The Lycus Valley, incorporating the cities of Colossae, Hierapolis and Laodikeia, was a hub for textile production. In the first century CE Strabo (Geography Book 12, Chapter 8, Section 16) noted the excellent sheep from Laodikeia with soft ‘raven-black’ wool:

The region of Laodikeia bore excellent sheep, not only for the softness of the wool, which also surpasses that of the Milesians, but also for the raven-black color, so that splendid revenues came from it, as do also the neighboring Colossians from the color which bears the same name.

At Hierapolis Strabo (Geography 13.4.4) described the excellent springs for washing and dyeing:

The water at Hierapolis is remarkably adapted also to the dyeing of wool, so that wool dyed with the roots rival those dyed with the coccus or with the marine purple.

In the first centuries CE unique woolen and luxury garments were manufactured and exported from Laodikeia. Situated at ‘the gate’ of the Lycus Valley on the Royal Road, Laodikeia was ideally positioned to trade its own textiles along with those from the rest of the valley. These three cities formed a union and exported their textiles via Ephesus.

The export of garments and wool from the Lycus Valley and particularly Laodikeia is best attested in the 4th Century in Diocletian’s Edict of Maximum Prices and the Expositio totius mundi.

Laodikeia is renowned for its garments and there is mention of garments unique to the city that are linked to its name. The ‘trimitia’, a tunic, was reportedly so famous as to alter the name of Laodikeia to Trimitaria. Ramsay indicates that Trimitaria was a title applied to Laodikeia but suggests that the name derives from τριμιτος that is a cloth manufactured in great quantity there rather than a garment. Famous clothes of one piece known as Laodicena are
Clothing Industry in the Lycus Valley

© Rosemary Canavan 2007

reported in the *Expositio totius mundi* along with a textile merchant, Julius Vericundus, attested in his epitaph as *negotiator Laodicenarius*, specializing in Laodicena or in textiles from Laodikeia.

Lodices were a garment first made in and exported from Laodikeia but they came into such general use that it became impossible to identity their place of origin by their name. This caused rival weaving centres who copied garment styles to list by garment type and weaving centre such as the Laodikeian chlamys.

An inscription of the 1st Century CE on a mausoleum in Hierapolis tells of a merchant, Flavius Zeuxis who sailed to the Malia Cape in Italy 72 times, presumably with garments and cloth from Hierapolis. Dyers were mentioned in inscriptions such as at Hierapolis. This one, probably dated to 2nd - 3rd Century CE, is on a large monument currently resting near the bath complex and before the triple portal Frontinus Gate at Hierapolis:

![Photo 2: Inscription on Heroon at Hierapolis](image)

ΤΟΥΤΟ ΤΟ ΗΡΩΟΝ
ΣΤΕΦΑΝΟΙ
Η ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑ ΤΩΝ ΒΑΦΩΝ
The association of dye workers honours this heroon.

Fullers, who both finished newly woven garments and also cleaned soiled ones, are included in inscriptions at Laodikeia.

The trade in high quality wool and garments catered to the needs of the very rich elite. The great weaving cities were located where there was an abundance of high quality raw material. Colossae and Laodikeia were among these. Medium priced and cheap clothing was produced locally.

Photos and Text by Rosemary Canavan