prose 40 and Mooren 1975: 185 no. 0344; 242 no. 00312, by Fraser 1961: 145 no. 26 and by Geraci 1976: 333–334.

iii. Bibliography

Braunert, H. (1964), *Die Binnenwanderung. Studien zur Sozialgeschichte Ägyptens in der Ptolemäer- und Kaiserzeit*. Bonn.

Fraser, P. M. (1961), 'Bibliography: Graeco-Roman Egypt Greek Inscriptions (1960)', *JEA* 47: 139–49.

Geraci, G. (1976), Review of the volume I.Delta, *Aegyptus* 56: 333–4.

Mooren, L. (1975), *The Aulic titulature in Ptolemaic Egypt: introduction and prosopography*. Brussel.

XIII. EVALUATION

i. Private association

Certain

Note

The terminology used (*koinon*, *synodos*), the internal organisation, and the type of dealings in which the group is involved make it certain that we have here a private association.