

The late-antique cityscape of ancient Halikarnassos Some recently excavated buildings with mosaic pavements

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Halikarnassos, modern Bodrum, in Turkey was never forgotten as the birthplace of the historian Herodotos and the place of the famous Maussoleion. The literary record agree that Halikarnassos never recovered after its destruction by Alexander the Great, but with the archaeological discoveries during the previous three decades, this assertion has to be reconsidered.

In the 1990s part of a large house, luxuriously embellished with mosaic pavements, was excavated. It is now known as the House of Charidemos, and with this building, the late-antique cityscape of ancient Halikarnassos began to appear. In recent years, substantial building activities in the city of Bodrum have brought to light a further number of late-antique buildings with floor mosaics. Some of the buildings seem to be private dwellings, but at least one belongs to a basilica. All these buildings with elaborate floor mosaics indicate that Halikarnassos had wealthy patrons to commission, and resources to produce luxurious embellished buildings during Late Antiquity (ca. 4th to 6th century AD).

Birte Poulsen is associate professor in Classical Archaeology at Aarhus University. She has been a member of several field projects in Italy, and since 2017 she is directing the Danish-Italian project: Contextualising the past in the Alban Hills that includes an investigation of the so-called Villa of Clodius at Via Appia. Since 1990, she has been a member of the Danish-Turkish project in Bodrum, ancient Halikarnassos, a project that she is now co-directing together with Poul Pedersen. Her research is related to Roman imperial material culture, sanctuaries and villas. Another main focus is the urban development of Halikarnassos during Late Antiquity and she has treated topics related to private architecture and tombs as well as questions related to workshops and patrons/viewers.

