The Lives of Ancient Villages

Our conception of the culture and values of the ancient Greco-Roman world is largely based on texts and material evidence left behind by a small and atypical group of city dwellers. The people of the deep Mediterranean countryside seldom appear in the historical record from antiquity, and almost never as historical actors. This book is the first extended historical ethnography of an ancient village society, based on an extraordinarily rich body of funerary and propitiatory inscriptions from a remote upland region of Roman Asia Minor. Rural kinship structures and household forms are analysed in detail, as are the region’s demography, religious life, gender relations, class structure, normative standards, and values. Roman Hieradoumia is perhaps the only non-urban society in the Greco-Roman world whose culture can be described at so fine-grained a level of detail: a world of tight-knit families, egalitarian values, hard agricultural labour, village solidarity, honour, piety, and love.

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The Greek culture of the Roman Empire offers a rich field of study. Extraordinary insights can be gained into processes of multicultural contact and exchange, political and ideological conflict, and the creativity of a changing, polyglot empire. During this period, many fundamental elements of Western society were being set in place: from the rise of Christianity, to an influential system of education, to long-lived artistic canons. This series is the first to focus on the response of Greek culture to its Roman imperial setting as a significant phenomenon in its own right. To this end, it will publish original and innovative research in the art, archaeology, epigraphy, history, philosophy, religion, and literature of the empire, with an emphasis on Greek material.

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Rural Society in Roman Anatolia

PETER THONEMANN
University of Oxford
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Preface

This book is a historical ethnography of the rural communities of the middle Hermos valley in inland western Asia Minor during the first three centuries AD. Kinship and household structure are central concerns throughout, for reasons which will I hope become clear; I have also said something about the region’s demography, land-tenure patterns, village politics, rural cults, and – more tentatively – the relationship between kin-groups and wider social organization. I hope that the book may be of use for the comparative study of non-urban societies in the ancient world, a field where a good deal remains to be done.

Much of this book is founded on other people’s grief. Its primary raw materials are thousands of tombstones, set up by grieving parents for their children; by young husbands for their beloved wives; by women for their brothers, sisters, and friends. For the purposes of the present study, this ocean of personal sorrow has been reduced to a set of cold demographic data-points: a female who dies aged 16; a death on Day 20 of the month Apellaios; a tombstone erected by members of the nuclear family. I have tried always to remember that behind these data-points lie real people – people like Assklepiades and Glykeia, the father and mother of a much-loved daughter Ammias, who died aged sixteen on the twentieth day of Apellaios, autumn AD 210; father and mother, too, of a son named Assklepiades, who died aged sixteen on the thirteenth day of Apellaios, autumn AD 216. Assklepiades and Glykeia were sober and undemonstrative people, and the tombstone that they set up for their children strictly says nothing to prove that Ammias and her brother were ‘much loved’. But I am sure they were.

Much of the research for this book was undertaken in 2013–2015, when I was the holder of a Philip Leverhulme Prize. I am grateful to the Leverhulme Trust for their support and for their patience. Alain Bresson, Richard Duncan-Jones, and Kyle Harper commented helpfully on an early draft of Chapter 3, and Sally Humphreys and Karl Praust sharpened my thinking in Chapter 4. I am indebted to an anonymous external reader and to the Series Editors (particularly Jaś Elsner), for their acute and constructive comments.
Preface

on a first draft of the whole. Charles Crowther and Andrew Meadows were good-humoured travelling companions. Every author, I take it, writes with an ideal reader in mind; I hope that John Davis (1938–2017) would have approved. My greatest debt is to my own beloved syngeneia: my wife Sarah, and my children Alex and Sam.
## Abbreviations

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<tr>
<td>AD</td>
<td>Archaiologikon Deltion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AE</td>
<td>L'Année épigraphique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANRW</td>
<td>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BE</td>
<td>Bulletin épigraphique, annually in REG.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNG</td>
<td>Classical Numismatic Group (auction catalogues)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DGE</td>
<td>Diccionario Griego-Español. Madrid, 1980–.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPRR</td>
<td>Digital Prosopography of the Roman Republic. <a href="http://www.romanrepublic.ac.uk">www.romanrepublic.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EBGR</td>
<td>Epigraphic Bulletin for Greek Religion, annually in Kernos.</td>
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IG Inscriptiones Graecae


## List of Abbreviations

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Leu</td>
<td>Leu Numismatik (auction catalogues)</td>
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<tr>
<td>LfgRE</td>
<td>Lexikon des frühgriechischen Epos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGPN</td>
<td>Lexicon of Greek Personal Names</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAMA</td>
<td>Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naumann</td>
<td>Numismatik Naumann (auction catalogues)</td>
</tr>
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>RPC</td>
<td><em>Roman Provincial Coinage</em> (<a href="https://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk">https://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEG</td>
<td><em>Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAM</td>
<td><em>Tituli Asiae Minoris</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLL</td>
<td><em>Thesaurus Linguae Latinae</em></td>
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Map 1 Western Turkey.
Map 3 The Katakekaumene.