2 | Commemorative Cultures

As we saw in Chapter 1, the historical and institutional development of Hieradoumia in the late Hellenistic and early Roman imperial periods was in many ways unlike that of other parts of inland western Asia Minor. Large-scale migration into the region in the later Hellenistic period created an ethnically and culturally mixed society, in which it is effectively impossible to distinguish 'indigenous' Lydian and Phrygian elements from 'imported' Greek, Macedonian, and Mysian cultural forms. As a result of the settlement policies of the Seleukid and Attalid kings, urbanism in the region during the Hellenistic period was minimal, in terms both of settlement agglomeration and *polis*-institutions; instead, the late Hellenistic *koina* of the region (the Mysoi Abbaitai; the Maionians in the Katakekaumene) seems to have served as a functional alternative to organization by *poleis*. The scattered villages of the region were, eventually, lumped together into *poleis*, but this development was (or so I will argue in Chapter 10) late and marginal. The result of this combination of trajectories, by the turn of the era, was a region which possessed a highly distinctive shared culture, but lacked a strong focus of collective identity.

Nonetheless, the strongest argument for treating Roman Hieradoumia as a distinct and meaningful culture zone is *not* the region's particular historical and institutional development between, say, 200 BC and AD 200. It is, instead, a case based on material culture – more specifically, the emergence in this region of two highly idiosyncratic and instantly recognizable local commemorative practices, the familial epitaph and the propitiation-*stēlē*. It is almost entirely from these two categories of epigraphic monument that our knowledge of the social structure of Hieradoumia derives. The aim of the present chapter is to introduce these two categories of monument, to describe their distribution in time and space, and to indicate some of the ways in which they can be used to reconstruct the particular statics and dynamics of Hieradoumian society. As we will see, although the two kinds of monument were set up in different places and to very different ends, they in fact bear close resemblances in both physical appearance and – more

25

surprisingly – in textual content.[1] As these formal similarities suggest, both commemorative practices should be seen as ways of expressing a single distinctive Hieradoumian cultural 'outlook' on the world. In Alois Riegl's famously knotty formulation, they are different facets of a single *Kunstwollen* or 'artistic volition' – the expression in diverse artistic and textual genres of a single distinct worldview, specific to a particular place and time.[2]

It is, of course, hardly surprising that the inscribed monuments of one region look different from those of another region. Microregional diversity in epigraphic practice (particularly the funerary sphere) is characteristic of much of the ancient Greek world, both at the level of the individual city and its territory, and at the level of cultural regions as a whole; inner Anatolia is no exception.[3] Nonetheless, the geographic clarity and definition of the Hieradoumian 'material culture zone' is striking and significant, and it maps with satisfying precision onto that stretch of the middle Hermos valley which underwent the peculiar pattern of historical and institutional development described above. As I will argue throughout this book, there is good reason to think that the distinctive *Kunstwollen* of the rural communities of the middle Hermos valley, as expressed in their two chief commemorative cultures, may reflect real differences between the social structure of this region and other parts of inland western Asia Minor. If so, that is perhaps rather exciting, and might even be methodologically consequential.

2.1 Familial Epitaphs in Roman Hieradoumia: Overview

Between the first and third century AD, the men and women of Hieradoumia regularly commemorated their dead with a highly distinctive local type of epitaph. Here is a characteristic example, from a village on the territory of Saittai, dated to early AD 167:[4]

---

[1] It is infuriating that – to the best of my knowledge – not a single one of the thousands of inscribed monuments from the region was discovered *in situ*. We do not know what a Hieradoumian village graveyard looked like, nor how propitiatory *stēlai* were disposed within rural sanctuaries (although see Chapter 8, Section 8.2).

[2] Riegl 1901, 209–18, esp. 215, with Ginzburg 1989, 45. As it happens, my own large cultural generalizations derive primarily (though not only) from close formalist analysis of the textual content of the monuments rather than their decorative features; but the analogy stands. More on this in Chapter 10.

[3] Thonemann 2013b, 36–7; Kelp 2013, 2015.

[4] *TAM* V 1, 175, from Hacı Hüseyn Damları, in the far south-east of the territory of Saittai, near Kalburcu (Map 3).

ἔτους σνα′, μη(νὸς) Δύ-
στρου ηι′.
Ἡρακλείδης β′ καὶ
Φλ. Σωφρόνη Σωφρό-
5   νην τὴν ἑαυτῶν θυγα-
τέρα καὶ Εὔδοξος ὁ ἀνὴρ
καὶ Δημόφιλος καὶ Νύσα οἱ
ἑκυροὶ καὶ Ἡρακλείδης ὁ υἱὸς
καὶ Δημόφιλος ὁ δαὴρ καὶ οἱ ἴδι-
10   οι πάντες ἐτείμησαν ζήσα-
σαν ἔτη κϛ′.

Year 251, Day 18 of the month Dystros. Herakleides, son of Herakleides, and Fl(avia) Sophrone (honoured) Sophrone their daughter, and Eudoxos her husband (honoured her), and Demophilos and Nysa her husband's parents, and Herakleides her son, and Demophilos her husband's brother, and all her own people (*idioi*) honoured her, having lived for 26 years.

Around a thousand epitaphs of this basic type are known, almost all of them dating between the mid-first and the mid-third century AD.[5] The 'Hieradoumian' epitaph type is characterized by four distinctive features:

(1) *Physical form and decoration*. The monuments typically take the form of a thin trapezoidal marble *stēlē* tapering towards the top, terminating in a triangular pediment with akroteria, with a rough *tenon* below for fixing to the ground. The upper part of the shaft generally carries a depiction of a vegetal wreath, incised or in low inset relief, either above the inscribed text or – as in the example depicted in Figure 2.1 – between the date and the remainder of the text. In a minority of cases, instead of a wreath, the upper part of the shaft bears a sculptural depiction of the deceased (who may be accompanied by one or more other figures), either in a recessed niche or in low relief projecting forward from the face of the shaft.

(2) *Date and age*. The overwhelming majority of epitaphs either begin or conclude with a date in the form Year – Month – Day (more rarely, Year – Month, or Year alone), indicating – as we will see shortly – date

---

[5] Figure 2.7 below shows only the chronological distribution of the 781 epitaphs from Hieradoumia and neighbouring regions which are precisely datable to the year; around a hundred further dated epitaphs cannot be assigned to a particular year, either through uncertainty as to the era in use (Sullan or Actian: see below), or through damage to the stone. If one were to include undated and fragmentary 'Hieradoumian-type' epitaphs, the total number of extant texts of this basic type from the region would be significantly over 1,000.

Figure 2.1 Epitaph of Sophrone, from Hacı Hüseyn Damları. *TAM* V 1, 175.

of death. Age at death is indicated in around 30 per cent of cases, as in the example quoted here.[6]

(3) *Grammatical structure.* The name of the deceased is invariably given in the accusative case, followed or preceded by the name(s) of at least one commemorator, always in the nominative. The act of commemoration is almost always indicated by means of the verb τ(ε)ιμᾶν, 'to honour', in the aorist tense (ἐτείμησεν in the singular, ἐτείμησαν in the plural). We very occasionally find other verbs used, such as στεφανοῦν, 'wreathe', μνησθῆναι, 'commemorate' (with the genitive), or καθιερῶσαι, 'conse-crate'.[7] The verb is sometimes omitted, leaving a simple 'accusative of the deceased' and 'nominative(s) of the honourer(s)'.

(4) *Familial commemoration.* Most epitaphs feature a more or less extended list (in the nominative case) of the relatives who joined in commemorating the deceased, most commonly consisting of around four to six persons, but sometimes running into the dozens. These relatives are sometimes accompanied by acquaintances and friends from outside the deceased's immediate kin-group, and/or by corporate bodies of one kind or other (trade guilds, cult associations).[8]

Not all of these features are found on every monument, but together they make a sufficiently distinctive 'package' that there is in practice no real diffi-culty in identifying and classifying marginal cases. Figures 2.2–2.5 illustrate some of the kinds of variation found within the basic Hieradoumian mon-ument type. Figure 2.2 is a 'standard' Hieradoumian epitaph from the ter-ritory of Saittai, with virtually the full complement of typical textual and iconographic features (lacking only the day of the month and the age of the deceased).[9] Figure 2.3, from Silandos, includes all the same formal features,

---

[6] See Chapter 3, Section 3.4. Broux and Clarysse 2009, 32 note that the age of the deceased is less frequently found on epitaphs antedating *c.* AD 140.

[7] στεφανοῦν: *TAM* V 1, 775 (Loros, 45 BC); *SEG* 57, 1212 (Saittai: Hellenistic); *SEG* 40, 1077 (Uşak: imperial period). ἐμνήσθη/-ησαν: *TAM* V 1, 133 (Saittai); *SEG* 29, 1161 (Daldis); *TAM* V 3, 1773, 1783 (Philadelphia). καθιέρωσεν/-αν: *TAM* V 1, 177 (Saittai); *TAM* V 1, 298 (Kula); *SEG* 38, 1232 (unknown provenance); *SEG* 40, 1077 (Uşak); *TAM* V 3, 1784 (Tetrapyrgia), with bibliography; cf. *TAM* V 1, 285 (Kula), where the deceased appears to be 'consecrated' to Zeus Ktesios. The verb ἀνατίθημι is occasionally found: *SEG* 35, 1235 (Saittai: with the dative); *TAM* V 1, 682 (Charakipolis: with the accusative). The formula in *SEG* 49, 1673 (Saittai: στήλην θῆκαν, with the dative) is anomalous.

[8] For the various corporate groups of non-kin that appear in Hieradoumian epitaphs, see Chapter 7.

[9] *TAM* V 1, 102 (Çayköy): ἔτους ρϞϛ′, μη(νὸς) Ξανδικοῦ. Ἀπολ|λωνιὰς Ἀσκληπιάδου Ἀπολλώ|νιον τὸν ἑαυτῆς ἄνδρα καὶ οἱ | υἱοὶ αὐτοῦ Ἑρμογένης, Γάϊος |(5) καὶ Βρόμιος ὁ συμβιωτὴς αὐ|τοῦ ἐτείμησαν ('Year 196 [AD 111/12], month Xandikos. Apollonias daughter of Asklepiades (honoured) Apollonios her husband, and his sons Hermogenes and Gaios and his *symbiōtēs* Bromios honoured him').

Figure 2.2 Epitaph of Apollonios, from Çayköy. *TAM* V 1, 102 (Manisa Museum).

but is visibly of much cruder workmanship: both pediment and wreath are asymmetric, and the lettering is far less professionally executed.[10] By contrast, Figure 2.4, from the ancient village of Taza, is at the very top end of the scale for technical quality; it commemorates two individuals, a husband and wife (the latter still living at the time the monument was erected), and carries a relief depiction of the couple instead of a wreath.[11] Finally, Figure 2.5 is an epitaph now in the Uşak Archaeological Museum, of uncertain provenance,

[10] *SEG* 57, 1225 (Karaselendi): ἔτους ρνγ΄, μη(νὸς) Δύσ|τρου π(ροτέρᾳ). | Ἀτικὸς καὶ Γάμος καὶ | Θάλ⟨α⟩μος ἐτείμησαν |(5) Παπαν τὸν πατέραν | καὶ Νύμφη ἡ σύνβιος αὐ|τοῦ ('Year 153 [AD 68/9], on the penultimate day of the month Dystros. Atikos and Gamos and Thalamos honoured their father Papas, as did his wife Nynphe'). Note the various orthographic and phonetic peculiarities, absent from the more 'professional' text from Saittai quoted above.

[11] *SEG* 34, 1200 (Kavaklı): ζῇ. | ἔτους ροθ΄, μη(νὸς) Δαισίου α΄. | Ζεῦξις ὁ καὶ Γάϊος καὶ Ἀντίο|χος καὶ Φιλέρως ἐτείμη|(5)σαν Μηνόφιλον τὸν | [π]ατέρα καὶ Μελ⟨τί⟩νην | [τὴν] μητέρα ('Year 179, day 1 of the month Daisios. Zeuxis, also known as Gaios, and Antiochos and Phileros honoured their father Menophilos and their mother Meltine'.) The single word ζῇ, 's/he is living', is inscribed immediately below the feet of the female figure in the relief, indicating that Meltine was still alive when the monument was set up; the date therefore reflects the date of death of her husband Menophilos (see further Section 2.2).

Figure 2.3 Epitaph of Papas, from Karaselendi (Silandos). *SEG* 57, 1225 (Manisa Museum).

but certainly from Hieradoumia (probably somewhere in the eastern part of the region). The inscribed text is of the normal Hieradoumian type (date, ἐτείμησαν-formula, etc.), but the upper part of the *stēlē* carries an unusually elaborate relief depiction of the deceased woman, standing within a 'bower' of curling vine branches loaded with grapes, flanked by decorative pilasters with capitals supporting an archivolt with two fascias.[12]

In terms of their overall geographic distribution, 'Hieradoumian-type' epitaphs are almost exclusively confined to the middle and upper Hermos valley. The westernmost boundary of the Hieradoumian 'epitaphic zone' can be drawn very sharply along the western flank of the Katırcı Dağı mountain range, the dividing line between the territories of Gordos and

---

[12] *SEG* 39, 1294: ἔτους τμαʹ, μη(νὸς) Δίου δʹ. | Ἀφφιὰς Βάσσαν τὴν θυγατέ|ρα καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτῆς | καὶ ὁ σύνβιος αὐτῆς Ἀμιανὸς |(5) ἐτείμησαν μνίας χάριν ('Year 341 [AD 256/7], day 4 of the month Dios. Apphias (honoured) Bassa her daughter, and her brothers and her husband Amianos honoured her, for memory's sake').

Figure 2.4 Epitaph of Menophilos and Meltine, from Kavaklı (Taza). *SEG* 34, 1200 (Manisa Museum).

Loros to the east and the territories of Thyateira and Attaleia to the west (Maps 1 and 2).[13] To the west and south-west, the cities of the lower Hermos valley (Sardis, Magnesia under Sipylos) and the Lykos plain (Thyateira, Apollonis, Attaleia, Hierokaisareia) have produced virtually no epitaphs of this type. West-Lydian epitaphs generally take a quite different form: dated epitaphs are very rare, and epitaphs were typically erected (κατασκευάζειν, ποιεῖν) by a *single* individual for *several* family members, whose names are listed in the dative case.[14] To the south and south-east, Hieradoumian-type familial epitaphs do appear in the hill country north of Philadelphia, but

[13] West of the Katırcı Dağı, Hieradoumian-type epitaphs appear at Sarılar (*TAM* V 2, 840A-B), Görenez (*TAM* V 2, 1128), Hacıosmanlar (*TAM* V 2, 1059, 1095, 1156, 1213), and Akçaalan (*TAM* V 2, 1062 and 1064); all these villages lie in the far east of the territories of Thyateira and Attaleia, on the fringe of the Hieradoumian culture zone.

[14] Numerous examples in *TAM* V 2, 831–854 (Attaleia), 1044–1156 (Thyateira), 1371–1392 (Magnesia). Epitaphs of the west-Lydian 'dative' type also predominate at Gölmarmara, in the western part of the territory of Daldis (*TAM* V 1, 653–670); *SEG* 57, 1157 is a notable exception.

Figure 2.5 Epitaph of Bassa, uncertain provenance. *SEG* 39, 1294 (Uşak Museum).

very seldom in the plain of the Kogamos river itself.[15] No epitaphs of Hieradoumian type are known at Blaundos, in south-east Lydia. To the north, Hieradoumian-type epitaphs remain dominant up to, but not beyond, the Simav Dağları mountain range (ancient Mt Temnos). Two epitaphs of Hieradoumian type have been found at the modern village of Yassıeynehan, in the upper Selendi Çayı valley (probably the far north-east of the territory of Silandos); beyond Mt Temnos, only a single example is known from the territories of Synaos and Ankyra Sidera, in the plain of Simav.[16]

    Within the Hieradoumian culture zone, sub-regional variation is relatively slight. Most of the longest examples of Hieradoumian-type epitaphs, listing

---

[15] Hieradoumian-type epitaphs in the northern part of the territory of Philadelphia: *TAM* V 3, 1700 (Yeşilova), 1732 (Hayallı), 1734 (Kastollos), 1736 (Sarı Sığırlı), 1745 (Toygarlı), 1775 (Kastollos), 1776 (near Şeritli), 1845 (Bebekli), 1894 (Yeşilova). At Philadelphia itself, only *TAM* V 3, 1722, 1744, 1772, probably all brought to Alaşehir from villages to the north.

[16] Yassıeynehan: *SEG* 58, 1359 and 1360. Among the numerous epitaphs from the plain of Simav published in *MAMA* X, nos. 359–483, only one is of Hieradoumian type (*MAMA* X 458, from Savcılar).

dozens of separate family members, derive from the western part of the region (Gordos, Daldis, Apollonioucharax), although there are exceptions.[17] Most of the earliest dated examples seem also to derive from the west, particularly from the towns of Gordos and Loros. It therefore seems reasonable to suppose that this particular commemorative habit originated in the western part of the region in the late Hellenistic period, before gradually being adopted in towns and villages further up the Hermos valley to the east over the course of the first two centuries AD. Conversely, in the north-eastern part of Hieradoumia (in particular on the large territory of Saittai), epitaphs tend to be relatively short, typically only listing half a dozen relatives or (more often) fewer. Saittai was also home to a distinctive 'non-familial' variant of the Hieradoumian epitaph type, in which individuals (usually, but not always, adult males) are commemorated by a trade association or other corporate body rather than by their kin; epitaphs of this 'guild' type are all but unknown elsewhere in the Hieradoumian culture zone.[18]

It is particularly striking that the characteristic funerary practices of late Hellenistic and Roman Sardis seem to have left virtually no influence at all on the middle Hermos region. At Sardis, the most common form of funerary monument is the inscribed cinerary chest (usually bearing the deceased's name in the nominative, with no relatives mentioned), a monumental type which is all but unattested in Roman Hieradoumia.[19] The absence of Sardian influence on Hieradoumian commemorative culture is particularly striking in light of the abundant evidence for members of the Sardian elite owning large estates in rural Hieradoumia (see Chapter 10, Section 10.2).

2.2 Familial Epitaphs in Roman Hieradoumia: Dating and Chronology

The overwhelming majority of gravestones from Roman Hieradoumia record the date of death, either at the beginning or at the end of the epitaph, and usually in the form Year – Month – Day. This is one of the most

---

[17] Lengthy examples from Gordos and neighbouring towns: *TAM* V 1, 701–707, 710–714, 725, 764–765, 768–769 (Gordos); *SEG* 57, 1156, *I.Manisa* 521 (Apollonioucharax); *TAM* V 1, 624–625 (Daldis). Extended lists of relatives elsewhere in Hieradoumia: *TAM* V 1, 432–433 (Nisyra); *TAM* V 1, 483a (Iaza); *SEG* 40, 1070, *SEG* 49, 1657 and 1660 (Saittai).

[18] See Chapter 7, Section 7.2.

[19] Alexandridis 2018. The Sardis-style cinerary chest does seem to have been in limited use in the area around Daldis–Charakipolis in the early Julio-Claudian period (*I.Manisa* 465, 467; *SEG* 57, 1147–1149), but it evidently did not catch on. Inscribed epitaphs on Sardian cinerary chests do often bear dates of death (usually the name of the annual Sardian eponym, month + day), and it is possible that this influenced dating practices on Hieradoumian funerary *stēlai*.

idiosyncratic features of the epitaphs of this region compared to other parts of the Greek East: the inclusion of dates of any kind on epitaphs is exceptionally rare in the ancient Greek-speaking world at any period. Here is a typical dated Hieradoumian epitaph from the city of Saittai[20]:

> ἔτους σϞζ΄, μη(νὸς) Ξανδικοῦ ι΄.
> Αὐρ. Βάσσος ὁ σύνβιος καὶ
> Αὐρ. Ἀσκληπίδης καὶ Αὐρ.
> Βασσιανὸς οἱ υείοὶ καὶ Αὐρ.
> 5   Φρούγιλλα ἡ ἐγγόνη Βάσ-
> σαν καλῶς βιώσασαν ἔτη
>   να΄ ἐτείμησαν.

Year 297, (Day) 10 of the month Xandikos. Aur(elius) Bassos her husband, and Aur. Asklepides and Aur. Bassianos her sons, and Aur. Frugilla her granddaughter honoured Bassa, who lived creditably for 51 years.

This particular tombstone, like most dated epitaphs from Roman Hieradoumia, carries the 'full' threefold dating by year, month, and day (Figure 2.6). Epitaphs dated by year and month alone are also widely found in the region; tombstones dated by year alone are distinctly less common.[21] The year of death is generally reckoned according to either the Sullan era (85 BC) or the Actian era (31 BC), or in a few cases both. Although the Sullan era was by far the more widely used of the two, some towns in the region did use the Actian era (e.g. Daldis), and hence Hieradoumian-type epitaphs which lack a firm provenance cannot always be dated with confidence.[22] The epitaph of Bassa is firmly attributed to the vicinity of Saittai, a city which is known to have used the Sullan era, and the text can thus be securely dated to AD 212/213.[23] In fact, in this particular case, the use of the Sullan era is neatly confirmed by internal evidence; 10 Xandikos of Year 297 of the Sullan era corresponds to early spring AD 213, very shortly after the *constitutio Antoniniana*. In the epitaph, the four surviving members of the family all bear the *nomen* 'Aurelius' (unattested in earlier inscriptions from Saittai), while the deceased does not.[24] It is therefore highly likely

---

[20] *TAM* V 1, 122 (İcikler).

[21] Broux and Clarysse 2009, 33: 'in about 14% of this type of stelae a month is given without any day indication'.

[22] There are also several cases of funerary *stēlai* which have migrated *within* Hieradoumia in recent years: Thonemann 2015, 132 n.55; Thonemann 2019, 132 no. 8.

[23] Herrmann 1972, 526–9; Leschhorn 1993, 301–35, esp. 318–21.

[24] Adoption of the *nomen* 'Aurelius' by families in Asia Minor immediately after AD 212: Robert, *Hellenica* XIII, 232–4; *MAMA* XI 201; Kantor 2016, 49–50. Another Hieradoumian example: *SEG* 57, 1230 (Thermai Theseos), a dedication to the river Hermos erected by Μᾶρκος Αὐρ[ή]λιος Ἄνβεντος, dated 18 Loos, Year 297 (Sullan era, mid-summer AD 213).

Figure 2.6 Epitaph of Bassa, from İcikler. *TAM* V 1, 122 (Manisa Museum).

that the *constitutio Antoniniana* took effect in Hieradoumia in the interval between Bassa's death and the erection of her tombstone.

781 epitaphs from Hieradoumia and neighbouring regions can be dated to the year with reasonable confidence.[25] Their chronological distribution, grouped by ten-year bands, is presented in Figure 2.7. Dated epitaphs of the first century BC and of the Julio-Claudian period are relatively few in number, with a slow rising trend across the first sixty years of the first century AD. Epitaphic production rises sharply in the Flavian period (after AD 70) and reaches a peak in the later Antonine and early Severan period (160s–190s); it then drops off very sharply in the second half of the third century, and inscribed epitaphs cease altogether in the early fourth century; 90.3% of all dated epitaphs from the region (n = 705) date to the two

---

[25] This figure includes around 30 dated epitaphs from Philadelphia, and a small handful of dated epitaphs from Sardis and the Kaystros valley. On the overall chronology of the epigraphic habit in Roman Hieradoumia, see already MacMullen 1986; Broux and Clarysse 2009 (who collected 606 dated funerary monuments from the region).
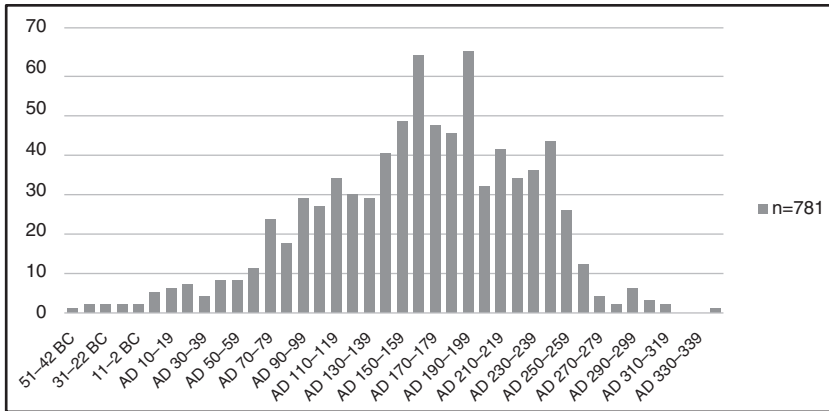
Figure 2.7 Chronological distribution of dated epitaphs from Hieradoumia and neighbouring regions (n = 781).

centuries between AD 70/1 and AD 269/70. As we will see later in this chapter, precisely the same overall trends can be seen in the chronological distribution of dated votive and propitiatory monuments from Roman Hieradoumia (Figure 2.17); dated public monuments from the region are too few for meaningful analysis.

Can we be certain that the dates on Hieradoumian tombstones represent the date of death, rather than (say) the date on which the tombstone was erected,[26] or even the date on which a copy of the epitaph was deposited in the city archives?[27] My view is that we can. In eight epitaphs – not, it is true, a particularly large number – the phraseology makes it all but certain that the recorded date does indeed reflect the date of death.[28] In one, highly

---

[26] The gap between these two dates could be a year or more: cf. *TAM* V 3, 1780 (Philadelphia): date of death, Year 178, Month XII Hyperberetaios 6 (late summer AD 148); tomb completed, Year 180, Month I Dios (early autumn AD 149).

[27] Explicit in several epitaphs from Thyateira (*TAM* V 2, 1051, 1075, 1080, 1084, 1144, 1149, probably 1150–1152); also at Blaundos, in south-east Lydia (Filges 2006, 340, no. 33). However, in all these cases, the deposition of a copy in the city archives is connected to the stipulation of a fine to the city treasury for illicit use of the tomb, and provisions of this kind are all but unknown in Roman Hieradoumia.

[28] (**1**) *TAM* V 1, 95 (Saittai: τελευτήσαντα ἔτους ρξβ′); (**2**) *TAM* V 1, 218, lines 5–7 (Tabala: τελευ[τ]ᾷ δὲ ἡ Ἄπφιον ἔτους σϞζ κτλ.); (**3**) *TAM* V 1, 289 (Kula: ἔτους τα′, μη(νὸς) Ἀπελλαίου Ἀσσκληπιάδης τελευτᾷ ιγ′, ἔτων ις′); (**4**) *TAM* V 1, 546 (*SGO* I 04/22/02, Maionia: ἔτους Ϟ′ καὶ γ′, μη(νὸς) Ὑπερβερταίου ε′ ἀπιούσ[η], μετήλαξεν Ἄρτεμις); (**5**) *TAM* V 1, 631 (Daldis: ἔτους τϛι′, μη(νὸς) Λώου δ′, ἐτελεύτησεν ὀνόματι Εὐκάρπη); (**6**) *SEG* 34, 1227 (Saittai: τελ(ευτήσαντι) ἔτ(ους) σπα′ κτλ.); (**7**) *SEG* 40, 1090 (unknown provenance: ἔτ(ους) σλθ′, μηνὸς πρώτου, ζήσας ἔτη εἴκοσι τελυτᾷ); (**8**) *SEG* 55, 1308 (unknown provenance: ἔτους σνγ′, μη(νὸς) Αὐδναίου ιε′, Ἕρμιππος τελευτᾷ ἐτῶν η′). Cf. Robert, *Hellenica* VI, 102.

anomalous case, a certain Dionysios of Saittai is honoured with *two* separate tombstones, erected by different corporate groups, both dated to 19 Peritios, AD 167/8; this date must surely reflect Dionysios' actual date of death.[29] Moreover, in a few cases where two or more individuals are commemorated by the same epitaph, separate dates are given for each deceased individual: in such instances, the two (or more) dates must surely reflect their actual dates of death.[30] More problematic are the numerous epitaphs which commemorate two or more individuals, but where only a single date is given; in such instances, I take it that the date probably reflects the most recent date of death, or the fact that one or more of the individuals commemorated is in fact yet to die.[31] In only a very small number of cases does the recorded date demonstrably *not* represent the date of death.[32] In the absence of strong arguments to the contrary, it therefore seems safe to assume that the dates recorded on Hieradoumian Lydian epitaphs do

[29] Thonemann 2017b, 192–4, on *TAM* V 1, 91 and *SEG* 33, 1018. We have no way of knowing whether the two *stēlai* originally stood side by side above a single tomb: compare the case of the two 'epitaphs' of Antonia of Sardis, Herrmann 1959, 7–8 (*Sardis* II 669–670), discussed further below.

[30] *TAM* V 1, 95 (three deceased, with a gap of seven years between the first and last deaths); *TAM* V 1, 289 (two deceased, with a gap of six years); *SEG* 60, 1291 (two deceased, with a gap of two years); *TAM* V 1, 704 (two deceased, with a gap of one month). This last example is a *post mortem* honorific decree of the city of Gordos, and we can thus infer that the dates on other such *post mortem* decrees (e.g. *TAM* V 1, 701–2, 705, 775; perhaps *TAM* V 1, 687) also reflect date of death, not the date on which the decree was voted. In a few cases, a second date is subsequently added to the tombstone in a separate hand, to reflect the burial of a second individual in the same tomb: *TAM* V 1, 218, 811; *TAM* V 2, 840; *SEG* 35, 1258; *SEG* 49, 1561; *SEG* 57, 1148; *I.Manisa* 241.

[31] *TAM* V 1, 35 (two *tethrammena*), 57 (parents), 61 (wife and daughter), 104 (two children), 167b (parents), 174 (parents), 191 (father and daughter), 198 (two sons), 212 (two daughters), 216 (parents), 434 (two siblings), 472 (husband and son), 480 (parents), 511 (two children), 547 (two sons), 591 (mother and son), 705 (wife's brother, parents, sister), 714 (two sons), 737 (parents), 803 (parents), 811 (son and grandson); *SEG* 32, 1216 (wife, son and *threptē*); *SEG* 32, 1235 (two daughters and a male child); *SEG* 33, 1015 (parents); *SEG* 35, 1270 (father, sister and brother); *SEG* 40, 1101 (two daughters); *SEG* 49, 1619 (wife and another female), *SEG* 49, 1727 (daughter and son-in-law); *SEG* 52, 1165 (parents); *SEG* 54, 1211 (five individuals); *SEG* 55, 1286 (husband and daughter-in-law); *SEG* 55, 1305 (two sons); *SEG* 55, 1306 (son and daughter); *Sardis* II 666 (husband and son); *I.Manisa* 376 (parents); Thonemann 2019, no. 1 (parents and son). In a few cases, one or more 'honoured' individuals are explicitly described as still living at the time the tombstone was erected: *SEG* 31, 1009 (= *SEG* 49, 1628); *SEG* 34, 1200 (see above, n.11); *SEG* 40, 1085; cf. *SEG* 53, 1341.

[32] In an epitaph from Koloe, in the eastern Kaystros valley, the date clearly reflects the completion of the monument: *SEG* 56, 1322 (ἐτελέσθ⟨η⟩ ἔ⟨τ⟩ου⟨ς⟩ σκζ′, μη⟨νὸς⟩ Πανήμου, Ἀπολλώνιος λατύπος); the same may be true of *Sardis* VII 1, 139 (lines 9–12, ἐποίησε μνίας ἕνεκα, ἀνθυπάτου Σιλβανῷ, μη⟨νὸς⟩ Ξανδικοῦ γι′) and Filges 2006, 342, no. 34 (Blaundos). The character of the date in *TAM* V 1, 741 (Gordos) is unclear; it *could* reflect the date of death of the (unnamed) wife of the tomb builder.

indeed generally represent the (or at least a) date of death; as we will see in Chapter 3, patterns in the seasonal distribution of recorded dates provide strong *prima facie* support for this assumption.

Of development over time in the Hieradoumian familial epitaph – evolution, refinement, decadence, decline – there is none. In both their physical form and their textual conventions, the last extant epitaphs, from the very early fourth century AD, are, to all intents and purposes, indistinguishable from those of the Julio-Claudian period.[33]

2.3 Familial Epitaphs in Roman Hieradoumia: Families

It is of course quite normal for Greek and Latin tombstones to be erected by close kin of the deceased. But the epitaphs of Roman Hieradoumia typically list not just one or two close family members, as is standard elsewhere, but family groupings which may run to dozens of individuals. In one extreme case, a deceased eighteen-year-old priest at the village of Nisyra was commemorated by no fewer than thirty-two named relatives, teachers and friends, plus seven unnamed spouses, and an uncertain number of children.[34] All of these kinsmen and friends are precisely located in the deceased's family tree: paternal and maternal uncles and aunts, brothers- and sisters-in-law, step-kin, foster-siblings, and so forth.

The form of self-representation of familial groups in the epitaphs of Roman Hieradoumia is very much *sui generis*: there is nothing else quite like this in the vast corpus of funerary epigraphy from the Greco-Roman world.[35] The only remotely meaningful analogies that I know of come from Rhodes and neighbouring parts of coastal Asia Minor (the Rhodian Peraia, Xanthos), where, in the second and first century BC, there was a short-lived trend for private honorific statues to be erected by large extended families – up to twenty-one relatives, including uncles and aunts, cousins, nephews and nieces, and kinsmen by marriage.[36]

---

[33] Three centuries separate *TAM* V 1, 152 (Ariandos, AD 8/9) from *SEG* 49, 1741 (region of Kula, AD 309/10); but you wouldn't know it.

[34] *TAM* V 1, 432 (Nisyra). The interest of this text is highlighted by Robert, *OMS* V, 692–4.

[35] Although, as we will see, there are some close connections with the funerary epigraphy of northern Phrygia, particularly the Upper Tembris valley.

[36] Fraser 1977, 58, 147–8 nn. 323–5; Rice 1986, 209–33; Kontorini 1993 (*SEG* 43, 527: a particularly elaborate example, listing twenty-one relatives); Ma 2013a, 160–3, 203–5. Rhodian Peraia: e.g. Bresson 1991, no. 3 (Kedreai). Xanthos: e.g. *SEG* 55, 1502. The verb

However, unlike in Roman Hieradoumia, these late Hellenistic Rhodian 'family monuments' were not tombstones; only in a very few cases can we be sure that the honorand was deceased at the time the statue was erected.[37] Nor is there any reason to think that this short-lived Rhodian familial 'statue-habit' exercised any direct influence on the commemorative practices of Roman Hieradoumia, and I suspect that we are dealing with entirely independent developments.

As a result of the commemorative practices of Roman Hieradoumia, we know more about family and kinship structures in this small region than in almost any other part of ancient western Eurasia.[38] As we will see in Chapter 4, thanks to these familial epitaphs, the kinship terminology of Roman Hieradoumia is known to us in extraordinary detail. We can reconstruct large extended families with absolute precision and can say something about how those families chose to represent themselves. Even if not all the individuals listed on an epitaph literally co-habited in the same dwelling, the fact that they (and not others) all joined in commemorating a deceased relative clearly tells us *something* about family forms in the region (see Chapter 5). Finally, we can start to say something about distinctive interfamilial strategies in Roman Hieradoumia: marriage, adoption, fosterage, and so forth.

The relationship of the 'honouring' individuals to the deceased seems generally to have been recorded as precisely as possible. The relevant kinship term can either appear in the nominative, describing the honourer (Μᾶρκος ὁ πάτηρ ἐτείμησεν Γλύκωνα, 'Marcus, the father, honoured Glykon'), or in the accusative, describing the deceased (Μᾶρκος ἐτείμησεν Γλύκωνα τὸν υἱόν, 'Marcus honoured Glykon, his son'). Similarly, if a man's brother's wife dies, he can either describe himself as her δαήρ ('husband's brother') or describe her as his ἰανάτηρ ('brother's wife'). In some epitaphs, kinship terms appear in the nominative throughout; in others, the accusative is consistently preferred, and sometimes we find a mixture of the two.[39]

ἐτείμησεν/ἐτείμησαν is not used on statue bases of this type: the verb is generally omitted altogether. Elsewhere in the Hellenistic world, inscriptions associated with private honorific statues typically name one or two family members of the honorand, almost always from his/her immediate nuclear family unit (parents, siblings, spouses, children: Ma 2013a, 155–239).

[37] E.g. *TAM* II 370 (Xanthos), a small funerary altar, where the honorand is described as ἥρωι (line 10).

[38] Robert, *Hellenica* VI, 94–8.

[39] Nominatives: e.g. *TAM* V 1, 210, 379. Accusatives: e.g. *I.Manisa* 521, 524. Mixture: e.g. *SEG* 40, 1044; *I.Manisa* 525.

The choice of one or the other 'grammatical perspective' was not entirely random. In describing cross-generational kinship relationships, there seems to have been a general preference for marking the elder generation: so the terms for 'grandfather/-mother' are far more common than the terms for 'grandson/-daughter'. Furthermore, individuals seem always to have tended to gravitate towards the most precise kinship term available. As we will see in Chapter 4, the inhabitants of Roman Hieradoumia had a very rich and specialized kinship terminology for different categories of uncle and aunt (the mother's brother, the father's brother, the father's brother's wife …), but no distinct terms for the nephew and niece. Hence when an uncle chose to honour his deceased nephew, he almost always opted to use the nominative (Γλύκωνα ἐτείμησεν Μᾶρκος ὁ πάτρως, 'Marcus, the uncle, honoured Glykon'), while when a nephew chose to honour his deceased uncle, he generally opted to use the accusative (Γλύκωνα ἐτείμησεν Μᾶρκος τὸν πάτρως, 'Marcus honoured Glykon, his uncle').[40] In cases where the terminology would have been equally precise either way (e.g. siblings, cousins), the choice between the two possible grammatical perspectives seems to have been more or less arbitrary.

It is very difficult indeed to say what determined the length of the list of relatives in any given text (although, as we have seen, there is a distinct concentration of longer texts in the western half of the region). At the village of Nisyra, in autumn AD 120, a certain Hipponeikos was commemorated by his mother and his brother alone; at the same village, in winter AD 183, a boy called Dionysios, who died nine days short of his tenth birthday, was commemorated by his father and mother, brother and sister, paternal uncle, maternal aunt, two unspecified kinsmen, grandfather, maternal uncle, six slaves, four friends, and three foster-parents.[41] Can we conclude from this that Hipponeikos lived in a tight-knit nuclear family and that Dionysios belonged to a sprawling multigenerational household? Or simply that Dionysios' family was

---

[40] So in *TAM* V 1, 625 (Daldis), nephews and nieces indicate their relationship with the deceased with the accusative τὸν πάτρως … τὸν μήτρως (lines 8–10), while his uncles and aunts use the nominative οἱ μήτρως … [ἡ τ]ηθείς (lines 13–14). The various Greek terms for 'uncle/aunt' appear *c.* 120 times in Hieradoumian epitaphs, while the Greek terms for 'nephew/niece' are effectively absent altogether (only six certain examples, plus perhaps an uncertain number of ἀδελφιδεῖς, relatives 'through the brother': see Chapter 4, Section 4.5).

[41] *TAM* V 1, 431 (Hipponeikos) and 433 (Dionysios): βιώσαντα ἔτη ιʹ, παρὰ ἡμέρας θʹ. For this 'sentimental precision', see Robert, *OMS* V, 312–14; *TAM* V 3, 1780 (an adult woman); likewise e.g. *SEG* 43, 817 (Ephesos), *IG* V 1, 801 (Sparta), *SEG* 26, 1193 (Rome) (small children in each case).

rich, and Hipponeikos' family was poor? It is better to confess that we simply do not know.

Nor can we be certain in any given case that the list of relatives honouring the deceased represents the complete register of those to be found around the family dinner table on Sundays (as it were). On occasion, the deceased is honoured by very small children, who cannot conceivably have been conscious actors in the commemorative process.[42] In at least two instances, individuals listed among those honouring the deceased were demonstrably already dead themselves (!).[43] In some cases, all the honouring relatives are recorded by name; in others, large parts of the family are listed in summary form, as in an epitaph for a brother and sister (perhaps twins) from Nisyra, who were commemorated by the brother's two children, the woman's husband and son, 'their paternal uncles and paternal aunts, their cousins, their foster-siblings, their relatives, their private association, and their homeland'.[44] In very many inscriptions, however, long or short the list of named kinsmen may have been, the register of those honouring the deceased is rounded off with a general summary phrase such as '... and all the relatives, acting in common' (καὶ οἱ συγγενεῖς πάντες κατὰ κοινόν), apparently a catch-all formula for those relatives who are not listed by name.[45] All this

---

[42] *TAM* V 2, 841 (Yeniceköy), erected by a one-year-old girl; *TAM* V 1, 105 (Saittai), a twenty-year-old mother honoured by her husband and infant son; *SEG* 39, 1280 (Saittai), a father honoured by, among others, a son less than three years old.

[43] *SEG* 52, 1165 (uncertain provenance), ἐτίμησαν οἱ υἱοὶ … ἡ νύμφη καὶ οἱ προάξαντες ὑπὸ ζόφον εἰερόνεντα; *SEG* 55, 1286 (uncertain provenance), Ἄφφιον Ἀνδρέαν τὸν ἑαυτῆς ἄνδρα ζήσαντα ἔτ(η) μ΄, ἐνοῦσα καὶ αὐτή, ἐτείμησε (see Petzl 2010). Cf. also perhaps *TAM* V 1, 494 (*SGO* I 04/22/03: Hamidiye), τειμὴν ἔλαβα ὑβὸ πατρός, [κ]εῖμαι δαὶ μετὰ αὐτοῦ, although here the father could merely be indicating his intention to be buried in the same tomb.

[44] *TAM* V 1, 434 (*SGO* I 04/20/01, Nisyra): οἱ πάτρως καὶ ἑ πάτραι, οἱ ἀδελφιδεῖς, οἱ σύντροφοι, οἱ συγγενεῖς, ἡ συνβίωσις, ἡ πατρὶς ἐτείμησαν.

[45] καὶ οἱ συγγενεῖς πάντες κατὰ κοινόν: e.g. *SEG* 56, 1293 (Hierokaisareia); sometimes in the form καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ συγγενεῖς, 'and the other relatives', as in *TAM* V 1, 725 (Gordos), and frequently. For the phrase κατὰ κοινόν, cf. e.g. *SEG* 29, 1164 (Gölmarmara); *I.Manisa* 427 (Daldis?); *I.Manisa* 521 and 525 (Apollonioucharax). The family is sometimes described with the noun ἡ συγγένεια: *TAM* V 1, 824 (Kömürcü); *I.Manisa* 533 (Daldis: a line missing from the transcription), καὶ ἡ συγγένεια ἐτείμησαν κατὰ κοινόν. In an inscription from Kavakalan (*TAM* V 1, 777 [*SGO* I 04/10/04]), nine individuals are described collectively as οἱ ἴδιοι καὶ προσήκοντες; it is not clear whether these two terms carry distinct meanings (e.g. 'consanguines and affines'?). For the phrase οἱ προσήκοντες, cf. *TAM* V 2, 1341 (Hyrkanis), οἱ προσήκοντες μητρόθεν γένους σου, 'belonging to your family on the mother's side'; cf. *TAM* V 1, 625 (Daldis), οἱ πατρὸς καὶ μητρὸς συγγενεῖς. Foster-kin (θρεπτοί, σύντροφοι) were not considered to be part of the συγγένεια: e.g. *I.Manisa* 292 (Saittai: οἱ ἴδιοι vs. οἱ σύντροφοι), *TAM* V 1, 777 (Kavakalan: οἱ ἴδιοι καὶ προσήκοντες vs. ὁ σύντροφος), *TAM* V 2, 1062 (Thyateira: οἱ συγγενεῖς vs. τὰ θρέμματα); *TAM* V 1, 626 (Daldis: οἱ συγγενεῖς vs. τὰ τεθραμμένα).

makes it difficult or impossible to use the funerary epigraphy of Roman Hieradoumia as hard statistical evidence for the size and shape of the extended family in the region: the list of named relatives provided in any given text seems not to have been governed by any firm rules or norms, but simply to have reflected the whim of the particular family concerned.

Nonetheless, the mere fact that we have so many epitaphs from the small towns and villages of Roman Hieradoumia listing so many members of the deceased's extended family and social circle is a significant and profoundly startling social phenomenon in its own right. Nowhere else in the Greek-speaking world (with the partial exception of late Hellenistic Rhodes) did people choose to commemorate their kin in this remarkable manner – why did they do so here? As we will see in Chapter 4, this commemorative habit in fact goes hand-in-hand with a far richer and more precise terminology of kinship than we find anywhere else in the Greek world. Hieradoumian funerary practices in the first three centuries AD therefore reflect a culture in which kinship relations were not just more visibly commemorated, but were actually *more finely defined*, than in any other part of the Roman Empire. And as I will argue in Chapters 5 and 6, although Hieradoumian epitaphic practice does not allow us to 'see' familial structures in a direct and straightforward way, recurring patterns in the ways in which extended kin groups chose to commemorate themselves can nonetheless tell us a very great deal about the characteristic forms of familial groups in the region.

2.4 Familial Epitaphs in Roman Hieradoumia: 'Honour'

A final distinctive feature of Hieradoumian epitaphs is the conception of the tombstone as an 'honour' paid by living relatives to the deceased, as seen most clearly in the ubiquitous epitaphic formula ὁ δεῖνα ἐτείμησεν τὸν δεῖνα, '*x* honoured *y*', a usage which is almost entirely confined to Hieradoumia and immediately neighbouring regions.[46] This 'honour' was primarily conceived as residing in the erection of an inscribed *stēlē* to mark the place of burial, rather than the act of formal burial *per se*. This is made

---

[46] The same usage is also found in neighbouring regions of north-west Phrygia, particularly the Upper Tembris valley: Robert, *OMS* II, 1344–6; *Hellenica* VI, 92; *BE* 1971, 603.

explicit in a few cases, as for instance in a verse epigram for a youthful doctor from Saittai[47]:

τὸν νέον εἰητῆρα | κασιγνήτη Διόφαν|τον
τείμησε στήλλη ξεστῇ κὲ γράμ|(5)μασι τοῖσδε
Τειμα|ῒς κὲ τῇσδε πόσις | Πραξιανὸς ἀμύμων.

The young doctor Diophantos – his sister Teimais honoured him with a carved *stēlē* and with this inscription, as did her husband, blameless Praxianos.

Several Hieradoumian epitaphs lay particular emphasis on the making and erection of the *stēlē* as the primary honour conferred on the dead, by singling out those relatives who took on the specific responsibility for the construction of the funerary marker. So, for instance, in a verse epitaph from the village of Iaza in the Katakekaumene (Figure 2.8), the deceased was 'adorned and buried' by all his (unnamed) kin and 'honoured with a *stēlē* and noble inscription' by his (named) foster-father and wife:[48]

ἐνθάδ᾽ ἐγὼ κεῖμαι Τρόφιμος ὁ τραφεὶς | εἰς ἄστυ Γολοίδων
κἀμὲ κάλυψε γῆ | ὡς Μοῖρ᾽ ἐπέκλωσ᾽ ἐν Ἰάζοις·
τὸν ἴδιον | κόσμησαν ἔθαψαν ἅπαντες,
τεί|(5)μησαν δ᾽ ἄρ᾽ ἐμὲν στήλη καὶ γράμ|μασι σεμνοῖς
θρεπτὸν ἑὸν Χροίσα[ν]|θος, ἄνδρα Ἑρμιόνη τὸν ἑαυτῆς.|
τοῦτο γέρας θνητοῖς, μνήμη δὲ | ἐώνιός ἐστιν.
ἔτους τζι΄, | (10) μηνὸς Ἀρτεμισίου.

Here I lie, Trophimos, who was reared in the city of Kollyda, and the earth covered me in Iaza, as Fate assigned. All my kin adorned and buried me, their kinsman; and Chrysanthos honoured me, his *threptos*, with a *stēlē* and noble inscription, as did Hermione, for her husband. This is the honour (*geras*) due to the dead, and my memory is everlasting. Year 317 (AD 232/3), month Artemisios.

---

[47] *SEG* 29, 1203 (*SGO* I 04/12/05); cf. *SEG* 27, 785 (uncertain provenance, ἐτείμησεν στήλλη); *SEG* 40, 1065 (Saittai: τείμης γράφες = ἐτείμησε γράφαις); *TAM* V 1, 96 (Saittai: ἐτείμησαν … στήλλη μαρμαρίνῳ); *Sammlung Tatış* 36 (uncertain provenance, στήλλη τίμησέ με τῇδε); *TAM* V 3, 1896 (*SGO* I 04/24/14, Philadelphia: βωμῷ τειμήσας). The metaphorical τειμή of a funerary monument was of course undesirable: *TAM* V 1, 550 (*SGO* I 04/22/04, Maionia), ἐτείμησαν ἐμὲν ἣν οὔποτε ἤλπισα τειμήν.

[48] *TAM* V 1, 475 (*SGO* I 04/19/04, Iaza). The relief depicts Trophimos with a staff in his left hand, leading two mules by the reins with his right hand; on mules in the region, Robert, *Hellenica* VI, 106–7. In *SEG* 31, 1020 (Saittai), the deceased's son-in-law is singled out as having made the *stēlē* himself (ὁ ποήσας τὴν στήλλην); likewise, in *TAM* V 1, 191 (Saittai), the son of the deceased constructed the tomb from his own resources ([κατ]εσκεύασεν τὸ ἡρῷ[ον ἐκ τῶν ἰδί]ων πόρων καὶ ἐτεί[μησεν]), while the rest of the family simply 'honoured' the deceased. Cf. also *TAM* V 1, 117 (Saittai: one individual singled out as having constructed the tomb); *TAM* V 1, 190 (Saittai: the *stēlē* erected by the deceased and her husband, with the rest of her family συντειμησάντων); perhaps also *TAM* V 2, 840B (Sarılar); *TAM* V 1, 682 (Charakipolis). Cf. *I.Ancyra* 287, a tombstone carved by a professional stonemason (λιθουργός) for his friend and his friend's wife.

Figure 2.8 Epitaph of Trophimos, from Ayazören (Iaza). *TAM* V 1, 475 (Manisa Museum).

A still more extreme example of conceptual separation of the burial proper from the 'honour' conferred by the inscribed *stēlē* derives from the city of Sardis where, at some point in the second century AD, a certain Apollophanes constructed a familial tomb for his deceased wife Antonia, for himself, and for other individuals specified in his will. The chief funerary inscription was inscribed on the front face of the tomb itself, which probably took the form of a monumental sarcophagus: 'Apollophanes son of Apollophanes, of the tribe Asias, constructed the memorial (τὸ μνημῖον κατεσκεύασεν) while still living for himself and for his deceased wife Antonia, daughter of Diognetos, etc'. But alongside this tomb structure, Apollophanes also set up a pedimental *stēlē* depicting his wife in low relief, with the simple inscription 'Apollophanes son of Apollophanes, of the tribe Asias, honoured her (ἐτείμησεν)'. This 'honorific' *stēlē* was only one element in a larger package of burial rituals, and its full significance would only have been

apparent to the viewer in the context of the wider tomb complex: indeed, the *stēlē* did not even carry Antonia's name.[49]

Explaining *why* the inhabitants of a particular region might originally have adopted a given set of epitaphic formulae is necessarily going to be speculative (assuming that 'why' is even a meaningful question in this context). But the honorific 'colouring' of Hieradoumian epitaphs does strongly suggest that this epitaph type might have originated in a kind of 'generic transferral' of the conventions of civic honorific epigraphy. The notion that the form and language of Hellenistic inscribed honorific decrees might have influenced the shape of funerary commemoration in Hieradoumia is not as implausible as it might seem at first sight. Across large swathes of inland Asia Minor, the habit of inscribing (Greek-language) texts on stone begins only in the second or first century BC; in very many places, the *earliest* inscribed texts known to us are civic honorific decrees.[50] For many communities in inner Anatolia, the practice of inscribing written texts of any kind on stone may well have begun with 'public' honorific decrees, and only subsequently been extended to 'private' texts like tombstones, making the idea of generic transplantation of honorific conventions into the funerary sphere less peculiar than it might intuitively appear.

The argument for 'generic transferral' can in fact be made more strongly than this. Among the earliest inscribed texts from Hieradoumia, dating to the late Hellenistic and early Julio-Claudian periods, we find a distinctive and unusual group of hybrid public/private monuments which blur together the genres of 'civic honorific' and 'private epitaph'.[51] In this group of 'hybrid' monuments, elite individuals are honoured after their death both by the local *dēmos* and by their grieving relatives. This genre seems to have been particularly popular at the small towns of Loros and Gordos, neighbouring communities in the valley of the Kum Çayı (the ancient river Phrygios), between the mid-first century BC

---

[49] Herrmann 1959, 7–8; *Sardis* II 669–670.

[50] E.g. Apameia (*MAMA* VI 173 and *SEG* 61, 1140, with Bresson 2012); Akmoneia (Chin and Lazar 2020); Aizanoi (Günther 1975), Synnada (Wilhelm 1911, 54–61), Themisonion (Michel, *Recueil* 544, with Wilhelm 1921, 45–8); Sala/Apollonia (*SEG* 63, 990: attribution uncertain); see further Thonemann 2013b, 25–8. Several of these texts are in fact posthumous honorifics, as at Sala/Apollonia, Aizanoi and Synnada.

[51] The earliest example perhaps *TAM* V 1, 468b (*SGO* I 14/19/01: Iaza, *c.* 130 BC): the *stratēgos* Mogetes honoured by the *dēmos*; wife, mother, and brother mentioned in the accompanying epigram. Cf. also the early hybrid text *TAM* V 3, 1894 (*SGO* I 04/24/12, Yeşilova: perhaps first century BC).

and the mid-first century AD.[52] Here is a typical example, from Gordos, dated to spring AD 37[53]:

> [ἔ]τους ρ′ καὶ κα′, μη(νὸς) Ξανδικοῦ α′.
> ὁ δῆμος ὁ Ἰουλιέων Γορ-
> δηνῶν καὶ ὁ Λορην⟨ῶ⟩ν δῆ-
> μος ἐτίμησεν Νέωνα Μη-
> 5 τροφάνου.
> *wreath*
> Μητροφάνης Νέωνα τὸν
> υἱόν, Ἀπφιας καὶ Μέναν-
> δρος τὸν ἀδελφόν, Θυνεί-
> της τὸν πενθεριδῆ, Ἀλκὴ
> 10 τὸν πρόγονον, Ἀρτεμίδω-
> ρος καὶ Ἀμμιας τὸν ἀδελ-
> φιδοῦν, οἱ συνγενεῖς καὶ
> οἰκέται χρυσῷ στεφάνῳ.

Year 121 [AD 36/7], day 1 of the month Xandikos. The *dēmos* of the Ioulieis Gordenoi and the *dēmos* of the Lorenoi honoured Neon son of Metrophanes. Metrophanes (honoured) Neon his son, Apphias and Menandros (honoured) their brother, Thyneites (honoured) his wife's brother, Alke (honoured) her step-son, Artemidoros and Ammias (honoured) their cousin (?), the kinsmen and slaves (honoured him) with a golden wreath.

These hybrid public/private monuments, which served simultaneously as a record of public honours and as a private tombstone, seem to be a local peculiarity of Hieradoumia (Figure 2.9). Naturally, monuments of this kind would only ever have been set up for members of the local elite.[54] But it is, I hope, fairly easy to see how they could have served

---

[52] *TAM* V 1, 701–705, 775; *SEG* 57, 1157 (Gölmarmara) and 1176; Ricl and Malay 2012, nos. 1 and 2 (*SEG* 62, 917–918). The earliest example dates to 45 BC (*TAM* V 1, 775), the latest to AD 76 (*TAM* V 1, 704). In each case, the *dēmos* had presumably voted some concrete posthumous honours to the deceased (a public funeral, bronze or marble portrait statues, a painted portrait, etc.): see also *TAM* V 1, 687–688 (posthumous honorific decrees from Gordos); on public funerals, Herrmann 1995, 195–7. See further Chapter 7, Section 7.3.

[53] *TAM* V 1, 702, found at Gördes; for the location of Loros, either near Tüpüler (immediately south-west of Gordos) or further downstream near Eğrit/Korubaşı, see Ricl and Malay 2012, 78–9; for the toponym, Petzl 2018. The precise scope of reference of the term *adelphidous* (lines 11–12) is unclear (see Chapter 4, Section 4.5): here it could signify 'cousin', 'nephew', or even conceivably 'step-brother'.

[54] Likewise, the earliest purely 'private' epitaphs from Hieradoumia are very clearly elite monuments: *SEG* 35, 1166 (*SGO* I 04/22/07, Maionia, late second or early first century BC); *SEG* 41, 1037 (*SGO* I 04/13/01, with Ma 2013b, 66–8: Yiğitler, late second century BC):

Figure 2.9 Epitaph of Neon, with posthumous honours conferred by the *dēmoi* of Iulia Gordos and Loros. *TAM* V 1, 702 (Gördes).

as a kind of 'intermediary stage' between Hellenistic civic honorific decrees and the ordinary sub-elite familial epitaphs of Roman-period Hieradoumia.

Various other elements of Hellenistic honorific practice similarly became 'fossilized' in the Roman-period funerary epigraphy of the region. On the most formal level, the use of the tapered pedimental *stēlē* as the typical form of gravestone in Hieradoumia – rather than (say) the sarcophagus, *bōmos*, *cippus* or doorstone – may well have been

Πατροκλείδης Ἀττάλου Ἀσκληπιάδην τὸν γαμβρὸν κα[ὶ] Στρατονίκην τὴν ἀδελφὴν φιλοστοργίας ἕνεκεν τῆς πρ[ὸς αὐ]τούς, χαίρετ[ε], 'Patrokleides son of Attalos (honoured) his brother-in-law Asklepiades and his sister Stratonike, for the sake of his affection towards them, farewell', followed by a twelve-line epigram. Although the verb ἐτείμησεν does not appear in the Yiğitler text, the 'accusative of the deceased' and 'nominative of the honourer' are already present.

Figure 2.10 Epitaph of Servilius, from Gordos. *TAM* V 1, 705 (Gördes).

influenced by the widespread usage of pedimental *stēlai* for the inscribing of honorific decrees in the Hellenistic period. Perhaps most striking of all is the vegetal wreath which we find depicted on the overwhelming majority of Hieradoumian grave-*stēlai*, either incised or (more often) in low inset relief. This iconographic feature is certainly a direct imitation of the visual repertoire of Hellenistic inscribed honorific decrees, which often feature schematic depictions of vegetal wreaths, reflecting the common practice of crowning civic benefactors with gilded wreaths. On the funerary *stēlai* of Roman Hieradoumia, the Hellenistic 'honorific wreath' takes on a complex and baroque visual life of its own: we find wreaths integrated into abstract decorative patterns (Figure 2.10); wreaths with a portrait of the deceased at their centre, looking out as if through a circular window (Figure 2.11); and giant, intricately carved wreaths with the entire epitaph inscribed within (Figure 2.12).[55]

---

[55] Abstract patterns: *TAM* V 1, 705 (Gordos, AD 57/8). Wreath surrounding portrait of the deceased: *TAM* V 1, 13 (Aktaş, AD 94/5). Wreath surrounding the epitaph: *TAM* V 1, 823

Figure 2.11 Epitaph of Oinanthe, from Aktaş. *TAM* V 1, 13 (Uşak Museum).

It is a delicate question whether the wreaths depicted on Roman-period Hieradoumian epitaphs should be understood as reflecting a 'real-life' practice of honouring the dead with wreaths, or whether this is simply a conventional visual shorthand for the respectful grief felt by relatives for the deceased. In favour of the first hypothesis, we can point to a substantial cluster of Hieradoumian epitaphs in which the standard verb of 'honouring' is expanded to the more explicit phrase 'honour *x* with a golden wreath' (τειμᾶν χρυσῶι στεφάνωι), as in the epitaph for Neon of Gordos quoted above.[56] When Greek cities honoured their benefactors with public

---

(*SGO* I 04/07/02: Kömürcü, AD 241/2). This last type is closely paralleled in a painted tomb inscription at late antique Sardis (*Sardis* II 693); the date alone is sometimes inscribed inside the wreath, as in e.g. *SEG* 57, 1154 (Taşkuyucak, AD 184/5 or 238/9). Note also *TAM* V 1, 682 (Charakipolis), the epitaph of a married woman, in which the wreath surrounds a depiction of a wool basket, as if it were the woman's domestic virtues being honoured.

[56] Explicit mention of family members honouring the deceased with a 'gilded wreath': *TAM* V 1, 775 (Loros: 46/5 BC); *SEG* 57, 1176B (Loros, AD 5/6); *TAM* V 1, 13 (Aktaş, AD 94/5), οἱ συγγενεῖς καὶ φίλοι πάντες ἐτείμησαν χρυσοῖς στεφάνοις; *TAM* V 1, 470a (Iaza, AD 96/7); *SEG* 57, 1175 (Iaza, AD 164/5); *TAM* V 1, 483a (Iaza, undated: a minimum of twelve gilded wreaths).

Figure 2.12 Epitaph of Hesperos, from Kömürcü. *TAM* V 1, 823 (Bursa Museum).

burial in the late Hellenistic period, the funerary honours conferred by the *dēmos* often included a golden or gilded wreath, which was placed on the deceased in the course of his/her funeral;[57] this practice probably underlies the incised wreaths surrounding the words ὁ δῆμος ('the *dēmos*') which often appear on late Hellenistic funerary *stēlai* from Smyrna and other parts of western Asia Minor.[58] In an early Hieradoumian-type epitaph from Saittai, a woman explicitly says that she has wreathed her husband 'with the

---

[57] Cic., *Flacc*. 75; Günther 1975 (Aizanoi, 49/48 BC); *I.Smyrna* 515 (*SGO* I 05/01/38: second century BC); Debord and Varinlioğlu 2001, 108–10, no. 4 (Pisye); Herrmann 1995, 196–7. In *I.Priene²* 67, lines 290–293 (decree for Krates, shortly after 90 BC), it is envisaged that Krates will be wreathed with a golden wreath at his funeral (ὅταν δὲ μεταλλάξῃ τὸν β[ίον], στεφα[νῶσαι] αὐτὸν [ἐπὶ τῆς ἐκφορᾶς στεφάνωι χρυσέωι]), and that anyone else who wishes will be permitted to add their own wreath ([ἐξεῖναι δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς ἐκφορᾶς τῶν] λοιπ[ῶν τὸν β]ουλόμενον στεφανοῦν Κράτητα).

[58] Robert, *OMS* III, 1411; Zanker 1993, 214; Herrmann 1995, 196 n.34. In Hellenistic Hieradoumia, note e.g. *SEG* 33, 1004 (Yiğitler, late second century BC: Chapter 1 above, Figure 1.6): epitaph of a cavalryman with four wreaths in inset relief, each 'conferred' by a different local *dēmos*; *TAM* V 1, 700 (Gordos: first century BC?), with Robert, *Hellenica* VI, 89–91: posthumous honours for a married couple, with seven incised wreaths associated with different parts of the citizen body, no doubt reflecting wreaths conferred at a public funeral. For public funerals in Roman-period Hieradoumia, cf. *Sammlung Tatış* 36 (uncertain provenance): the 'whole *polis*' participates in the funeral of a three-year-old (πᾶσα πόλις δὲ θανόντα προπέμψατο).

Figure 2.13 Votive dedication to Hekate, from Menye. *TAM* V 1, 523 (Manisa Museum).

wreath depicted above'; on a late Hellenistic gravestone from Maionia, a relief depiction of the deceased and his parents is surrounded by four small holes, probably for fixing a metal wreath to the front of the *stēlē*.[59]

All this seems strongly to imply that the wreaths depicted on Hieradoumian grave-*stēlai* represent real wreaths employed in funerary ritual. But some caution is required, since vegetal wreaths, either incised or in low relief, also appear in monumental contexts where we can be pretty certain that no 'real-life' wreaths were involved. Most notably, we have several examples of votive dedications to various deities inscribed on pedimental *stēlai* bearing images of vegetal wreaths (Figure 2.13).[60] In no case is there

---

[59] *SEG* 57, 1212 (Saittai: late Hellenistic): ἐστεφάνωσεν τῷ προκιμέν[ῳ] στεφάνῳ (which I take to mean the wreath 'lying before' the inscription on the *stēlē* itself); *SEG* 35, 1166 (SGO I 04/22/07, Maionia).

[60] *TAM* V 1, 523 (*SGO* I 04/22/01: Hekate: Maionia, second century AD; here, Figure 2.13); Malay and Petzl 2017, nos. 16 (Zeus Kananeirenos: 149/8 or 148/7 BC), 30–31 (Meter Anaeitis: early imperial), 39 (Meter Anaeitis and Meis Tiamou: 3/2 BC); 211 (Theos Hypsistos: early imperial). Cf. also *I.Manisa* 176 (genre unclear).

any indication that the votive *stēlē* serves even incidentally to 'honour' persons either alive or dead. The conclusion seems inescapable that on these votive dedications, we are dealing with an irrational transferral of a standard decorative schema into an epigraphic genre where it *no longer bears any representational meaning*. We therefore cannot rule out the possibility that on some, or many, of the hundreds of tombstones which bear an image of a wreath, the same may be true.

2.5 Propitiation-*stēlai* in Roman Hieradoumia: Overview

To turn from the epitaphs of Roman Hieradoumia to the propitiation-*stēlai* erected at the rural sanctuaries of the region is not just to move from one genre of evidence to another; it is to enter what appears to be a completely different moral universe. On their tombstones, in formulaic prose or sober and dignified verse, the peasants and small farmers of the region showed off the impeccable virtues of the deceased, and the honour dutifully paid to them by the large and tight-knit familial units to which they belonged. Yet when one opens the pages of Georg Petzl's extraordinary corpus of *Die Beichtinschriften Westkleinasiens* ('The confession-inscriptions of Western Asia Minor', almost all of which derive from Roman Hieradoumia), one is instantly plunged into a colourful world of theft, sexual promiscuity, impiety, witchcraft, and interpersonal violence, much of it conducted *within* those very same tight-knit family groups which represented themselves with such grave decency in their epitaphs.[61]

The sense of wild disjunction between the Dr Jekyll of the epitaphs and the Mr Hyde of the propitiatory inscriptions is only heightened by the remarkably close physical and formal similarities between the two epigraphic genres. In both cases, we are typically dealing with small tapering white marble *stēlai* with triangular pediments topped with palmette acroteria, often with a sculptured image in low relief at the top of the shaft; both categories of text typically begin or end with a date, in the format Year – Month – Day. The *stēlai* were evidently produced by the same workshops, and it looks very much as though the region's lapidary workshops produced generic 'blanks', which could be used equally for tombstones or for propitiatory inscriptions (or other dedications or votives).

What actually is a 'propitiatory inscription'? In the most schematic terms, it is an inscribed *stēlē* erected in a sanctuary, bearing a narrative

---

[61] Petzl 1994, with the supplement in Petzl 2019.

Figure 2.14 Propitiatory inscription of Claudia Bassa. *SEG* 33, 1012 (Petzl 1994, no. 12).

of a private moral or religious transgression which was subsequently punished by the gods (typically in the form of the death or illness of the perpetrator or a family member). The text usually goes on to narrate the way in which the perpetrator propitiated the god's anger (generally by the very act of inscribing and erecting the *stēlē* itself); many texts conclude with a short eulogy of the god's power. Here are two fairly characteristic

examples, from a rural sanctuary of 'Zeus from the Twin Oaks' on the territory of ancient Saittai (Figures 2.14 and 2.15):

> Διὶ ἐγ Διδύμων Δρυῶν· Κ. Βάσσα κο-
> λασθῖσα ἔτη δ΄ καὶ μὴ πιστεύουσ-
> α τῷ θεῷ, ἐπ⟨ι⟩τυχοῦσα δὲ περὶ ὧ-
> ν ἔπαθα, εὐχαριστοῦσα ⟨σ⟩τήλλην
> 5   ἀνέθηκα, ἔτους τλη΄, μη(νὸς) Περιτίου ηι΄.

To Zeus from the Twin Oaks. I, C(laudia) Bassa, having been punished for four years and having no faith in the god, having been successful concerning my sufferings, I dedicated the *stēlē* in gratitude, Year 338 [AD 253/4], day 18 of the month Peritios.[62]

> μέγας Ζεὺς ἐ⟨γ⟩ Δεδύμων
> Δρυῶν· Ἀθήναιος κολασ-
> θεὶς ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ὑπὲρ
> ἁμαρτείας κατὰ ἄγνοι-
> 5   αν ὑπὸ ὀνείρου πολλὰς
> κολάσεις λαβὼν ἀπητή-
> θην στήλλην καὶ ἀνέγρα-
> ψα τὰς δυνάμις τοῦ θεοῦ.
> εὐχαριστῶν ἔσστηλο-
> 10   γράφησα ἔτους τμη΄,
> μη(νὸς) Αὐδναίου ηι΄.

Great is Zeus from the Twin Oaks! I, Athenaios, was punished by the god on account of my error, because I was unaware; and having received many punishments, I had a *stēlē* demanded of me in a dream, and I wrote up the powers of the god. I inscribed the *stēlē* in gratitude in Year 348 [AD 263/4], day 18 of the month Audnaios.[63]

---

[62] Robert 1987, 364–7 (*SEG* 33, 1012; Petzl 1994, no. 12); it is not clear whether Bassa's 'lack of faith' is conceived as the original cause of her punishment. The relief sculpture above the text depicts (I assume) Bassa herself at top right, placing an uncertain object (incense?) on a small altar; the bearded male figure at top left, carrying a wreath in his right hand, is presumably a priest (likewise in Figure 2.15); the two smaller figures with raised right hands in the lower register perhaps represent the 'crowd' who witnessed Bassa's public propitiation at the sanctuary (see Chapter 10, n. 94). The imagery is strikingly disconnected from the textual content of the inscription; I do not know what the ritual significance of the gesture above the altar or the priestly wreath-bearing might have been.

[63] Robert 1987, 360–4 (*SEG* 33, 1013; Petzl 1994, no. 11). On the phrase 'because I was unaware' (κατὰ ἄγνοιαν), see further below. The specification that the order to erect a *stēlē* was delivered in a dream is atypical, but compare Petzl 1994, no. 1 (the god appears to Meidon 'in his sleep'); Petzl 1994, no. 106 (the god appears in a dream); perhaps Petzl 2019, no. 143; Potts 2019, 100. The 'angel' who delivered the commands of Meis Axiottenos (Petzl 1994, nos. 4 and 38; Cline 2011, 60–5) may well have done so in dreams.

Figure 2.15 Propitiatory inscription of Athenaios. *SEG* 33, 1013 (Petzl 1994, no. 11).

As will be clear, a fair amount of variation is possible even between near-contemporary texts from the same sanctuary (which are probably the work of the same stonemason, at that). Physically, one has a pediment, the other does not; one begins with an acclamation of the deity ('Great is Zeus!'), the other with the name of the deity in the dative (indicating that the *stēlē* is formally a dedication *to* the god); one bears an account of the

god's 'demand' for a *stēlē* by way of propitiation ('I had a *stēlē* demanded of me'), the other does not – and so on. In light of this pervasive variation in form and structure, it is unclear how hard a line we can legitimately draw between these 'propitiatory *stēlai*' (a category which is, after all, a modern scholarly construct) and other votives and dedications from Roman Hieradoumia. Take, for instance, the following dedication from the sanctuary of Zeus from the Twin Oaks, dated around a generation earlier than the two texts quoted above (Figure 2.16)[64]:

μέγας Ζεὺς ἐγ Διδύ-
μων Δρυῶν Ποπλιανῷ
παρέστη καὶ ἀπήτησεν
αὐτὸν στήλλην, ἣν ἀπο-
5 δίδει μετὰ τῆς συνβίου
εὐλογῶν καὶ εὐχαρισ-
τῶν τῷ θεῷ. ἔτους σϟ-
δʹ, μη(νὸς) Ἀπελλαίου.

Great Zeus from the Twin Oaks appeared to Poplianos and demanded a *stēlē* of him, which he gives along with his wife, with praise and gratitude to the god. Year 294 [AD 209/10], in the month Apellaios.

Formally speaking there is very little indeed to distinguish this monument from the *stēlai* of Claudia Bassa and Athenaios quoted above: their physical form is extremely similar; the god 'demands' a *stēlē* from Poplianos in a dream, exactly as he would later do for Athenaios; all three dedicators speak of their 'gratitude' (εὐχαριστέω) to the god; all three texts end with the date of erection of the *stēlē* in the format Year – Month – Day.[65] In short, the category of propitiatory inscriptions is a 'fuzzy concept': a fairly easily recognizable subgroup within the larger category of Hieradoumian votive and dedicatory *stēlai*, characterized by certain loose affinities of theme (a concern with divine punishment and propitiation), but lacking hard definitional boundaries.[66]

---

[64] *SEG* 57, 1224; for the generic similarity to propitiatory inscriptions from the sanctuary, Chaniotis, *EBGR* 2007, 300, no. 66.

[65] Likewise, one might compare the propitiatory *stēlē* of Claudia Bassa with e.g. *TAM* V 1, 455 (Kula): [θεῷ ἐπηκ]όῳ Μηνὶ Ἀξιττη[νῷ Τ]ρόφιμος εὐξάμε[νος] καὶ ἐπιτυχὼν εὐχα[ρισ]τῶν ἀνέθηκα. |(5) [ἔτους …, μ]η(νὸς) Δίου βιʹ, 'To Meis Axiottenos, the god who listens; I, Trophimos, made a vow and was successful, and I dedicated this in gratitude. Year [-], Day 12 of the month Dios'. Both Bassa and Trophimos speak in sequence of their 'success' (ἐπιτυγχάνω), 'gratitude' (εὐχαριστέω), and 'dedication' of the monument (ἀνατίθημι)

[66] Further examples of marginal cases abound (Chaniotis 2009a, 117–18; Potts 2017). There is little distinction between Malay and Petzl 2017, no. 53 (a man is cured from illness, is grateful, and makes a dedication to Artemis Anaeitis and Meis Tiamou) and Malay and Petzl 2017,

Figure 2.16 Votive dedication of Poplianos. *SEG* 57, 1224 (collection of Yavuz Tatış, Turkey, inv. 2122).

2.6 Propitiation-*stēlai* in Roman Hieradoumia: Structure

As one would expect, the textual structure of the propitiatory inscriptions varies a great deal. Nonetheless, some standard (or at least recurrent) features can be identified. The inscriptions often begin with a short acclamation of the god to whom the *stēlē* was erected, in the form 'Great is Meis Artemidorou who possesses Axiotta and his power!'.[67] The 'narrative' part of the text frequently begins with the conjunction ἐπεί, 'since, whereas', a feature which is otherwise almost unknown in Greek votive and dedicatory inscriptions, and

---

no. 55 (Petzl 2019 no. 154: a woman is punished in her eyes, is saved, is grateful, and makes a dedication to Artemis Anaeitis and Meis Tiamou). Conversely, one might quibble about the classification of *TAM* V 1, 453 (Petzl 1994, no. 61) which features neither transgression nor punishment; or *SEG* 53, 1344 (Petzl 2019, no. 56), in which a man praises Meis at length for rescuing him from imprisonment at the hands of his nephew.

[67] Petzl 1994, no. 79: μέγας Μὶς Ἀρτεμιδώρου Αξ[ιο]ττα κατέχων καὶ ἡ δύναμις αὐτοῦ. The basic form is completely standard for Greek acclamations of deities: Chaniotis 2009b, 203–6; Potts 2019, 105.

which presumably should be taken as an imitation of the typical structure of Greek honorific decrees ('Since *x* has been a good man …'). The texts then proceed through a set of four fairly conventional 'narrative stages', not all of which are found in all inscriptions[68]:

(1) Almost all of the texts begin with at least some minimal description of the act which incurred the gods' wrath. In many cases, only context-specific vocabulary is used ('I swore a false oath'; 'I entered the sanctuary while in a state of ritual impurity'; etc.), but when the action is described in generic terms, the most common word used is (ἐξ-)ἁμαρτάνω, 'err', and the act itself is a ἁμαρτία or ἁμάρτημα, 'error'.[69] *Hamartia* is one of the most controversial terms in Greek ethical vocabulary, but it is widely accepted that the term does not connote 'sin', so much as a 'mistake of fact', a broad concept which may in Greek thought encompass both moral failing and ignorance of the true state of affairs.[70] Similarly, in Roman Hieradoumia, *hamartia* is demonstrably conceived primarily as an act of 'ignorance' rather than 'sin'. This is clear from the terms used as synonyms for ἁμαρτάνω: we regularly find people describing their actions in terms of 'unawareness' (ἀγνοέω) or 'forgetting' (λανθάνομαι).[71] This does not signify that they did not know that they were doing anything wrong, but rather – or so I take it – that they were 'unaware' of the gods' willingness to impose fearful punishments for what they themselves conceived as venial rule bending.[72]

---

[68] For various views on the number of discrete narrative stages in the propitiation inscriptions (three, four, six), see Belayche 2012, 321. On the vocabulary, de Hoz 1999, 114–24.

[69] ἁμαρτάνω and cognates appear in some seventeen texts in total: Petzl 2019, 77 and 81, Index *s.v.* ἁμαρτάνω, ἁμάρτημα, ἁμαρτία, ἐξἁμαρτάνω.

[70] The bibliography is vast: e.g. Bremer 1969; Stinton 1975; Belfiore 1992, 166–70.

[71] 'Unawareness': Petzl 1994, no. 10 (Stratoneikos cut down a sacred oak 'because he was unaware', διὰ τὸ ἀγνοεῖν αὐτόν); no. 34 (Hermogenes swore a false oath 'being unaware', ἀγνοήσας); no. 76 (Aur. Stratoneikos cut trees from a sacred grove 'in unawareness', κατὰ ἄγνοιαν); Petzl 2019, no. 155 (Trophimos laid hands on something 'in unawareness', κατὰ [ἄγ]γυαν). 'Forgetting': Petzl 1994, no. 6 (Pollio 'forgot' and crossed a boundary when impure, με ἔλαθεν); no. 112 (Eutychis entered the sanctuary when impure: 'I forgot', λημόνησα); no. 115 (a person 'forgot' and entered when impure, ἔλαθέ [με]). The concepts of *hamartia* and 'unawareness/forgetting' are sometimes combined: so in Petzl 1994, no. 11 (quoted above), Athenaios was punished 'on account of my error, because I was unaware' (ὑπὲρ ἁμαρτείας κατὰ ἄγνοιαν); in no. 95, Ammias was punished 'on account of her error, having spoken a word and having been forgetful' (δι' ἁμαρτίαν λόγον λαλήσασ[α] καὶ λαθαμένη – apparently a false oath).

[72] Chaniotis 1997, 360 (followed by Gordon 2004, 193; also Chaniotis 2004a, 24–6) takes these terms to be mitigating considerations introduced by the guilty parties to minimize their culpability (i.e. an insistence that they 'did not realise what they were doing'); this seems to me less likely (I do not see how one could be unaware one was swearing a false oath). See further Potts 2019, 114–22.

(2) The act of *hamartia* is then followed by a description of the divine punishment, again sometimes described with context-specific vocabulary ('the god slew him/her'), but most commonly indicated with the verb κολάζω and/or the noun κόλασις, or with the near-synonyms νεμεσάω and νέμεσις.[73] In light of this punishment, the perpetrator of the 'error' is compelled to acknowledge the power of the gods. The term used for this is ἐξομολογέομαι, 'recognise/acknowledge (the gods' power)', and the 'recognition' generally follows close after the act of punishment. The term ἐξομολογέομαι has in the past often been taken to mean 'confess (one's sin)', but this is certainly incorrect: the sense 'acknowledge the power of the gods' is explicit in one case, and in other texts, this sense is clearly preferable to 'confess'.[74]

(3) The gods then typically demand propitiation or redress, sometimes in response to a direct enquiry from the perpetrator as to what he/she needs to do to appease the gods' anger.[75] The technical term for the 'demand' made by the gods is ἐπιζητέω, sometimes with the form of redress explicitly specified (e.g. ἐπεζήτησε ὁ θεὸς στήλην, 'the god demanded a *stēlē*'); a few texts use instead a clause introduced by the verb κελεύω.[76] The act of propitiating or appeasing the god is indicated with the verb (ἐξ-)ἱλάσκομαι, in place of which we occasionally find the verb (ἐκ-)λυτρόομαι, 'pay a ransom', particularly in cases where the act of propitiation involves a payment of

---

[73] κολάζω/κόλασις appear in some 94 texts; for νεμεσάω/ νέμεσις, see Petzl 1994, nos. 3, 15, and 59; that the terms are effectively synonyms emerges from Petzl 1994, no. 57, ἐκολάσετο αὐτήν … καὶ ἐκέλευσεν στηλλογραφηθῆναι νέμεσιν, 'he punished her … and ordered her to inscribe the punishment on a *stēlē*'.

[74] 'Acknowledge the power of the gods': Petzl 2019, no. 146, ἐξομολογούμενον τὰς δυνάμις τῶν θεῶν. In Petzl 1994, no. 111, ἐξομολογοῦμε κολασθεὶς ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ means effectively 'I recognise that I was punished by the god'. For other examples, see Petzl 1994, nos. 3, 43, 109, 112, 116; Petzl 2019, no. 144. The verb is mistranslated by Petzl as referring to 'confession' (e.g. Petzl 1994, no. 3, ἐξωμολογήσατο, 'er tat ein Geständnis'), followed by many others (e.g. Belayche 2008, 181; Rostad 2020, 8). People do occasionally 'admit' to a criminal act in the propitiatory inscriptions, but the verb used is always ὁμολόγεω (Petzl 1994, nos. 68, 100, 106; Petzl 2019, no. 141). For the terms ὁμολόγεω and ἐξομολογέομαι, see further Potts 2019, 28–41.

[75] Indicated with the verb ἐρωτάω (9 texts): see, most explicitly, Petzl 2019, no. 146, ἐρωτῶντες τοὺς θεοὺς … ἵνα ἐλέου τύχωσιν, 'asking the gods … so that they might be pitied'.

[76] Petzl 2019, no. 125. The verb ἐπιζητέω is used in some 33 texts, with various different constructions (but always with the god as the implied subject: Belayche 2012, 330); it sometimes takes the 'error' as its direct object, as in Petzl 1994, no. 4, ἐπεζήτησεν … τὸ ἁμάρτημα, 'demand (propitiation for) the error' (similarly Petzl 1994, no. 40). The verb can be used in the passive, of a person who 'has redress demanded of them', as in e.g. Petzl 1994, no. 89 ([ἐπ]ειζητηθεῖσα ἀνέθ[ηκεν]); in a few cases, the verb is active in form but apparently passive in meaning, as in Petzl 1994, no. 75 (ἐπιζητήσασα ἀν[έθ]ηκεν), and probably in nos. 73 and 74 (ἐπεζήτησεν ἱεροπόημα, which I take to mean that the perpetrator 'had a ritual offering demanded of him').

cash or other goods to the deity.[77] The most common form of propitiation is the simple act of erecting an inscribed *stēlē*, often described with a phrase like 'writing up on a *stēlē* the power of the gods' (στηλ(λ)ογραφῆσαι τὰς δυνάμεις τῶν θεῶν).[78]

(4) Finally, texts often conclude with an expression of 'gratitude' to the gods (usually with the verb εὐχαριστέω), and/or a statement that in future the perpetrator and his family 'will praise the gods from now on' (ἀπὸ νῦν εὐλογοῦμεν and similar). The idea of 'bearing witness' (μαρτυρέω) to the gods' powers appears in the concluding lines of several texts; at the sanctuaries of Apollo Lairbenos and Zeus from the Twin Oaks, this act of 'bearing witness' is expressed in a standardized formula, 'I proclaim that no-one should despise the god, since s/he will have this *stēlē* as an exemplar' (παραγγέλλω μηδένα καταφρονεῖν τοῦ θεοῦ, ἐπεὶ ἕξει τὴν στήλην ἐξεμπλάριον).[79]

There is clearly some room for debate about what the 'central' function of these texts might be, depending on whether we choose to lay the emphasis on the original transgressive act ('confession-inscriptions'); the propitiation of the gods' anger ('propitiation-inscriptions'); or the act of praising and bearing witness to the gods' power ('exaltation-inscriptions'). To my mind, the accent ought to lie firmly on the latter two aspects, not the first. The transgression itself often not mentioned at all, or is described in only the vaguest of terms – sometimes no more than the simple statement that 'I erred' (ἡμάρτησα).[80] As we have seen, the concept of 'confession' is seldom explicitly articulated in these texts, and it is far from clear that the texts reveal any real conception of 'sin' or 'sinfulness'. No less important,

---

[77] The verb (ἐξ-)ἱλάσκομαι appears in some 21 texts; for the verb λυτρόομαι and cognates, see Petzl 1994, p.XI; Chaniotis 1997, 373; Chaniotis 2004a, 37–8; that straightforward cash payments were sometimes involved is clear from e.g. Petzl 2019, no. 133, where the λύτρον is divided equally between the gods, the village community, and the priests. A 'successful' propitiation is sometimes marked with the verb ἐπιτυγχάνω.

[78] Sometimes the act of erecting the *stēlē* is emphasized, with the verb (ἀν-)ἵστημι, 'set up', or ἀνατίθημι, 'dedicate'; sometimes the act of writing is highlighted, with the verb ἐγγράφω or (more often) στηλ(λ)ογραφέω (thirty-two instances).

[79] 'Bearing witness': e.g. Petzl 2019, no. 159, εὐχαριστῶ Μητρὶ Θεῶν Λαρμηνῇ καὶ μαρτυρῶ αὐτῇ τὰς δυνάμεις, 'I am grateful to Meter Theon Larmene and I bear witness to her powers'; likewise Petzl 1994, nos. 8, 17, and 68. 'I proclaim … exemplar': e.g. Petzl 1994, nos. 106–7, 109–112, 117, 120–121; Petzl 2019, no. 150 (Apollo Lairbenos); Petzl 1994, nos. 9 and 10 (Zeus from the Twin Oaks). The word ἐξεμπλάριον is a Latin loan-word. Broadly similar in function is the 'proclamation-formula' in Petzl 2019, no. 146, μή τίς ποτε παρευτελίσι τοὺς θεόυς, 'Let no-one ever belittle the gods!'.

[80] No transgression mentioned: Petzl 1994, nos. 38, 41, 51, 53, 75, 83–4, 89, 94; Petzl 2019, nos. 125, 133, 147, 154, 156, 169. Vague references to 'error': Petzl 1994, nos. 11, 24, 66 (ὑπὲρ ὧν ἁμαρτοῦσα ἐπέτυχεν), 73, 74 (ἐπεὶ ἡμάρτησεν … ἐπεζήτησεν ἱεροπόημα), 109.

the generalizing statements with which the texts conclude – the 'lessons learned', if you like – only very seldom refer back to the details of the transgression.[81] Instead, the take-home messages generally focus solely on the appropriate attitude to be adopted towards the gods and their powers: 'I proclaim that no-one should despise the god'; 'I shall praise the god from now on'; 'I have written up the powers of the god on a *stēlē*'. These formulaic phrases strongly suggest that the problem was not so much the original transgression itself, but rather the underlying contempt for the gods that these transgressions demonstrated.

It therefore seems to me – and I am certainly not the first to say so – that to call these texts 'confession-inscriptions' is positively misleading. It focuses on a relatively incidental part of the narrative (the description of the original transgression which revealed the perpetrator's contempt for the gods); it also introduces inappropriately Christianizing categories ('sin' and 'confession') which are largely absent from the texts themselves. The point of these texts is rather to bear witness to the power of the gods (as manifested in the punishment) and to encourage readers to adopt an appropriately respectful attitude towards the gods and their powers. Several modern scholars have therefore preferred to refer to the texts as 'propitiatory inscriptions'; although I am not sure this quite captures their primary function, it is certainly better than the alternative, and I have no appetite for inventing yet another name.[82]

2.7 Propitiation-*stēlai* in Roman Hieradoumia: Chronology and Geography

Given the difficulty of drawing clear dividing lines between propitiatory inscriptions and other private votives and dedications, it would be somewhat misleading to tabulate the chronological distribution of propitiatory inscriptions alone. Figure 2.17 therefore gives the overall distribution over time of all dated 'private' religious texts from Hieradoumia (propitiatory inscriptions, votives, dedications: n = 219). Sixty-one of these dated texts are classed as 'confession-inscriptions' by Petzl and are indicated in dark

---

[81] For exceptions, see *TAM* V 1, 179b (Petzl 1994, no. 10): 'I proclaim that no one should belittle the god's powers and cut an oak' (παραγγέλω δὲ, αὐτοῦ τὰς δυνάμις μή τις κατευτελήσι καὶ κόψει δρῦν); Petzl 1994, nos. 27 (no one should swear unjust oaths), 110; Petzl 1994, no. 123 (no one should eat goat meat that has not been offered in sacrifice).

[82] See e.g. Belayche 2008, 181, 193; Chaniotis 2009a, 116–18; Gordon 2016, 227 n.2; Hughes 2017, 151; Rostad 2020, 8–9.
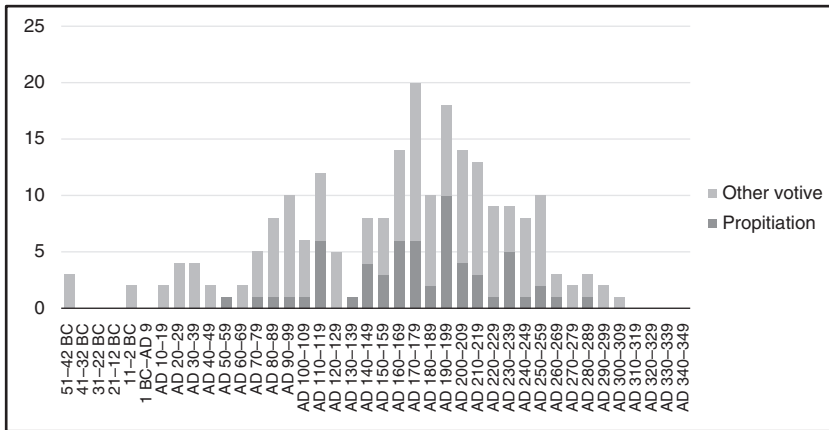
Figure 2.17 Chronological distribution of dated propitiatory inscriptions and other private religious texts from Hieradoumia and neighbouring regions (n = 219).

grey. As one might have hoped, the overall distribution is pleasingly similar to that of dated epitaphs from the region (compare Figure 2.7 above). We see the same paucity of dated private religious inscriptions in the late republican and Julio-Claudian periods (40s BC–60s AD); as with dated epitaphs, we see a sharp rise in the Flavian period (70s–90s), a peak in the later Antonine and early Severan periods (160s–190s), and a dramatic drop-off in the second half of the third century, with production of dated propitiatory and other private religious *stēlai* ending around AD 300; 87.2% of the dated propitiatory inscriptions and other private religious texts from the region (n = 191) date to the two centuries between AD 70/1 and AD 269/70; the comparable figure for epitaphs is 90.3%.

It will quickly be seen that the distribution of propitiatory inscriptions is broadly in line with that of other private religious texts, at least in the second and third century AD. However, the genre does not really emerge until the turn of the first/second century AD. The two earliest dated texts in Petzl's corpus of 'confession-inscriptions' are both in fact generically 'marginal' cases. The earliest dated text (AD 58) is an extended series of acclamations of Meis Axiottenos, with a narration of the help provided by the god in freeing the dedicator from custody; no 'error' or propitiation is involved.[83] The next dated text (AD 72) is the only known propitiatory inscription in verse (five elegiac couplets); the content fits well into the main run of propitiatory inscriptions (a man vows to erect a *stēlē* if he recovers from illness, fails to do

---

[83] *SEG* 53, 1344 (Petzl 2019, no. 56), with Chaniotis 2009a, 115–21, on the text's genre.

so, has further tortures imposed on him, and finally dedicates a more lavish *stēlē*), but the idiosyncratic use of verse may suggest that the generic 'norms' of propitiatory *stēlai* were not yet fully established.[84] We should probably see the later Julio-Claudian and Flavian periods as a transitional phase, during which the regionally specific Hieradoumian practice of monumentalizing acts of propitiation was gradually emerging out of older and more conventional votive and dedicatory practices. I will offer a tentative explanation for this chronology in the final pages of Chapter 9 below.

When we turn to look at the geographic distribution of propitiatory *stēlai*, we find some interesting similarities and differences with the distribution of the Hieradoumian-style familial epitaph. The geographic 'core zone' of both epigraphic practices is identical: the middle Hermos valley between Satala in the west and Tabala in the east, with dense concentrations of relevant texts on the left bank of the Hermos in the Katakekaumene (Maionia, Kollyda, and the villages to the north: Map 3) and on the right bank of the Hermos in the large territories of Saittai and Silandos (Map 2). By my count, 138 of the 175 texts in Petzl's corpus (78.9%) can be certainly or very plausibly attributed to this 'core zone'.[85] A further seven texts derive from closely neighbouring regions: one from Buldan, south-east of Philadelphia near Apollonia–Tripolis, and six from Sardis.[86] Eight monuments derive from various parts of western and central Phrygia, but in each case, their classification as propitiatory *stēlai* is questionable at best.[87] Twenty-one of the remaining twenty-two texts derive from the remote rural sanctuary of Apollo Lairbenos, some distance to the south-east of the main Hermos cluster, on the left bank of the Maeander in the modern Çal ovası (Map 1).[88] One final outlier is said to derive from Akçaavlu, in the upper Kaystros valley north-east of Pergamon; but since the text refers to a cult of Zeus Trosou, a deity whose sanctuary is known to have been located near the sanctuary of Apollo Lairbenos at modern Akkent, it is quite possible that this *stēlē* has 'migrated' northwards from the Çal ovası in modern times.[89]

[84] Malay and Petzl 2017, no, 188 (Petzl 2019, no. 171).
[85] Petzl 1994, nos. 3–97; Petzl 2019, nos. 125–142, 144–149, 154–172. This count includes fifteen texts from the territory of Philadelphia (Petzl 1994, nos. 83–97), almost all of them dedications to Meter Phileis, whose sanctuary was located near Killik on the northern flank of the Kogamos valley, on the fringe of the Katakekaumene (Malay 1985; *TAM* V 3, 1557–1618).
[86] Petzl 1994, no. 98 (Buldan); nos. 99–101 and Petzl 2019, 173–175 (Sardis).
[87] Petzl 1994, nos. 2, 102–105; Petzl 2019, nos. 151–153. Only two of these texts refer to 'punishment' (nos. 104 and 151) and none describe acts of propitiation.
[88] Petzl 1994, nos. 106–124; Petzl 2019, nos. 143 and 150.
[89] Petzl 1994, no. 1 (*I.Manisa* 55); for the sanctuary of Zeus Tros(s)ou at Akkent, see Akıncı Öztürk, Baysal and Ricl 2015.

Two features of this geographic spread are of particular interest. First, the total *absence* of propitiatory texts from the westernmost part of the Hieradoumian culture zone, west of the Demrek (Demirci) Çayı: we have not a single propitiatory inscription (and, for that matter, very few votive and dedicatory texts of any kind) from the territories of Gordos, Loros, Daldis, or Charakipolis, all of which have produced substantial numbers of Hieradoumian-type epitaphs. Second, the *presence* of a substantial group of propitiatory *stēlai* from the rural sanctuary of Apollo Lairbenos, far to the south-east of the main Hieradoumian culture zone, located in a region which has produced no epitaphs of the distinctive Hieradoumian type. There is nothing particularly disturbing about these geographic 'mismatches': it would, indeed, be startling if the spatial distribution of two distinct groups of cultural artefacts *ever* mapped onto one another with absolute precision. It is worth noting that the 'outlying' group of propitiatory inscriptions from the sanctuary of Apollo Lairbenos does in fact show some minor but consistent differences from the 'main' Hieradoumian group: none of the *stēlai* from the sanctuary of Apollo Lairbenos bear dates, and none of them include acclamations of the deity.

In short, the distribution of propitiatory *stēlai* in both time and space, while not identical to that of Hieradoumian-type epitaphs, is certainly close enough to suggest that the two monumental practices can usefully be treated as different aspects of a single distinctive regional culture.

2.8 Epitaphs and Propitiations: Towards a Cultural History of Roman Hieradoumia

This final point can in fact be pushed one step further. As we have seen, in formal terms, there are very strong overlaps between the propitiatory inscriptions and the epitaphs of Roman Hieradoumia: their physical form is more or less indistinguishable (pedimental *stēlai* with a decorative feature on the upper part of the shaft), and both categories of text typically begin or end with a date in the form Year – Month – Day. But the affinities between the two groups of texts in fact go further than that. One of the most striking recurrent features of the propitiation-*stēlai* is the conception of the immediate family unit as a single 'moral entity' which bore collective responsibility for the errors of its members. When an individual committed a *hamartia*, his or her closest relatives were considered to be implicated in the act in various ways: the god's punishment often fell not on

the perpetrator, but on one or more close kinsmen or -women, and it was very often other family members who ended up performing the formal act of propitiation (sometimes, but not always, after the perpetrator's death). Here, for example, is a propitiatory *stēlē* from a sanctuary of Meis Labanas and Meis Petraeites (almost certainly at the village of Pereudos), in which divine vengeance fell on the perpetrator's son and granddaughter, who are depicted alongside the penitent man in the relief panel (Figure 2.18)[90]:

> μέγας Μεὶς Λαβανας καὶ Μεὶς
> Πετραείτης. ἐπὶ Ἀπολλώνιος
> οἰκῶν ἐ⟨ν⟩ οἰκίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ παραν-
> γελλομένῳ αὐτῷ ὑπὸ τοῦ θε-
> 5   οῦ, ἐπὶ ἠπίθησεν, ἀπετελέ-
> σετο αὐτοῦ Εἰούλιον τὸν υἱὸν
> καὶ Μαρκίαν τὴν ἔκγονον αὐτοῦ,
> καὶ ἐστηλογράφησεν τὰς δυνά-
> μ⟨ις⟩ τῶν θεῶν, καὶ ἀπὸ νῦν συ
> 10   εὐλογῶ.

Great are Meis Labanas and Meis Petraeites! Since Apollonios – when a command was given to him by the god to reside in the house of the god – (5) when he disobeyed, (the god) slew his son Iulius and his grand-daughter Marcia, and he inscribed on a stele the powers of the gods, and from now on (10) I praise you.

This collective responsibility seems generally not to have extended very far within the family group. We have no examples of persons being punished for the sins of their uncles or aunts, brothers-in-law, or sisters-in-law. Instead, as is clear from a glance at Table 2.1, divine punishment generally fell either on the perpetrator or on his/her children alone; we have single instances of punishment being extended to the perpetrator's father, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, and granddaughter, and a solitary example where the perpetrator's 'whole household' was made 'close to death'.[91] It may be significant that we have no certain cases of a

---

[90] *SEG* 35, 1158 (Petzl 1994, no. 37): perpetrator at left, granddaughter at centre, son at right, all making the same gesture (raised right hand), which presumably represents acknowledgement of the god's power. The *stēlē* lacks a firm provenance, but the gods Meis Labanas and Meis Petraeites are known to have been worshipped together at Pereudos (*SEG* 34, 1219). For Apollonios' refusal to 'reside in the house of the god', see Chapter 8, Section 8.5.

[91] 'Whole household … close to death': *TAM* V 1, 179b (Petzl 1994, no. 10), with Chaniotis, *EBGR* 2004, 98 (*SEG* 53, 1505): ὁ θεὸς … αὐτὸν κατέθηκεν ὁλοδουμε⟨ὶ⟩ ἰσοθανάτους; for a possible link between this text and the Antonine Plague, see Chapter 3, Section 3.6. In a couple of instances (Petzl 1994, nos. 34 and 113), punishment fell on the perpetrator's livestock. Clearly collective responsibility is not at issue here; I take it that livestock were regarded as 'extensions' of a man or woman's person just as his/her children were, but as (say) his/her brother generally was not.

Table 2.1 Persons said to have been punished for a relative's *hamartia* in Hieradoumian propitiatory inscriptions

Petzl no.	Perpetrator	Person(s) punished (*killed*)	Person(s) depicted on relief
1994, no. 10	Male	Perpetrator and 'whole household'	Perpetrator
1994, no. 62	Female	Father	Victim
1994, no. 7	Male (?)	Son	Perpetrators and victim
1994, no. 64	Male	Two sons	None
1994, no. 69	Female	*Perpetrator and son*	None
2019, no. 127	Male	*Son and daughter-in-law*	None
1994, no. 37	Male	*Son and granddaughter*	Perpetrator and victims
1994, no. 34	Male	*Daughter, ox and donkey*	None
1994, no. 45	Male	Daughter	None
2019, no. 168	Female	Daughter	None
1994, no. 71	Male	Female relative	None
2019, no. 160	Male	Female relative	None
1994, no. 28	Male (?)	Son-in-law (?) and others (?)	None
1994, no. 113	Male	Ox	None

Figure 2.18 Propitiatory inscription of Apollonios. *SEG* 35, 1158 (Ödemiş Museum).

spouse or a sibling being punished: the underlying conception seems to be that divine anger tends, as a general rule, to travel 'vertically downwards' within the perpetrator's family lineage. In fact, this fits rather nicely with wider local conceptions of the 'heritability' of guilt: epitaphs from Roman Hieradoumia (and other parts of inland Asia Minor) often include a curse-formula stating that the gods' anger will pursue tomb robbers 'to their children's children', and in a propitiatory inscription from the village of Perkon, a penitent man likewise claims to have 'appeased the gods, to my children's children and my descendants' descendants'.[92] As it happens, we have no examples of foster-children (*threptoi*) being punished for their foster-parents' transgressions; but we do find the children of two women who have committed a *hamartia* of some kind collectively propitiating the goddess 'on behalf of their children and foster-children', indicating that it was seen as a realistic possibility that the goddess' anger might fall on either their natural children or their *threptoi*.[93]

When it came to the propitiation of the gods, we find a somewhat wider range of family members taking on responsibility for appeasing the gods' wrath, although still very seldom extending far beyond the immediate nuclear family group: the evidence is collected in Table 2.2.[94] Once again, the perpetrator's sons and daughters are by far the most heavily represented, although we also find spouses, siblings, grandchildren, foster-children, and – in a case where the offenders seem to have been children – parents.[95]

The underlying conception of the workings of divine punishment and propitiation is not in itself distinctive: as readers of Greek tragedy will be well aware, the concepts of 'ancestral fault' and 'inherited guilt' had a long

---

[92] Curse-formula (εἰς/διὰ τέκνα τέκνων and similar): Robert, *Hellenica* XIII, 96–7; Robert, *OMS* V, 282–3; Strubbe 1994, 73–83; Thonemann 2019, 131. Appeasement: *SEG* 39, 1279 (Petzl 1994, no. 6: AD 239), lines 19–21: ἱλασάμην τοὺς θεοὺς διὰ τέκνα τέκνων, ἔγγον' ἐγόνων.

[93] *TAM* V 1, 322 (Petzl 1994, no. 70, with addendum in Petzl 2019, p.19): εἱλασαμένυ … ὑπὲρ τέκνων καὶ θρεμμάτων, where (*pace* Petzl) the term θρέμμα must mean 'foster-child', not 'livestock'. In *SEG* 38, 1229 (Petzl 1994, no. 4), two *tethrammenai* propitiate the god for a *hamartia* committed by their foster-father.

[94] In the fragmentary text *TAM* V 1, 180 (Petzl 1994, no. 13) at least four family members are involved in some way (a man, his mother, his wife, and his sister). Several brothers seem to be associated in both transgression and propitiation in the fragmentary *TAM* V 1, 527 (Petzl 1994, no. 80); cf. *TAM* V 1, 466 (Petzl 1994, 28: several brothers, perhaps in the context of an inheritance dispute); *SEG* 54, 1225 (Petzl 2019, no. 125: two sisters). The family relationships in *SEG* 41, 1039 (Petzl 1994, no. 38) cannot be determined.

[95] Parents: *SEG* 37, 1737 (Petzl 1994, no. 22); it is not clear whether the perpetrators (a boy and a girl) are siblings. 'Underage' persons did not set up their own propitiatory *stēlai*: note *SEG* 37, 1000 (Petzl 1994, no. 58), in which a husband propitiates the god for his wife's false oath, 'because she was not yet of age' (μήπω οὖσα ἐνῆλιξ).

Table 2.2 Persons responsible for seeking appeasement on a relative's behalf in Hieradoumian propitiatory inscriptions

Petzl no.	Perpetrator	Person(s) responsible for appeasement	Person(s) depicted on relief
1994, no. 8	Unknown	'The family' (*syngeneia*)	None
1994, no. 22	Male and female	Parents	None
1994, no. 9	Male	Son	None
1994, no. 46	Male	Three sons	None
1994, no. 74	Female	Son	None
2019, no. 135	Female	Son	None
1994, no. 39	Male	Perpetrator and son	None
1994, no. 24	Male	Son and two grandsons (by a different son)	None
2019, no. 142	Male	Son and daughter's daughter	None
1994, no. 54	Male	Daughter	None
2019, no. 143	Male	Daughter and son	None
2019, no. 151	Female	Perpetrator and daughter	None
1994, no. 70	Two females	Daughters and sons	Perpetrators (breasts/leg)
1994, no. 36	Female	Heirs (*klēronomoi*)	None
1994, no. 69	Female	Daughter's daughter and her three brothers	None
1994, no. 44	Female (and her *threptos*)	Grandson	None
1994, no. 58	Female	Husband	None
1994, no. 102	Female	Husband	None
2019, no. 141	Male	Wife	Perpetrator (leg)
1994, no. 15	Male	Wife	None
1994, no. 68	Male	Wife, child and brother 'with the children'	None
1994, no. 34	Male	Wife (?), three sons and one daughter	None
1994, no. 72	Male	Brother	None
1994, no. 18	Male	Brother, heirs, brother-in-law (?)	Perpetrator
1994, no. 4	Male	Two foster-daughters (*tethrammenai*)	Perpetrator

prehistory in Greek thought.[96] What is unusual and striking is the decision of so many Hieradoumian families to place all the mortifying details of these familial catastrophes on public display, at what was no doubt a serious cost to familial honour. In short, just as with the familial epitaphs of Hieradoumia,

---

[96] E.g. West 1999; Sewell-Rutter 2007; Gagné 2013, especially 22–54 (theological justifications offered by Proclus and Plutarch); the Hieradoumian material offers a rare opportunity to observe the belief system in practice.

the propitiatory inscriptions of the region also served as a form of *familial self-representation*, underlining in both words and images – even in this most reputationally damaging of contexts – the solidarity of the family unit as the basic 'building-block' of Hieradoumian rural society.

As will by now be abundantly clear, the propitiatory inscriptions of Roman Hieradoumia are of immense value for our understanding of religious mentalities, ritual practices, and (thanks to their extensive descriptions of divine 'punishments') the social history of illness in Roman Asia Minor. Over the past generation or so, the texts have attracted a large body of first-rate scholarship coming from one or more of these perspectives.[97] For us, though, the primary interest of these texts lies elsewhere, in their status as a highly localized cultural epiphenomenon, the product of a particular rural society located very precisely in space (the middle Hermos valley) and time (the first three centuries AD). Indeed, as we have seen, one of the most remarkable things about the propitiatory inscriptions is how closely they map on to the geographic and chronological contours of the Hieradoumian 'familial' epitaphic habit. The two monumental genres can usefully be treated – as they will be in this book – as the two halves of a local diptych, speaking to us about a single, largely rural village culture. Put crudely, the epitaphic half of the diptych tells us about *social norms*: the ways in which individuals, families, and corporate groups wished ideally to be seen and remembered by their peers. The accent throughout is on honour, sentiment, familial and corporate solidarity, and the exemplary virtues of the deceased. The propitiatory half of the diptych tells us about moments of *social dysfunction* – moments when a member of Hieradoumian rural society has deliberately or (less often) inadvertently transgressed that society's collective norms. The epitaphs reflect the mechanisms of *solidarity* within peasant society; the propitiatory texts give us a series of brief but sometimes brilliant glimpses into the subterranean *tensions* of that society, when the interests of one family member rub up hard against those of another, or when one household ends up locked in a vendetta with another, or when an individual chooses to put him- or herself at odds with the wider community. Neither aspect of Hieramounian culture – neither the static nor the dynamic – can be properly understood without the other.

---

[97] The bibliography is ample (Petzl 2019, 4–7). I have learned most from Belayche 2006, 2008, 2012; Chaniotis 1995, 1997, 2004a, 2004b, 2009a, 2012; Hughes 2017, 151–86; Petzl 2011a; Potts 2019 (the best discussion of confessional practices in the wider Greco-Roman world); Rostad 2020. For the propitiatory inscriptions as evidence for the local cultural history of Roman Hieradoumia, see in particular Petzl 1995; Ricl 2003; Gordon 2004; Gordon 2016 (these last two of particular quality and interest). To the best of my knowledge the propitiatory *stēlai* have never been systematically set in dialogue with the region's epitaphs.

In the chapters that follow, I shall attempt to trace the outlines of the society that produced these two remarkable bodies of cultural artefacts. This society was, I will argue, a fundamentally *kin-ordered* one, in which laterally and vertically extended kin groups played a central role in the organization of social life. The forms and functions of kinship in Roman Hieradoumia will be described in three lengthy chapters (Chapters 4–6), dealing in turn with kinship terminology, household structure, and the circulation of children between households ('fosterage'). In Chapter 7, we will look at the extra-familial corporate groupings (friends and neighbours, cultic and trade associations, political communities) who appear alongside kin groups in commemorative contexts. Chapter 8 turns to the role played by the village sanctuaries of Hieradoumia in the organization of rural society, with a particular focus on land and labour. Chapter 9 draws on the narratives recorded in the propitiatory *stēlai* to evoke some of the inter- and intra-familial dynamics of village life in Roman Hieradoumia. Chapter 10 attempts to draw some of these threads together into a coherent picture of the social structure of Hieradoumia in the first three centuries AD. Before all that, though, we ought to begin with a few words about the region's underlying demographic regime.