

MISSIONE ARCHEOLOGICA ITALIANA DI IASOS

IV

NICOLETTA MOMIGLIANO

BRONZE AGE CARIAN IASOS

STRUCTURES AND FINDS FROM THE
AREA OF THE ROMAN AGORA

(c. 3000-1500 BC)

With contributions by

P. Belli, M. Bichler, J. Hilditch, C. J. Knappett,

D. Pirrie, M. Power, and J. H. Sterba

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*To the memory of
Clelia Laviosa
and to the people of Kiyıklıslak*

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PREFAZIONE

Riprende con questo volume, il IV della collana *Missione Archeologica Italiana di Iasos* curata da Giorgio Bretschneider Editore, la pubblicazione dei risultati degli scavi condotti, sulla costa dell'antica Caria, nel sito di Iasos, oggi Kiyıkıslacık, facente parte del distretto di Milas (Turchia).

Il volume è opera precipua di Nicoletta Momigliano, coadiuvata, per specifici aspetti tecnologici del lavoro da Max Bichler, Jill Hilditch, Carl Knappett, Duncan Pirrie, Matt Power, Johannes H. Sterba e da Paolo Belli.

La Iasos dell'età del Bronzo che qui incontriamo scaturisce da ricerche notevolmente impegnative e complesse, come sovente avviene quando ci si deve confrontare 'a posteriori' con metodologie che hanno sostanziato l'operatività di altri studiosi, in questo caso da Doro Levi e da Clelia Laviosa. Le fortunate indagini sul terreno, che portarono ai ritrovamenti preistorici nel sito ma che in seguito non furono proseguite, si devono a entrambi. Entrambi vollero che s'intraprendessero nuovi studi, ma né l'uno né l'altra ebbero modo di 'incontrarsi' con tali studi nel corso del loro sviluppo, men che meno con i loro risultati.

Certo è che, in questo lavoro, l'insediamento assume contorni storici diversi da quelli prospettati in precedenza, in conseguenza sia dell'infittirsi dei ritrovamenti lungo le coste e all'interno del Paese avvenuti successivamente agli scavi condotti a Iasos, sia (soprattutto) del mutare delle valutazioni del dato archeologico.

I materiali presi in esame provengono tutti dall'isola/penisola sulla quale in età arcaica si costituì la *polis*.

Alcuni, sparsi ma non per ciò meno significativi, attestano la frequentazione delle alture del luogo (e non soltanto di esse) a partire dal Neolitico-Calcolitico e nell'età del Bronzo Antico, un orizzonte cronologico, quest'ultimo, al quale appartengono le necropoli edite da Paolo Emilio Pecorella (*La cultura preistorica di Iasos in Caria*, Missione Archeologica Italiana di Iasos, I), l'una, più vasta, sulla 'terraferma', l'altra ubicata presso l'insenatura occidentale della penisola stessa.

Come si dimostra nel testo, dalla ben documentata fase che, secondo le più recenti e convincenti proposte degli specialisti, corrisponde – sulle coste anatoliche – al periodo Neopalaziale di Creta, l'abitato pervenne a un'interruzione traumatica per cause naturali e straordinarie (le ceneri eruttate dal vulcano di Santorini si depositarono anche sull'isola/peniso-

la), per riprendere, successivamente, con testimonianze di non facile lettura e interpretazione.

L'estensione dell'insediamento, i resti murari e le varie classi di materiali fittili, in parte prodotti *in loco* in parte importati, forniscono una messe di elementi in base ai quali la lettura che se ne trae viene integrata da ipotesi che, non soltanto per la vicinanza territoriale, ravvisano in Mileto condizioni e presupposti simili a quelli che portarono prosperità anche nel 'nostro' sito. Certo, l'archeologia ha fornito ben altri indizi, a Mileto, in base ai quali si è supposto che il ruolo di quest'ultima soverchiasse per importanza quello delle vicine e coeve località. Grazie al lavoro di Nicoletta Momigliano, Iasos trova quindi una propria collocazione nel più ampio quadro culturale e commerciale rappresentato dall'Egeo e dalle coste dell'Anatolia.

È quindi con compiacimento per il traguardo raggiunto e con gratitudine per quanti, a vario titolo, hanno contribuito alla realizzazione dell'opera, che presentiamo agli studiosi e agli specialisti il lavoro di Nicoletta Momigliano e dei suoi collaboratori.

I risultati conseguiti colmano una lacuna importante nella millenaria storia di Iasos. Essi costituiscono inoltre le premesse per un altro contributo, finalizzato all'esame della *facies* successiva, quella con cui si conclude l'età del Bronzo: con la realizzazione di tale ultima opera si attuerebbero *in toto* gli auspici degli studiosi, autori delle scoperte degli anni '60 e '70 del secolo scorso, e le finalità costitutive del progetto BACI (*Bronze Age Carian Iasos*), che è stato di grande supporto alle nuove ricerche.

FEDE BERTI
Ferrara

MARCELLO SPANU
Università della Tuscia, Viterbo

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Publicare bene uno scavo è spesso più difficile che farlo; pubblicarlo in modo completo ed esauriente, ed insieme semplice e chiaro, perché i risultati possano essere immediatamente utilizzati dal mondo scientifico, è il più grande merito che si suole riconoscere a una missione archeologica.

(LAVIOSA 1987, p. ix).

Publishing an excavation well is often more difficult than running it; publishing it in a manner that is complete and thorough, and at the same time straightforward and clear, so that the results can be immediately used by the scientific community, is the greatest merit that one usually ascribes to an archaeological mission.

S'è dunque messo in luce a Iasos un centro abitato assai anteriore alla colonia argolica ricordata dalla leggenda; e s'è vista confermata un'altra delle tradizioni letterarie finora considerate leggendarie, cioè quella della talassocrazia di Minosse.

(LEVI 1979, p. 419)

At Iasos we brought to light a settlement that is much older than the Argolic colony remembered in [Greek] legends; and we have seen the confirmation of another written tradition, which was among those that had until now been considered as legend, i.e. that of the thalassocracy of Minos.

This volume represents an attempt to fulfil, at least in part, Clelia Laviosa's expressed wish to produce a thorough and clear publication of the Bronze Age discoveries at Iasos, one of the most interesting and long-lived coastal settlements in Caria, southwest Turkey, excavated by Doro Levi and Clelia Laviosa many decades ago. Its main aim is to rescue this material from oblivion, since it provides a considerable wealth of new and interesting data relevant to issues of Mediterranean interconnections, connectivity, and especially 'Minoanisation', which are currently widely debated. The finds from Bronze Age Iasos, in particular, provide intriguing new information on networks, trade patterns, human mobility between Western Turkey and the islands of the Aegean, and the use of material culture in the creation of different kinds of identities and social strategies, revealing a

more subtle and complex picture of these processes than previous research at the site had suggested.

As is well-known, in the existing archaeological literature Iasos has often been described as a Minoan colony dating to the Minoan Old Palace period (early 2nd millennium BC), largely because of the interpretations put forward by its first excavators, Levi and Laviosa, in their numerous preliminary reports and conference papers. The present volume offers views that diverge from those reported by these two scholars, at times quite substantially. This difference of opinions, however, should not overshadow the deep feelings of gratitude and respect for their pioneering work. Laviosa's prime mover role in this publication project is, indeed, acknowledged by the dedication of this volume to her memory.

Laviosa started her work at Iasos with Doro Levi, who led the very first excavation campaign at the site in the summer of 1960, under the aegis of the Italian Archaeological School in Athens, of which he was then director. Levi's own interest in the site, however, and the research questions that he hoped to elucidate, go back to the 1920s and were clearly inspired by his predecessor in Athens, Alessandro Della Seta (see Chapter I).

Since 1960, excavations at Iasos have continued every summer until the present day. In 1973, Laviosa succeeded Levi as director of the project, and from that date archaeological investigations have been carried out under the aegis of the Italian Archaeological Mission at Iasos¹. In 1985 Dott.ssa Fede Berti, succeeded Laviosa as director. Prehistoric discoveries continued to be made under Berti's directorship, but more sporadically, since her research interests focus on later periods and on the restoration of the extant structures. In 2011 Prof. Marcello Spanu succeeded Berti.

Levi's and Laviosa's excavations brought to light remains belonging to all phases of habitation at the site, from the Late Chalcolithic/Early Bronze Age to the Medieval period, but both scholars had a special interest in the 2nd millennium BC, i.e. the Middle and Late Bronze Age, and especially in the question of the so-called Minoan *thalassocracy*. Although various preliminary reports, short articles, conference papers, and Pecorella's 1984 monograph on the Early Bronze Age necropolis have appeared, no comprehensive study of the Bronze Age levels excavated in the settlement area was undertaken until the late 1990s, when Laviosa invited Paolo Belli, Mario Benzi, and Nicoletta Momigliano to collaborate on this enterprise. They conducted a short exploratory study season in the summer of 1998, but Laviosa was unable to join them, for her health was already in rapid decline. After Laviosa's untimely demise in the winter of 1999, the

1) LEVI 1984 gives 1973 as the date of succession, whereas LEVI 1979, p. 414 mentions 1971, but Paolo Belli (pers. comm.), who was present during the 1971 season, remembers that Levi was then still in charge.

research programme on prehistoric Iasos was continued by Belli, Benzi, and Momigliano, and was dubbed (by Momigliano) the Bronze Age Carian Iasos (BACI) project.

As discussed in Chapter I, over the years prehistoric finds were discovered at many locations all over the site. This volume focuses on the Bronze Age buildings and finds discovered by Levi and Laviosa between 1967 and 1973 in the area of the Geometric cemetery beneath the Roman Agora – the area that has revealed the most important Bronze Age structures, stratigraphy, and greatest number of prehistoric finds (cf. Chapter I – the finds from other years and other areas of the site are relatively few in quantity, and come from even more disturbed contexts). This volume also focuses on the period from c. 3000–1500 BC (Early Minoan/Early Helladic I–Late Minoan IB/Late Helladic IIA, in Aegean terminology), since the materials dating to c. 1500–1100 BC (Late Helladic IIB/IIIA–IIIC) will be presented by Mario Benzi and his collaborators in a separate publication.

Over the years, various collaborators joined the original BACI team: Prof. Giampaolo Graziadio, Dr. Isabella Morabito, and Dott.ssa Anna Lena helped with the study of the pottery and other finds; Prof. Carl Knappett (University of Toronto, formerly of the University of Exeter) undertook the analyses of some pottery fabrics; and Prof. Max Bichler (Technical University of Vienna) kindly analysed volcanic ash and obsidian samples. The BACI team also benefited from the help of Mario Epifani and Sue Grice, technical illustrators in the departments of Archaeology of the Universities of Pisa and Bristol, respectively, and by a number of Bristol University students (Emma Mutter, Irini Nikolakopoulou, Stephanie Court, and Hege Osborne). Kate Grice (University of Reading) and especially John Grice (Clifton College, Bristol) also provided much valued support. Sue Grice produced the electronic version of all the illustrations in this volume.

In March 2004 the BACI team started their writing up in earnest, but in April of that year Paolo Belli became seriously ill and, since then, his persistent poor health has prevented him from returning to his research activities. N. Momigliano is extremely grateful to his wife, Lucia Vagnetti, for allowing her to use the plans, photographs, and sections that Belli had patiently gathered over the years, as well as for her advice and friendship over many years. Needless to say, had Belli been able to contribute more fully, many of the shortcomings present in this volume would have been avoided.

In the course of her work at Iasos and in the preparation of this volume, N. Momigliano has greatly benefited from the help of many other people and institutions (beside the other contributors to this volume). Their names are gratefully recorded below, and the writer can only apologise in advance for any unintentional omission.

Acknowledgements must start with Fede Berti, as the Director of the Missione Archeologica Italiana di Iasos during the period in which the re-

search for this volume was carried out at Iasos (1998–2004), who also provided several useful bibliographical suggestions and comments for this volume. These initial acknowledgements extend to all the participants in the *Missione*, including all the *temsilciler* (Representatives of the Turkish Government): these are too many to be mentioned individually, but an exception must be made for Daniela Baldoni for her extraordinary dedication to Iasos. Other people whose help is gratefully acknowledged are: Robin Barber, Mary Benton, Francois Bertemes, Andy Bevan, John Boardman, Cyprian Broodbank, Getzel Cohen, Jack L. Davis, Hayat Erkanal, Andreas Furtwängler, Emanuele Greco, Marta Gusowska, Eleni Hatzaki, David Konstan, the late Manfred Korfmann, Ourania Kouka, Toula Marketou, Elaine Massung, Chris Mee, Wolf and Barbara Niemeier, Peter Pavuk, Elizabeth Riorden, Vasif Şahoğlu, Mirjio Salvini, Riza Tuncel, Gisela Walberg, Peter Warren, Todd Whitelaw, Mark Whittow, Malcolm Wiener, and David E. Wilson. Mario Benzi, Lucia Vagnetti, and Todd Whitelaw in particular are also warmly thanked for their comments as reviewers of the manuscript submitted to the publisher, but are, of course, in no way responsible for any remaining mistakes, omissions, and other defects.

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Many thanks are also due to the publisher of the Iasos series, Boris Bretschneider.

Last but not least, I wish to thank my husband, Roger Lonsdale, for his patience, moral support, linguistic help, and sense of humour over the years.

Bristol-Oxford, December 2011

NICOLETTA MOMIGLIANO

I

INTRODUCTION. A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF EXPLORATIONS, EXCAVATIONS, AND OTHER RESEARCH AT IASOS, WITH REFERENCE TO THE PREHISTORIC PERIODS

NICOLETTA MOMIGLIANO

1. THE SITE AND ITS LOCATION

The ancient site of Iasos is located on the Carian coast of southwest Turkey (36° 16''N- 27° 35''E), by the modern village of Kıyıkıslacık, in the district of Milas and province of Muğla (Fig. 1 a-b). The area occupied by the Bronze Age settlement seems to have been confined to or, at least, to have been centred on a small promontory that perhaps was once an island, located at the head of what is nowadays known as the gulf of Mandalya or the gulf of Güllük (after one of the modern towns nearby). Among classical authors it was sometimes referred to as the gulf of Iasos, after our site, or as the gulf of Bargylia, after another classical city located just a few km across the bay to the south. The ancient cities of Miletus and Halikarnassus (modern Bodrum) lie to the north and south respectively, at a distance of less than 50 km as the crow flies.

The Iasos promontory consists of a small elongated hill with steep slopes on the west side, and more gentle terraces towards the east, south, and north (Figs. 2 a - 6). The promontory tapers to a narrow point towards the south, and is flanked by two natural harbours on its eastern and western side. In the hinterland behind the promontory lies a relatively small valley crossed by a few streams. In turn, this relatively flat area is surrounded by low peaks, namely the Pasa Dağ (ancient Grion), the Karaoğlan and the Kıslacık Dağ, which are located on the southern spurs of the Laba or Ilbir mountain chain (Fig. 1 a-b).

2. ANCIENT SOURCES AND EARLY TRAVELLERS

Not surprisingly, given its relatively marginal location and modest size, no references to Iasos appear to have been found in the surviving Hittite,

Egyptian, and other Near Eastern documents of the 3rd and 2nd millennia BC. The personal name or toponym *i-wa-so* and the related ethnonym *i-wa-si-jo-ta* appear in the Linear B tablets from Pylos, but whether they are related to our Carian site or to another settlement on mainland Greece is open to speculation¹. The personal name ‘Iasos’ also appears in Homer’s *Iliad* (XV, 337), and other ancient authors mention various characters bearing this name (e.g. one of the kings of Argos)².

Secure references to the Carian settlement discussed in this volume can be found in many ancient Greek sources, but these refer to foundation myths and to the post-Bronze Age phases of its occupation³. Here it will suffice to remember that, according to Polybius, Iasos was a colony of Argos, founded with the help of nearby Miletus, while Thucydides described it as a city of ‘ancient wealth’⁴. Levi’s excavations have in fact shown that Iasos was first inhabited well before any ‘Mycenaean’ or later Greek contacts, ‘migration’, or ‘colonisation’ had ever occurred, i.e. since at least the early third millennium BC, and has continued to be occupied, albeit with some possible gaps, until the present day.

A number of early travellers and lovers of Classical antiquities described and illustrated its impressive ruins, especially its Hellenistic city walls and theatre. For example, in 1675 and 1676, the French physician Jacob Spon and the English gentleman George Wheler travelled together in the Mediterranean, and gave separate accounts of their journey, which included brief descriptions of the site of ‘Askemkalesi’ (i.e. the castle of Askem, with ‘Askem’ perhaps being a misunderstanding of the word Assyn, which is used in later works and, in turn, is likely to originate from Iasos or Iasus). They identified this site with Strabo’s description of Iasos – an identification later confirmed by epigraphical discoveries⁵. Wheler also included a rather sketchy plan, here reproduced in Fig. 2 b, showing Iasos as a separate islet. About a century later, in October 1764⁶, Richard Chandler visited the site, which he referred to as Assyn-kalesi⁷. He noted the presence of various inscriptions, and described briefly the remains of the medi-

1) *I-wa-si-jo-ta* in PY Cn 3.5; *I-wa-so* in PY Cn 655.5: see VENTRIS and CHADWICK 1956, p. 145 and 190; MORPUGO 1963, p. 117; JORRO 1985-1993, s.v.; SCAFA 1999, esp. pp. 272, 277; cf. PUGLIESE CARRATELLI 1999.

2) See s.v. *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (<http://www.tlg.uci.edu>) and the Pauly-Wissowa *Realencyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft*; see also BIRASCHI 1999.

3) On ancient sources on Iasos see BIRASCHI 1999, with further bibliography; see also BÜRCHNER 1914.

4) POLYBIUS XVI.12; THUCYDIDES VIII.28.

5) SPON and WHELER 1678, vol. I, pp. 360-362; WHELER 1682, p. 273. On epigraphic evidence from Iasos see also LE BAS and WADDINGTON 1870, pp. 86-98; HICKS 1887.

6) CHANDLER 1971, p. 69.

7) CHANDLER 1775, pp. 181-183; CHANDLER 1971, pp. 105-106. *CIG* 2, p. 467 nos. 2681, 2682, 2683, 2686, 2671, 2672.

eval castle dominating the promontory from its elevated position, the Hellenistic city walls, the theatre, the Byzantine tower by the small port, and the remains of another large structure near the isthmus (another medieval fortification), which he found inhabited by a few Greeks; a family of Greeks also inhabited a large Roman tomb by the isthmus, where Chandler and his companions spent a night⁸. A dozen years later, in the summer of 1776, the Count of Choiseul-Gouffier followed in Chandler's footsteps, and described Iasos in his remarkable and voluminous *Voyage pittoresque de la Grèce* (published in 1822), which included a rather approximate plan of the settlement on the promontory (Fig. 3 a-b), which was shown as being joined to the mainland⁹.

Iasos continued to attract visitors throughout the nineteenth century. In 1816, Otto Friedrich von Richter wrote a brief description of the site, accompanied by a picturesque rather than exact illustration of the ruins (Fig. 4 a), and in 1844 the indefatigable Ludwig Ross included a visit to our Carian site among his numerous Aegean journeys¹⁰. At about the same time (i.e. in 1843-44), the French scholar Philippe Le Bas visited Iasos and copied some inscriptions¹¹. Among these early visitors, however, it is Charles Texier, travelling in Asia Minor in the 1830s, who provided what is arguably the most comprehensive account and detailed plan of the site (Fig. 5), indicating, among other monuments, the location of the Roman agora, the Hellenistic city walls around the promontory (which he showed as being separated from the mainland by some kind of channel), the Greek theatre, and the medieval castle on the hill's summit¹². In 1887, the German scholar Walther Judeich visited the site and later published another fairly accurate plan (Fig. 4 b)¹³, before the standing monuments were much ruined by the local inhabitants and also by the latest Ottoman sultans, who re-employed ancient blocks for constructions in Istanbul¹⁴.

Iasos, and especially its Greek inscriptions, continued to capture the attention of visitors and scholars throughout the late 19th and early 20th cen-

8) CHANDLER 1775, Chapter LIV, pp. 180-183; CHANDLER 1971, Chapter XXV, pp. 104-107.

9) CHOISEUL-GOUFFIER 1822, vol. 1: pp. 163-164, pls. 102-103.

10) RICHTER 1822, pp. 546-547; ROSS 1850; pp. 120-126. On Ross, see GOETTE and PALAGIA 2005; see also LABORDE 1838 (*non vidi*, but cited in REINACH 1888, p. 49).

11) LE BAS and WADDINGTON 1870; REINACH 1888, pp. 48-49.

12) TEXIER 1849, pp. 133-148, pls. 142-149.

13) JUDEICH 1890.

14) On this reuse of Iasian monuments see BEAN and COOK 1957, p. 101; LEVI 1961-1962, p. 506; BERTI 1993, p. 189; BERTI *et al.* 2010. See also CHANDLER 1775, p. 183 (cf. CHANDLER 1971, p. 106) who described how fishermen would 'often carry stones away for ballast. We had paid a piaster at Scio for leave to transcribe three marbles, which lay on the shore, and were transported from this place. They contained honorary decrees made by the Iasians.'

turies¹⁵. But during the Great War, a well-known ancient historian and pioneer of Aegean Bronze Age studies, Sir John Myres, seems to have subjected the site to a cattle raid, instead of more scholarly pursuits¹⁶. Less than a decade later, in 1921, Italian archaeologists paid a visit to Iasos as part of their explorations in Caria – a visit that proved to be quite significant in view of Levi's later work, as discussed below.

3. EARLY ITALIAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXPLORATIONS IN CARIA (1921-22) AND PRELIMINARIES TO EXCAVATION (1955)

The history of Italian archaeological investigations abroad has often been intertwined with political developments, and Iasos is no exception¹⁷. Excluding very early figures, active before the creation of the Italian kingdom in 1861, such as Ciriaco D'Ancona (a.k.a. Ciriaco de' Pizziccolli), the earliest interests and explorations in Asia Minor by Italian archaeologists developed in the intellectual and political climate of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This was a time in which the imperialist and colonial aspirations of the European nation states, including the relatively new Italian kingdom, were in counterpoint with the gradual decline of the Ottoman Empire. It was also a time in which archaeology was one facet in the competition among Western nations for prestige and power¹⁸. Italian colonial aspirations, which considerably pre-date the idea of a *mare nostrum* so dear to the Fascist regime, did not bear substantial fruits in Asia Minor, except for the brief occupation of Antalya soon after the Great War¹⁹. But this 'poor man's imperialism', as aptly described by Petricioli²⁰, resulted in the longer Italian occupation of the Dodecanese (1912-1943) and the creation of the Italian Archaeological Mission in Rhodes²¹. The Rhodian infrastructure facilitated the continuation of Italian archaeological interests in Asia Minor, as illustrated by the joint expeditions to Caria conducted by the Italian Archaeological School in Athens and the Italian Archaeological Mission in Rhodes in 1921 and 1922²². These expeditions included a visit to Iasos in 1921, and the excavations of the Geometric 'Lelegian-Car-

15) See, e.g., LE BAS and WADDINGTON 1870, p. 87 ff.; HICKS 1887; BLÜMEL 1985; MADDOLI 2007.

16) MYRES 1980, esp. Appendix 5.

17) See, e.g., LA ROSA 1986; PETRICIOLI 1990.

18) See, e.g., MARCHAND 1996; McENROE 2002; MOMIGLIANO 2002a.

19) D'ANDRIA 1986, p. 98; PETRICIOLI 1983.

20) PETRICIOLI 1983, Chapter 11 (entitled 'L'imperialismo dei poveri').

21) D'ANDRIA 1986; PETRICIOLI 1986; PETRICIOLI 1990, esp. pp. 149 ff., and 167 ff.

22) DELLA SETA 1921-1922a, pp. 282-287; 1921-1922b, pp. 533-538; 1922-1923, p. 284; 1924-1925, p. 87; GUIDI 1921-1922; MAIURI 1921-1922; LEVI 1961-1962, pp. 505-506; D'ANDRIA 1986, pp. 99-101.

ian' necropolis of Gökçallar near Bodrum in 1922; the young Doro Levi took part in the latter²³.

As explained in the published reports, the director of the Italian Archaeological School in Athens at that time, Alessandro Della Seta, was particularly keen to promote a systematic exploration of the Carian region in the context of a study of the origin and demise of the 'Minoan-Mycenaean civilisation' – an interest clearly stimulated by the spectacular discoveries made by such scholars as Heinrich Schliemann (at Troy, Mycenae, Tyrins, and Orchomenos) and Arthur Evans (at Knossos) between the 1870s and the early 1900s, and also by the work carried out by Italian scholars at various Minoan sites, especially Phaistos and Haghia Triada²⁴. According to Della Seta, the investigation of Caria could throw some light on these issues because of the proximity of this region to Crete (through the bridge provided by the islands of Kasos, Karpathos, and Rhodes) and the intriguingly close relationship between Carians and Cretans (especially with King Minos) mentioned by ancient Greek authors such as Herodotus, Thucydides, and Strabo – all ideas that formed the intellectual springboard for Levi's later excavations²⁵.

During these early explorations of the 1920s, the Italian archaeologists obtained permission to start excavations at Mylasa (modern Milas), an important town in the Carian interior, but almost immediately the political situation, i.e. the events related to the Turkish nationalist movement led by Mustafa Kemal (Attatürk), put a stop to further investigations on the coasts

23) DELLA SETA 1921-1922c, pp. 490-491; DELLA SETA 1922-1923, p. 284; LEVI 1961-1962, p. 505.

24) On Schliemann and Evans see, e.g., FITTON 1995; on Italian discoveries in Crete see, e.g., LA ROSA 1984.

25) See in particular DELLA SETA 1921-1922b, p. 533: «Uno dei problemi più importanti dell'archeologia è quello delle origini e della fine della civiltà cretese-micenea. Alla sua soluzione potrà contribuire l'esplorazione della Caria, perchè non soltanto la Caria è, per la posizione geografica, la terra di Asia più vicina all'isola di Creta attraverso il ponte insulare di Caso, di Scarpanto e di Rodi, ma perché per nessun'altra regione come di essa sono accennati nella tradizione letteraria tanti rapporti con Creta». See also DELLA SETA 1924-1925, p. 87, and cf. LEVI 1961-1962, pp. 505, 509, and 571: «lo scopo principale prefisso alle nostre ricerche, cioè quello di apportare nuova luce sui rapporti tra la primordiale civiltà Caria e le civiltà preistoriche dell'Egeo [...] I contatti del mondo egeo col mondo asiatico, dopo la scoperta della città micenea [sic] di Troia, sono stati recentemente illuminati da numerosi altri reperti, in primo luogo [...] nella vicina Mileto, che la leggenda stessa abbiamo visto mettere in relazione con Iasos: ne risultava una legittima speranza di trovare anche in quest'ultima città testimonianze di relazioni fra l'Egeo e le coste d'Asia, di scoprire anche qui nuovi elementi per apportare luce sull'ancora misteriosa e dibattuta origine delle civiltà medesime dell'Egeo, come sui reciproci influssi dei due mondi vicini [...] I reciproci influssi tra la civiltà di Creta e quella della prossima Anatolia, alla ricerca dei quali principalmente hanno preso le mosse questi nostri scavi». The best account on Minoans (and the *thalassocracy* of Minos) in Greek sources is (still) HUXLEY 1968.

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