



Summary :

The Dorians together with the Ionians and the Aeolians participated during the Early Iron Age in the colonisation of the western coast of Asia Minor. There they established two new Greek cities, Halicarnassus and Cnidus. The selection of the specific sites was based on the criterion of securing arable land and, as a result, the Dorian colonies became agrarian settlements. The Dorians brought their dialect, their mores and their devotional practices to their new homes.

Date

12th - 8th c. BC.

Geographical Location

Coasts of Asia Minor.

1. Dorian Colonies

The Dorians together with the Ionians and the Aeolians were the three Greek peoples which participated in the colonisation of the western coast of Asia Minor. The spread of the Dorians as far as the eastern continental side of the Aegean originated from the Peloponnese with intermediate stops in the islands of the south Cyclades (Thera, Melos), Crete and the Dodecanese (Rhodes, Kos) and reached the shores of [Caria](#), in the south-western part of Asia Minor.¹ There the Dorians established two new Greek cities, [Halicarnassus](#) (modern Bodrum) and [Cnidus](#).

2. Literary Evidence

According to Strabo, when the Athenian king Codrus passed away, Cnidus and Halicarnassus did not exist, while [Rhodes](#) and Kos had already been founded.² This testimony is supported by archaeological evidence, for Rhodes and Kos were among the most prominent Mycenaean centres in the Eastern Aegean.³ On the contrary, it appears that no permanent settlement existed in the two sites of the Carian seacoast that can be dated before the foundation of the Dorian colonies.⁴

According to tradition, Halicarnassus was settled by colonists from Troezen.⁵ Herodotus calls them 'Dorians'⁶ and Stephen of Byzantium reports that the founder Anthes led the tribe of the Dymanes, one of the three Dorian tribes from Troezen to Halicarnassus.⁷ It should be noted that Diodorus Siculus⁸ does not include Halicarnassus among the Dorian possessions of the South Cyclades and Caria, while Vitruvius⁹ mentions the participation of Argives in the foundation of this colony.

The literary attested connection between Halicarnassus and Troezen is supported by later epigraphic evidence.¹⁰

According to Herodotus,¹¹ Cnidus, the second Dorian colony on the coast of Caria was founded by Lacedaemonian colonists. A different version featuring settlers from Megara is found in Strabo.¹² However, Herodotus' testimony is considered more reliable, for the historian was born in Halicarnassus and would have been quite knowledgeable about Cnidus.¹³ The connection between Cnidus and Sparta is indirectly confirmed by other testimonies by the same historian, as well as by Diodorus Siculus. A first indirect connection between Cnidus and Sparta can be discerned in the episode relating the rescue of Cyrenian captives by the Cnidians, who subsequently transported them to Thera.¹⁴ The inhabitants of Thera considered themselves related to the Cnidians,¹⁵ probably because of their common Lacedaemonian ancestry.¹⁶ In a sense, Cyrene could also be considered a Spartan colony, with Thera as its metropolis.¹⁷ The Cnidians interceded again for the return of the exile Gillos from Taras, since the Cnidians and the denizens of Taras were friends.¹⁸ According to Diodorus Siculus, Cnidians and Lacedaemonians participated, together with Argives and Rhodians, in the foundation of Syme.¹⁹ Around the end of the 5th c. BC, Cnidus was one of Sparta's loyal allies. It appears that Cnidus belonged



to the network of Spartan colonies in the Mediterranean, a network which included Taras, Melos and Thera.²⁰

3. Dating the Foundation of the Colonies

The task of dating colonisation in Asia Minor is beset with various difficulties and great uncertainty.

According to tradition, the onset of the Dorians towards the islands of the Aegean and the coast of Asia Minor took place after their defeat by the Athenian king Codrus, and is, consequently, concurrent with the Ionian Colonisation.²¹ In the traditional chronology of the [Ionian Colonisation](#), as this is described in ancient sources, this event is dated to the 11th c. BC.²²

When the envoys of Halicarnassus in Rome contend in 27 AD that their city has existed for 1200 years, that is, from around 1175 BC, without having ever been struck by an earthquake, this is but a move to impress the Senate, for such an early date is not supported by archaeological finds and possibly results from a dating system connected with the Trojan War.²³

Modern researchers have not arrived at a unanimously accepted date for the colonisation of the Aegean and Asia Minor by the Ionians, the Aeolians and the Dorians. Various chronologies have been suggested, ranging between the 12th and 8th centuries BC, thus covering the Early Iron Age in its entirety.

More specifically, as for the establishment of the Dorian colonies in Asia Minor, J. Berard suggests a date around the end of the 12th c. BC.²⁴ Certain scholars situate the Dorian Colonisation in the 10th c. BC,²⁵ while according to a third view, the main thrust of the Dorian expansion in the islands of the southeastern Aegean should be dated to the 8th c. BC.²⁶

Due to the uninterrupted habitation in the site of Halicarnassus, no remnants from buildings belonging to the period of the early settlement have survived. Even the earliest movable finds cannot be dated before the 8th c. BC.²⁷ This does not entail, however, that the first settlement cannot be earlier.

The archaeological data for the chronology of the establishment of Cnidus are similarly insufficient. Furthermore, in the case of this Dorian colony, there are conflicting views concerning the site on which it was established.

According to one theory, the first settlement was founded in the south coast of the peninsula, and the city remained there until the end of the 5th c. BC, when it was re-established in modern Tekir, at the edge of the peninsula. The sole argument of the supporters of this thesis rests on the absence of archaeological remnants from Tekir dated before the 4th c. BC. More recent excavations on this site have, however, unearthed finds dating from the 7th c. BC. This fact, combined with the complete lack of any reference to a relocation of Cnidus in ancient sources, represents the argument of those who believe that, from the very beginning, Cnidus was established at Tekir, at the edge of the peninsula.²⁸

The absence of archaeological remnants dated before the 7th c. BC complicates the fixing of a precise chronology for the early Spartan settlement in Cnidus.

According to a recent theory, Cnidus was established late, in the 8th c. BC. In this period (and not earlier) the Spartan expansion in the Aegean can be situated, according to the archaeological research conducted on Thera.²⁹ Consequently, Taras is not the sole, but perhaps the last, Spartan colony established in the 8th c. BC. Unlike Corinth, which began sending out settlers around 730 BC, Sparta had already established all its colonies in the Mediterranean area by then, including Cnidus in Asia Minor.

4. Character of the Dorian Colonies in Asia Minor

Divergent answers have been provided for the question of whether the settlement of Dorians on the coasts of Asia Minor was a peaceful affair. Independently of whether there was any resistance by the [Carians](#), the indigenous population of southwest Asia Minor,



the peaceful coexistence of colonisers and natives cannot be contested.

The selection of the sites of Cnidus and Halicarnassus was made with a view to exploiting arable lands and ensuring the protection of the cities; their isolation from the barbarian inland was also an important consideration. The Dorian colonies were agrarian settlements and not sea-trading posts.³⁰ Unlike the Ionian colonies, they espoused organised civic life as late as the end of the 5th c. BC, following the defeat of Athens in the Peloponnesian War.

The settlers brought their dialect, their mores and their devotional practices to their new homes. The Temple of Apollo Triopios was the centre of the Dorian communities of Rhodes, Kos and Caria. It was situated on the peninsula of Cnidus, but its precise location has not been ascertained as of yet.³¹

Herodotus narrates the expulsion of Halicarnassus from this Dorian league on the charge of impiety.³² The real cause, however, must have lied with the fact that, by the 5th c. BC already, the language and culture of this city were wholly Ionic.

The Greek settlements on the coasts of Asia Minor during the Early Iron Age proved crucial for later developments in the Aegean region. The immediate result of their foundation was the transformation of the Aegean Sea into a Greek 'lake'.³³

The first expansion wave towards the Aegean and the coasts of Asia Minor prepared the Greeks to dare to establish settlements much farther from the metropolis in their next colonisation.

5. Critical Approach to the Colonisation

A fundamental difference exists in the way modern and ancient historians perceive of the Greek Colonisation.³⁴ Historical research differentiates between two phenomena: First, the forays of Ionians, Aeolians and Dorians during the Early Iron Age, which resulted in the colonisation of the Aegean and Asia Minor; and secondly, the large colonial expansion which commenced during the second half of the 8th c. BC and led to the establishment of Greek colonies throughout the Mediterranean. On the contrary, for the ancient Greeks the foundation of the colonies took place in the context of a single and sustained process, during which the Aegean islands and the coast of Asia Minor were settled first, with the subsequent establishment of the more remote colonies of the Western Mediterranean.

The fusion of these two distinct Greek expansions by the ancient writers has had an impact on the linguistic level as well. The ancient sources use the same terminology (colony, founder, metropolis) to describe Early Iron Age settlements as well as colonies established in the following centuries. For the first expansion wave of the three Greek peoples, modern scholars often prefer the term 'migration' or 'movement' instead of 'colonisation'. This is, in effect, the last phase of the settlement of Greeks in the region of the Aegean Sea, which unfolded in an unsystematic manner³⁵ and, of course, cannot be compared with the organised colonisation of the Archaic Age (mid-8th to mid-6th c. BC).

1. About the course of the Dorian expansion in the Black Sea, see: Cook, J.M., *The Greeks in Ionia and the East* (London 1962), p. 29; Hammond, N.G.L., *Migrations and Invasions in Greece and adjacent areas* (1976), p. 151, map no. 25. *IEE B* (1971), p. 26, map on p. 27; Boruchovic, V. G., 'Die agaische Kolonisation', *Klio* 70 (1988), p. 126.

2. Strabo, 14.2.6.

3. Βασιλικού, Ντ., *Ο μυκηναϊκός πολιτισμός* (Athens 1995), p. 388.

4. About the existence of Proto-Geometric and submycenaean pottery in tombs of the area of Halicarnassus: Desborough, V.R., *The*



Greek Dark Ages (London 1972), pp. 180-184; Schachermeyer, F., 'Griechenland im Zeitalter der Wanderungen', *Agaische Fruhzeit* 4 (Wien 1980), pp. 340-343; Vanschoonwinkel, J., *L'eege et la mediterranee a la fin du deuxieme millenaire* (Louvain-La- Neuve 1991), pp. 166-167; Lemos, I. S., *The Protogeometric Aegean* (Oxford 2002), p. 212; Coldstream, J.N., *Geometric Greece* (London 2003)², p. 258.

5. Strabo, 14.2.16; Paus., 2.30.9, 32.6.

6. Hdt., 7.99.3.

7. Stephen of Byzantium, see entry 'Αλικαρνασσός'. Anthes of Troezen is also reported as founder by Strabo, 14.2.16.

8. D. S., from 5.53 onwards.

9. Vitr., *De arch.* 2.8.12. Argive colony according to Pomponius Melas, 1.16.3.

10. CIG 2655. About the relations between Halicarnassus and Troezen, see Jameson, M.H., 'Troizen and Halikarnassos in the Hellenistic Era', Isager, S. – Pedersen, P. (edit.), *The Salmakis Inscription and Hellenistic Halikarnassos*. Halicarnassian Studies 4 (2004), pp. 93-107.

11. Hdt., 1.174.2-3. Hansen, M.H. – Nielsen, T.H. (edit.), *An Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis* (Oxford 2004), see entry 'Knidos' (P. Flensted-Jensen), p. 1123.

12. Strabo, 14.2.6.

13. Malkin, I., *Myth and Territory in the Spartan Mediterranean* (Cambridge 1994), p. 81, note 46; Malkin, I., 'Categories of early Greek Colonization: The Dorian Aegean' in *Il dinamismo della colonizzazione greca. Atti della tavola rotonda Espanzione e colonizzazione greca di eta arcaica*, Venezia 1995 (Napoli 1997), p. 34, note 46.

14. Hdt., 4.164.2.

15. IG XII 3.322.

16. Malkin, I., *Myth and Territory in the Spartan Mediterranean* (Cambridge 1994), p. 81, note 46; Malkin, I., 'Categories of early Greek Colonization: The Dorian Aegean' in *Il dinamismo della colonizzazione greca. Atti della tavola rotonda Espanzione e colonizzazione greca di eta arcaica*, Venezia 1995 (Napoli 1997), note 47.

17. Malkin, I., 'Categories of early Greek Colonization: The Dorian Aegean' in *Il dinamismo della colonizzazione greca. Atti della tavola rotonda Espanzione e colonizzazione greca di eta arcaica*, Venezia 1995 (Napoli 1997), p. 35.

18. Hdt., 3.138.2-3.

19. D.S., 5 53.2-3. For a different version of the quotation, see *CAH II 2* (1975)³, p. 791 (J.M. Cook).

20. Malkin, I. *Myth and Territory in the Spartan Mediterranean* (Cambridge 1994), p. 81.

21. *CAH II 2* (1975)³, p. 791 (J.M. Cook).

22. *Der Neue Pauly* 6 (1999), p. 648, see entry 'Kolonisation' (S. Deger-Jalkotzy).

23. Bean, G.E. – Cook, J. M., 'The Halicarnassus Peninsula', *BSA* 50 (1955), p. 95, note 66.

24. Berard, J., *L'expansion et la colonisation greques jusqu'aux guerres mediques* (Paris 1960), p. 47.



25. Boruchovic, V.G., 'Die ägäische Kolonisation', *Klio* 70 (1988), p. 127; Oliva, P., 'Kolonisation und Entstehung der Polis', Will, W. – Heinrichs, J. (edit.), *Zu Alexander d. Gr. Festschrift G. Wirth* (1987), p. 1102.
26. I. Malkin., 'Categories of early Greek Colonization: The Dorian Aegean' in *Il dinamismo della colonizzazione greca. Atti della tavola rotunda Espansione e colonizzazione greca di eta arcaica*, Venezia 1995 (Napoli 1997), p. 32, note 31 with earlier bibliography.
27. *CAH* II 2 (1975)³, p. 792 (J.R. Cook).
28. For the relevant bibliography, see Hansen, M.H. – Nielsen, T.H. (edit.), *An Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis* (Oxford 2004), p. 1123, see entry 'Knidos' (P. Flensted-Jensen).
29. Malkin., I. , 'Categories of early Greek Colonization: The Dorian Aegean' in *Il dinamismo della colonizzazione greca. Atti della tavola rotunda Espansione e colonizzazione greca di eta arcaica*, Venezia 1995 (Napoli 1997), p. 32.
30. For details about the character of the Dorian colonies, see Blumenthal, E., *Die altgriechische Siedlungskolonisation im Mittelmeerraum* (Tübingen 1963), pp. 97-98.
31. Detailed bibliography concerning the possible identifications of the sanctuary: Hansen, M.H. – Nielsen, T.H. (edit.), *An Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis* (Oxford 2004), p. 1124, see entry 'Knidos' (P. Flensted-Jensen).
32. *Hdt.*, 1.144.
33. Thomas, C.G. – Conant, C., *From Citadel to City State* (Bloomington 1999), p.79.
34. Miller, T., *Die griechische Kolonisation im Spiegel literarischer Zeugnisse* (Tübingen 1997), pp. 12-14.
35. The opposite view on the existence of organisation is expressed by Thomas C.G. – Conant, C., *From Citadel to City State* (Bloomington 1999), p. 79.

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