

# LATE ROMAN HALIKARNASSOS: THE AMPHORA EVIDENCE

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## ABSTRACT

Since 1966 the *Danish Halikarnassos Project* has undertaken several archaeological investigations at different locations in Bodrum, Turkey, the town of Hellenistic Halikarnassos. These sites both extend within the city boundaries and the periphery of ancient Halikarnassos and cover contexts of many different functions as to domestic, public and manufacture as well burial purposes.

The substantial ceramic finds which were made during these excavations indicate radical infrastructure changes in Halikarnassos at the beginning of the Byzantine period. The spreading of inhabited areas within Halikarnassos itself seems to have changed within a relatively short period of time. The pottery production, which had been well established and had continued more or less unchanged from the Classical period to some time in the Roman period underwent radical changes during the Late Antique period, implicating drastic changes in the Halikarnassian trade market. The imported amphorae are the most eloquent evidence of the fundamental changes of Halikarnassian society during Late Antiquity,

In the Late Classical period, amphorae were traded on a mostly regional basis. Later on, during the Hellenistic and Early Roman period, the majority of amphorae finds originate from Halikarnassos itself or from immediate neighbours, whereas later in the Roman period African products find their way to the city. In the Byzantine period, these trade pattern change significantly. The imported goods were now transported over notably longer distances than hitherto and the sources of import were primarily the Levant and locations along the trading route between the Levant and the western coast of Asia Minor e.g. the southern coastline of Turkey and Cyprus. The latest research on the finds has furthermore shed light upon what appears to be a new important source of goods in the Byzantine period. Amphorae finds originating from Ephesos (LRA 3) prove a regional trade between the two cities unsurpassed since the Hellenistic period.