



Summary :

Independent Isaurian kome (large village) of the Roman period, with an important sanctuary of Zeus, which can be traced in the area among other building remains found at Tamaşalık.

Geographical Location

Southern Turkey

Historical Region

Isauria

Administrative Dependence

Province of Isauria

Geographical Coordinates

X=Degrees: [32.403E]

Y=Degrees: [37.027N]

1. Location – History

Kome (large village) of [Isauria](#), whose ruins have been traced at Tamaşalık, near the village of Polat, 7 km NW of Hadim, in a woodland ending in the gorge formed at the northern Gök Su River.

According to epigraphic evidence, the place was a kome, whose name is deduced from the reported ethnic Astrenos. Therefore, the names Astra or Astros found in modern bibliography are disputed. The name probably comes from the word astron (star). It is also likely that Astrenon Kome was a Hellenised Isaurian settlement.¹ Epigraphic evidence is available only from the Roman period, when the place appeared as an independent Isaurian kome.

The deities worshipped in the city were reportedly [Zeus](#) Astrenos, whose priest held the unknown title of *banouais*, Hera and an unknown god called Stallos, probably a deity of the pre-Hellenic settlement.² Egnatia Mariniana, wife of Emperor [Valerian](#), was possibly worshipped along Zeus in the second half of the 3rd c. AD.

The settlement occupied a flat area on top of a steep hill, which was easily accessed only through a narrow strip of land to the west, in the area of the cemetery. The ruins of a small theatre,³ or rather an auditorium,⁴ and the sanctuary of Zeus are found at the top of the hill. There was possibly a temple of Hera too, since the name of the goddess was found carved on an altar among the ruins of a small rectangular building, 45 m to the east of the theatre. The auditorium at the flat part of the hill is built of limestone. The diameter of the area in front of the cavea is 5.20 m, the diameter of the first row (out of nine preserved) of seats is 5.50 m, while the seats are 0.42 m high.

According to inscriptions, the sanctuary of Zeus Astrenos consisted of a peribolos with a small temple⁵ and an altar, the god's temple – a 18.55m long building – as well as other buildings, such as a larger construction of unknown use to the west of the temple and a small circular building dedicated to Zeus. Parts of the sanctuary were financed by individuals, as evidenced by inscriptions. It should be noted that a wall of the sanctuary, perhaps that of the peribolos, was built thanks to the donation of 50 denarii made by three



craftsmen and an amount offered by the sanctuary, while the same wall was later rebuilt thanks to a temple's offer of 47 **denarii**; part of the sanctuary was built by a group of craftsmen including two stone dressers from Porind (o)s⁶ and another one from Astrenon Kome. The sanctuary must have been built in the mid-2nd c. AD, while it was definitely in use until the 3rd c. AD.

A building on the rocky Çataloluk Tepesi Hill, about 750 m south of Astrenon Kome, is possibly identified with yet another temple (?) of Zeus, where a 2nd c. AD list of Zeus' priests was found.

Finally, the area of the cemetery yielded a wall of **isodomic masonry** coming from a large burial monument and **sarcophagi** with lion-shaped lids.

1. Zgusta, L., *Kleinasiatischen Ortsnamen* (Heidelberg 1984) p. 104, no. 111.
2. It is also connected with the ethnic Σταλλαηνοί reported in inscriptions, which indicates the existence of a city under the name Stalla in Phrygia between Afyon and Astra, Zgusta, L., *Kleinasiatischen Ortsnamen* (Heidelberg 1984); see p. 104, no. 111; p. 586, no. 1255a.
3. Sitlington Sterrett, J.R., *The Wolfe Expedition to Asia Minor* (PASA 3, Boston 1888) p. 46.
4. Bean, G.-Mitford, T.B., *Sites old and New in Rough Cilicia* (TAM Ergänzungsbänd 3, Wien 1970) p. 130, picture 105.
5. This must not be the pronaos of the temple, but the entrance to the yard of the sanctuary.
6. Perhaps an Isaurian city or kome, Zgusta, L., *Kleinasiatischen Ortsnamen* (Heidelberg 1984) p. 504, no. 1086. The ethnic is difficult to read, Hereward, D., "Inscriptions from Pamphylia and Isauria", *JHS* 78 (1958) pp. 56-77; particularly for the ethnic, pp. 73-74.

Bibliography :

	Bean G., Mitford T.B. , <i>Sites Old and New in Rough Cilicia</i> , Wien 1970, TAM Ergänzungsband 3
	Hereward D. , "Inscriptions from Pamphylia and Isauria", <i>JHS</i> , 78, 1958, 56-76
	Sitlington Sterrett J.R. , <i>The Wolfe Expedition to Asia Minor</i> , Boston 1888, PASA 3

Glossary :

	denarius
Roman silver coin equal to two silver attic drachmas	
	isodomic masonry (opus quadratum)
A type of masonry in which blocks of equal length and thickness are laid in courses, with each vertical joint centered on the block below.	