



Summary :

Independent kome (large village) in Lycaonia founded in the early 1st c. AD on the hill of Kilisse Tchale. It was probably the base of a Roman military road guard corps and was still inhabited until the Late Roman period.

Geographical Location

Central Turkey

Historical Region

Lycaonia

Administrative Dependence

Province of Lycaonia

1. Name – History – Religion

Gorgoromeon Kome is located on the 100m-high Kilisse Tchale Hill, 1 km east of Akkisse (former Ak Kilisse), on the northeastern banks of Suğla Gölü (the ancient Trogitis Lake). A great amount of spolia was used in the walls of the modern settlement.

The place is described as a kome only in inscriptions, which also provide the ethnic name. The plural genitive form of the name also appears as Gorgoromon. Earlier bibliography reports the settlement as Gorgorome, while later bibliography uses the ethnic Gorgoromeis.¹ The first part of the name reminds of Gorgo, who is connected with Lycaon and [Perseus](#), two heroes of the Late Lycaonian mythological tradition. According to a tradition, [Iconium](#), the most important city of [Lycaonia](#), was named after the icon of Gorgo.² It has also been assumed that Gorgon, which is definitely connected with technical works, was a river Perseus beheaded and “tamed”.³ The second part of the name could be derived from *rome* (strength in Greek) or Rome. Perhaps the name of the kome shows the “strength of Gorgo”, the destructive power of the lake or of Irmak Çanal,⁴ or even indicates the coexistence of the old with the new ethnic element combined in the new settlement.

The kome was founded during the 1st c. AD in the region where the Homonadeis lived, when their land was brought under immediate military control after they were defeated by Sulpicius Quirinus in 4-3 BC. A cavalry and an infantry unit were stationed there, assigned with the duty of guarding the road leading from Mithion to [Old Isaura](#), which was a branch of the Sebastoi Road. A bridge was located along this road, 50 m to the north of the current bridge, over the south projection of the lake, to the southwest of the ancient settlement. The settlement probably prospered in the first four Christian centuries, the period also providing most of the finds.

The population of the city included veteran Romans and natives. The meagre occurrence of Greek names shows that the local society was not extensively Hellenised and maintained its own identity, which was enriched with Roman cultural elements due to the imperial military presence.

There are references to the cults of Zeus, Apollo, Tyche of Gorgoromon and "archpriest of the Sabastoi" ([imperial cult](#)). The identification of a local deity behind the name Poloxos reported in inscriptions⁵ must be incorrect.⁶

2. Topography

To the west and southwest the land of the city probably reached as far as the banks of the lake, while to the northwest it occupied a part of the irrigated plain including the villages of the region of Kara Viran and bordered the land of the city of Basada; to the north



and northeast it possibly adjoined to the land of the city of Sedasa, while to the southeast it reached as far as the elevation Karatepe, where a ὄρος of an unknown neighbouring city, whose ruins were traced near the village of Balikliavi, was found.

The earliest settlement occupied the northeastern sides of the Kilisse Tchale Hill, while the Late Roman settlement spread over the flat area at the top of the hill, where remains of several buildings and a stone reservoir were located. The cemetery of the city was traced at the southwestern side of the hill. The [sarcophagi](#) found in the walls of Akkisse houses and an ossuary depicting funerary banquets and figures in military outfits were discovered in the cemetery.

A church overlooking the lake and measuring 12x30 m was later built at the end of the flat area; its walls were preserved up to a height of 2 m until the 1970s.

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1. Sitlington Sterrett, J.R., *The Wolfe Expedition to Asia Minor* (PASA 3, Boston 1888), p. 130; Hall, A.S., "The Gorgoromeis", *AS* 21 (1971), pp. 125-166.
 2. Weiss, P., "Mythen, Dichter und Münzen von Lycaonien", *Chiron* 20 (1990), pp. 221-237; for Perseus, p. 227, n. 21.
 3. Nonn., Δ., 13.520-545; Ramsay, W.M., *The Social Basis of Roman Power in Asia Minor* (Aberdeen 1941), pp. 182-183.
 4. See Gorgopis Lake of Corinth, *RE* 14 (1912), column 1.658, see entry "Bölte", and Gorgos, a tributary of the Tigris in Babylonia, *RE* 14 (1912), column 1.660, see entry "Streck".
 5. Buckler, W.H. – Calder, W.M. – Cox, C.W.M., "Asia Minor 1924. I. Monuments from Iconium, Lycaonia and Isauria", *JRS* 14 (1924), pp. 24-84, particul. pp. 71-72, no. 105.
 6. *SEG* VI (1932), no. 537.

Bibliography :

	Ramsay W.M. , <i>The Social Basis of Roman Power in Asia Minor</i> , Aberdeen 1941
	Hall A.S. , "The Gorgoromeis", <i>AS</i> , 21, 125-166