

# Who were the Lelegians? Interrogating affiliations, boundaries and difference in ancient Caria

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## Abstract

Who were the Lelegians? Ancient Greek and Latin texts refer to the Lelegians as an indigenous people, locating them in southwestern Anatolia in a region known in historical times as Caria. Yet attempts to find evidence for the Lelegians ‘on the ground’ have met with questionable success. This paper has two aims. First, it provides an up-to-date picture of the archaeology of ancient Caria and shows that there is little indication of distinctly ‘Lelegian’ forms of material culture during the first millennium BCE. Second, it juxtaposes archaeological evidence with the development of the Lelegian ethnonym and suggests that the idea of a distinct Lelegian identity was retrospectively constructed by the Carians to fulfil the role of an imaginary ‘barbarian other’. This happened in the late Classical and early Hellenistic periods, a time of intensified Carian ethnogenesis, and was a process that responded to and made creative use of earlier Greek knowledge traditions. Finally, this paper argues that a later horizon of Lelegian imagining occurred in modern scholarship of the 19th and 20th centuries. Who, then, were the Lelegians? This article proposes that they were an imaginary people, invented and reinvented over the centuries.

## Özet

Lelegler kimdi? Eski Yunanca ve Latince metinler, Leleglerden yerli bir halk olarak söz eder ve onları, güneybatı Anadolu’da tarihsel dönemlerde Karia olarak bilinen bir bölgede konumlandırır. Yine de Lelegler için ‘sahada’ kanıt bulma girişimleri tartışmaya açık bir başarıyla sonuçlanmıştır. Bu makalenin iki amacı bulunmaktadır. İlki antik Karia arkeolojisinin güncel bir resmini sunmak ve MÖ birinci binyılda belirgin bir şekilde “Leleg”lerle ilgili materyal kültür formlarına dair çok az kanıt olduğunu göstermektir. İkinci amacı ise, arkeolojik kanıtları Leleg etnik isminin gelişimiyle birlikte değerlendirerek, farklı bir Leleg kimliği fikrinin geriye dönük olarak Kariyalılar tarafından “öteki barbarlar” rolünü yerine getirmek için yaratılan hayali bir topluluk olduğunu ileri sürmektir. Bu, Karia etnik kökeninin yoğunlaştığı bir dönem olan geç Klasik ve erken Hellenistik dönemlerde meydana gelmiş ve daha önceki Yunan bilgi geleneklerine karşılık gelen ve onları yaratıcı bir şekilde kullanan bir süreç olmuştur. Son olarak, bu çalışmada, 19. ve 20. yüzyılların modern biliminde Leleg tasavvurunun daha geç bir anlayış biçimi tartışılmaktadır. O halde Lelegler kimdi? Bu makalede, onların yüzyıllar boyunca yaratılan ve yeniden keşfedilen hayali bir halk oldukları öne sürülmektedir.

The southwestern Anatolian region, known in historical times as Caria, was diverse throughout its early history. Carian territory centred on Mylasa (modern Milas) and Halicarnassus (Bodrum) and extended from the mountainous area south of the Meander (Büyük Menderes) River valley in the north to the Indus (Dalaman) River in the south and from the Aegean coast

in the west to the Marsyas (Çine) River valley in the east (fig. 1; Hornblower 1982: 1–4; Marchese 1989: 11–20). The heterogeneous quality of this region was in part determined by its landscape, consisting of jagged coastline with hills rising immediately beyond and fragmented inland regions with narrow valleys and mid-range mountains.

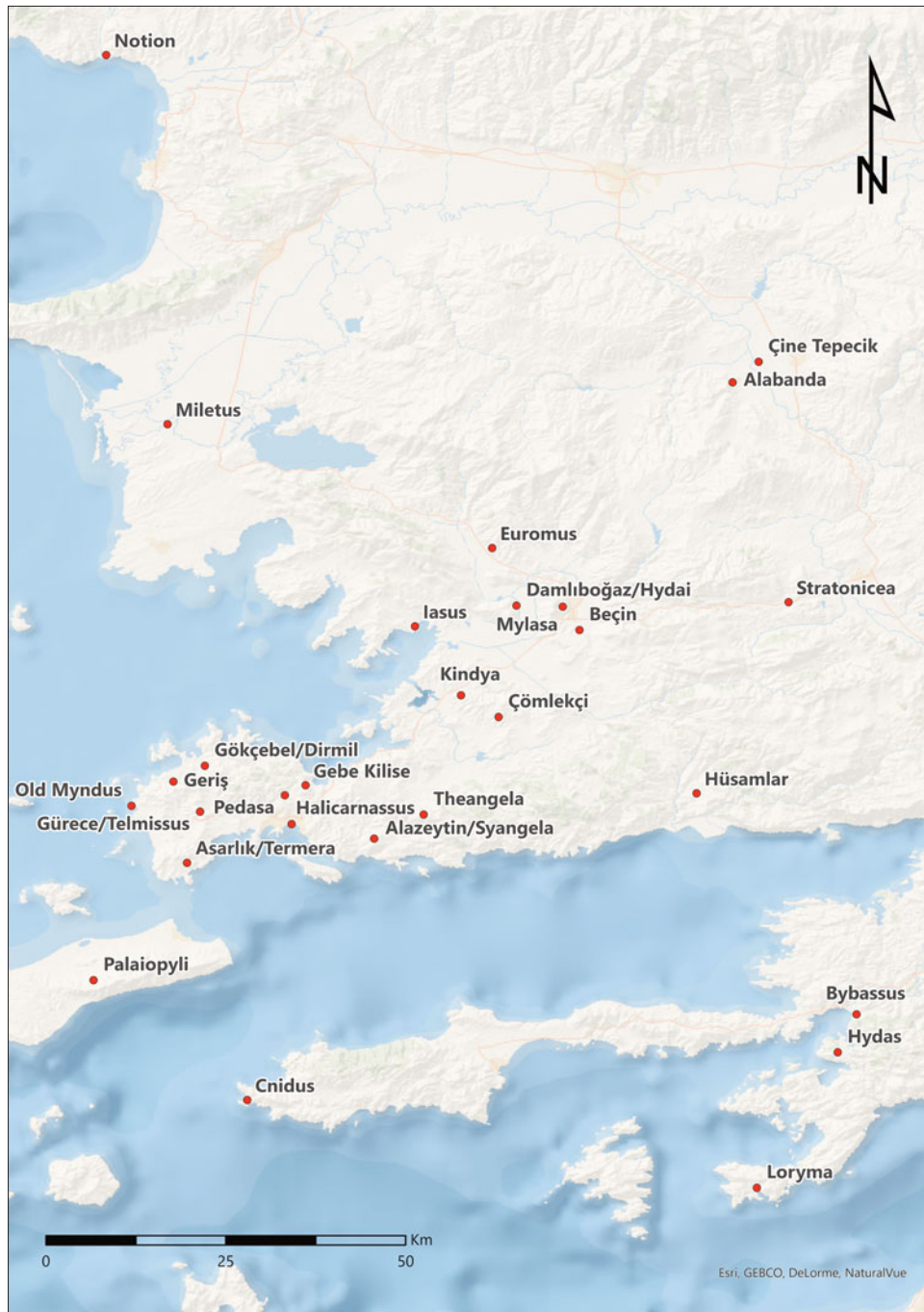


Fig. 1. Map of Caria showing major sites mentioned in the text.

Ancient literary sources (e.g., Hdt. 1.171; Strabo 7.7.2, 13.1.58–59, 14.2.27) suggest that Caria had a comparably diverse sociocultural environment, having been occupied by three ethno-cultural communities – the Greeks, the Carians and the Lelegians. Modern scholarship on the ancient Greek-speaking communities in the region abounds and does not need to be discussed here. The Carians are a sociocultural entity well known through their own language, settlement, material culture and historical tradition (Rumscheid 2009b; Adiego 2013; Henry 2013b).

However, the more elusive Lelegians present a conundrum. The name of the Lelegians might have been derived from *λαλέω*, meaning chatter or blabber, thus designating them as not speaking Greek (Hes. fr. 234; Flensted-Jensen, Carstens 2004: 110; Rumscheid 2009a: 175, 180). Alternatively, it might be possible that the name derives from an unknown Anatolian root. The uncertainty about the origins of the name is matched only by the uncertainty about the identity of the people designated by it. Who were the Lelegians? This article juxtaposes archaeological evidence

with the development of the Lelegian ethnonym. It offers new insights in two areas. First, it reassesses the relevant archaeological evidence, crucially updating previous summative work (e.g., Flensted-Jensen, Carstens 2004; Carstens 2011a) with new archaeological discoveries from the last decade of excavations and surveys. Second, it pinpoints and contextualises the moment of Lelegian ethnogenesis in the late Classical to early Hellenistic period (late fourth to third century BCE), explaining this process as a by-product of Carian ethnic self-fashioning.

The archaeological record of Early Iron Age to Archaic-period Caria (the 11th to sixth century BCE; table 1), has often been examined for evidence of ethnic Lelegians. Scholars of early Caria, including G.E. Bean and J.M. Cook (1952; 1955; 1957), W. Radt (1970), F. Rumscheid (2009a), A. Diler (2019) and B. Özer and Ö. Şimşek Özer (2017), have searched intensively for a Lelegian material signature. They identified evidence for a regionally particular lifestyle in the Early Iron Age to Archaic periods – dispersed rural habitation, platform tombs, refuge settlements, herding compounds and dry-stone masonry – and associated it with the Lelegians. The archaeological record demonstrates that this way of life gradually gave way during the Classical and Hellenistic periods to a more urban lifestyle, focused on coastal cities. For these modern scholars, the change between Early Iron Age and Archaic lifestyles on the one hand, and late Classical to Hellenistic lifestyles on the other, has been explained in terms of ethnic differences rather than micro-regional developments. Of course, not all modern researchers see the lifestyle package of the Early Iron Age to Archaic period in terms of Lelegian ethnicity. Writing over a decade ago, A.M. Carstens in particular (2011a; Flensted-Jensen, Carstens 2004) has argued that we cannot identify distinct Lelegian features on the basis of material

remains alone. Yet since this important work, a decade's worth of new evidence has come to light from increased archaeological activity in the region. This article provides a much-needed update on the state of archaeology in western Caria, expanding the spatial frame to examine the entirety of Caria beyond the Halicarnassus peninsula and making explicit contextual connections to the archaeology of southwestern Anatolia.

In this article, I argue that the origins and identity of the Lelegians are not to be found in the ground, but rather in ancient literary accounts of Lelegians in Caria from the Archaic to the Roman period (table 2). This evidence ultimately demonstrates that the existence of the Lelegians was a sociopolitical invention of the late Classical and Hellenistic periods. In the early Classical period (fifth century BCE), there was a vague sense that Lelegians had been amongst the pre-Greek inhabitants of western Anatolia and even some of the adjacent islands such as Samos and Chios, but there was relatively little clarity about them (Pherekydes *FGrH* 3 fr. 155; followed by Strabo 7.4.1; Hdt. 1.171; Shipley 1987: 25; Carless Unwin 2017: esp. 59–60). It was not until the Hellenistic and Roman periods (late third century BCE to fourth century CE), as this contribution demonstrates, that the Lelegians were given a more tangible identity, identified as the subservient and rural population of the Halicarnassus peninsula with a distinctive pastoral lifestyle (Philip of Theangela *FGrH* 741 F1; Strabo 7.7.2, 13.1.58–59; 14.2.27). Yet despite their relatively late invention, the Lelegians came to hold an important place in ancient discourses of belonging. This happened in the context of articulating intercultural relationships in the region, in association with built and natural environment, that invoked connections with a long-distant past, as ultimately seen in the tradition reported by Strabo (13.1.59). In short, it is argued that a Lelegian cultural identity was retrospectively constructed by the Carians from the late Classical period, a time of intensified Carian ethnogenesis, with powerful implications for the positioning of group identities in the region within the context of increased interaction between the Carians, Greeks, Lydians and Persians (Ratté 2009; Henry 2016).

This article therefore explicitly addresses the divergence between the ancient literary/historical tradition and archaeology. Exploring this phenomenon dovetails with a growing discussion on the relationship between ethnonyms and material culture (Morgan 2001; Sherratt 2005). In the context of the ancient Mediterranean, the use of ethnonyms such as the 'Phoenicians' has been increasingly questioned (Quinn 2018). In Anatolia, similar case studies include those of the mythical Maeonians in Lydia (Hom. *Il.* 2.865; Roosevelt 2010), as well as the Aeolians (Rose 2008) and Ionians (Mac Sweeney 2017).

<i>Period</i>	<i>Conventional date</i>
Late Bronze Age	1700/1650–1100/1075 BCE
Early Iron Age	1100/1075–700 BCE
Early Protogeometric	1100/1075–975 BCE
Middle Protogeometric	975–950 BCE
Late Protogeometric	950–900 BCE
Early Geometric	900–850 BCE
Middle Geometric	850–750 BCE
Late Geometric	750–700 BCE
Archaic	700–494 BCE
Classical	494–323 BCE
Hellenistic	323–31 BCE
Roman	31 BCE–fourth century CE

*Table 1. Overview of major chronological divisions with corresponding conventional dating mentioned in the text.*

Author	Reference	Date	Lelegians as	Followed by
Homer	<i>Iliad</i> 10.429, 21.85–86	Late 8th c. BCE	Anatolian people; mythical people	Alcaeus of Mytilene
Hesiod	Fr. 234	Late 8th c. BCE	Mythical people	Strabo (7.7.2)
Alcaeus of Mytilene	Fr. 337	Early 6th c. BCE	Anatolian people; mythical people	Herodotus; Strabo (13.1.51)
Pherekydes	<i>FGrH</i> 3 fr. 155	Mid-6th c. BCE	Migration; mythical people	Strabo (14.1.3)
Asius of Samos	<i>F7 GEF</i>	6th c. BCE	Anatolian people; mythical people	
Herodotus	1.171.1–6	Mid-5th c. BCE	Migration; mythical people	
Ephorus	<i>FGrH</i> 70 fr 127	4th c. BCE	Anatolian people?	
Aristobulus of Cassandrea	<i>FGrHist</i> 139 F6	4th c. BCE	Anatolian people?	
Philip of Theangela	<i>FGrH</i> 741 F1–5	Hellenistic	Historical people; contemporary people	Strabo (14.2.28); Athenaeus; Stephanus of Byzantium
Apollonius of Aphrodisias	<i>FGrH</i> 740 F1–16	Hellenistic	Unknown	Stephanus of Byzantium
Pseudo-Scymnus	572, 591	2nd c. BCE	Migration; mythical people	
Vitruvius	<i>De architectura</i> 4.1.4–5	1st c. BCE	Migration; Anatolian people; mythical people	
Parthenius of Nicaea	<i>Narrationes Amatoriae</i> 11	1st c. BCE	Anatolian people; mythical people	
Strabo	7.7.2, 7.4.1, 13.1.58–59, 14.2.27–28	Late 1st c. BCE/early 1st c. CE	Migration; mythical people; historical people; with material remains	
Plutarch	<i>Quaestiones Graecae</i> 46	Second half 1st/early 2nd c. CE	Historical people?	
Pausanias	7.2.8	2nd c. CE	Mythical people	
Athenaeus	<i>Deipnosophistae</i> 6.101	Late 2nd/early 3rd c. CE	Historical people	

Table 2. Ancient sources that discuss Lelegians in Caria (NB: mythical people are considered to be associated with more distant mythical or pseudo-historical events: e.g., the rule of king Minos, legendary founders, the Trojan War).

Thus, while this article adds to a more complete and systematic picture of the mosaic of different peoples who inhabited western Anatolia in the first millennium BCE, its approach is of wider relevance to the study of ethnic groups in antiquity.

### Modern scholarship on the Lelegians

Modern scholarship has drawn many ideas about the Lelegians from Strabo, an Anatolian author writing in the Greek language under the Roman Empire in the late first century BCE, a time of increased interest in ancient material remains still visible in the Anatolian landscape (Rojas 2019; also note the case of Gerga, which features Archaic-looking buildings erected in the Roman period: Bean 1969). Strabo wrote the earliest surviving detailed treatment of the Lelegians as a distinct population group

and identified a distinctive Lelegian ‘archaeology’ when he claimed that abandoned rural tombs and forts were monuments of the Lelegians (Strabo 13.1.59: ἐν ὅλῃ δὲ Καρία καὶ ἐν Μιλήτῳ Λελέγων τάφοι καὶ ἐρύματα καὶ ἴχνη κατοικιῶν δείκνυται [and in all of Caria and in Miletus tombs, fortifications and traces of settlements of the Lelegians are to be seen]). His work was followed by later writers in antiquity (Paus. 7.2.8; Vitruvius *De Arch.* 4.1.4–5; Plutarch *Quaest. Graec.* 46; Steph. Byz. 438.8–9), but also by modern scholars writing about the Lelegians (e.g., Paton, Myres 1896; Bean, Cook 1955; 1957; Radt 1970; Varinlioğlu 1992; Rumscheid 2009a; Herda, Sauter 2009: 64). In particular, the modern identification of Lelegian settlements (Bean, Cook 1955: 96; Varinlioğlu 1992) – Theangela, Alazeytin/Syangela, Myndus, Termera/Asarlık, Madnasa, Ouranion, Pedasa and

Telmissus – has usually correlated town names identified as Lelegian by Strabo (13.1.58–9; also Plin. *HN* 5.107) with towns mentioned in the Athenian tribute lists from 453–425 BCE (which mention no association with the Lelegians).

Archaeological fieldwork has also sought to shed light on the Lelegians. The first systematic explorations of the Halicarnassus peninsula and the adjacent areas began in the second half of the 19th century CE, when C.T. Newton (1862), followed by W.R. Paton and J.L. Myres (Paton 1887; Paton, Myres 1896), as well as A. Maiuri (1922) a few decades later, identified ancient architectural remains that were distinct from the recognisable architectural styles of the Classical and Hellenistic ruins. In the 1950s, Bean and Cook (1955) conducted an extensive survey of monuments with the specific goal of identifying and characterising the non-classical archaeological or ‘Lelegian’ remains on the Halicarnassus peninsula. Radt’s (1970; 1978; 1992) impressive contribution to Carian archaeology also focused on shedding light on the archaeological signature of the peninsula’s Archaic or ‘Lelegian’ population. He identified three primary classes of material culture as indicative of Lelegian presence: compound buildings, stone tumuli and strongholds. Expanding on Radt’s identification, Rumscheid (2009a) proposed a combination of spatially co-occurring categories of archaeological elements as Lelegian: settlements surrounded by fortification walls, fortified strongholds/refuge settlements (*Fluchtburgen*), farmsteads, herding compounds (*Viehpferche*), polygonal masonry style and tumulus cemeteries (cf. Lohmann 2019: 270, tab. 5). Rumscheid’s treatise concluded that the evidence in favour of the existence of a separate group of the Lelegians on the Halicarnassus peninsula is strong, even though their distinct material culture became less pronounced after the end of the Archaic period (Rumscheid 2009a: 193).

An important step toward a critical dismissal of the concept of Lelegian material culture and ethnicity has been formulated by Carstens. In a study of the Early Iron Age remains on the Halicarnassus peninsula, she brought the notion of Lelegian material remains under scrutiny and reanalysed the three classes of evidence previously identified by Radt as indicative of the presence of the Lelegians (Flensted-Jensen, Carstens 2004; Carstens 2008; 2009a; 2009b; 2011a). In addition, she examined some of the later material traces. She concluded that while it was possible to identify differences between harbour and inland settlement forms, there was no evidence supporting the distinction between the Carians and Lelegians or the identification of truly Lelegian features on the basis of material remains alone (Carstens 2008: 107). Rather than assigning a specific ethnic meaning to architectural styles, Carstens argued that the compound

buildings were particularly suited to the pastoralists on the peninsula and that the relatively contained fortified settlements dating to the seventh century BCE and later were also appropriate for small, dispersed groups, as they provided protection and a good view of the surrounding landscapes (Flensted-Jensen, Carstens 2004: 113–19).

This notwithstanding, some modern scholars still find it useful to attribute the regionally specific forms of material culture to the Lelegians (e.g., Diler 2009; 2016; 2019; Herda, Sauter 2009; Rumscheid 2009a; Diler, Gümüş 2012; Cianciulli 2013; Herda 2013; Özer, Şimşek Özer 2017). Ancient narrative frameworks thus continue to be used, even if the terms employed now represent different entities from their past meanings. This issue has not been investigated methodologically, and the following sections provide a critical reassessment of the available evidence.

### **The Late Bronze Age: the lack of Lelegians**

Not even the most eager proponents of the term ‘Lelegian’ have been able to apply it to the Late Bronze Age remains of Caria. At that time, the main settlement activity in south-western Anatolia was situated in river valleys that provided arable land and channelled movement between the coast and inland areas. Larger settlement nodes include places such as Çine Tepecik in the Marsyas River valley (Günel 2006), a southern tributary of the Meander, and perhaps also Stratonicea and Mylasa (Mellaart 1968: 188; Hanfmann, Waldbaum 1968: 51–52; fig. 1). Activity in the vicinity of the sea has been primarily identified through funerary evidence, including the chamber tombs at Müsgebi on the Halicarnassus peninsula and Pilavtepe near Mylasa (Boysal 1967; Benter 2009a). The material culture broadly aligns with the wider western Anatolian regional patterns in terms of settlement architecture, ceramic assemblages and burial practices, and the coastal areas interacted with the Mycenaean regions, especially in the 14th to the 12th century BCE (Mountjoy 1998; Mokrišová 2016; Vaessen 2016).

There is no contemporary evidence for people known as Lelegians during this period. The Hittite textual evidence from the 14th and 13th centuries BCE refers to this region as Karkiša (Carruba 2000; Herda 2013: 434–35), and it is now generally agreed that the regional unit of Karkiša was the predecessor of Early Iron Age Caria (Hawkins 1998; 2013; Herda 2009; *contra* Simon 2015). Hittites paid attention to areas on their frontiers, but the level of detail in terms of geography and social organisation of lands and people (known from archival records) varied depending on military and administrative needs (Gerçek 2017). And while texts are informative about toponyms in terms of political geography (from settlements to lands/polities and loose confederacies, like Arzawa lands), they do not

provide a productive understanding of ethnicities or cultural groups (Gander 2017). It can thus be problematic to match Hittite nomenclature of the Late Bronze Age with later Greek and Anatolian toponyms and ethnonyms. Nonetheless, it is interesting that, according to linguistics specialists, there is some correspondence between the two, for example, Attarimma (Telmissus/Fethiye), Iyalanda (Alinda), Wallarima (perhaps Hyllarima), Mutamutassa (Mylasa) and Atriya (Idras/Stratonicea), attesting to the presence of a few key stable sites that continued to be occupied, perhaps with minor discontinuities, into the Hellenistic period (Hawkins 1998: 26–28; Herda 2009: 45; for parallels in continuity, see Houwink Ten Cate 1961). It is therefore interesting, albeit not entirely conclusive, that Hittite sources make no reference to a population specifically identifiable as the Lelegians.

### The Early Iron Age: changing patterns

Those seeking to identify the Lelegians in the archaeological record have felt more comfortable applying the term to the remains from the Early Iron Age. The early (11th–ninth-century BCE) activity in the region can be traced to somewhat limited settlement evidence in the form of fortified sites and refuge sites (or strongholds/*Fluchtburgen*) and more extensive funerary remains (Rumscheid 2009a). This pattern changes toward the end of the Late Geometric period (the eighth century BCE), when these material classes become more pronounced, with new pockets of fortified and refuge settlements and built tombs (Held 2019: 90–91; Lohmann 2019: 271–76).

Toward the end of the second millennium BCE, two larger settlements sprang up in proximity to the Aegean Sea. On the Halicarnassus peninsula, evidence for early habitation at the settlement of Halicarnassus is extremely limited, most probably due to its eradication by Hellenistic building activities and the construction of the Castle of St. John in the 15th century CE (Bean, Cook 1955: 93). The second settlement is Old Myndus, located nearby to modern Gümüşlük, on the western end of the peninsula. It is the predecessor of Myndus, founded in the mid-fourth century BCE, perhaps when Mausolus ordered a region-wide synoecism that resulted in the establishment of a larger settlement on the coast (Şahin 2009: 505). The first settlement stands on the Kocadağ peninsula (Bean, Cook 1955: 110; Şahin 2009) and is fortified by a wall made of cyclopean masonry. The excavators have described the construction as employing a ‘typical Early Iron Age’ local technique of dry-stone masonry made of roughly rectangular boulders (Şahin 2009: 506). The cyclopean wall has also been identified as typically ‘indigenous Lelegian’ (Şahin 2009: 506; see also Diler 2019), thus explicitly linking the early occupation on the peninsula with the legendary inhabitants. Furthermore, the construction of an associated gate has been identified as

recalling the indirect-access gates of Mycenae and Troy VIIa, suggesting that the fortifications were quite early and that the settlement had links with the Mycenaean world – the Argolid and Boeotia in particular – during the 13th century BCE (Şahin 2009: 511–14).

While settlement in the earliest phases of the Early Iron Age focused on coastal areas, by the end of the period, the interior of Caria was dotted with pockets of habitation (for the full catalogue see Radt 1970; see also Bean, Cook 1955; Carstens 2009a: Appendix A). From the Archaic period onward, there is good evidence for settlements surrounded by fortification walls of large stone masonry that sprawled over hilly terrain, but pre-Archaic traces of this type of settlement are very rare. More common in the Early Iron Age are smaller ‘refuge’ settlements (*Fluchtburgen*) with limited architectural traces preserved on the peaks that they once occupied (Rumscheid 2009a: 188). These strongholds are simple in plan and have only a few discernible buildings (as preserved above the modern ground level), enclosed by strong fortification walls. The function of the fortifications was to provide shelter rather than to form elements of larger systems of territorial defence or control (Lohmann 2019: 273).

The refuge settlements occupy peaks of western Caria, which might not have been suited for year-round occupation. Dating these sites is difficult and usually relies on surface ceramics associated with visible structures. In general, the Early Iron Age strongholds are smaller than the fortified Archaic to Classical-period settlements, with a slightly different, less built-up interior architectural configuration. This prompted W. Held (2019: 90–91) to suggest that they belong to an earlier phase of occupation in southern Caria than the Archaic period, generally dating to the Late Geometric. H. Lohmann (2019: 157, 271–76), however, dates the refuge settlements on Mount Mycale to the seventh century BCE, based on the excavations at Kaletepe, thus making a connection with increased Greek immigration and conflict between Carians and Ionians.

Strongholds are relatively common and primarily date from the Geometric to the Classical period. Held’s survey identified 15 *Fluchtburgen* around Bybassus on the Bozburun peninsula, in antiquity known as Carian Chersonesus, and M. Benter identified a further 18 hilltop settlements in the same area. Very similar structures were documented by A. Peschlow-Bindokat on the southern shores of Lake Bafa, by Lohmann on Mt. Grion and the Latmus, and by Rumscheid around Mylasa (Peschlow-Bindokat 1981; 1996: 22–23; Rumscheid 1999: 209–12; Lohmann 2005: 76–80; 2019; Benter 2009b; Held 2019). The geographical extent of strongholds is thus broad; they span the territory between Notion in the north and Loryma in the south, with specific local variation in architectural configuration as a result of environmental conditions and social needs.

As noted, a concentration of strongholds lies in the southernmost part of Caria on the Bozburun peninsula. These areas were more densely inhabited in Archaic and Classical times (e.g., Debord, Varinlioğlu 2001), but some eighth- to seventh-century BCE occupation has been recorded around ancient Bybassus (at Asartepe and ancient Kastabos, modern Köklü Dağ: Held et al. 2009; 2011; Held 2019), and even earlier activity has been documented at ancient Hydas (Benter 2009b: 498–500; see also Held 2019: 81). Based on surface pottery scatters belonging to the transitional Late Helladic IIIC/Protogeometric period (late 12th/early 11th century BCE; Benter 2009b: 496–98), Hydas was a focus of settlement activity at the dawn of the Early Iron Age (fig. 2). The chronologically corresponding early walls are preserved in isolated sections in the southwestern corner of the upper citadel and the area by a cave shelter (Benter 2009b: 492–96). The majority of the preserved walls, however, date to the Archaic period, and some of the identified ceramics were of Late Geometric date (Bulba 2010: 167–69).

Even though the refuge settlements on the Bozburun peninsula share parallels with their northern counterparts in terms of the architectural configuration of fortifications, their interiors are arranged differently. They comprise discrete buildings of different plans, as demonstrated, for example, by a refuge nearby to Loryma (fig.

3; Held 2019: 83), rather than utilising the agglutinative architecture common to the examples on the Halicarnassus peninsula and better documented in the following Archaic-period settlements.

While the Halicarnassus peninsula has persistently been identified as the Lelegian core – reflected in the use of the term ‘Lelegian’ peninsula (e.g., Özer, Şimşek Özer 2017; Diler 2019) – the so-called Lelegian features pre-dating the Archaic period have been identified in the wider western Carian region. In addition to the so-called Lelegian masonry – the dry-stone, roughly polygonal construction made of grey local stone – curvilinear architecture, popular in western Anatolia throughout the period, has also been considered indicative of Lelegian presence during the early stages of the Early Iron Age. The site of Damlıboğaz (ancient Hydai), located east of Iasus, provides an example of an investigative approach that associates certain architectural styles with ethnicity (Diler 2009: 359–60; 2019: 520). This fortified settlement, which thrived from the Late Geometric period to the late Classical period, stands by the ancient Kyrbesus (modern Sarıçay) River. Its inhabitants buried their dead in chamber tombs dug into the Sodra Dağı hill immediately to the west of the modern village (Diler 2009: 361–62, fig. 1). The settlement remains, and especially the earliest domestic curvilinear structures, have been identified as Lelegian (Diler 2009: 360–62). Similarly, the curvilinear/oval

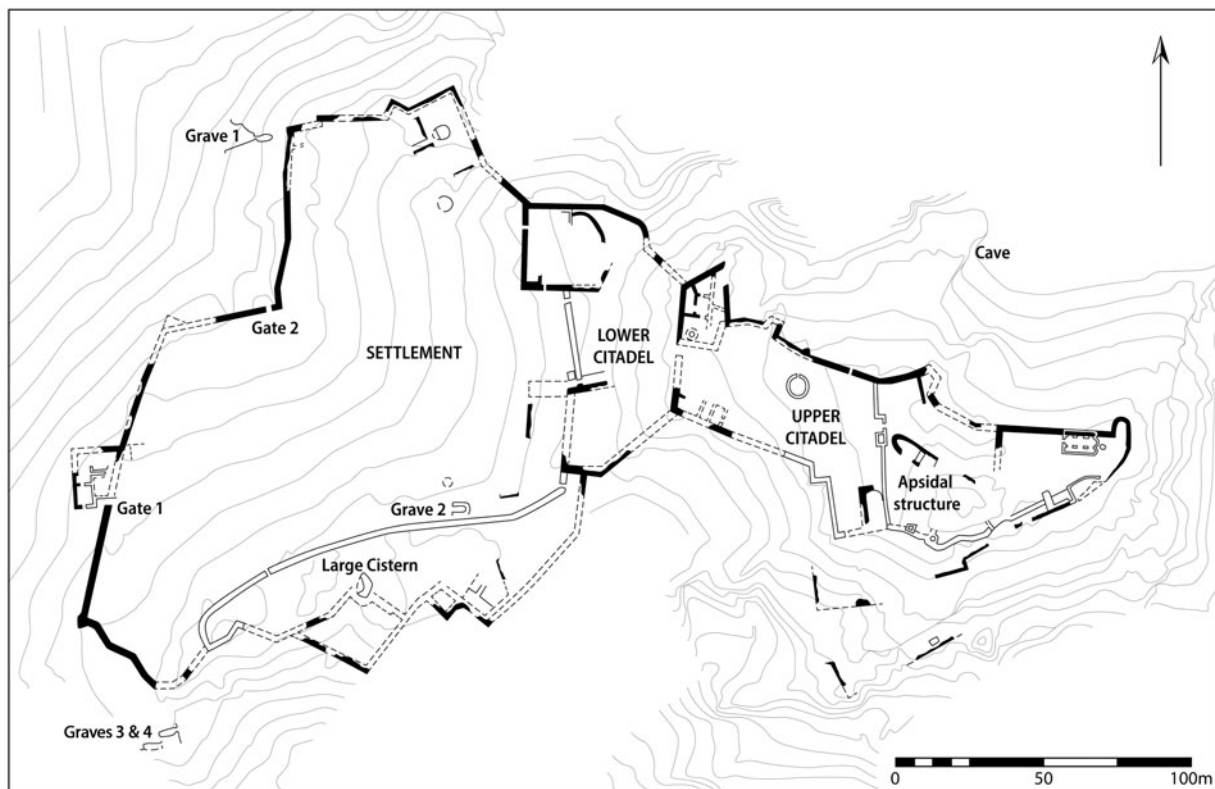


Fig. 2. Plan of the settlement at Hydas on the Bozburun Peninsula (after Benter 2009b: fig. 15; redrawn by C. Kolb).

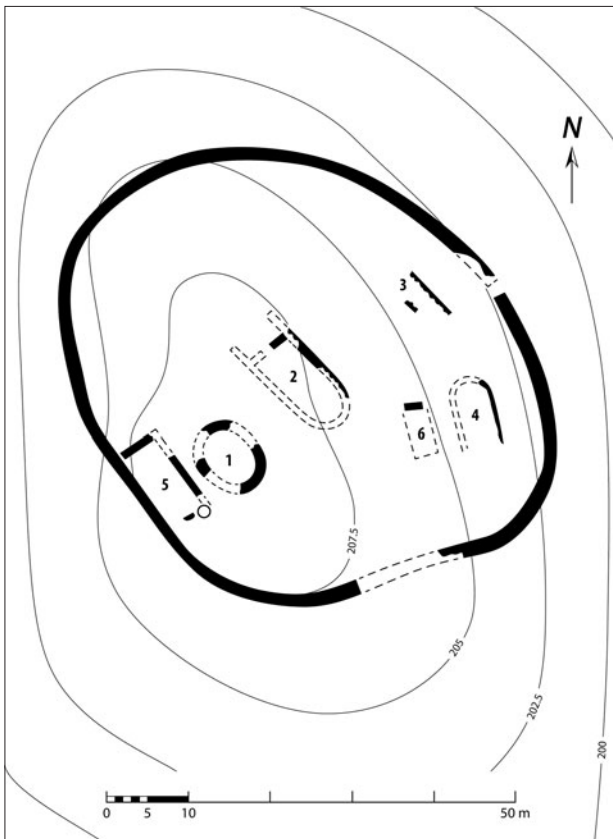


Fig. 3. Plan of a refuge settlement by Loryma on the Bozburun peninsula (after Held 2019: fig. 8; redrawn by C. Kolb).

buildings located on easily defensible hills around Iasus, not too far from Damlıboğaz, have also been interpreted as attesting to Lelegian presence (Cianculli 2013). This suggestion is primarily based on the use of local stone similar to that of the Halicarnassus peninsula in construction and their oval plan, which was to become a staple of the Archaic rural pastoral structures (Radt 1970: 206–7).

The beginning of the Early Iron Age is better documented through funerary evidence. The main types of Protogeometric burials are built chamber tombs covered by a tumulus and rock-cut chamber tombs, both of which contained multiple burials; rectangular or circular cist tombs lined with stone slabs, with either single or multiple burials; and individual tombs in the form of a cist, pithos or sarcophagus (Mariaud 2012: 359). Both cremation and inhumation were practised in Caria at the transition from the Late Bronze to the Early Iron Age. Four funerary loci – Çömlekçi, Asarlık (Termera) and Gökçebel (Dirmil) on the Halicarnassus peninsula and Hüsamlar east of it – belong to the 11th century BCE and present important evidence for the early stages of the Protogeometric period. Burial grounds on and around the Halicarnassus peninsula (e.g., in the environs of Pedasa and Hydai) become more numerous from the Late Proto-

geometric to the Archaic period. In general, these types of evidence have been associated with the Lelegians primarily because of their proximity to Archaic- to Classical-period settlements identified as Lelegian and because of the use of local stone in dry-stone construction (Bean, Cook 1955: 116–18; Flensted-Jensen, Carstens 2004: 115).

Early burials display micro-regional specificities. Rectangular burial cists and circular burial chambers with inclined walls (for a dome) were reported at the Late Helladic IIIC/Protogeometric cemetery near Çömlekçi (Boysal 1967: 41–43; Carstens 2008: 70–71). They contained inhumation and cremation burials. Another well-known example is the Late Protogeometric tholos tomb at Gökçebel/Dirmil (fig. 4), featuring a corbelled vault made of roughly rectangular unworked polygonal masonry (illustrations in Paton's report [1887] suggest that the stones were not worked, even if the masonry is called isodomonic). A seemingly unique feature in this early period – a rectangular pit dug out under the chamber that held a terracotta sarcophagus – later occurred in the Geometric cemeteries at Iasus and Damlıboğaz (Mellink 1964: 161; Boysal 1967: 44–45; Berti 2007: 441; Carstens 2011a: 490). At Asarlık, located on top of a steep mountain with a view of the coast, Paton reported the presence of rectangular and circular tombs with terraces and crepis walls, as well as tumuli and chamber tombs (fig. 5; Paton 1887: 67–68). The former type can be more appropriately described as platform graves, as shown in the recent investigations by Diler (Diler, Gümüş 2012; Diler 2016; see also Özer, Şimşek Özer 2017; Özer 2019). Platform tombs are circular or rectangular in shape, with shafts for burial cists and pithoi, which contained cremated remains, placed at their centre, covered by flat stones in the shape of irregular domes (figs 6–7). Cremations were placed into ash urns or amphorae, which were then deposited in cists sunken into platforms made of vertically assembled flat stones; inhumations were placed directly onto the platforms (Diler 2016: 464). It is generally presumed that these tombs were family burials used across generations. On the evidence of associated finds, such as pottery and fibulae, the platform graves at Asarlık have been dated from the Late Helladic IIIC/Protogeometric to Archaic periods (Flensted-Jensen, Carstens 2004: 113–19; Carstens 2011a: 484–86; Özer, Şimşek Özer 2017). At Hüsamlar (late 12th [Tomb 342] and 11th [Tomb 35] centuries BCE; Özer 2019), rectangular cists were constructed with local flat stones.

Many Early Iron Age to Archaic-period tumuli have been documented in the hinterland of the ancient town of Pedasa (Diler 2019: 511). The most notable is the Late Protogeometric circular Tumulus G at Sivriçam Hill,





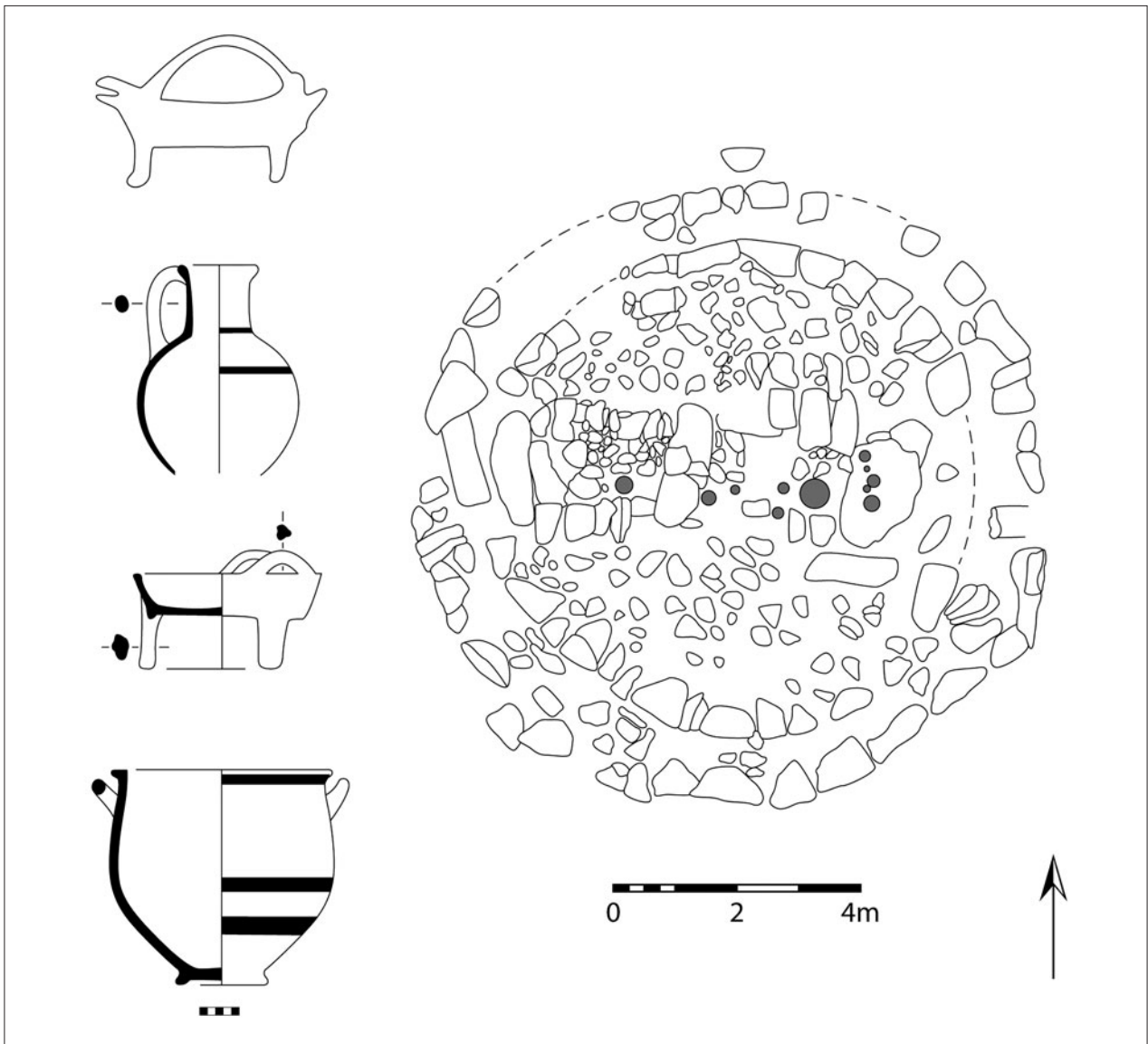


Fig. 6. Example of a circular platform tomb from Asarlık (after Diler 2019: fig. 13; redrawn by C. Kolb).

located south of the acropolis (fig. 8; Diler 2009; 2016: fig. 2; Özer 2018). It has a spacious square burial chamber (3.2 by 3.1m) underneath a large circular tumulus, which featured a typical rough corbelled vault made of relatively thin slabs of local grey stone (Diler 2009: 370–72, figs 17–20). Secondary burials were inserted around the tumulus, next to its crepis wall (Diler 2016: 458). The locally made pottery, including amphorae and ash urns, dated the burials to the Late Protogeometric to Late Geometric periods (Bulut 2014: 65–66; Diler 2016). Platform graves that housed cremations are located on the lower slopes of hills surrounding Pedasa (Diler 2009: 370; 2016: 465; Bulut 2014: fig. 2). They are rectangular in shape (9–18m long) and similar to the larger examples at Asarlık (Özer 2018: 37–42). While the construction of the graves has been dated to the Early to Middle Protogeometric period, pottery scatters around them indicate

prolonged activity (Özer 2018: 43–44). It is intriguing that no chronologically corresponding settlement has been found to date; the fortifications, and domestic and public structures at Pedasa belong to the Geometric to Classical periods (Diler 2009: 374–76).

Discussions about cultural and ethnic affiliations have primarily focused on the form of burials, but funerary assemblages have also been invoked in interpretations. This evidence, therefore, deserves a comment in the wake of a lack of similar assemblages from stratified settlement contexts. Burial goods deposited in the early tumuli included weapons, fibulae, jewellery and pottery and can be characterised as having close affinities with the south-eastern Aegean, signalling that Carian elites were connected to regional economic and social networks (Boysal 1967: 43; Carstens 2008: 76–83). The early metal objects such as fibulae (fig. 9) and weapons share broad

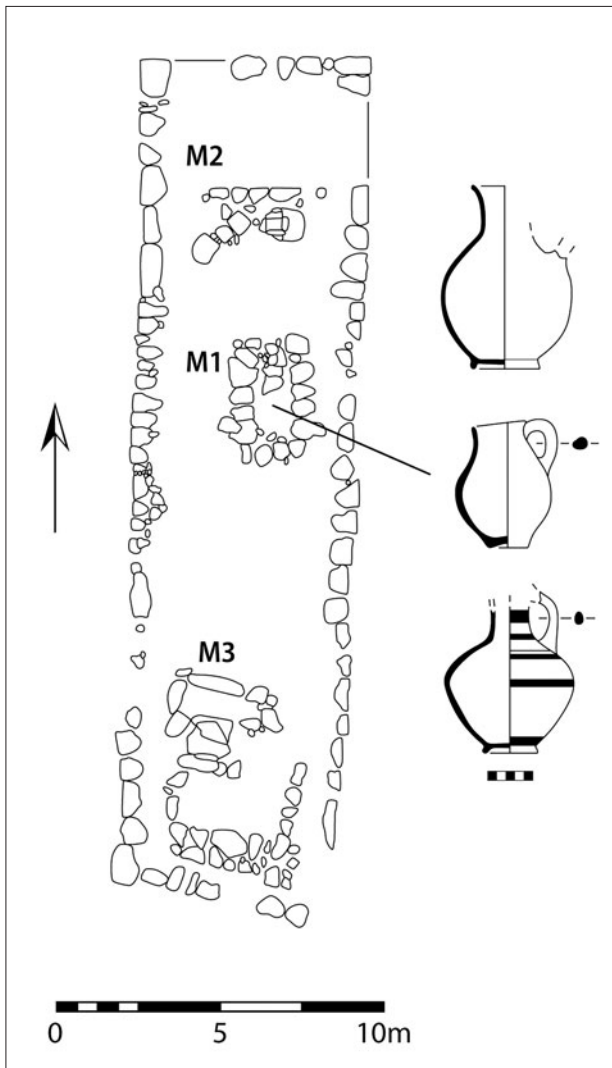


Fig. 7. Example of a rectangular platform tomb from Asarlık (after Diler 2019: fig. 12; redrawn by C. Kolb).

stylistic parallels with Crete, Cyprus and the Dodecanese. Notable are the early iron objects from Asarlık (knives and spears in tombs A, C and D; Paton 1887: 68–70) and Hüsamlar (iron knife in Tomb 342; Özer 2019), which present some of the earliest examples of this metal in the Aegean (late 12th to 11th century BCE).

In terms of pottery, most of the Protogeometric objects from Asarlık and Gökçebel/Dirmil were apparently locally made and show features common to other sites in Caria and western Anatolia (Bass 1963; Coldstream 1968: 264–69; Özgünel 1979: 69–70, 76–78). The pottery from Çömlekçi shares parallels with the Dodecanese and seems to have been made locally only (Carstens 2008: 82). Y. Boysal dated Asarlık to the ‘Submycenaean’ and the beginning of the Protogeometric period (fig. 10, but see also figs 6–7), based on the presence of a stirrup jar, which might have been imported from Attica, while the pottery

from Gökçebel/Dirmil is of Late Protogeometric date (Boysal 1967: 43; Bass 1963; Bulba 2010: 20–22). Thus, even though the Protogeometric ceramic styles in Caria drew on motifs common in vessels from Attica and Crete to the Dodecanese and Ionia, the similarities in the popularity of design and shape of locally produced and imported pottery might have resulted from trade and social relationships between western Caria and its neighbours, maintained by the mobility of individuals such as traders, labourers and elites.

Overall, it can be concluded that the earliest activity in Caria during the Early Iron Age draws on patterns of connectivity (primarily with the Dodecanese and Ionia) established already in the Late Bronze Age. This period is marked by local development of permanent installations for defensive structures (fortified settlements and strongholds) and varied forms of tombs (chamber tombs, tumuli and platform graves), which come to characterise the material record of western Caria more broadly. So far, however, no recognisable evidence for domestic activities has been documented. The absence of evidence for the latter might reflect the current state of research in Caria rather than a past trend.

With respect to the character of early settlement, it must be emphasised that there is no clear evidence of increased cultural differentiation in the region. The example of Old Myndus is striking in the context of this observation, as its material configuration can be comfortably analysed without adhering to ethnic explanations of the materials and building styles employed at the site (whether connected with the Mycenaeans or the Lelegians). The fortifications of Old Myndus consist of boulders of roughly rectangular proportions, which, as we shall see, are quite different from the dry-stone, roughly polygonal ‘Lelegian’ construction, as epitomised by later funerary structures (e.g., Gebe Kilise). Instead, the walls at Old Myndus resemble Late Bronze Age architecture in the southwestern Anatolian/southeastern Aegean region, such as the nearby settlements of Iasus and Palaiopyli on Cos. At Palaiopyli, a stretch of the preserved cyclopean walls consists of roughly hewn dry-stone masonry (fig. 11; Hope Simpson, Lazenby 1970: 59–60; Vitale et al. 2017: 239; cf. Şahin 2009: figs 4–7). Smaller stones filling gaps between large masonry are rare, which is slightly dissimilar to the fortifications of Old Myndus, in which smaller rocks filled the spaces between large stones, but the general use of similarly shaped boulders shows close parallels. While the cyclopean masonry is more robust than that of other fortifications found on the peninsula, it seems to bear greater similarities to the fortifications in the eastern Aegean and elsewhere in southwestern Anatolia than to examples in Greece. Old Myndus’ material configuration can therefore be comfortably analysed without adhering to the somewhat contradictory interpretations that primarily stem from later legendary traditions.

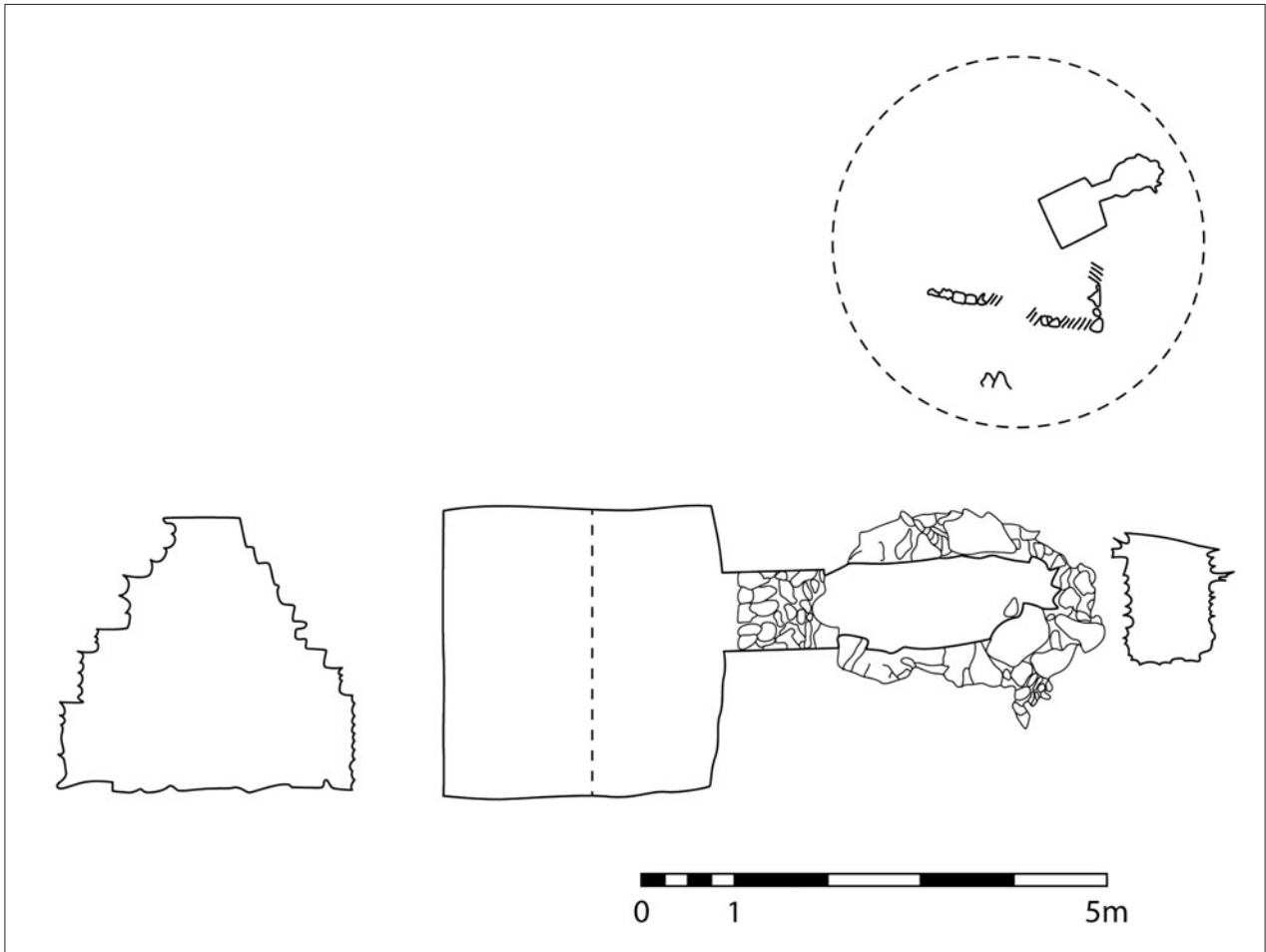


Fig. 8. Plan and section of a Late Protogeometric tumulus at Pedasa (after Diler 2009: fig. 18; redrawn by C. Kolb).



Fig. 9. Late second-millennium BCE bronze fibulae from Asarlık (British Museum Inv. No. 1887,0502.52; photo © Trustees of the British Museum).

The other type of early settlement in the region is the strongholds, the presence of which has been interpreted in terms of an increased need to house Carian or Lelegian refugees in times of insecurity after the end of the Late

Bronze Age and during the Early Iron Age (Herda et al. 2019: 6; Lohmann 2019: 271). This interpretation is not without its problems. First, it considers Classical and later-period sources as historical documents for the Early Iron Age. Second, the vast majority of these refuge sites show activity from the late eighth/early seventh century BCE onward rather than the 11th or tenth centuries BCE (at Latmus and Mycale: Peschlow-Bindokat 2005: 93–101; on the Halicarnassus peninsula: Rumscheid 2009b: 174–90). Third, both fortified and refuge settlement types extend beyond the supposed Lelegian heartland of the Halicarnassus peninsula. Their presence, too, can easily be explained as a matter of developing building trends without the need to assign ethnic categories. Indeed, in a recent extensive study Held (2019: 84) rejects a strict difference between Carian and Lelegian refuge settlements despite micro-regional differences in intra-settlement organisation (in terms of free-standing buildings of agglutinative plan and the use of rectangular versus curvilinear building plan), as the walls in these refuge sites are constructed in a similar manner throughout Caria. Fortified sites can be found across western Anatolia and the Aegean

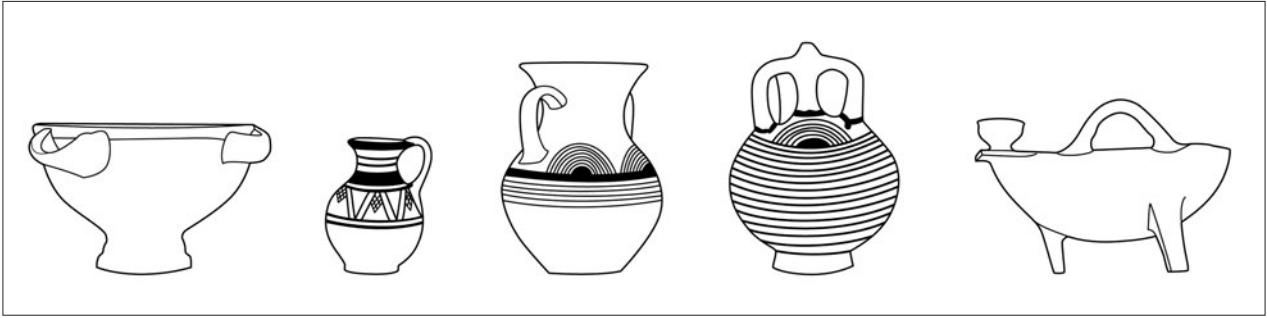


Fig. 10. Protogeometric pottery from Asarlık (after Paton 1887: fig. 6; redrawn by C. Kolb).



Fig. 11. A stretch of preserved Late Bronze Age fortifications at Palaiopyli on Cos (photo by the author).

in the first millennium BCE, and even contemporary settlements in Greece have some fortification walls, which were built against competition from neighbours rather than far-flung invaders. Furthermore, curvilinear architecture was a long-standing tradition common to Anatolia and the Aegean ever since the Early Bronze Age, and apsidal houses are well known from the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age Aegean and western Anatolia (e.g., Klazomenai/Limantepe: Ersoy 2007; see Mazarakis-Ainian 1989: 269 for early examples). Therefore, this type of building plan is not an isolated phenomenon, and certainly not one that implies specific ethnic associations.

A second line of argumentation suggests that as there are relatively few known pre-Archaic settlements, strongholds must be connected with the mobile pastoral lifestyle in early Caria, a pattern which eventually changes in favour of more permanent settled forms during a process of nucleation that takes place in the course of the Classical period (Held 2019: 91–92). Both explanations have important implications for the envisioned regional social organisation as well as social evolution, notably the emphasis on the lack of physical rootedness or stability during the first centuries of the Early Iron Age. This raises a number of important questions. First, do we have to

envision that Early Iron Age inhabitants were either pastoralists without permanent settlement or immigrant communities living in an unsafe environment? Such a vision would implicitly suggest a relatively low level of social stratification as detected through settlement hierarchies. Yet a pastoralist lifestyle does not need to indicate such a lack of social stratification. Rather, the Carian pattern implies a lack of archaeologically visible proxies for settlement. We certainly see increased settlement and social hierarchies in the Archaic and Classical-period settlements, as will be outlined later, but we need to think more deeply about the types of social structures that enabled construction of these fortified facilities, especially in terms of the required command of natural and human resources. Why would the communities construct these fortified settlements and why would they invest in wealthy burials for certain members of their communities instead of investing in habitation infrastructure? It is conceivable, therefore, that more permanent settlement structures were already located not too far from the refuge sites in the Early Iron Age but utilised more ephemeral construction (e.g., mudbrick).

The presence of some of the built tombs has been variably linked to the Lelegians, but the review of evidence has shown these connections are inconsistent. Indeed, the form of the earliest tombs (principally Asarlık, Hydas and Gökçebel/Dirmil) has often been associated with the Mycenaean. For example, B. Özer (2019: 149–50) has argued for Aegean Bronze Age influence via migration of people to explain the similarity in the forms of both tumuli and chamber tombs to those from the Argolid, which featured cremation urns (see also Mariaud 2012 for a similar argument; Diler 2016 linked the form of the tumuli at Pedasa to the Cretan examples). Yet it can be contended that the general tradition of using built chamber tombs is not specific to Late Bronze–Early Iron Age western Caria. There is good evidence for the general type of burial (now usually covered by a tumulus) across western Anatolia, and the general form of the Carian examples (especially the tomb at Dirmil with a short dromos) are in principle similar to stone built chamber tombs, such as at Panaztepe (also called small tholoi; e.g., Erkanal-Öktü 2018: pl. 16) and perhaps also at Colophon (Bridges 1974: pl. 52). There is a certain continuity in the form from the very beginning of the Early Iron Age, if not the end of the Late Bronze Age (at Çömlekçi), inspired by monumental burials of the Bronze Age common in both western Anatolia and the eastern Aegean.

Moreover, even though the architectural remains (funerary structures, fortified settlements, dry-stone masonry) on the Halicarnassus peninsula have been explained in terms of a singular cultural affiliation – that

of the Lelegians – similar tombs and fortified settlements on the Bozburun peninsula have not, even if they share parallels in terms of construction and architectural principles. Crucially, while the platform tombs are the one form of burial truly unique to the Halicarnassus peninsula, they co-occur with other burial forms, namely tumuli and chamber tombs, which have a broader geographic distribution. This pattern indicates some shared preferences for funerary expressions across western Caria.

To sum up, archaeological evidence shows that during this period there is a lack of any material distinction between what we might think of as discrete cultural groups – the Greeks, the Carians and the Lelegians – but that there is a regional tradition characterised by local variation.

### **The Archaic and early Classical periods: diversification**

The previous section has demonstrated that there is no clear archaeological evidence for the existence of a distinct ethno-cultural group that could be designated as the ‘Lelegians’ in the Iron Age. This section will show that this is also the case for the Archaic and Classical periods. A discernible change in the Archaic period is increased building activity in both settlements and countryside. At the start of the Archaic period, a greater range of settlement sizes and complexity emerges in Caria; in addition to strongholds and fortified settlements, herding compounds can now also be documented (Radt 1970). Yet this activity follows architectural precedents. More attention, however, is now paid to social diversification within settlements.

During this period, population in the region continues to be relatively dispersed in smaller settlements in coastal as well as inland areas. While rural sites maintain a more traditional character with a pastoral focus throughout the first half of the first millennium BCE, larger settlements begin to adopt a more cosmopolitan character, so to speak. These include Halicarnassus and Mylasa, as well as Iasus, Stratonicea and Cnidus (Bean, Cook 1952; 1955; 1957; Marchese 1989). On the Halicarnassus peninsula, larger towns are usually located on the coast, taking advantage of the connections facilitated by the sea routes (Halicarnassus and Myndus) or nearby (Asarlık/Termera and Pedasa), while smaller settlements tend to be somewhat removed, situated on hilltops and ridges (Gürece/Telmissus and Geriş). Settlements immediately east of the peninsula are located at a distance from the coast (e.g., Alazeytin/Syangela, Theangela and Kindya; Bean, Cook 1955; Radt 1970; Carstens 2009a: Appendix A; Diler, Gümüş 2012; Lohmann 2019: 260).

While many of the small strongholds and fortified settlements are located on the Halicarnassus peninsula and its immediate environs, the overall geographic distribution of this settlement type remains relatively broad, extending from Alabanda (Bean 1971: 180–89)

to the Milesian peninsula and the Gulf of Iasus in the northwest (e.g., Kindya: Bean, Cook 1957: 97–99; Pierobon Benoit 2006; Carstens 2009a: Appendix A, 134; and Euromus: Bean 1971: 45; Carstens 2009a: Appendix A, 130), to a few settlements in the Gulf of Keramus in the west (such as Idyma: Bean, Cook 1957: 68–72; Carstens 2009a: Appendix A, 133) and Bybassus and Loryma in the far south (Held 2005: figs 3–4; 2019). Even in this period, fortified settlements and strongholds are difficult to categorise discretely and the difference between the two is usually determined by their geographical location and size. Refuges tend to be smaller, with sparse architecture (figs 12 and 13) rather than a clearly defined set of architectural features. Varied activities took place at these sites, based on need; for example, fortified settlements might have periodically provided shelter or refuge for rural inhabitants during the Archaic and Classical periods (for comments see Carstens 2009a: 104–7). Much of the typological

identification thus relies on the dating of the masonry, usually based on the comparison of technical parameters better known from late Classical and Hellenistic-period building phases and surface pottery scatters (Flensted-Jensen, Carstens 2004: 118).

The general characteristics of the Archaic fortified settlements include defensive walls that usually follow the natural terrain, with the space enclosed by them often subdivided into a protected citadel and a lower town. The fortification walls are often interspersed with towers. The access to a settlement is by way of the gentler slopes, which are easily defensible. The agglutinative architectural configuration is typical across the Halicarnassus peninsula, as the site of Alazeytin/Syangela demonstrates (fig. 14; Bean, Cook 1955: 125–27; Radt 1970: 17–74; Carstens 2009a: Appendix A, 127; Rumscheid 2009a: 184), with a circular settlement plan of closely packed buildings that often shared walls (dating to the late eighth to the fourth century BCE).

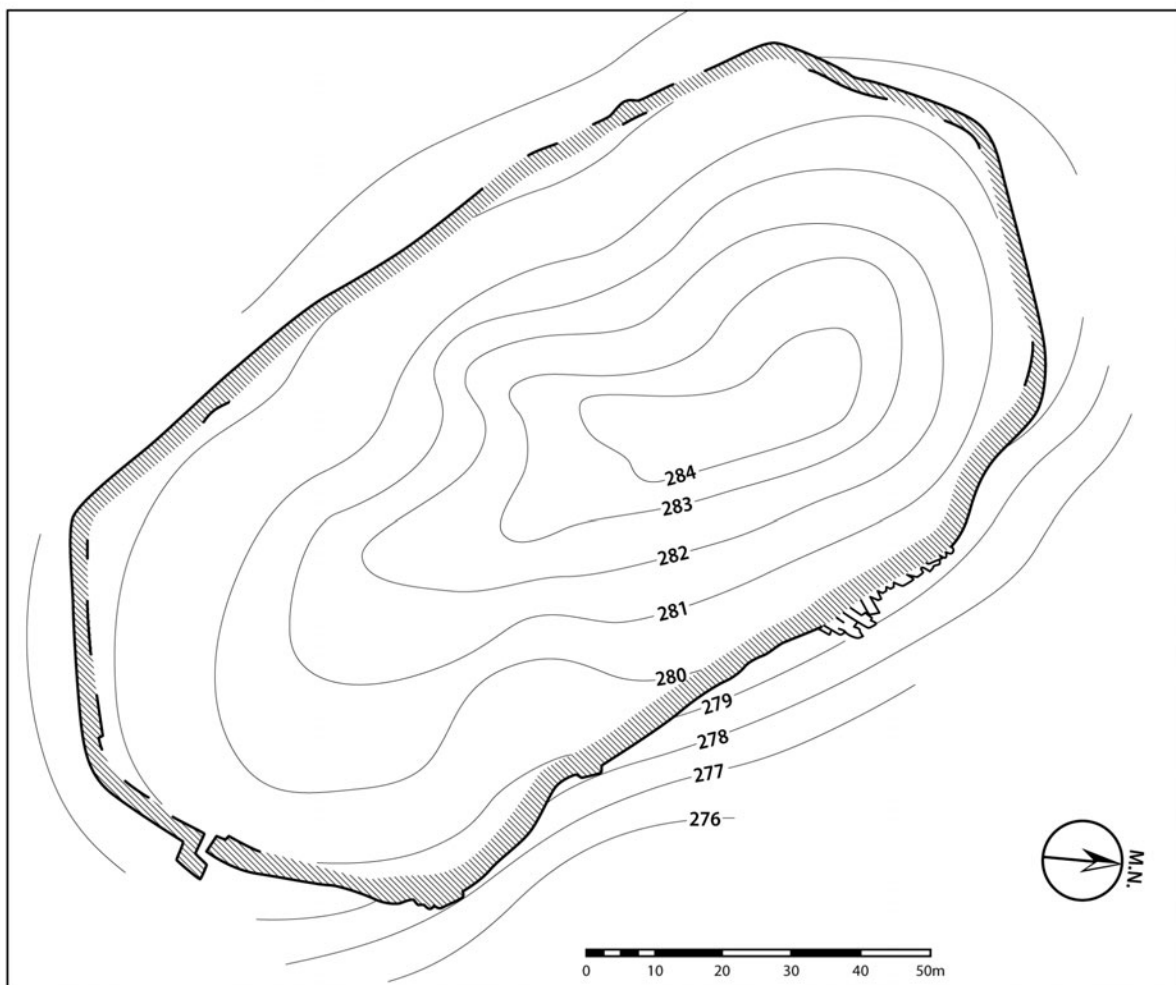


Fig. 12. Refuge settlement at Zeytin Dağ in the Latmos, featuring the so-called Lelegian fortification walls (after Peschlow-Bindokat 1996: fig. 19; redrawn by C. Kolb).

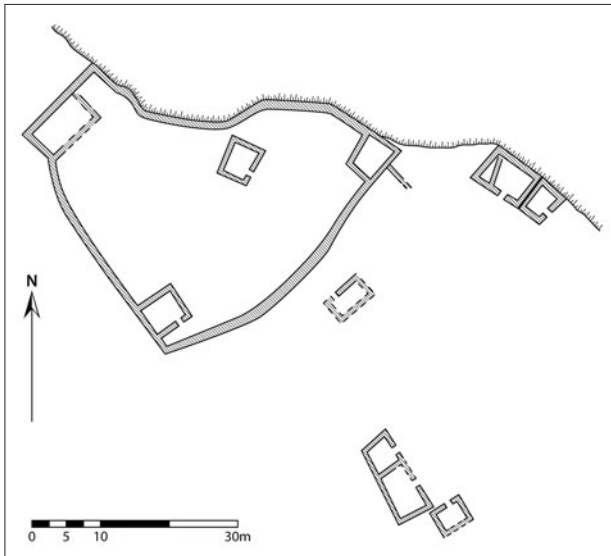


Fig. 13. Refuge settlement at Oyuklu Dağ (after Radt 1970: fig. 10; redrawn by C. Kolb).

Asarlık/Termera (Bean, Cook 1955: 116–18; Carstens 2009a: Appendix A, 128), the acropolis of Damlıboğaz/Hydai (Lohmann 2019: 194–97), Geriş (Bean, Cook 1955: 118–20; Carstens 2009a: Appendix A, 130) and Pedasa (Bean, Cook 1955: 123–25; Carstens 2009a: Appendix A, 131; Diler 2016) occupy the hazy boundary between the categories of fortified settlements and larger strongholds/refuge sites. These more complex sites spring up in the Late Geometric to Archaic periods. They continue to be occupied until Hellenistic times but are clearly descended from the earlier, yet smaller and less complex, strongholds. The hinterland of these settlements was occupied by smaller farmhouses, animal enclosures and agricultural terraces (Diler 2019: 509).

The settlement of Pedasa illustrates well the combined function of shelter and habitation. It extends over a spacious high terrain, enclosed by fortification walls of well-fitted monumental masonry (fig. 15). The site features early monumental tombs – suggesting that it might have been occupied already in the Early Iron Age, even if only Archaic and later-period remains can be identified to any great extent (Diler 2019: 511–12). The settlement was substantially expanded during the Mausolean era (mid-fourth century BCE), so most of the visible standing architecture in fact postdates the early remains. Two city walls surround the separate districts of the town; one is dedicated to the protection of the inner city, while the other encloses the lower town (Diler 2009: 375; 2019: 514). The buildings within the city wall are rectangular one-room structures, 4 to 5m along a side, often with a courtyard, and constructed in an agglutinative fashion (Diler 2019: fig. 22). A dynastic keep or a bastion forms part of the enclosure, and water cisterns

and towers were added to the fortifications during the Archaic and Classical periods (Radt 1970: fig. 14).

A common feature of not just Pedasa but most of the settlements in the hills is the presence of a ‘ruler’s dwelling’, a building of larger dimensions and made with better-executed, roughly isodomic masonry (Diler 2009: 375, fig. 25). As these structures are known from architectural surveys rather than excavation, their function is conjectural. Nonetheless, their central position and the increased investment in labour does mark them out. They might also have served as houses for a local cult or as administrative centres, or they may have combined a number of these functions. Indeed, throughout western Anatolia, temple structures pre-dating the Archaic period cannot easily be discerned at most settlements, since they do not seem to feature recognisable plans and architectural features or because there were in fact no temples in these settlements, as religious activity was confined to open air altars and natural features. At Pedasa, the activity at the temple of Athena dates from the Archaic to the Hellenistic period, as indicated by inscriptions and archaeological investigations rather than architectural form alone (Diler 2019: 516–17).

A new settlement type takes the form of simple pastoral compounds – called ‘Lelegian’ based on their oval plan and use of dry-stone masonry – which now dot the hinterland of settlements, such as at Alazeytin and Pedasa (Radt 1970: 167–75, supp. 8–10, pls 6–10; Diler 2019: fig. 24). The earliest examples date to the Geometric period, but the larger and better-known compounds belong to the Archaic period. They are usually circular with respect to the form of both the outer wall (10 to 20m in diameter) and the inner courtyard. The inner courtyard was presumably left unroofed, but the few rooms that radiated from it provided shelter from the weather (fig. 16). The inner walls incline, giving a dome-like impression to the entire structure. These buildings were increasingly used by rural populations during the Archaic period, but it is conceivable that they had developed from a more perishable form of earlier, less permanent structures.

Such a configuration seems to indicate a regular flow of people between the countryside and the central settlement. The structures were suitable for smaller clusters of pastoralists, perhaps being the private property of families and clans, or other specific types of social groups, who regularly moved about the landscape (Bean, Cook 1955: 167; Radt 1970: 145–93; 1992: 7–11). Altogether, Radt identified at least 70 such compounds, which are found primarily on the Halicarnassus peninsula, as well as in the hinterlands of Miletus, Teichioussa and Iasus (Radt 1992; Herda 2009: 94; Cianciulli 2013; Diler 2019: 518–21). These compounds are only located at higher elevations on slopes suitable for herding; they are not found in agricultural areas or by the coast (Radt 1970 with extensive catalogue).





Fig. 14. Fortified settlement at Alazeytin Kalesi (after Radt 1970: suppl. 1; redrawn by C. Kolb).

In terms of funerary evidence, built chamber tombs continue to be scattered through the countryside around fortified settlements, such as Pedasa on the Halicarnassus peninsula and Theangela just east of it. In general, local, easily breakable grey limestone is used for the construc-

tion of dry-stone masonry in the east of the peninsula, while larger volcanic rocks are utilised in the west (Flensted-Jensen, Carstens 2004: 113). The former type has been referred to as ‘Lelegian’. A true polygonal form of dry limestone masonry does not emerge until the late



Fig. 15. Plan of the fortified settlement core at Pedasa (after Diler 2019: fig. 22; redrawn by C. Kolb).

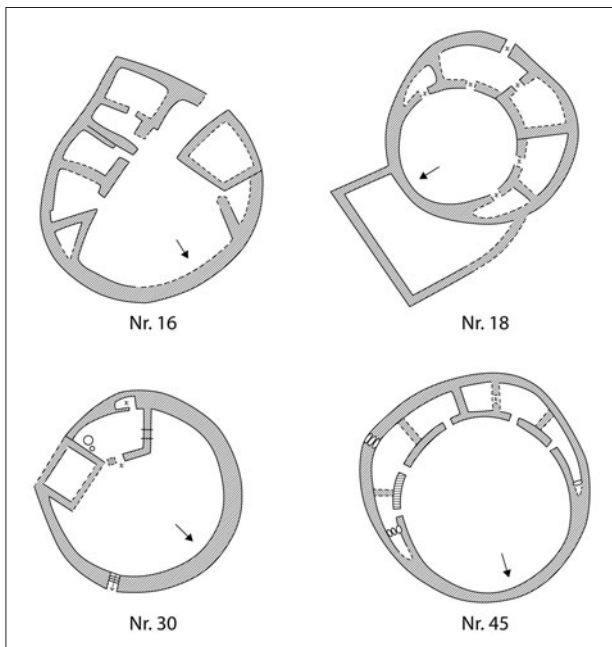


Fig. 16. Examples of different kinds of simple pastoral compounds (after Radt 1970: tab. 1; redrawn by C. Kolb).

Classical period, however, and most of the well-executed Archaic-period construction can be classified as pseudo-polygonal or roughly polygonal.

The Archaic-period tumuli consist of a surrounding crepis wall with a cornice, a low and narrow dromos and a stone chamber (Diler 2016: 457–58). This particular construction is regionally specific and has traditionally been associated with the Lelegian ethnonym. Unlike their predecessors, these tombs are built up without much supporting earth piled upon the upper structure. They house multiple burials, so access to the chamber via the dromos would have presumably been closed and reopened on the occasion of a new burial (see Carstens 2009b for an overview of notable Archaic tombs). The tombs might have thus been in use for a long time, also serving as foci of ancestor cult during the Archaic period (Carstens 2002a: 405–6). The dead were buried in terracotta sarcophagi or in cists, with ashes contained in cremation urns (Diler 2016: 458), which follows the Early Iron Age pattern. Understanding individual acts of funerary deposition, however, is not possible, as the redeposition of the deceased caused disturbances within the burial chamber, making it difficult to ascertain the

relationship between individual burials and assemblages. Moreover, a vast majority of these tumuli were further disturbed by looting, so the dating relies mostly on the style of the masonry (Carstens 2009b: 381).

Many Archaic tombs around Pedasa feature a similar masonry style (that is, a construction of roughly polygonal dry-stone walls) and vault form to the early tumuli. Most of the tumuli are 6–8m in diameter and consist of a tomb chamber in which a body could be laid out comfortably (the largest tumulus measures 14m in diameter: Flensted-Jensen, Carstens 2004: 114; Carstens 2008: 85; Diler 2009: 368). These tumuli are constructed of large slabs of the local stone. They are surrounded by stone crepis walls and have a stone platform that supports the entire structure. A notable tumulus of this type is the remarkable Gebe Kilise (fig. 17; dating to the seventh century BCE), located on a hillside east of the acropolis of Pedasa. The tomb towers over the landscape and must have belonged to a local dynast. Its exceptional preservation can be attributed to the high quality of its execution (Bean, Cook 1955: 123–28; Radt 1970: 291, fig. 19; Carstens 2002a: 404–5; 2009b: 379–80; Flensted-Jensen, Carstens 2004: 114; Diler 2016: 463). The walls are made of squared blocks of pseudo-isodomic masonry, carefully laid but loosely fitted in courses of irregular height, and the entire structure is crowned with a dome,

which is still standing. The tomb might have served as an inspiration for another noteworthy structure, the Classical period tomb at Geriş made of roughly isodomic masonry (Carstens 2002a: 404–5; 2009b: 378–80).

While platform tombs and chambers like that of Gebe Kilise are specific to the Halicarnassus peninsula (Carstens 2002a: 404–5; although the roughly rectangular chamber tomb of Gebe Kilise has parallels around Loryma, too: Diler 2016: 463, figs 4–6), they co-occur with other types of burials such as tumuli, which are more common throughout the broader region (from Aeolis down to Caria), resembling the Early Iron Age trend. Stylistically similar tombs have been documented in the environs of Miletus (built-up chamber tombs, but without cists, were detected around Akbük), as well as around Beçin (cist tombs with multiple inhumations) by Mylasa (Akarca 1971; Voigtländer 1986; Arslan, Kızıl 2007; Carstens 2009b; Lohmann 2019). There is clear micro-regional variation in the tomb form (Henry 2009), with an interplay with other local forms of burials, especially in the borderland regions (Lydian, Phrygian and later also Lycian; Flensted-Jensen, Carstens 2004: 119).

Archaic pottery assemblages from Caria have been more widely published than their Early Iron Age counterparts and therefore will not be commented on in detail here (e.g., Cook 1993; Fazlıoğlu 2007). Suffice to say that



Fig. 17. The tumulus at Gebe Kilise (courtesy of Angela Commito).

Carian Archaic pottery follows the tradition of painted Late Geometric pottery and has long been considered a regional variant of western Anatolian Archaic ceramics, which made frequent use of floral and animal patterns (similar to the Ionian Wild Goat and Fikellura styles, hence categorised as a subgroup of ‘East Greek’ pottery: Cook 1993; Cook, Dupont 1998: 91–92). Much of this pottery made its way to museums and cannot be traced to stratified contexts, but it seems to have been associated with burial assemblages (Cook 1993: 109; Carstens 2002b: 129–30). Pottery shapes indicate use as table services, comprising pouring vessels, such as jugs, and open tablewares. Despite the limitations outlined, it is possible to observe that there is no difference between pottery from Carian sites and from sites more closely associated with the Lelegians. ‘Carian’ decorated fine wares have been found in similar proportions in the supposedly ethnically ‘Greek’ sites of the Milesia (Lohmann 1999: 456), in the supposedly ethnically ‘Carian’ settlements in the environs of Mylasa (Akarca 1971; Cook 1993) and also in the supposedly ethnically ‘Lelegian’ sites further south, such as Dirmil and Theangela (Özgünel 1979; Işık 1990; Carstens 2002b). Other types of assemblages have so far been published in a more limited fashion, but there is hope that increased excavation in recent years will rectify this situation. New results are slowly coming from Pedasa, for example. The city tapped into the flow of Archaic-period trade between the eastern Mediterranean and the Aegean (Diler 2016: 462), attested by the material from the sanctuary of Athena. Examples of notable dedications include a Syrian-style bone figurine, while the assemblages from the tumuli in the West Acropolis included an iron knife and bronze items, such as bracelets and fibulae (Diler 2016: 468–69), which were not local.

It can be concluded that the changes during the Archaic period thus speak to increasing differentiation of site hierarchies (with the emergence of more formalised settlement forms) as well as social hierarchies (symbolised through the construction of dynastic tombs at prominent locations) and specialisation of certain modes of productive sustenance (with the emergence of a stronger infrastructure to support pastoralism). Yet there is nothing to suggest that the spectrum of local particularities observed throughout western Caria corresponds to discernible ethnicities.

Settlements of varying sizes and farmsteads have been described as having Carian or Lelegian ethnocultural affiliation due to their non-urban character and the type of architecture preserved – with non-rectilinear rural structures associated with the Lelegians (Lohmann 1999: 450–51; for a comment see Carstens 2009a: 102). For example, the chora of Archaic period Iasus have been described as populated by different peoples, some of whom practised agropastoralism and lived in ‘Lelegian’ structures, and some of whom lived in the fortified settlements that

controlled the flow of traffic over the hilly area. All of them used typical local Carian pottery, and worship took place in local shrines and sanctuaries that did not share the ‘canonical’ Greek form (Pierobon Benoit 2006: esp. 280). The limited funerary evidence from Protogeometric Iasus, which bears similarities to that of Pedasa and Termera, has been considered Carian (Levi 1972: 467–68).

In an intriguing contrast, there is no discernible ‘Lelegian’ label for ceramics; the ceramic evidence has been linked to the supposed Greek immigration into Caria (but see Özgünel 1979; Carstens 2002b; Fazlıoğlu 2007). Now, it would be naive to argue that a community of people needs to use distinct types of material culture; people do not equal pots. Yet specific Lelegian foodways, organisation of space within houses, settlement hierarchies and so on have not been identified.

The association of tombs with the Lelegians has relied on two aspects: the first is their mode of construction (the use of dry-stone masonry) and the second is their proximity to the supposed Lelegian towns (for example, Pedasa, discussed at length earlier). The so-called Lelegian type of masonry is also relatively widespread geographically and chronologically, as it presents an efficient way of working with local resources (Held 2019: 84; Lohmann 2019: 159–60, 186–89 on ‘Carian’ enclosure walls in southwestern Anatolia). The monumental burials of the Archaic period descend from the Early Iron Age tumulus forms, and in fact many of these tombs might have been used for centuries by prominent local families (Carstens 2009b: 386; Mariaud 2012).

Last but not least, the use of polygonal masonry becomes a hallmark of settlement fortifications and prestige burials of the Archaic period and later, but the use of this style of masonry is not consistent. Pseudo-polygonal masonry was used in the construction of tombs of local dynasts at Geriş, and well-executed polygonal masonry was used in the construction of the pinnacle of tomb architecture in the region, the built chamber tomb at Gebe Kilise. In fact, the spectacular tombs such as Gebe Kilise and the architecture of buildings at places like Alazeytin reflect a deeply local tradition and seem to be related (at least with respect to their distinctive manner of construction of their dry-stone vaults).

Archaic-period local building traditions reflect micro-regional cultural differences that have more to do with social adaptations in regional environments than with ethnicity. While social hierarchies can impact fledging ethnic identities, the evidence does not indicate that this occurred along the divide of poor/rural Lelegians versus wealthier/urban Carians. If the Lelegians were supposed to be the subservient rural populace, then how does one explain relatively affluent assemblages in the tumuli of the local dynasts at Pedasa, for example?

**The invention of the Lelegians in the literary sources**

Our earliest literary texts offer only a vague sense of the Lelegians as a group in the area of western Anatolia, perhaps related in some way to the Carians (table 2). Both groups first appear in the *Iliad*. Homer characterises the Carians as inhabiting Miletus and the surrounding Meander River valley, while the Lelegians are mentioned together with other Anatolian groups as allies of the Trojans, including the Carians and the Lydians (Hom. *Il.* 2.858, 10.429). Information about the nature and location of the Lelegians remains vague. *Iliad* 21.85 describes them as inhabiting Pegasus on the Satnioeis and being ‘war-loving’ by nature (this led Rumschied [2009a: 175–78] to suggest that the Lelegians originated in the Troad and moved south). The same passage also mentions that Priam married a Lelegian princess, a daughter of Altes. Hesiod is vaguer, describing the Lelegians as peoples picked from the earth (λεκτοῦς ἐκ γαίης), locating them not in Anatolia but instead on mainland Greece in Lokris (Hes. fr. 234, quoted in Strabo 7.7.2; Flensted-Jensen, Carstens 2004: 109).

During the Archaic period proper, both traditions about the Lelegians persisted. Alcaeus of Mytilene (in the early sixth century BCE) locates them in the Troad, possibly following Homer (Alc. fr. 337; Hom. *Il.* 21.86; Rumschied 2009a: 175–76; Carless Unwin 2017: 1–2). Another tradition, attested by Pherekydes of Syros (*FGrH* 3 fr. 155), writing a generation later, suggests that the Carians and the Lelegians had co-existed in Ionia and moved to Caria after having been driven out by the Ionians. Asius of Samos (*F7 GEF*) placed them in southern Ionia. Yet other authors continued to place the Lelegians in various locations on mainland Greece, perhaps following Hesiod (Boeotia: Ephorus *FGrH* 70 fr. 127; Lokris: Ps.-Scymn. 572, 591). In general, these sources characterise the Lelegians as a legendary early non-Greek people, perhaps akin to the Pelasgians (Sourvinou-Inwood 2003; Flensted-Jensen, Carstens 2004; McInerney 2014; Herda et al. 2019: 17–18; see also Radt 1970: 11–12).

Herodotus embraces a mix of traditions. According to him, the Carians were known as Lelegians when they inhabited Crete and paid tribute to king Minos by manning ships and fighting as part of his navy (Hdt. 1.171.1–6). Carians-as-Lelegians eventually migrated to the south-western coast of Anatolia, or, alternatively, were forced to migrate there by the coming of the Ionians (Hdt. 1.171.1–6; Thuc. 1.4.4). After relating this episode, Herodotus never returns to the Lelegians again, although he proceeds to give further information about the Carians, including Carian myths of their own autochthony (Hdt. 1.171.5–6) and massacres by the incoming Ionians (Hdt. 1.146; Carless Unwin 2017: 38–39).

**The Hellenistic to Roman periods: accelerated changes**

This vague and indistinct image of the Lelegians undergoes a transformation in the late Classical and Hellenistic periods. In these centuries, a clearer idea of the Lelegians emerges, which considers them as an ethnically distinct population characterised by cultural simplicity, rural lifestyles and servile or barbarian status. It is this characterisation which has crucially shaped modern scholarship on the Lelegians. How and why did this characterisation of the Lelegians emerge?

The late Classical to Hellenistic period is often presented as the heyday of Caria. It witnessed changes in lifestyle, detected through increased expenditure on urban architecture – including monumental fortifications and sacred precincts – in line with the standard urban model common to Hellenistic western Anatolia. This configuration represents a break with the lifeways of the Carian past and becomes the symbol of a more cosmopolitan Caria in the present. Such a shift has been the subject of prolific scholarship, the details of which will not be rehearsed here as many major publications outline specific aspects of sociopolitical crystallisation during this period (Hornblower 1982; Linders, Hellström 1989; Isager, Pedersen 2004; Carstens 2009a; Rumschied 2009b; Karlsson, Carlsson 2011; Henry 2013a; 2013b; Carless Unwin 2017).

The increased wealth and monumental investment evident in Caria from the fourth century BCE onwards are accompanied by a new, more clearly defined political status and an upswing in a conscious sense of Carian identity. Carian villages and small settlements with dependent territories had already formed *koina*, or federal leagues/collectives of settlements organised around local sanctuaries (Hornblower 1982: 54–59; Henry 2016: 429). From the late fifth century BCE, some of these smaller *koina* become organised into larger *poleis* with dependent demes (Hornblower 1982: 54–59; Marchese 1989: 39; Linders, Hellström 1989; van Bremen, Carbon 2010; Henry 2013b). But it is not until the fourth century BCE that Caria emerges as a clearly defined regional unit in sociopolitical terms. This is an outcome of its political status as an administrative unit of the Persian empire, combined with local political centralisation made by Hecatomnus, a ruler of Mylasa who became the first satrap of Caria (Hornblower 1982: 1; Carstens 2009a: 101–2).

In the century that followed, this new coherent status is accompanied by a distinct Carian identity – advertised through political and civic structures and increased elaboration of monuments – deliberately promoted by the Hecatomnid dynasty. In the third century BCE, this Carian identity further crystallises into the Chrysaoric League, a formal union of Carian communities focused on the

sanctuary of Zeus at Stratonicea (Hellström 2009). The self-conscious Carian identity of this league is made clear in the epigraphic evidence and in the creative reworkings of mythic genealogies (Carless Unwin 2017: 53).

The archaeological record of this period shows continued activity at established settlements, with increased expenditure on monumentality and architectural formalisation (Bean, Cook 1955; 1957; Marchese 1989: 47–57; Carstens 2009a; 2011b; Henry 2013b). Construction keeps to the earlier tradition of agglutinative arrangement of buildings, especially on the Halicarnassus peninsula, such as at Alazeytin/Syangela (fig. 14). During this period, faster-paced changes in defensive architecture and the use of truly polygonal masonry take place (Radt 1970 for an overview of chronology and examples; Carstens 2009a: 105–6; see also Vergnaud 2021 on regional comparisons). Indeed, the development of military architecture in Caria is a remarkable phenomenon. Contemporary trends in Greek fortifications are embraced and innovated upon, resulting in some of the most expensive and sophisticated wall circuits in the Mediterranean (e.g., at Heraclea, Iasus, Loryma and Theangela; Pimouguet-Pédarros 2000). Public buildings, cult places and elaborate building complexes (‘palaces’) are now clearly visible in the archaeological record (Baran 2009; Carstens 2011b: 374–80; Diler 2021). Yet most of the pastoral compounds – considered the key material expression of Lelegian ethnic identity (Radt 1970; Cianculli 2013) – either fall out of use as the population increasingly moves to towns or change their form (Rumscheid 2009a: 185). The new compounds are not fully enclosed nor are they circular in shape. This is the most pronounced change of this period, but one which is poorly understood due to a lack of excavated stratified deposits associated with these features.

No Lelegians can be discerned in the material culture of this period. Even though some have suggested that Lelegian towns comprised the bottom of the Carian settlement hierarchy (e.g., Bean, Cook 1955), the continuity and prosperity of smaller settlements (Hornblower 1982: 9–10) does not yield much to support such an interpretation. Changes can be more neutrally explained in terms of increasingly preferential treatment of well-connected settlements in proximity to the sea or valley routes (most of the ‘Lelegian’ towns were at a distance from these, for example), coupled with increased synoecism and urbanisation (Henry 2013a: 4–6). Yet from now on, the identity of Carian communities becomes understood as being linked to the urban rather than the rural.

### Placing the Lelegians in Carian history

This time of accelerated sociopolitical change, evident in the archaeological record, is accompanied by a flowering of local historiography. It is at this point that the Lelegians

emerge as a useful trope in the negotiation of what it means to be Carian and in the structuration of intercultural relationships. By the late Classical period, cultural dialogue between Greeks and Carians (Crielaard 2009: 51–54; Herda 2013; Carless Unwin 2017: 41–42) includes exchange of mythical and historiographical ideas (Herda et al. 2019: 13–14). One well-known example of this process is the Salmakis epigram, a late Hellenistic (late second/early first century BCE) inscription of 60 lines related to the mythical foundation of the city of Halicarnassus. It is noteworthy that this poem celebrates the Greek rather than Carian establishment of the city (Isager 1998; Isager, Pedersen 2004; Gagné 2006); Greek historiographical traditions and tropes would have been familiar in a Carian context.

For the first time there are records of histories written by Carian authors preserved for us through ancient citations. A work entitled *Περὶ Καρῶν καὶ Λελέγων* that could elucidate the relationships between the different peoples was written sometime during the Hellenistic period by Philip of Theangela (*FGrH* 741 F 3), but the text survives only in very limited fragments, as a reference in the work of Athenaeus. The excerpt is concerned with the supposed servile status of the Lelegians to the Carians, in both the past and the present (Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* 6.101: Φίλιππος ὁ Θεαγγελεὺς ἐν τῷ Περὶ Καρῶν καὶ Λελέγων συγγράμματι καταλέξας τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίων εἰλωτας καὶ τοὺς Θετταλικοὺς πενέστας καὶ Κᾶράς φησι τοῖς Λελέξιν ὡς οἰκέταις χρήσασθαι πάλαι τε καὶ νῦν [Philip of Theangela, in his work on the Carians and the Lelegians, having mentioned the helots of the Lacedaemonians and the Thessalian penestas also says that the Carians use the Lelegians as domestic slaves both in the past and in the present]; Carless Unwin 2017: 32–33; on the Lelegians as Carian serfs, see McNerney 2014: 51–52).

Apollonius of Aphrodisias is another local chronicler, who wrote an extensive history of the Carians in 18 books (Apollonius, *FGrH* 740/*BNJ* 740 F1–16) and whose work is now lost. Limited preserved fragments (in Stephanus of Byzantium’s *Ethnika*) suggest a significant focus on the foundation legends of various Carian cities but do not mention Lelegians. We therefore cannot be sure of the original content and sensibilities of his work.

The Hellenistic period is the time when Carian histories become of interest, with two notable aspects. First, these works were written in Greek. In Anatolia, the increased use of Greek by local communities had already taken place in the late Classical period, and by the third century BCE, Greek had become the lingua franca of the eastern Mediterranean as the language of Seleucid imperial administration. These works thus had the potential to reach a wider audience and be involved in common dialogues on origins, social hierarchies and civic status (I thank

Naoise Mac Sweeney for this point). Second, Philip's work, conscious of the hierarchical relationship between the Carians and the Lelegians akin to the historical situation in Lacedaemon, is the first explicit mention of contemporary activities of the Lelegians in Caria.

An interesting feature of the preserved texts is that ambivalence continues to resonate through most charter myths, suggesting a persistent vagueness of cultural and ethnic identities formed through prolonged interaction between Carian cities and their Aegean neighbours through symbolic as well as physical means (e.g., in the Salmakis epigram from Halicarnassus: Gagné 2006; and the story of Endymion: Herda et al. 2019: 18–20; for western Anatolian monuments, see Sergueenkova, Rojas 2017). The different cultural groups of Carians and Greeks came together in different settlements, and frequent contact with the Lydians, Phrygians and Mysians took place especially in the border zones in the east (Ratté 2009; Henry 2016). Mixing and meeting are a consistent feature of the cultural landscape of Caria, as explicitly noted a few centuries later by Strabo (13.4.12, 14.1.42).

Within this context, the conversation on identities and relationships emphasises differences rather than bonds, and thus while the Carians come to be identified as the more Hellenised group of indigenous inhabitants, the Lelegians come to present the alternative – a more 'barbarian' indigenous counterpart, known from the remains of the rural and pastoral lifestyle in the hills of the peninsula, eventually identified materially by Strabo (13.1.59). It is also worth stressing that 'discourses of alterity' were one of the strategies employed by the Greeks in the complex process of place- and identity-making during intercultural encounters, which quickened in the Classical period (Vlassopoulos 2013: 52–56; in Carian context: Carless Unwin 2017: 38–40). In short, the invention of the Lelegians happens in the context of Carian political self-imagining during a period of increased interest in origins and identities (see Mac Sweeney 2021 on a concomitant shift in Ionia) and against the background of entanglement between local traditions and accelerated sociopolitical changes (including political centralisation and urbanisation). Admittedly, even as Caria emerges as a more formalised geopolitical unit, it is difficult to know how this development impacted individuals' sense of identity and how it changed in the following centuries under the Seleucid rule.

Nonetheless, one thing is clear. From now on, the idea of Carians as distinct and superior to the Lelegians proliferates, and authors writing in Greek and Latin elaborate on this theme. Perhaps the best known and most influential of these on modern scholarship is Strabo. Strabo is somewhat inconsistent about the relationship between the Carians and the Lelegians. He notes that while some

thought that they were the same people, others suggested that they were only co-inhabiting the same territory (Strabo 7.7.2–3, 14.2.28). He ultimately settles on the idea that both of them had inhabited Ionia before they were driven out by the Ionians but that even in those early times there had been a difference between these two groups of peoples, as the Lelegians had previously been driven out of Troy by the Greeks (Strabo 13.1.49–59). Most crucially, he identifies the deserted structures, such as tombs and forts, as Lelegian, and this identification suggests that they were perceived as such during the Roman period (Strabo 13.1.59).

Strabo draws on earlier traditions that the Lelegians purportedly led a wandering life, having set foot in distant Acarnania, Lokris and Aetolia, among other regions in mainland Greece (Strabo 7.7.2; 14.2.27; based on Hom. *Il.* 21.85–86, Hdt. 1.171.1–6 and Hes. fr. 234; see Paus. 3.1.1 on Lelegians in Laconia; but see Parth. *Amat. narr.* 11 on their identification as natives of Caria). He elaborates on these scrappy early tales by reporting that Lelegians were once prominent in Caria but eventually diminished in number, and after the pressure extended by the coming of the Ionians, they mixed together with the Carians. The Lelegians are said to have established eight poleis, and eventually six of them (excluding Myndus and Syangela) located in the area of the Pedasis and outside the Halicarnassus peninsula became part of the city of Halicarnassus through a process of synoecism (Strabo 13.1.58–59).

### Conclusion

Who were the Lelegians? The archaeological record of the Late Bronze Age, Early Iron Age, and Archaic and Classical periods shows no evidence for a distinct population group in Caria that can be identified as Lelegians. The literary sources, when viewed in their own historical context, suggest that in earlier periods, ideas about the Lelegians were vague and flexible, only crystallising relatively late, in the late Classical and Hellenistic periods. The picture of Lelegians that we can find in later texts such as Strabo's, which has informed and indeed perhaps even dominated the discussion in much modern scholarship, is therefore an invention – a by-product of the complex processes of Carian ethnogenesis.

The argument proposed here has suggested that investigating material patterning rather than relying on selected categories of material culture enables us to move on from an unproductive linking of data of different character (material versus textual tradition) and date with (ethnic) identities. Such an approach leads to a conclusion that the Lelegians were not a distinct group of people that once inhabited western Caria in the Early Iron Age and that the material culture does not map well onto the perceived social boundaries between Carians and

Lelegians. Archaeological reconnaissance of first-millennium BCE western Caria shows interesting and dynamic patterns that speak to the ways in which people situated themselves within their social and natural environment rather than to specific types of (ethnic) identities. When we consider the typological representation of ‘Lelegian’ material remains, however, it becomes clear that specific, and arguably very restricted, categories of material culture – particular construction styles, the use of rural compounds and the practice of burying in tumuli and platform graves – have been thought to convey information about very distinct identities. In short, Lelegian material culture has traditionally been characterised in architectural terms only.

The Lelegians become a symbol of the more primordial other in opposition to which the communal Carian identity is shaped during an era that witnesses prominent processes of self-definition and a slow emergence of oppositional, in contrast to plural, social identities. The emphasis on difference from and opposition to other communities was a crucial feature in the formation of the Ionian identity during the Archaic period (Hall 1997: 32). It might have spurred parallel processes in neighbouring Caria some generations later, as it increasingly opened to the Greek world and began to reconfigure its sociopolitical profile in the wake of regional political centralisation. Indeed, the narratives describing the relationship between Greeks and Carians become particularly popular in the late fifth to early third centuries BCE, a period that witnesses changes in Carian sociopolitical structures and settlement patterns, reflecting the rise of social complexity and the increase in inter-group contact and the widening of networks of interaction.

Ultimately, modern scholars have sought to extend the Lelegian historical lifespan by retrojecting ethnic associations from Hellenistic and Roman-period discourses onto the Early Iron Age and Archaic material remains. These early remains can be connected to particular practices, enabling a particular mode of living and sustenance, which

certainly must have spurred the sharing of communal bonds and forging of new sets of identities within the slow process of increasing stratification of Carian communities. This shared social experience, however, need not translate into the existence of multiple ethnicities and, additionally, we cannot assume that the varying spectra of identities were conceptualised along ethnic rather than geographic, community or cultural lines.

Western Caria was home to various types of communities that positioned themselves differentially in relation to other communities and the evolving local and regional networks that connected them. They built, however, on a common language of material expressions, which the hunt for the Lelegians neglects to take into account. Perhaps the hesitation of modern archaeology to embrace the wide-ranging spectrum of material culture stems from the long-entrenched view that considers stylistic change as directly corresponding to historical events, ethnic divisions and cultural breaks (for critical reflection on the link between ethnicity and material culture see, e.g., Jones 1997; Morgan 2001). Yet the invention of the Lelegians was a dynamic, evolving and complex process, intertwined with the inherent and persisting plurality of the Carian social landscape of the first millennium BCE.

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