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1 Hieradoumia

1.1 Hieradoumia: An Introduction

Hieradoumia (Maps 1 and 2) is an upland region in modern western Turkey, situated in the north-eastern part of Manisa province (*Manisa ili*), roughly corresponding to the modern districts (*ilçeler*) of Gördes, Köprübaşı, Demirci, Selendi, and Kula (*c.* 4,500 km^2). Its modern-day population is around 145,000, just under half of which is concentrated in the five urban district capitals; Kula is today the largest town in the region, with a population of around 26,000. Most inhabited zones lie between 400 and 700 m above sea level, and the region has a temperate Mediterranean climate, with warm dry summers and mild wet winters. This book is about the culture and society of Hieradoumia in the Roman imperial period – that is to say, roughly the first three centuries AD, with fairly regular glances back into the first century BC, and occasionally earlier.

You could be forgiven for never having heard of Hieradoumia before. It is a made-up name – made up by me, for the purposes of this book. The use of an invented name is not frivolous.[1] It reflects the fact that in antiquity, this region was not a single political unit, was never (so far as we know) considered as a distinct cultural zone, and was not a primary focus of local identity. But the existence of a meaningful shared regional culture across time and space is not at all dependent on the conscious articulation of a shared identity on the part of that region's inhabitants, and so the fact that no one in antiquity ever had cause to assign this particular region its own special name is really neither here nor there.[2] Modern historians who have worked on this region have generally called it 'north-east Lydia'. This is not very satisfactory, since it implies that the region was culturally more closely linked to 'the rest of' Lydia to the west and south-west than it was to (say) Phrygia

[1] Compare the heuristic devices employed by Scott 2009, esp. 13–22 ('Zomia') and Purcell 2013 ('Tethys Corridor').

[2] Vlassopoulos 2007, 166–9; Roberts and Vander Linden 2011. The existence of non-random spatial and temporal association groups in the material record can be usefully separated from the second-order assumption that some of these association groups correspond to 'peoples' as self-conscious historical actors.

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to the east or Mysia to the north, an implication that – as we will see – is problematic at best.[3] Others have preferred to refer to it as the 'middle Hermos', which is hydrologically correct (most of the region does indeed belong to the drainage basin of the middle Gediz Nehri, the ancient River Hermos) but gives an undue prominence to the Hermos river, which was not, so far as I can tell, particularly central to the human ecology of the region.[4] My choice of the name 'Hieradoumia' is almost arbitrary, but not quite.[5]

Why should you care about Roman Hieradoumia – assuming, that is, that you are not one of the dozen or so people with a professional interest in this obscure backwater of the ancient world? No important events ever occurred here. I cannot, with any conviction, praise the aesthetic quality of its art, the sophistication of its poetry, or the intellectual distinction of its inhabitants (though I do have a soft spot for the dream-interpreter Artemidorus of Daldis, half-Hieradoumian on his mother's side).[6] The case for Hieradoumian history rests on quite different grounds.

The people of the deep Mediterranean countryside appear very seldom in the historical record from antiquity, and almost never as historical actors. We can, of course, infer their existence from the vast incomes accumulated by large landowners (who in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean, as in all pre-modern societies, made up the overwhelming majority of the rich and very rich); we find them stereotyped, disparaged, and occasionally romanticized in the poetry and imaginative prose of the elite. But as agents they are desperately elusive, and we have, for the most part, literally no idea whether they shared the values of the elite. Inner Anatolia is the only part

[3] Debord 1985; Herrmann 1985, 249–50; Lochman 2003, 204–5; Wörrle 2009, 437, n. 116. It is true that Pausanias once refers to a town to the far east of this region as belonging to 'upper Lydia' (Temenouthyrai, modern Uşak: Paus. 1.35.7); modern scholars in fact prefer to assign Temenouthyrai to 'Phrygia' (Drew-Bear 1979), a nice illustration of the haziness of cultural boundaries in this region (Strabo 12.4.4, 12.8.2–3, 13.4.10–11). The excellent overview of 'Lydian geography' in Roosevelt 2009, 33–58 (including our region) is based on a putative 'Greater Lydia' of the seventh and sixth century BC.

[4] Unlike at least one other west-Anatolian river basin (or so I have argued); see Thonemann 2011a, 1–49.

[5] The term *doumos* is a Phrygian word denoting a 'kinship-group' or 'family' (Neumann 1999, 2002, with Chaniotis, *EBGR* 2004, 98 and *SEG* 53, 1505). In our region, we find numerous examples of small-scale cultic associations designated as 'sacred *doumoi*' (ἱεροὶ δοῦμοι), all of which are probably kin-based groups: *TAM* V 1, 179 (Saittai), 449 and 483a (Iaza), 536 (Maionia); *SEG* 57, 1174 (Petzl 2019, no. 140: Iaza); *SEG* 57, 1186 (Petzl 2019, no. 146: Kollyda); see Harland 2014, 199–203, with bibliography. Sacred *doumoi* are not quite unique to this region, but they do neatly encapsulate what I take to be one of the most distinctive features of Hieradoumian social organization, the institutionalization of extended kin groups as 'segments' of village society; see Chapter 10, Section 10.4.

[6] Thonemann 2020.

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of the Roman Empire to provide us with a sufficient density of texts and monuments produced by peasants to give us something resembling an 'insider's view' of the culture of the non-urban 95 per cent.[7]

Within the vast and varied corpus of rural epigraphy from Roman Anatolia, the inscribed monuments of rural Hieradoumia stand out, for three reasons. First, their extreme homogeneity. As we will see in Chapter 2, the funerary and religious monuments of Roman Hieradoumia take a highly distinctive physical form, with common decorative elements and a stereotyped textual structure. Not only does this allow for a regional study that is closely bounded in both space and time, but it also enables rigorous quantitative analysis of a kind that is quite impossible anywhere else in rural Anatolia. Second, their volubility. In most parts of Anatolia, inscribed monuments set up by farmers and shepherds are short and – to be blunt – not vastly informative ('Aurelius Meiros set up this memorial for his own sons Attas and Manes'; 'Babeis, on behalf of her children, to Zeus Alsenos, in fulfilment of a vow'). In Roman Hieradoumia, things were different. The distinctive local habit of 'familial commemoration' means that epitaphs often list dozens of family members and associates of the deceased, providing us with a remarkably 'thick' picture of Hieradoumian rural households and extended kin groupings; likewise, the propitiatory inscriptions set up in Hieradoumian rural sanctuaries (Chapter 2, Sections 2.5–2.8) offer us extended narratives of crises and conflicts within families and village communities, of a length and detail quite unparalleled elsewhere in the Greco-Roman world. And third – it is only fair to add – the inscribed monuments of Hieradoumia have been exceptionally well published and studied by a series of outstanding historians, among whom particular honour is due to Karl Buresch, whose pioneering work in the early 1890s marks the beginning of serious research on Hieradoumia and its monumental culture[8]; to Josef Keil and Anton von Premerstein, who undertook three extensive epigraphic journeys in the region in the years before the First World War[9]; to Peter Herrmann, whose magisterial 1981

[7] Mitchell 1993, I 165–97 remains incomparably the best synthesis of the culture of rural Anatolia in the first three centuries AD; the most important body of new evidence to have appeared since then is the corpus of peasants' and shepherds' votives in Drew-Bear, Thomas, and Yıldızturan 1999. Some of Mitchell's premises have been challenged, but not overturned, by Schuler 2012.

[8] Buresch 1898, based on three extensive epigraphic journeys of 1891, 1894, and 1895, prepared for publication by Otto Ribbeck after Buresch's premature death at the age of thirty-three. Note in particular his outstanding discussion of the term *doumos* (58–72, on *TAM* V 1, 179).

[9] Keil and Premerstein 1907, 1911, 1914 (epigraphic journeys of 1906, 1908, 1911).

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Figure 1.1 Peter Herrmann (r.) at Akhisar, 1986.

corpus of Hieradoumian inscriptions is a model of concision and good judgement (Figure 1.1)[10]; and more recently, to Georg Petzl, Hasan Malay (1948–2022), and Marijana Ricl, who continue to publish new material from Hieradoumia at a fearsome rate.

In this book, I hope to persuade you of the extraordinary interest and importance of rural Hieradoumia for the historian of the Greco-Roman world. With the exception of parts of Roman Egypt, no other rural society in any part of the ancient Mediterranean is known to us in anything like this level of detail. Only here is it possible to reconstruct typical household forms and networks of extended kin in a non-urban setting (Chapters 4–6). Only here can we map out with any precision the structural relations between different levels of social organization: the family, the village, cult associations and worshipping groups, trade guilds, and the *polis* (Chapters 7 and 10). Only here, thanks to the admirable Hieradoumian habit of recording date of death and age at death on their tombstones, are we able to sketch the outlines of a rural demographic regime over time (Chapter 3). Only here can we hear peasants speaking for themselves – in

[10] *Tituli Asiae Minoris* V 1, *Regio Septentrionalis ad Orientem Vergens* (1981), preceded (and followed) by a host of other superb studies on the epigraphy and topography of the region, a selection of which are reprinted in Herrmann 2016, chapters 1–20; see also Habicht 2003 and Petzl 2003.

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the propitiatory inscriptions, almost literally 'speaking', in the first person – on the matters that concerned them most: livestock, intra-familial relations, vendettas between neighbours, theft, sickness (Chapters 8–9). Only here, in short, are we able to describe an ancient rural *culture* on a level above the superficial and anecdotal – its shared normative standards and values; its structural tensions and contradictions; its distinctive gender relations and class structure; its *Weltanschauung*.

Geographically, Hieradoumia falls into two unequal parts (Map 2), lying to the north (*c.* 3,500 km^2) and south (*c.* 1,000 km^2) of the narrow valley of the Gediz Nehri, the ancient river Hermos, which winds through the region from the east to the south-west (Figure 1.2). On the right bank of the Gediz Nehri, to the north, the land slopes gradually upwards towards the formidable Simav Dağları mountain range (the ancient Mt Temnos), which today serves as the boundary between the provinces of Manisa (to the south) and Balıkesir and Kütahya (to the north); for the purposes of this book, I treat the Simav Dağları as the northern limit of Hieradoumia.[11] South of the Simav Dağları watershed, several small perennial rivers drain southwards into the Gediz basin – from east to west, the Selendi Çayı, İlke Çayı, Demrek (Demirci) Çayı, Kum Çayı, and Kayacık Çayı, all running roughly parallel to one another from the north-east to the south-west (Map 1). These five river valleys and the rolling hill country between them supported a number of small urban centres in antiquity, some of which enjoyed *polis*-status in the Roman imperial period: Silandos, on the lower Selendi Çayı; Saittai, with an enormous dependent territory between the İlke Çayı and Demrek Çayı; Gordos, on the upper Kum Çayı; Loros, south of Gordos on the middle Kum Çayı; Daldis, between the lower Kum Çayı and the Gediz Nehri.[12] Many of these towns – particularly Saittai – are

[11] The ancient Makestos valley, immediately north of the Simav Dağları, has produced virtually no examples of the two characteristic epigraphic genres of Roman Hieradoumia, 'familial' epitaphs and propitiatory inscriptions (Chapter 2); conversely, the funerary 'doorstones' characteristic of Phrygia and Galatia are absent from Hieradoumia, but frequently found in the Makestos valley (Waelkens 1986, 35–7). However, the gabled funerary *stēlai* of the Makestos valley do closely resemble those of Hieradoumia in their physical form, if not their epigraphic content: Naour 1981, 15; *MAMA* X, xviii–xix, xxxi. For the cultural affiliations of Kadoi, east of the Simav Dağları, see Nollé 2010, 72–90.

[12] For the vast territory of Saittai, see Robert, *OMS* I, 433–5; it is now known to have extended to the south-west as far as Satala, on the edge of the plain of Sardis (*TAM* V 1, 604–17; Kolb 1990 [*SEG* 40, 1063]; Malay and Ricl 2019, 47 n. 6). For the location of Loros, see Ricl and Malay 2012, 78–9; for the correct form of the name (Loros or Loron), see Petzl 2018. On the character of these urban centres, see Chapter 10, Section 10.1.

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Figure 1.2 The Hermos valley near Thermai Theseos.

known to have been significant ancient centres for the production of wool and linen cloth, and fine textiles continued to be the chief export product of the towns of post-antique Hieradoumia (Gördes, Kula, Demirci) down to the later Ottoman period.[13] This northern segment of Hieradoumia is naturally bounded to the west by the Katırcı Dağı mountain range, whose western flanks drop down into the lowland valley of the Gördük Çayı, the ancient river Lykos.

South of the Gediz Nehri rises the plateau known in antiquity as the 'burnt country', the Katakekaumene (Map 3; Figures 1.3 and 1.4).[14] This region is described in some detail by the Augustan geographer Strabo (13.4.11):

> After this [the Kogamos valley] comes the so-called Katakekaumene region, 500 stadia in length and 400 in breadth, which one may call either Mysia or Maionia, for both names are in use. The whole region is treeless, except for the vine which produces the wine called Katakekaumenite, inferior in

[13] Textile production at Saittai: Chapter 7, Section 7.2; for the late Ottoman rug industry in the region, see Quataert 1993, esp. 134–60.

[14] See Robert 1962, 287–313, with numerous modern travellers' accounts, and a discussion of the rich Greco-Roman mythology of the Kula volcanic field, especially the remarkable account in Nonnus, *Dionysiaca* 13.471–97; see now also Rojas 2019, 82–8.

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Figure 1.3 Lava field north-east of Kula; note the sharp edge between the β4 lava flow and the fields in the upper part of the image.

Figure 1.4 Cinder cones near Kula, looking north over the Hermos.

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> quality to none of the famous wines.[15] The plains have an ashy appearance, and the mountainous and rocky parts are black, as if they had been scorched. Some suppose that this phenomenon was the result of lightning bolts and breaths of flame, and they do not hesitate to situate here the myth of Typhon; Xanthos also speaks of a certain Arimous as king of this region.[16] But it is not plausible that so large a region could have been burned up all at once by such events; rather, it must have been caused by some fires under the earth, whose springs are now exhausted. Also pointed out in this region are three craters, which they call 'bellows', around 40 stadia distant from each other. Above them lie rocky hills, which were probably heaped up out of the blazing matter blasted out of the earth. That soil of this kind is good for vines can also be inferred from the soil of Katana, which was formed from heaped-up ash and now produces a great deal of excellent wine.

There can be little doubt that Strabo had seen the Kula volcanic field for himself. He provides a vivid and accurate description of the most distinctive landmarks of the plateau south of the Gediz Nehri, the three sombre cinder cones (Kula Divlit, Kara Divlit, and Kaplan Alan; see Map 2) that dominate the region. The Kula volcanic field, extending from Adala (ancient Satala) in the west to Kula in the east, is the youngest volcanic field in western Turkey, and the most recent basalt lava flows may date to historic times (eruption phase β4, ending perhaps as late as *c.* 600–400 BC).[17] The basalt boulders left by these youngest β4 flows are still today largely bare of vegetation, aside from the toughest maquis (Figure 1.3), and no vines could conceivably have been grown on them in antiquity; Strabo's vineyards must have been located on the ashy soils left behind by the much earlier eruption phase β3, which probably ended around 9,000 BC (Figure 1.5).[18] In antiquity, the Katakekaumene seems to have been much

15 For viticulture in the region, see also e.g. Strabo 14.1.15; *SEG* 34, 1207 (Hamidiye); *SEG* 34, 1212–13 (Pereudos, near Saittai: Petzl 1994, nos. 17–18); *TAM* V 1, 318 (near Kula: Petzl 1994, no. 69); *SEG* 35, 1164 (near Kula: Petzl 1994, no. 71); *TAM* V 3, 1556 (Hayallı); Malay and Petzl 2017, no. 199 (vineyards near Kula). In funerary reliefs, the deceased and their commemorators are often depicted with bunches of grapes and vine-pruning knives: see e.g. *TAM* V 1, 36, 131, 207, 385 (here, Chapter 5, Figure 5.1), 477 (illustrated *I.Manisa*, Figure 124); *SEG* 39, 1294 (Uşak); *I.Manisa* 181.

16 Xanthos of Lydia, *BNJ* 765 F13b, with A. Paradiso's commentary; Strabo alludes to the same passage of Xanthos in 12.8.19 (*BNJ* 765 F13a). On this interpretation, the Katakekaumene was the site of the battle between Zeus ('lightning bolts') and the fire-breathing giant Typhon ('breaths of flame'). Homer claimed that the 'couch of Typhon' was located in the land of the Arimoi (*Il.* 2.783), a tradition that underlies Xanthos' reference to an alleged Lydian king 'Arimous'.

17 Heineke, Niedermann, Hetzel, and Akal 2016.

18 Not coincidentally, the largest β3 lava flow extends over a broad stretch of land between the modern villages of Menye, Sandal, and Gölde in the south and the Gediz Nehri in the north, a region which we know to have been particularly densely settled in the Roman imperial period.

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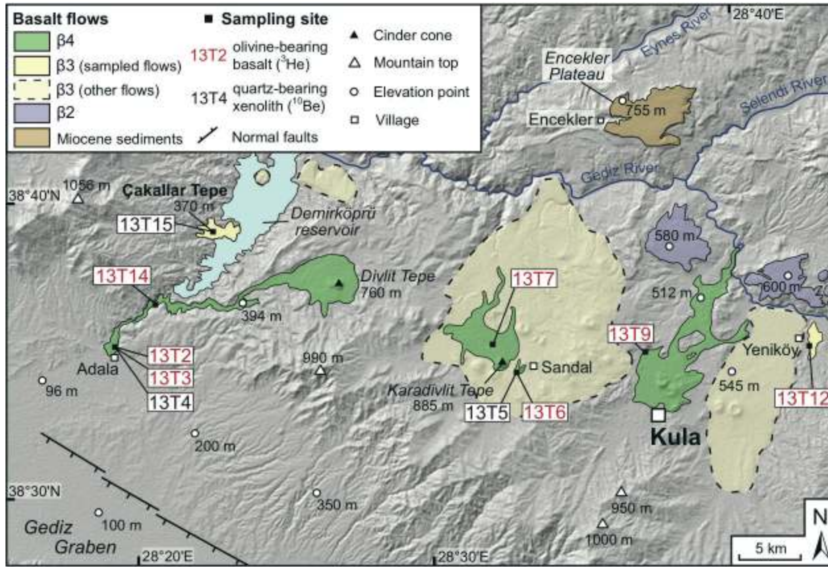

Figure 1.5 The Kula volcanic field.

more densely settled than the zone to the north of the Hermos river; although only two settlements south of the Hermos possessed *polis*-status in the Roman imperial period (Maionia and Kollyda), we know of numerous small villages and rural sanctuaries in this region, several of which have left remarkably rich epigraphic records (Nisyra, Iaza, Axiotta, and Taza, among many others).[19] The Katakekaumene region is bounded to the south by the rim of hills overlooking the lowland valley of the Alaşehir Çayı, the ancient river Kogamos.

1.2 Hieradoumia before Rome

No large-scale excavations or surveys have yet been conducted in Hieradoumia, and the history of human settlement in the region in the earlier first millennium BC is very poorly known. The great rock of Şahankaya, west of Gordos, seems to have served as a fortress and cult centre in the Achaemenid period.[20] A handful of inscriptions in Lydian and Aramaic

[19] Nisyra: *TAM* V 1, 425–38. Iaza: *TAM* V 1, 446–86; Thonemann 2019, nos. 3–7. Axiotta (Mağazadamları): Malay and Petzl 2017, 135–54. Meter Tazene and Meis Petraeites at Taza (Kavaklı): Malay and Petzl 2017, 175–87.

[20] Foss 1987, 81–91; Roosevelt 2009, 118–21.

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are known from the vicinity of Maionia and Saittai, and there are several *tumulus* burials dating between the sixth and fourth centuries BC scattered throughout the region.[21] A major Persian royal road followed the course of the Hermos river eastwards, on its way from Sardis towards the Anatolian plateau, close to the route of the modern İzmir–Ankara highway; a spectacular group of Lydian chamber tombs (*c.* 500 BC), with artefacts of a strongly Persianizing character, were situated close to this road, near modern Güre (ancient Bagis) in the far east of Hieradoumia.[22]

For us, the human geography of Hieradoumia only really comes into focus in the second century BC, when the Attalid kings of Pergamon promoted the large-scale settlement of both Mysian and Greco-Macedonian soldiers throughout the region (Figure 1.6).[23] These colonists seem typically to have been settled at or near existing Lydian villages, no doubt on royal land.[24] In late Hellenistic documents, they are generally described as 'the settlers (*katoikoi*) at *x*', where *x* is typically an indigenous Anatolian toponym (Lyendos, Tamasis, Atetta, Morei, Adrouta, Kapolmeia).[25] By the end of the Hellenistic period, the population of Hieradoumia must have been a mixture of long-established Lydian and Phrygian population groups, immigrant soldiers and their families from Mysia (the wooded highlands north and west of the Makestos River), and Greek and Macedonian settlers from lands far off to the north and west (for more on this, see Section 1.3).[26]

[21] Roosevelt 2009, 240–9 (catalogue); 2019, 145–50. For a Lydian-period settlement at Daldis, see Meriç 2018 (*non vidi*).

[22] Özgen and Öztürk 1996. The relative absence of evidence for Iranian settlement in Hieradoumia contrasts strongly with the abundant testimonia for an Iranian diaspora in the lower Hermos, north and west of Sardis: Sekunda 1985; Robert 1987, 329–35; Klingenberg 2014.

[23] Evidence for Seleukid interest in Hieradoumia is very scanty: there seems to have been a Seleukid military settlement at Gordos already under Antiochos III (*TAM* V 1, 689), and the cult of Zeus Seleukeios at Nisyra (*TAM* V 1, 426; cf. *TAM* V 2, 1306) may have been of Seleukid origin (Robert, *Hellenica* VI, 24–6; de Hoz 1999, 63–4). For 'Macedonian' settlers in Hieradoumia, e.g. *TAM* V 1, 221 (*TAM* V 3, 1423: Kobedyle, under Eumenes II); *TAM* V 3, 1669 (Adrouta); Robert, *Hellenica* VI, 22–4; Mitchell 1993, I 180 n. 142; de Hoz 1999, 5; Mitchell 2018.

[24] For royal land in Hieradoumia, note the 'royal folds' (βασιλικαὶ μάνδραι) near Kula in Malay and Petzl 2017, no. 199 (first century BC?) and a 'village of the kings' near Satala (*TAM* V 1, 609).

[25] Lyendos: *TAM* V 1, 1 (second century BC); Tamasis: *TAM* V 1, 156 (65/4 BC; cf. *SEG* 40, 1063, 1104); Atetta: *TAM* V 1, 543 (157/6 or 136/5 BC); Morei: *SEG* 57, 1219 (45/44 BC); Adrouta: *TAM* V 3, 1429 (25/4 BC); Kapolmeia: *TAM* V 3, 1432 (2/1 BC) and 1435 (AD 42/3). Terminology: Schuler 1998, 33–41.

[26] de Hoz 1999, 8–9, assumes that the population of Roman Hieradoumia remained 'almost entirely' indigenous.

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