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Thesis Summary

The Oikoi Building at Labraunda through Time: Function, Transition, and Continuity*

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Çağla DURAK has contributed % 60 and Cem ARDIL has contributed % 40 to this study.

The authors of this article declare that scientific and ethical principles were followed during the preparation of the study and that all studies used were cited in the references.

This study does not require ethics committee approval, and the data used was obtained from literature reviews/published sources.

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Tez Özeti

Labraunda'daki Oikoi Binası: İşlev, Değişim ve Süreklilik

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Bu makale, 2022 yılında Çağla DURAK tarafından İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent Üniversitesi, Arkeoloji Bölümüne sunulan "The Oikoi Building at Labraunda: Its Function(s)" başlıklı yüksek lisans tezinden üretilmiştir.

Bu çalışmaya Çağla DURAK % 60 ve Cem ARDIL % 40 oranında katkı sağlamıştır.

Bu makalede herhangi bir kurum, kuruluş, kişi ile mali çıkar çatışması yoktur ve yazarlar arasında çıkar çatışması bulunmamaktadır.

Bu makalenin yazarları tarafından çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyulduğu ve yararlanılan tüm çalışmaların kaynakçada belirtildiği beyan olunur.

Bu çalışma, etik kurul izni gerektirmeyen nitelikte olup kullanılan veriler literatür taraması/yayınlanmış kaynaklar üzerinden elde edilmiştir.

Bu çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde yapay zeka tabanlı herhangi bir araç veya uygulama kullanılmamıştır. Çalışmanın tüm içeriği, yazarlar tarafından bilimsel araştırma yöntemleri ve akademik etik ilkelere uygun şekilde üretilmiştir.

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Abstract

The Oikoi building at Labraunda, with its two rooms and tetrastyle in antis porch, represents a unique architectural and cultural monument in the sanctuary of Zeus Labraundos in ancient Karia. Built during the Hecatomnid dynasty, it reflects both the religious and political ideals of the dynasty, blending Karian, Greek and Persian traditions. Over the centuries, the building has undergone various transformations, adapting to different functions. Using epigraphic, architectural and historical analysis, this study examines the changing function, construction techniques and stylistic characteristics of the building, as well as comparative analyses of similar structures. The findings highlight the building's role as a multifunctional space, potentially serving as an unusual prytaneion, religious space, and storage facility, while later modifications align it with Late Antique centralizing movements seen in church architecture. The research underscores the enduring significance of the building as a testament to its Hecatomnid heritage and the dynamic interplay between form, function and cultural identity.

Keywords: Karia, Labraunda, Hekatomnid, Oikoi, Late Antiqutiy, architecture, Early Byzantine, building materials, Western Anatolia

Öz

Labraunda'daki Oikoi binası, iki odalı ve önündeki dört sütunlu verandasıyla antik Karia'daki Zeus Labraundos kutsal alanında eşsiz bir mimari ve kültürel eseri temsil etmektedir. Hekatomnid hanedanlığı döneminde inşa edilen yapı, hanedanlığın Karya, Yunan ve Pers geleneklerini kaynaştırarak hem dini hem de siyasi idealleri yansıtmaktadır. Yüzyıllar boyunca yapı, farklı işlevlere uyum sağlayarak çeşitli dönüşümler geçirmiştir. Arkeolojik, mimari ve tarihi analizleri kullanan bu çalışma, benzer yapıların karşılaştırmalı değerlendirmelerinin yanı sıra yapının değişen amacını, yapım tekniklerini ve stilistik özelliklerini incelemektedir. Bulgular, yapının alışılmışın dışında bir prytaneion, dini alan ve arşiv, olarak hizmet veren çok işlevli bir yapı olarak rolünü vurgularken, daha sonraki modifikasyonlar onu kilise mimarisinde görülen Geç Antik Çağ merkezileşme hareketleriyle uyumlu hale getirmektedir. Araştırma, yapının Hekatomnid mirasının ve biçim, işlev ve kültürel kimlik arasındaki dinamik etkileşimin bir kanıtı olarak kalıcı öneminin altını çizmektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Karia, Labraunda, Hekatomnid, Oikoi, Geç Antik, mimari, Erken Bizans, inşa malzemeleri, Batı Anadolu

The Oikoi Building at Labraunda through Time: Function, Transition, and Continuity

The Oikoi building with its two rooms and a shared tetrastyle in antis porch (fig. 1), situated within the sanctuary of Labraunda (fig. 2), west of the Temple of Zeus and north of Andron A, holds a peculiar place in the architectural and religious setting of ancient Karia. Under the Hekatomnid dynasty — mainly the rulers Mausollos and Idrieus — Labraunda became a center of religious, political and cultural interest (Henry, 2017). The transformation of Labraunda into a pilgrimage site can be attributed to the Hekatomnids' architectural and ideological ambitions, which strategically combined Karian traditions with Greek and Persian influences. This combination elevated Labraunda's aesthetic appeal and reinforced its political and religious role, symbolizing the dynasty's commitment to Karian heritage and Greek identity (Hornblower, 1982; Karlsson, 2013). The Oikoi building at Labraunda, with its architraval dedication to Zeus Labraundos by Idrieus (Crampa, 1972, p. 14-15), stands as a unique architectural wonder with ideological significance tied to the Hekatomnid dynasty, reflecting the Hekatomnids' enduring legacy in Karian society. Although the Hekatomnid dynasty disappeared in the late 4th century BC, the importance of the Oikoi Building at Labraunda seems to continue through time as the site continued to be uninterruptedly occupied and to play a continuous important role during Hellenistic period and the later rule of Eastern Roman Empire until the Christianization, when it became a dwelling area (Blid, 2016). During the Christianization of the empire, the Oikoi building was repurposed, with new architectural elements and construction techniques such as L-shaped piers and a dome, transforming the spatial arrangement of its southern room (fig. 3).

Spanning from the 4th century BC to Late Antiquity, this structure raises numerous questions. What was its function within the context of Hekatomnid Labraunda at the time of its initial construction? Did it serve the same purpose throughout its continuous use? Is it possible to precisely date additions such as the L-shaped piers and the dome? What do these changes reveal about the building's later use? These questions underline the complexity of the Oikoi's architectural and functional evolution. To address these questions, this article adopts an interdisciplinary approach, integrating archaeological, architectural, epigraphic, and historical analyses. Detailed surveys of the building's construction techniques, materials, and stylistic features are combined with comparative analysis of similar structures in the Greek World, Karia, and Western Anatolia to assess its design and function. The study also examines the building's inscription and modifications, linking them to broader trends in Ionian Renaissance architecture and Late Antique centralization movements. By synthesizing architectural evidence with historical and cultural developments, the research aims to uncover the Oikoi's evolving significance as a political, religious, and societal landmark.

Historical Context and the Role of the Hekatomnid Dynasty

By the time Mausollos rose to prominence, Labraunda had already become a site of deep cultural and religious significance for the Karians, as evidenced by archaeological findings around the Split Rock in the sanctuary's northern section, indicating some kind of activity dating back to the Late Chalcolithic-Early Bronze Age. The first trace of religious activity dates back from the 6th century BC, when a temple was built on the upper terrace of the site (Hellström and Thieme, 1982; Hellström, 2019). According to Herodotos (5.119-121), the sanctuary was originally associated with Zeus Stratios. The God's epithet was later changed to Labraundos probably by Hekatomnos, underscoring Labraunda's sacred role and its cultural significance as both a unifying symbol for Karian identity and the first step toward a dynastic ideology (Carstens, 2011; Hellström, 2019; Henry, 2020, p. 96; Hellström and Thieme 1982).

After Hekatomnos was appointed Satrap of Karia by the central Persian authorities (ca. 392 BC), the Hekatomnid dynasts gradually blended Greek, Persian, and local Karian traditions to solidify their influence through each aspect of Karian life. They also initiated a large program of architectural achievements, founding or re-founding cities (including moving the capital from Mylasa to Halikarnassos). Labraunda occupied a special

place in this architectural program as the site seems to have been completely remodeled by both Maussollos and his brother Idrieus. The Hekatomnids' promotion of Zeus Labraundos as a Pan-Karian deity and attaching its cult to the representation of their own power, the dynasts further elevated Labraunda as a central religious and cultural site, consolidating the family's political power through strategic religious patronage. Labraunda thus became a focal point where regional identity, dynastic pride, and spiritual devotion converged, establishing a religious, social, and political nexus for Karia (Hornblower, 1982; Briant, 2020, p. 47; Ruzicka, 1992, p. 46-50).

The sanctuary of Labraunda kept its significance after the Hekatomnid period in the late 4th century BC, and through the Hellenistic and Roman period the sanctuary protected the legacy of Hekatomnid dynasty. In the 3rd century BC, building projects continued in Labraunda with a new conception of monumental architecture that demonstrates the influence of Hekatomnid architecture[1]. Labraunda was an important economic source as it is seen from the conflict over the control of the sanctuary between the city of Mylasa and Priests of Labraunda which caused difficulties in transportation of the marble from the quarries around Lake Bafa to Labraunda through Mylasa. As a result, the constructions were made by using the local gneiss exclusively. By the Roman period, Labraunda kept its special status and seen construction of new structures like bath complexes and basilicas, and rearrangement of the temple terrace. While these new additions can be seen as a milestone for the architectural history of the Labraunda, the interest on the Hekatomnids' legacy and the cult of Zeus Labraundos were protected by using the Hekatomnid structures continuously with their original dedication inscriptions (Henry, 2020, p. 99-114).

In the Late Antique period, the urban fabric underwent transformations. During this period, Christians engaged in many building activities in line with their requirements. According to Ruggieri (2009, p. 216), the pre-Christian pagan sanctuaries of Karia, such as Lagina, Sinuri and Labraunda, continued to be used by Christians as they had a sacred appearance. In Labraunda, many buildings were converted from their original function and continued to be used.[2]

Architectural Innovations and the Ionian Renaissance

The building program that was started by Mausollos, reflected the new architectural experience which is called the Ionian Renaissance. The Ionian Renaissance of the Late Classical period was a dynamic cultural and artistic revival that unfolded in western Asia Minor, particularly along the eastern Aegean coast. It was the product of centuries of interaction between the Greeks and neighboring civilizations, including the Anatolians, Near Eastern cultures, and Egyptians. This period of renewal followed the Antalkidas Peace of 387/86 BCE, which reestablished Persian sovereignty in the region, providing stability that fueled economic prosperity and cultural exchange. The wealth of Persian satrapal courts created a fertile environment where Greek and Oriental artistic traditions merged, inspiring significant innovations in art, architecture, and urban planning. Archaic styles were revived and enriched with new royal iconography, monumental designs, and intricate motifs that reflected the hybrid Greek-Oriental culture of the time. These advancements not only revitalized the region but also influenced the Hellenistic world, as the Ionian Renaissance set the stage for the artistic achievements of Alexander the Great's empire and its successors. By integrating diverse cultural elements, this period exemplified the creative potential of cross-cultural synthesis and left an enduring legacy in Greek art, architecture, and cultural history (Pedersen, Poulsen and Lund, 2021, pp. 1-5).

The sanctuary's layout across multiple terraces, each featuring different structures like the Temple of Zeus, the Androns of Mausollos and Idrieus, and the Oikoi building exemplified the Hekatomnid approach to integrating functional and ceremonial spaces in the Ionian Renaissance. Each structure within Labraunda served specific roles, contributing to the sanctuary's cohesive yet diverse architectural landscape, which combined both religious and secular functions.

1 Such as the Andron C which is quite similar to the Hekatomnid Andron A and B. Another example of this influence can be seen on three large fountain houses of Labraunda in the Hellenistic period. These fountain houses are very similar to the Hekatomnid Doric House in terms of their design (Henry, 2020, pp. 99-101)

2 For instance, andrôn A was converted into an oil mill as early as the 6th century AD (Henry, 2020, p. 113).

A Unique Structure: The Oikoi Building From 4th Century BC to the Roman times[3]

The construction techniques and materials used in the Oikoi building highlight the Hekatomnid commitment to architectural grandeur and durability. The building's front façade (fig. 4), constructed entirely of marble, showcases the elite status of the structure within the sanctuary, while the remaining walls consist of greenish-brown gneiss, a stone sourced locally. The walls, constructed with the headers and stretchers technique, reach approximately 5 meters in height according to remains of the western wall of the northern room preserving nine courses that likely supported the entablature and roof.

The entablature of the Oikoi building is a significant feature, demonstrating the Hekatomnid architects' innovative fusion of Doric and Ionic elements. The Oikoi's entablature displays a blank frieze topped by an Ionic geison despite its Doric capitals (Hellström, 1994, p. 45). This stylistic choice reflects the broader architectural trends of the Ionian Renaissance, which emphasized experimentation and the blending of Greek and Anatolian aesthetics. The architrave (fig. 5), measuring 12.84 meters long and decorated with rows of guttae, the name of the building and the dedicator's name is written:

"`Ιδριεὺς Ἑκατόμνω Μυλασεὺς ἀνέθηκε τους οἴκους Διὶ Λαμβραύνδωι"

"Idrieus, son of Hecatomnos, Mylasan, dedicated the oikoi to Zeus Lambraundos"

(Crampa, 1972, p. 14-15)

Besides the name of the building, the inscription on the architrave gives a date for the building's construction. According to the inscription, the building was dedicated by Mausollos' brother Idrieus who was the satrap between 351-341 BC (Crampa, 1972, pp. 14-15). However, the inscription of the Oikoi building implies its construction likely began during Mausollos's satrapy since Idrieus was referred as "Mylaseus", probably after the transfer of the Karian capital by Maussollos from Mylasa to Halikarnassos and Idrieus then probably became hyparch of Mylasa (Hellström and Blid, 2019, p. 252).

The stylobate blocks, essential to the building's structural integrity, are bound by bronze clamps in dovetail cuttings (fig. 6), which is also observed in some buildings in Hekatomnid Labraunda, such as the Temple of Zeus and the two propylaea (Hellström, 2019, pp. 67-69). The identical dove-tail cuttings are also seen on the frontal face of the architrave blocks of the Oikoi Building (fig. 7). It is argued that the shape of the clamps was very similar to the double axe and was placed on the junctions of the architrave blocks as a decorative element. These clamps, shaped like a double axe (labrys), add both a symbolic and structural dimension to the building, invoking the iconography associated with Zeus Labraundos. This innovative use of functional elements for symbolic purposes is rare in Greek architecture, where religious symbolism is typically conveyed through decorative or sculptural additions rather than through structural details (Hellström and Thieme, 1982, p. 24; Hellström, 1984, p. 132-133). The labrys symbol, deeply embedded in Karian religious and cultural identity, enhances the Oikoi's sanctified status, merging architectural innovation with spiritual reverence.

The columns on the stylobate consist of four fluted drums. The height of the columns was 4.33 meters, including the Doric capital. The columns have 20 flutes. Holes cut in columns' drums (fig. 8) indicate that the space between the columns was closed with a metal fence except for the central intercolumniation (Hellström, 1984, p. 132; Hellström, 1994, p. 48).

The Oikoi building's layout is distinguished by its asymmetrical ground plan (fig. 1), a notable unorthodoxy

3 The Oikoi Building at Labraunda, a subject previously lacking extensive archaeological research, is comprehensively analyzed in the MA thesis "The Oikoi Building at Labraunda: Its Function(s)" by Çağla Durak, completed at Bilkent University in 2022. Durak's study stands out as the first in-depth investigation, utilizing excavation reports from Araştırma Sonuçları Toplantısı and Anatolian Studies alongside foundational works by Westholm (1963) and Blid (2016). Enhanced by Durak's fieldwork, which provided detailed measurements and photographs, this research represents the most thorough examination of the Oikoi Building to date.

from the symmetrical layouts often associated with Greek religious structures. Comprising two rooms of unequal size, accessed via a tetrastyle in antis porch. The Oikoi building's larger southern room measures 6.10 by 6.23 meters, while the northern room spans 4.56 by 4.63 meters. This structural asymmetry is highly unusual for buildings with ritualistic purposes. By contrast, most Greek buildings equipped with double rooms were designed with symmetry to convey harmony and divine order. For example, temples like the temple at Aptera, Temple of Aphrodite and Ares at Sta Lenika (Fusco, 2019), and the Building A at Mandra (Kourayos, Daifa, Ohnesorg, and Papajanni, 2012) feature double-room designs where the rooms are of equal size and functionally equivalent**.** The Oikoi building's asymmetry suggests a more experimental approach, one that is not necessarily tied to religious or civic conventions of the time. In fact, there are double-room structures that have rooms of unequal size, such as two temples at Aliki (Daux, 1967) and the temple at Elaious (Fusco, 2019), and the Ekklesiasterion at Delos (Vallois, 1929), but these rooms were fit in a rectangular layout in contrast to the Oikoi building. This asymmetry is not just an aesthetic choice but could also hint at a functional differentiation between the two rooms, suggesting that the Oikoi building served multiple purposes.

The smaller northern room features a brick podium (fig. 9) covered with marble slabs, positioned against its western wall. This podium, likely added in the 2nd century AD, may have served as a base for a statue or as an altar, highlighting the building's ritualistic significance (Blid, 2016, p. 198-201). The construction of this podium reflects the adaptability of the Oikoi building, illustrating how it evolved to meet the changing religious and functional needs of the sanctuary over time. The differentiation in materials and building techniques across the Oikoi's interior spaces reinforces the notion that the building was designed to serve multiple purposes within Labraunda's sacred landscape.

Search for the Oikoi's Possible Functions in the 4th century BC

Double-roomed buildings are a known feature of the ancient Hellenic world, as evidenced by both archaeological finds and literary sources. While they date back to the 7th century BC, their specific functions are not always clear. Hellmann's 1992 study on Delian inscriptions related to the term "oikos/oikoi" reveals that these structures served a variety of purposes. They could be religious, functioning as temples, shrines, or treasuries, or they might have had civic roles, such as serving as a prytaneion, an ekklesiasterion (like those at Delos), or even as dining halls.

The Oikoi building at Labraunda has been the subject of scholarly discussion over the years, with various interpretations regarding its purpose. Its first mention came from A. Persson publication in Anatolian Studies (Alkım et al., 1951, p. 14), where he noted a similar structure from Thasos but did not address the building's function. In a subsequent report, also in Anatolian Studies (Özgüç et al., 1952, p. 24), Persson briefly described the Oikoi building as a priest's residence, though he provided no further elaboration. J. Crampa (1972, p. 15) suggested that the building might have served as an administrative office for the shrine. This interpretation was based on inscriptions found within the Oikoi building, which included dedicatory texts (ILab 21, 30, 36), official records (ILab 53, 55), correspondence (ILab 87, 88), and name lists (ILab 102, 120). Over time, P. Hellström explored multiple possibilities for the building's function, describing it as "a kind of sacred prytaneion" (1991, p. 300), part of the complex of Stoas (1994, p. 44), an office for shrine-related activities (2007, pp. 119–125), and as a treasury (2009, p. 270).

Interpreting the Oikoi structure is challenging because the building, as excavated between 1948 and 1953, did not retain its original 4th century BC form. Over time, the structure underwent at least two significant transformations and restorations, with further disturbances caused by earthquakes. Excavations indicate that during these later modifications and reuses, much of the original building's equipment was lost or altered. This scarcity of original material evidence complicates efforts to determine the structure's initial function. However, it is evident that the Hekatomnids devoted substantial time and resources to the construction and development of the Labraunda sanctuary[4]. When examining all the evidence, it becomes clear that each structure within the Labraunda complex

4 The Hekatomnid sanctuary at Labraunda included at least nine distinct structures serving various purposes, along with a monumental tomb situated near the

was designed to serve the Hekatomnid family and the Karians, showcasing the grandeur of the architecture, the ideological power of the dynasty, and the practical functions of the buildings. This is particularly evident in the case of the two monumental androns at Labraunda. In the context of ancient Greece, an *andron* typically referred to a room within a house designated for hosting symposiums. However, the androns at Labraunda were far from typical—they were standalone, monumental structures rather than small rooms within larger buildings. Inside both androns, niches on the rear walls were likely used to display statues, highlighting their dual role as spaces for both social gatherings and expressions of satrapal authority. The architectural layout of these buildings further underscores the prominence of the satrap, whose central role in banquets reinforced the hierarchical nature of these events. This focus on hierarchy and the satrap's importance is a distinct departure from the egalitarian ideals often associated with Greek symposia. Additionally, the Persian-style sphinxes featured on the acroteria of these buildings are unprecedented in both mainland Greece and Asia Minor. These sphinxes appear to have been directly inspired by similar motifs found on Persian palace walls, such as those at Persepolis. This deliberate borrowing of Persian elements further demonstrates the Hekatomnid effort to blend local and imperial traditions in their architectural program. Given the extensive resources and attention dedicated to Labraunda's construction, it is evident that the Oikoi building played a significant role in the sanctuary's overall design and purpose during the 4th century BCE (Hellström and Blid, 2019, pp. 243–275; Henry, 2020, pp. 98–99; Umholtz, 2016, pp. 397–399, 401–402)

While defining the function of the Oikoi building at Labraunda, the architrave inscription gives us an undeniable clue as it defines the building as being *oikoi.* Yet, as it is mentioned above, the experience tells us to be particularly careful with Hekatomnid dedications: the Andrônes (a much less polysemous term) of Maussollos and Idrieus are no common banqueting hall but rather, as recently demonstrated, halls for Royal representation (Hellström and Blid, 2019, chap. 8) It seems that at Labraunda more than anywhere else, only a combined approach of terminology and context can left the veil on a building's function.

The term *oikos* frequently appears in both literary and epigraphic sources, carrying a range of meanings. Rups (1986, p. 11) explains that *οἶχος* can refer to a settlement as well as a house. Meanwhile, Joannes Zanaras (1967) proposes a connection between the word *οἶχος* and the term *εἴκω*, which translates to "a place to which one withdraws." Based on etymological analysis, Rups (1986, p. 11) concludes that *οἶχος* broadly signifies "any dwelling, room, or even a public meeting space that is accessible."Hellmann (1992, pp. 300–309) expands on this understanding, noting that the term acquires additional meanings when applied in monumental or religious contexts. Administrative inscriptions from Delos, for instance, identify various structures referred to as *oikos*, such as the Oikos of the Naxians, the Oikos of the Andrians, and the Oikos of the Delians. In these cases, *oikos* could denote a variety of functions, including a treasury, temple, shrine, or even a banqueting hall. The inventory lists from Delos confirm that certain buildings functioned as treasuries, storing both votive and non-votive items such as architectural materials and tools (Hellmann, 1992, pp. 300–301). For example, an inventory list (no. 203 B 94–99) indicates that building materials and tools were stored in the Oikos of the Andrians. Later records (No. 287 B 87–91; 286 B 5–11) show that the same building housed votive items like phiales, cups, and vessels (Rups, 1986, pp. 180–186). This raises the possibility that the Oikoi at Labraunda might have served a similar purpose as a double treasury or storage space, with two rooms sharing a common porch. However, beyond the trace of a metallic fence on its façade, there is no conclusive archaeological or epigraphic evidence to confirm this interpretation.

Split-Rock. On the southern terrace, two Ionic-style entrances are located: the East Propylon and the South Propylon. Adjacent to the South Propylon stands the Doric House, a tetrastyle in antis Doric building functioning as a fountain house. Access to the second terrace is provided by a monumental staircase, measuring 12 meters wide and 12.5 meters long, which leads to the West Stoa. On terrace 3, two significant structures are positioned at opposite ends: the East Stoa, containing six rooms, and the Andron of Mausollos, located on the west, which was used as a banqueting hall. A staircase from this level leads to the temple terrace, which features a peripteral Ionic temple built along an east-west axis. This temple was erected on the same foundation as an earlier Archaic temple dedicated to Zeus. On the northeastern side of the temple terrace, the North Stoa is situated. To the west of the Temple of Zeus Labraundos, two adjacent buildings can be found: the Andron of Idrieus, also a banqueting hall, and a tetrastyle in antis structure identified as the Oikoi, based on inscriptions. The construction of some buildings, such as Andron B, the North Stoa, and the series of androns with a stoa façade on terrace 2, is attributed to the time of Mausollos. Other structures were completed during the rule of Idrieus, as evidenced by dedicatory inscriptions (Williamson, 2021, pp. 116–127; Henry, 2020, p. 98; Umholtz, 2016, pp. 395–397).

Another inventory list (No. 163 A 1.34) suggests that the *Oikoi* of Zeus in Delos was used as a *hestiatorion* (a room reserved for ritual banqueting) (Hellmann, 1992, pp. 302). There are three examples that have two rooms functioning as *hestiatorion*. Priest's House at Marmaria (Delphi), Hestiatorion at Perachora and Building D at Kos. The late 6th-century BC building on the Marmaria terrace near Delphi features two equal-sized rooms (6.25m x 6.25m) with off-centered doorways, polygonal orthostat exterior walls atop a two-course limestone foundation, and smaller polygonal stones for interior walls. Interpreted to function as a dining hall, it could accommodate 22 couches and shares architectural parallels with the Hestiatorion at Perachora, emphasizing its communal purpose (Bookidis, 1983). The Hestiatorion at Perachora, located between two Hera sanctuaries in the Heraion valley of Corinth, dates to ca. 300 BC and consists of two equal-sized square rooms (6.32m x 6.32m) with off-centered doors and a common vestibule, enclosed by a wall. Built with limestone blocks, plaster-covered walls, and pebble-plastered floors, the structure features a slightly elevated platform along the walls. Two in situ stone couches, measuring 1.80m each, and evidence of tables suggest the building served as a banqueting hall, accommodating eleven couches per room (Tomlinson, 1969). There is a pattern: considering the banqueting halls at Marmaria and Perachora, a banqueting hall with two rooms has equal size rooms, off-center doors, and an enclosed porch. Nonetheless, the *Oikoi* building at Labraunda does not meet any of these criteria, and neither does the Building D with two rooms in the Asklepion at Kos even though it is considered as a banqueting hall (Armpis, 1998). Building D, located on the middle terrace of the Asklepios sanctuary near Kos, dates to two phases: the late Classical period and the late 3rd century BCE, coinciding with the construction of Temple B. The structure features two nearly equal-sized rooms (5 m x 7.85 m and 5.14 m x 7.85 m) opening onto an east-facing tetrastyle *in antis* porch with Doric columns standing 3.52m tall. Built from local limestone with varying block sizes, the architecture aligns with contemporary Kos designs. Scholars, including Armpis and Livadiotti, interpret the building as a banqueting hall, accommodating 11 couches per room, supported by a reference in Herodas' 3rd century BC poem describing feasting in the sanctuary's rooms[5] (Livadiotti, 2013). The reason why Building D at Kos and the Oikoi building at Labraunda have a similar ground plan might not be necessarily related to the function. In the 4th century BC, during the Hekatomnid period, Kos was politically linked to Karia, aligning with the reconstruction phase of the city of Kos. By the 3rd century BC, the architectural style and techniques of the Hekatomnids may have influenced the construction of Building D in the Asklepieion (Pedersen, 2015, p. 169). The Oikoi building at Labraunda, with its two rooms and tetrastyle in antis porch, could have served as a model for Building D, which shares the same porch style and features four Doric columns in antis. While the doors of the Oikoi building are known to have been perfectly centered, the off-centered doors of Building D are a matter of interpretation, with no solid architectural evidence supporting this reconstruction (Armpis, 1998; Livadiotti, 2013). Herodas (IV 1–95) refers to Building D as *oikoi* in epigraphic evidence, suggesting it may have been a banqueting hall. However, the Oikoi building at Labraunda lacks the typical features of such halls. The original floor is destroyed, leaving no confirmation of raised platforms for *kline*, and no windows for ventilation, common in dining halls, are present in the building remains. Hellström (1986, p. 159) suggests that the two rooms of the Oikoi building might still have served as dining spaces, based on threshold cuts that may indicate raised platforms. However, excavation reports do not provide any definitive evidence of dining hall features, casting doubt on this interpretation. Besides, Labraunda already had at least two *stoas* for common banqueting (East *Stoa,* and a new *stoa* on terrace 2[6] discovered during the 2021 excavation season) and two androns for formal banqueting in the 4th century BC. It can be concluded that the Hekatomnid architectural program incorporated two distinct designs for banqueting halls to meet specific needs. While it is theoretically possible that the two rooms of the Oikoi building, despite their size differences, served a similar purpose to those at Marmaria, Perachora, and Kos, the possibility of the Oikoi building being used for banquets cannot be entirely ruled out, but it seems to be quite unlikely.

5 Livadiotti supports that interpretation based on the text of IV mimiamb of Herodas (IV. 1-95), which was written around the 3rd century BC. The poem mentions two pious women and one of the women's slave visiting the sanctuary. According to the poem, when they visit the sanctuary, one of the women asked the priest to make the sacrifice and to divide it into two parts to feast in the rooms (l. 92: *τἄλλα δ ο› ἱκίης ἔδρῃ*). According to Livadiotti, Herodas referred to the two rooms of the Building D since there is no other building found on the site that would fit this description (Livadiotti, 2013, pp. 49-50).

6 Not published yet but see the reports in Anatolia Antiqua published in 2022, 2023.

Another perspective considers the possibility of the Oikoi building functioning as a temple. There is ample evidence of double-roomed temples and shrines in ancient sources, particularly in Pausanias' Description of Greece. Pausanias uses three distinct terms to describe such structures based on their architectural layout: *ἱερόν διπλοῦν, ναός διπλοῦς* and *οἴχημα διπλοῦν*. The terms *hieron* and *naos* typically refer to more conventional temple structures, such as those in Argos (2.25.1), Olympia (6.20.3), and Mantinea (2.10.2). In contrast, the term *oichema* is used for buildings with more unconventional architectural features, as seen in Sikyon (2.10.2) and Athens (1.26.5).

By comparing this literary evidence with double-roomed buildings identified as temples at various archaeological sites, three distinct types of double temples can be identified, as categorized by Fusco (2019). These include:

- Type A: Two rooms placed side by side with separate entrances facing the same direction.
- Type B: Two rooms aligned with doorways on the same axis.
- Type C: Two rooms with entrances on opposite sides (Fusco, 2019, pp. 106–108) (fig. 10).

The Oikoi building at Labraunda matches the ground plan of Type A, which is also found in temples at Mandra, Aliki, Elaious, Aptera, and Sta Lenika. This similarity strengthens the argument for interpreting the Oikoi building as a temple.

Double roomed temples could be equipped with unequal rooms, just like in Labraunda: in Aliki (Daux, 1967, pp. 84-87; Bent and Hicks, 1887, pp. 409-438) and Elaious (Daux, 1966, pp. 791; Beaufils, 2000, pp. 366). The columns *in antis* porch of the *Oikoi* building are also one of the similar features of two-room temples. We see common colonnaded porch at Mandra and Aliki. At Mandra, the double-roomed temple had seven columns in antis (Kourayos et al, 2012, pp. 119-123), while at Aliki example we see five Doric columns in antis on the South building and four Doric columns in antis on the latest phase of the North building (Daux, 1967, pp. 84-87). One more feature might further this interpretation: in the cases of Aptera (Tzanakaki, 2019, p. 49) and Mandra (Kourayos et al, 2012, p. 132), there is a square altar in front of the temples aligned with the anta wall. A similar square structure is located in front of and aligned with the southern anta wall of the Oikoi building. This feature could be interpreted as either a statue base or an altar (Westholm, 1963, p. 68). Supporting this interpretation, a dedicatory inscription found in the Oikoi building (ILab 36) mentions an altar dedicated to Hestia (Crampa, 1972, p. 35). However, Crampa dates this inscription to the 2nd century AD, meaning it cannot be considered relevant to the Oikoi building's function in the 4th century BC. Moreover, no epigraphic evidence from 4th century BC Labraunda mentions any deity other than Zeus that would require an additional cultic structure at the site. Without such evidence, it is not possible to interpret the Oikoi building as a temple in the 4th century BC. Constructing a second temple immediately west of the Temple of Zeus during this period would have represented an unnecessary allocation of resources.

In addition to religious buildings which have two rooms and a common porch, there are also civic structures that fit this description. The Prytaneion in Delos (Etienne, 1997), although it may not seem so at first glance, is a highly suitable structure with its two main rooms at the back and its tetrastyle in antis porch for comparison with the Oikoi building. The comparanda seems even more adequate when taking into account that a Prytaneion requires two main rooms with different functions; a room with a hearth and a dining hall (Wycherley, 1976, pp. 134-135). Miller (1977, p. 28) argues that when a scholiast to Thucydides (2.15.2) identifies the prytaneion as οἶκος μέγας, he refers to the function rather than the architectural form. In that context, what he means is "the House of the State". Considering the *Oikoi* building, its two rooms could have served as a hearth room and a dining hall. This difference in function between the rooms might explain their difference in shape and size. However, due to the later re-occupation and transformations of the building, the remains of a 4th c. BC hearth for Hestia don't exist.

One clue that might help clarify the function of the Oikoi building lies in the significant alteration made to its southern room during the 6th century AD. At that time, the original floor was entirely removed to construct

the foundation for corner piers (see below), resulting in the loss of evidence from earlier periods. However, this transformation could provide insights into the building's historical use. If the floor was replaced in the 6th century AD due to a change in function, it suggests that the Oikoi building might have been continuously used, possibly with the same or a similar purpose, from the 4th century BC through at least the 2nd century AD.

A *Hestia* cult is confirmed to have been associated with the *Oikoi* building at Labraunda, at least by the 2nd century AD. If we assume that the function of the *Oikoi* building remained consistent from the 4th century BC through the Imperial period, it is plausible that an altar dedicated to Hestia in the 4th century BC was later restored and rededicated in the 2nd century AD. The small square structure located in front of the southern side of the building might represent this altar. However, no detailed study of this structure has been conducted to substantiate this hypothesis

Mausollos maintained an ideology that emphasized the dynastic power of his rule, a theme consistently reflected throughout his reign. Labraunda was not merely a religious sanctuary for the Hekatomnids but also a political symbol, as demonstrated by the extensive building program and efforts to create a sanctuary uniting all Karians. In this context, it is plausible that the *Oikoi* building functioned as a kind of *prytaneion*, serving as the administrative center or "house of the state" for Karia

In conclusion, determining the exact function of the Oikoi building at Labraunda in the 4th century BC is challenging due to insufficient epigraphic and architectural evidence. However, the analysis presented suggests a compelling interpretation. During the Imperial period, one room of the building appears to have served as an archive or office for the shrine[7], while the other functioned as a cult room or shrine dedicated to Hestia. This dual-purpose design aligns with the concept of an unconventional prytaneion, reflecting both the experimental architectural tendencies of the Hekatomnids and Mausollos' ideological vision in the 4th century BC.

The Oikoi Building in the Late Antiquity: Plan and Structural Features

The life of the Oikoi building didn't end with the transformation of Karian society in the Late Antiquity and medieval periods. With the process of the Christianization of the empire, most probably, the building was converted from its original function. A new square space was settled inside the building using different materials and construction techniques in the southern room (fig. 3); it was added four L-shaped load-bearing piers in the corner of the room and the central square bay is defined; there is no indication that the northern room was actively used during this period.

The L-shaped load-bearing piers have an alternating appearance: The building materials used in construction of the piers are a combination of stones, bricks and mortar. There is no homogeneity in the size of the stones on the wall façades: in addition to cut stones and bricks, shapeless/amorphous stones were also used. The lengths of the bricks in the load-bearing piers are 25x27 cm, and their thicknesses were measured as 3-4 cm; the joint spacings in the piers are not parallel to the brick thickness, these areas were measured as 2.5 to 3.5 cm. The bricks are arranged in courses on the supporting piers. A photograph of the southern room, taken in 1951 season, from the Labraunda

7 The epigraphic evidence found within the Oikoi building offers valuable insights into its role during the Imperial period, as the majority of the inscriptions date to this time. Among the inscriptions, eight are from the Imperial period, with only one exception: a dedicatory inscription from the mid-3rd century BC (Crampa, 1972). These inscriptions provide crucial context for understanding the building's use.

One inscription (ILab 53), which outlines the regulations for Labraunda's annual festival, is an Imperial-period copy of a 4th-century BC original. Similarly, a letter (ILab 88) found in the building is a copy of a Hellenistic-period document. These examples show that important texts, such as festival regulations and correspondence from a Hellenistic king to a governor, were preserved during the Imperial period and stored alongside other related inscriptions.

Another significant inscription (ILab 55), dating to the Imperial period, addresses the care and transfer of belongings between outgoing and incoming officials. This raises the possibility, as suggested by Crampa (1972, p. 11) and Hellström (2007, pp. 119–125), that the Oikoi building served as an archive or administrative office for the shrine during this period. The preservation of records with administrative and ceremonial relevance in this building highlights its potential role in managing the sanctuary's affairs.

excavation archive shows at least 8 courses of bricks on one pier (fig. 11).[8] Moreover, these brick bands were not used as a façade element, they were used for the core of the piers. Although in Italy the bricks are only a façade element, in Western Anatolia the brick bands reach to the center of the wall and connect the two walls; thus, giving a more balanced and coherent load-bearing element (Ward-Perkins, 1981, p. 277-278).

Another important element retrieved from the excavation notebooks is an architectural fragment belonging to the covering system (fig. 12). This architectural fragment is the crown of the dome. It is quite important for us to have an idea about what the form of the covering system was. It shows a crown formed by the spiral laying of bricks. Yet, although we have information about the form of the dome, this finding does not mean that the covering system can be fully understood. The connections between the load-bearing piers were provided by barrel arches, as it is the L-shaped form of the load-bearing piers, which means that they have angled/cornered points for arches, these arches, as R. Ousterhout (2019, p. 201) emphasized, "…bear the weight of the dome and adjust it down-ward to the corner piers.". However, in Oikoi building, the springing of the arch or skewback part due to demolitions, where the arch rests on the piers, and the place where transition from square to circle, makes it impossible to determine in which material and techniques used in this section, and its relation with the dome, such as pendentives or other transition elements. In other words, it is not clear whether the dome of the Oikoi building rested directly on the pendentives (dome on pendentive) or was combined with a continuous pendentive (a dome with continuous pendentives or sail vault).

In the Labraunda 4: Remains of Late Antiquity, book published in 2016 by Jesper Blid (2016, pp. 198-199), mentioned about Oikoi Building's covering system:

> The reconstruction drawings show Thieme's and Hellström's hypothesis on the original façade of the building during the 4th century BC (to the left) and the author's suggestion on the rebuilt phase with a cupola covering the southern room (to the right). The tentative reconstruction for the second, domed building phase is inspired by that of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople perhaps the most famous example of the 6th century. It is a cupola resting on pendentives with a row of small windows in the lower section of the dome. The windows are placed in a thicker wall section that forms a supporting ring that can perhaps be described as a "semi drum". (fig. 13).

First of all, Hagia Sophia is a *tour de force*, the plan and spatial features of the building have not been repeated in any region or part of the empire (Krautheimer, 1986, p. 238). Secondly, even though it is stated by Jesper Blid as a "tentative", the Hagia Sophia dome given as a reconstruction proposal belongs to the Ottoman period, not the Byzantine 6th century. The first dome of Hagia Sophia (6th century), most probably, was lower/shallower and simpler in form than its later phases (Ousterhout, 2019, pp. 203-206; Krautheimer, 1986, p. 206). Thirdly, J. Blid mentioned above "It is a cupola resting on pendentives with a row of small windows in the lower section of the dome." In that case, it must be asked: Where is the evidence that the dome rests on pendentives and that there are windows in the drum or tambour of the dome? And lastly, there is an only architectural fragment unearthed belonging to the covering system is the crown of the dome. The fact that this part was found is not enough to understand the exact form of the covering system. To talk about "dome on pendentive", we need more evidence from upper part of load-bearing piers, and transition part from load-bearing piers to covering system.

Evaluation of the Plan

It must be appreciated that it is very difficult to determine the date and function of a building, on the basis of only four supporting piers, a square space, and limited evidence, just like in the Oikoi building. Therefore, the central space in the Oikoi building led to investigate other buildings with central square bay, regardless of their function. Although the function of the Oikoi Building could not be understood, a group of churches with the central square bay, which are St. John Church at Ephesos and Philadelphia, Building D at Sardis, Urban Basilica at Hierapolis

8 The piers have suffered since then and lost part of their elevation.

and Priene, in western coast of Asia Minor must be briefly mentioned and evaluated. The reason for choosing these buildings as a comparison is the process of centralisation that emerged in western Anatolia, especially in ecclesiastical architecture, by the 6th century AD.

The churches at Ephesos, Sardis, Philadelphia, Hierapolis and Priene have a unique interior form, different from the usual wooden-roofed, multiple-aisled/nave, basilical planned churches that were traditionally and commonly built in the regions within the borders of the empire. This is the form in which the longitudinally rectangular basilica is divided into at least two square spaces or units (fig. 14).[9]

The naos of these basilicas is divided into square units.[10] The square spaces in these basilicas are formed with independent load-bearing piers, and these units are covered by vaults. Bricks, stones, and mortared rubble materials were used in the elements of the load-bearing and covering systems of the buildings (Buchwald, 2001b, pp. 209-210; Ousterhout, 2019, pp. 189-194). These basilicas represent a crucial stage in the architectural development of the ecclesiastical buildings in the Late Antique/Early Byzantine period. It reflects the transition from load-bearing walls to load-bearing piers, with the division of the interior space into multiple units with piers, along with the covering of these units by a vaulting and were known as multi-domed basilica (Karydis, 2012, p. 358). The basilicas exemplified above, do not reflect a precise plan typology; the number of interior units varies, as do the techniques used in the load-bearing and covering system. However, the existence of similar centralized units, and building materials they used, have led researchers to categorize these churches together.[11]

It is worth mentioning a hypothesis as to, why these buildings, in Western Anatolia, have their central spaces in basilical plan? The spatial redesign of the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople and the Church of St. John in Ephesos began in the same year: 535 or 536 AD.[12] In the naos, transept arms, and bema of these two cross-planned basilicas, central spaces were formed with independent piers. Each central unit was covered with a dome. Referring to the construction dates of these two buildings, many specialists have suggested that the plan form of the Holy Apostles and the central units in its interiors inspired the St. John Ephesos (Buchwald, 2001b, p. 210; Krautheimer, 1986, p. 210; Karydis, 2011). As an alternative to this idea, there is no other example of a building with a similar plan scheme and interior design that can be dated to the first half of the 6th century AD or earlier on the coast of Western Anatolia. Therefore, the church of St. John in Ephesos may have inspired many other church buildings in Western Anatolia, in terms of its spatial characteristics or at least pioneered the spread of the central emphasis in church and other types of buildings. This may explain why Building D at Sardis, St. John at Philadelphia, Urban Basilica at Hierapolis and Priene have central spaces of equal square or very close dimensions within the basilical (rectangular) plan in form. For this reason, the possibility that the square space in the Oikoi Building may belong to that period can be evaluated together with the basilicas which have square spaces in Western Anatolia.

Although there is no evidence or spatial unit that can associate the Oikoi Building with a church, the reason why it seems relevant to evaluate it together with many churches, is the development of centralisation, seen in the cities of western Anatolia, dated in the 5th-7th century AD, especially in ecclesiastical architecture. This centralisation in the basilicas, mentioned above, was achieved by constructing four independent load-bearing piers and covering this space with a brick vault in different form just like in the Oikoi Building. Therefore, could the central space in the Oikoi building be another example of a manifestation of this centralisation movement, which was prevalent especially in ecclesiastical architecture of Western Anatolia during Late Antiquity?

9 The floor plans of the Building D at Sardis, Urban Basilica at Hierapolis, St. John Church at Philadelphia and Urban Basilica at Priene are longitudinally rectangular, while St. John Church at Ephesos is cruciform in its design.

10 As for St. John at Ephesos, in addition to the naos, the transept arms also have square units.

11 "Returning to western Asia Minor and the sixth century, we find a variety of vaulted buildings that employed the cross-domed unit. The enigmatic church of St. John at Alaşehir (Philadelphia) has a curious single-aisled plan, with a nave covered by two domes; Church D at Sardis was similar, while two churches at Pamukkale/Hierapolis —all probably Justinianic in date— seem to have employed similar modular designs" (Ousterhout, 2019, p. 194); Buchwald, 2001b; Karydis, 2011.

12 According to Krautheimer (1986, p. 242), the construction of the Church of the Holy Apostles was completed in A.D. 550, and the Church of St. John in Ephesos in A.D. 565.

Moreover, there is a Byzantine structure, Kale Mevkii Building,[13] situated on a plain approximately 5 kilometers North of ancient Mylasa, 11 km from Labraunda. Similar to the interior arrangement of the southern room of Oikoi building, only four piers of the Kale Mevkii Building survived today, making a square space. The external walls of this spatial unit have not survived, but the remains indicate that the square unit was covered by a dome. The materials used in the load-bearing piers of the Kale Mevkii Building were unhewn stones, bricks, and mortared rubble. On the lower and upper sections of the wall façades, there are two separate brick courses bands arranged in three and four rows. There are still uncertainties about the function and construction date of the Kale Mevkii Building. However, despite all these difficulties, the proximity of both buildings to each other, the attempt to create a central space in a similar way with four load-bearing piers, and the fact that this space is covered with a dome are important points that must be mentioned. Both the construction technique and the spatial similarity of the Oikoi and the Kale Mevkii Building are on a comparable level with the churches, located in the important cities of Western Anatolia which were mentioned above. And, it can be pointed out, at least, seems like this centralisation movement spread as far as the Karian region, Mylasa, and Labraunda. This shows us how active Labraunda and Mylasa were in architectural production during Late Antiquity/Early Byzantine period.

Material Usage and Construction Techniques

Stones, bricks and mortar, which were frequently used for load-bearing systems in the Late Antique/Early Byzantine period, were also the primary building materials used in the building of transitional and covering units such as arches, pendentives, vaults and domes (Karydis, 2011, p. 25). In this period, simple forms, such as barrel arch and sail vault, were preferred in the construction of covering systems on the Western Anatolian coasts (Krautheimer, 1986, p. 238).

The remains representing the crown of the dome in the Oikoi Building provide information about the form of the covering system: bricks arranged radially at the crown. However, it is unclear how it was transitioned from the load-bearing system to the covering system due to demolition: This is an obstacle for dating. Therefore, it is difficult to give precise dates about the form or construction date of the dome on the basis of the spiral brick layout seen only on the crown of the Oikoi's dome: because the crown of the dome was built with a spiral brick scheme can be dated from the 2nd to the 6th century AD (Lancaster, 2015, p. 85; Karydis, 2011, pp. 67-116). If there were any remains of the transition part from the load-bearing piers to the cover system, comparisons could be made on the technique used in the transition which would give us an idea on the precise date of the dome. For instance, sail vault was developed much earlier than the dome on pendentives of the 6th century AD (Lancaster, 2015, p. 72).

Instead of a very complex form, such as a dome on a pendentive, for which there are no remains, it seems more economical to propose that the Oikoi building may have been covered with a much simpler form, such as a sail vault (fig. 15). Yet, in the absence of evidence on the techniques used in the transition system, all recommendations remain as an assumption.

The materials used in the supporting piers of the Oikoi building, the presence of brick bands reaching the center of the piers, the square-shaped central space, and its coverage with a brick dome, all bear similarities to the central spaces of the basilica examples mentioned above. These features make it possible to compare the Oikoi building to these basilicas, suggesting a construction date that could also belong to the 6th century or later, as with the basilicas.

However, this can also be misleading. The building materials used in the Oikoi building are not a 6th century innovation; they are materials known and used in Western Anatolia since the Roman imperial period (Karydis,

13 The remains of the building have been thought of as a castle (kale) for years by the local community; for this reason, the area where the building is located is called 'kale mevkii' (castle location/site). The function of the building is not a military or defensive fortress; however, since the site is known by this name, I named the building as the 'Kale Mevkii Building' in a master thesis (A Byzantine Structure (Kale Mevkii Building) in the Hinterland of Ancient Mylasa: Studies on Construction Technique, Date, and Function) and the name given by the locals will continue to be used (Ardıl, 2020, pp. 22-25).

2011, p. 27). The use of brick spirally at the crown, which is an unearthed single part of the covering system, also corresponds to a very wide range of dates (Lancaster, 2015, p. 79-97). Therefore, it is misleading to date the building only on the basis of the construction materials and techniques used. Yet, it is clear that a considerable amount of resource and effort was spent on construction of the load-bearing and covering system of the Oikoi Building's southern room, which demonstrates that the Oikoi Building might be used as a prestigious building in the Late Antique period.

Although the Oikoi building has two rooms, there is no indication that the northern room was used in Late Antiquity, therefore, the answer to the question of the function of the building is only in the southern room. This central space can be associated with many other buildings with different functions that have a central space; for instance, such as the central bays of churches (the basilicas mentioned above), the central rooms of civil dwellings (Lancaster, 2015, pp. 81-82), and the central-single room of funerary structures. Yet, it is difficult to conclude definite conclusions and it is also difficult to make a speculation about the function of a single central area belonging to a single room without conclusive evidence.

The building does not incorporate any spatial features that could be associated with a church, such as, at least, an apse. Jesper Blid (2016, p. 200) has given a suggestion as to the function of the building and has suggested that it may have been a funerary architecture. As an example, he pointed to centricalness of a tomb in the east necropolis of Side, called Eastern Mausoleum. Firstly, centrality is not a single form; in addition to square, centrality can also be achieved in spaces exhibiting a polygonal geometry such as hexagonal, octagonal, circular, triconchos and tetraconchos. Funerary structure at Side has a central room, but the central room has an extended form with an exedra on each side. The Oikoi's plan scheme does not lend itself to this comparison: The southern room in the Oikoi building has only a single square space. Moreover, in the Eastern Mausoleum at Side, the fan technique was used at the beginning of the covering system (Lancaster, 2015, pp. 85-86; Mansel, 1960, p. 419); in the Oikoi building, this part was demolished and only the crown is known. For this reason, I have emphasized above the importance of knowing the materials and techniques used in the transition from the load-bearing piers to the cover system. Because a technique used in the transition from square to circle may be a technique known for centuries, or, perhaps a technique representative of a specific century. As for the function of the building, due to the lack of evidence, many suggestions will not go beyond assumptions. However, the idea that the central space created in the Oikoi building may have emerged as a reflection of the centralisation movement in Western Anatolia in the 6th century, especially in religious buildings, is of considerable importance.

Conclusion

The Oikoi building at Labraunda, spanning from the 4th century BC to Late Antiquity, represents a remarkable example of architectural conversion, alteration, and socio-political change. However, determining its precise functions over time remains a significant challenge, illustrating the building's complexity and adaptability.

Originally constructed under Idrieus, the Oikoi likely fulfilled critical roles within the sanctuary, potentially serving as a treasury, dining hall, or prytaneion. Subsequent transformations during the Hellenistic, Roman, and Late Antique periods introduced architectural modifications and new functions, mirroring broader societal transitions. With the Christianization of the site, the building was reconfigured, evidenced by the addition of L-shaped piers and a dome in the southern room, representing its incorporation into a new cultural and spatial perspective.

The difficulty in interpreting the Oikoi's functions stems from limited and fragmented archaeological evidence and the lack of definitive epigraphic records for certain periods. Its asymmetrical layout, diverse construction techniques, and successive architectural alterations resist straightforward classification, highlighting its experimental and context-specific character. These complexities set the Oikoi apart as a unique architectural case, reflecting both the innovative approaches of the Hekatomnid builders and the evolving needs of the sanctuary over centuries.

In essence, the Oikoi building's long history and multiple potential uses underscore its importance as both a functional structure and a symbol of resilience within the Labraunda. Its layered past challenges traditional frameworks of interpretation, offering a valuable lens to explore the dynamic relationships between form, function, and meaning in ancient architectural contexts.

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Figure 1

Ground Plan of the Oikoi Building (O. Henry)

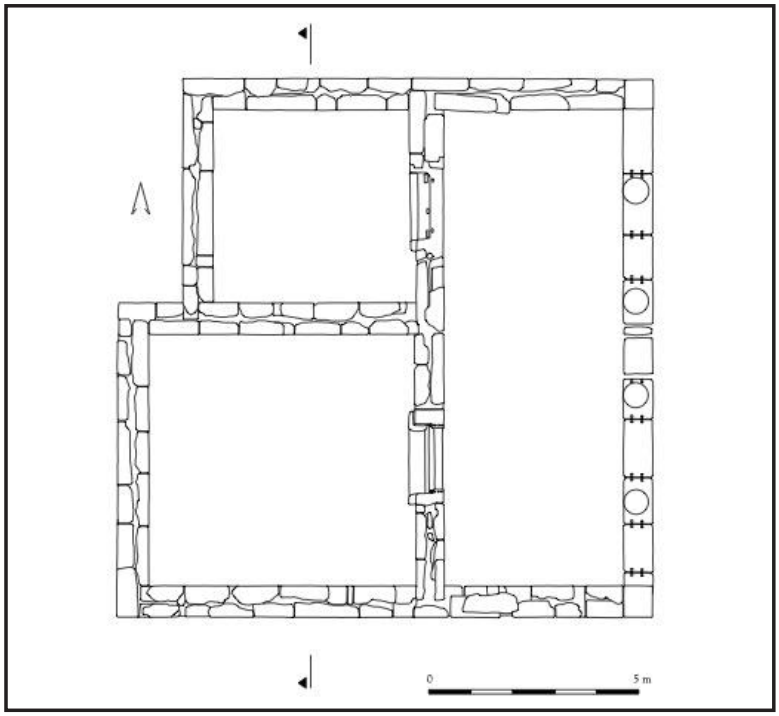

Figure 2

Plan of Labraunda (O. Henry)

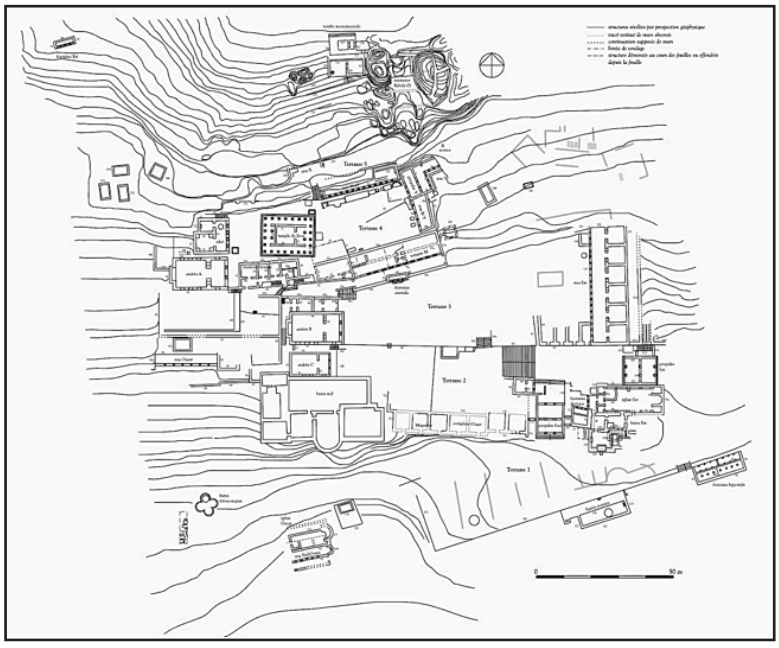

Figure 3

Plan of the Oikoi: red marks the piers of the second building phase (C. Ardıl, M. Özbek)

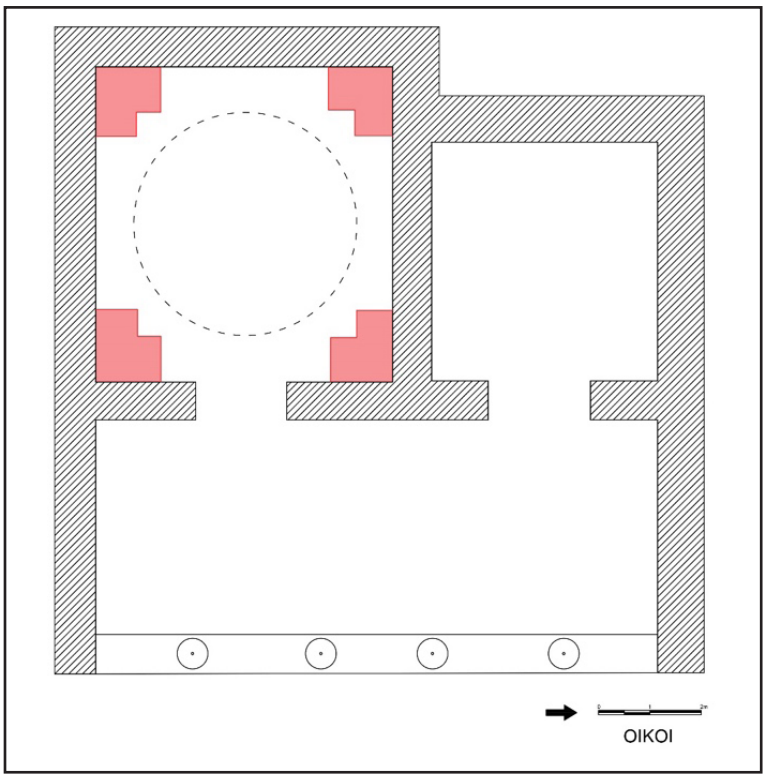

Figure 4

Oikoi Building from East (O. Henry)

Figure 5

The Architrave of the Oikoi Building (O. Henry)

Figure 6

Dove-tail beddings on the stylobate (Ç. Durak)

Figure 7

Clamp holes on the architrave of the Oikoi building (Ç. Durak)

Figure 8

Cuts on the column drum (Ç. Durak)

Figure 9

Brick podium of the northern room (Ç. Durak)

Figure 10

Plans of Type A, Type B and Type C temples (Fusco, 2019, fig.2)

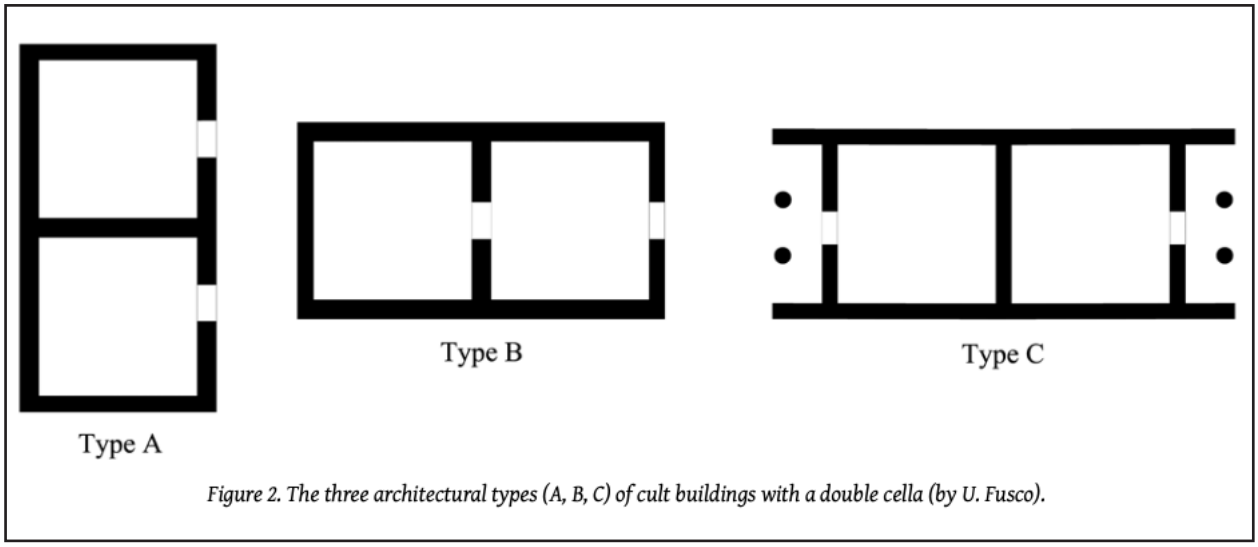

Figure 2. The three architectural types (A, B, C) of cult buildings with a double cella (by U. Fusco).

Figure 11

The north-western pier, at least 8 courses and fragment of covering system (1951 season, Labraunda excavation archive)

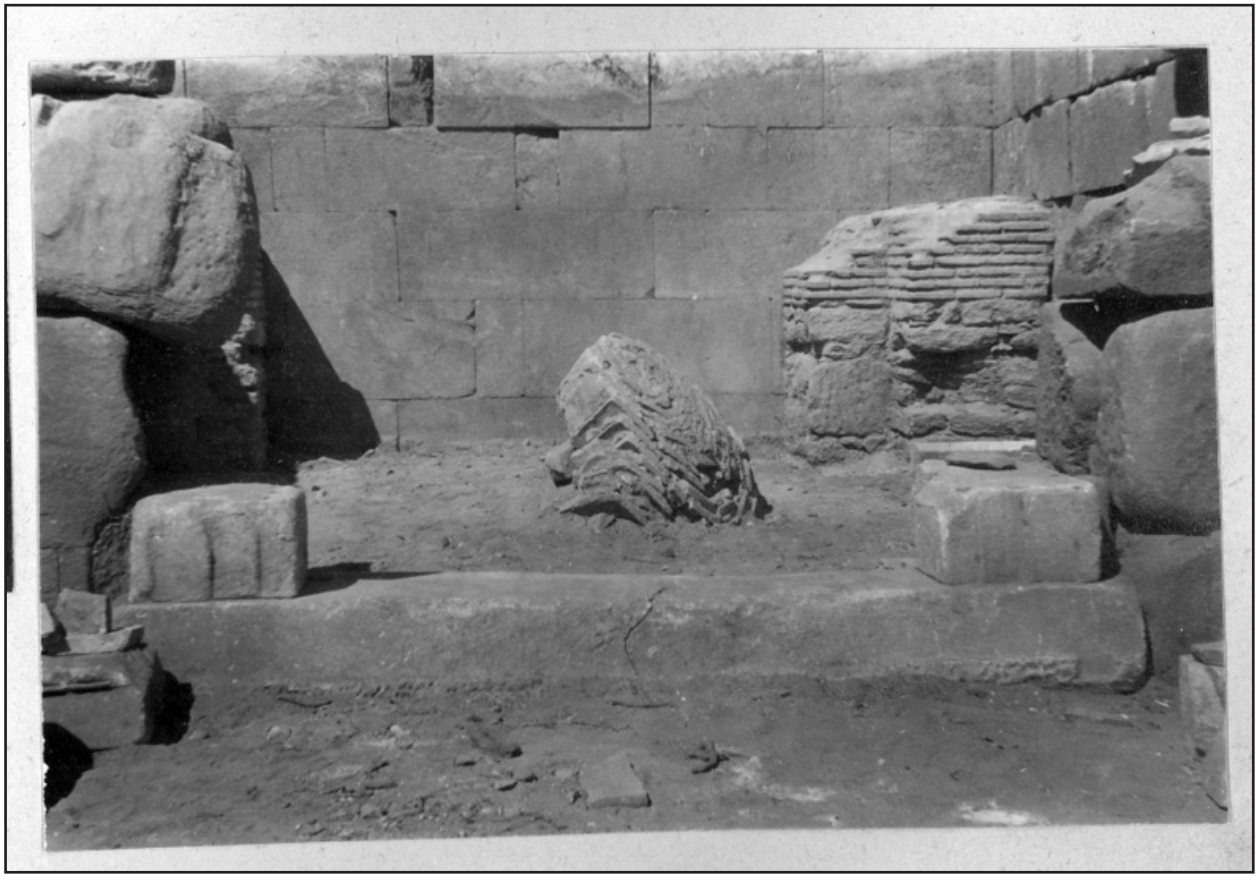

Figure 12

The crown of the dome, excavated in 1951 (Jesper, 2016, p. 196).

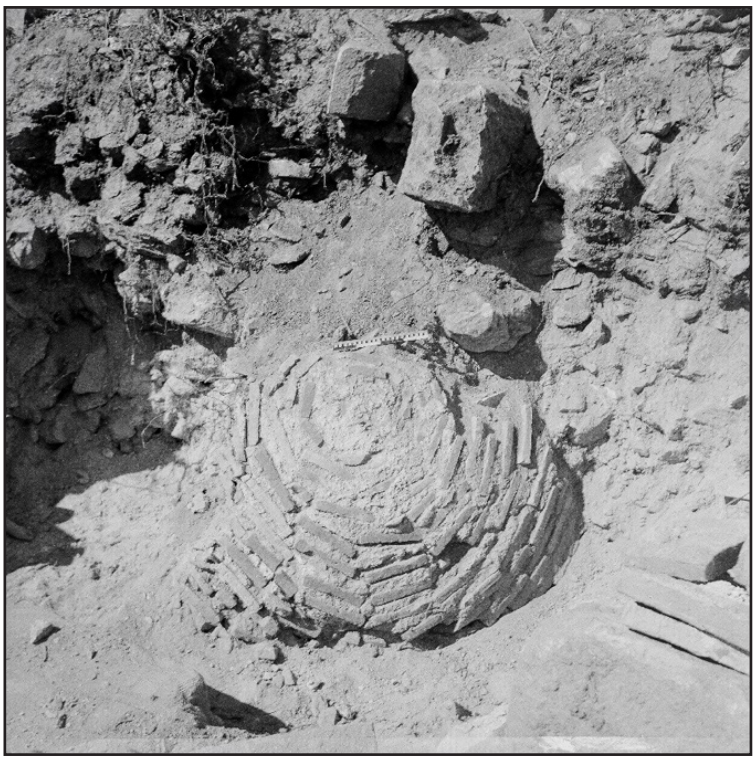

Figure 13

The later construction of the "cupola" over the southern room (Blid, 2016, p. 197)

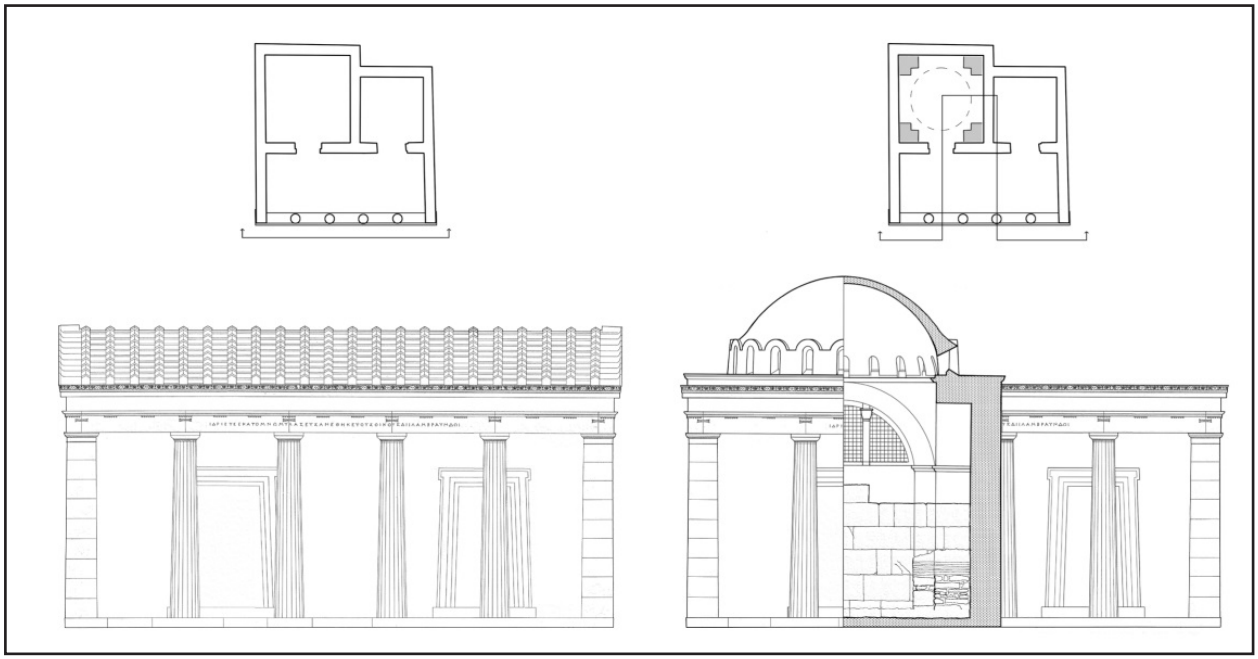

Figure 14

Top-left St. John, Philadelphia; bottom left Building D, Sardis; and right St. John, Ephesos (Ousterhout, 2019, p. 195-196)

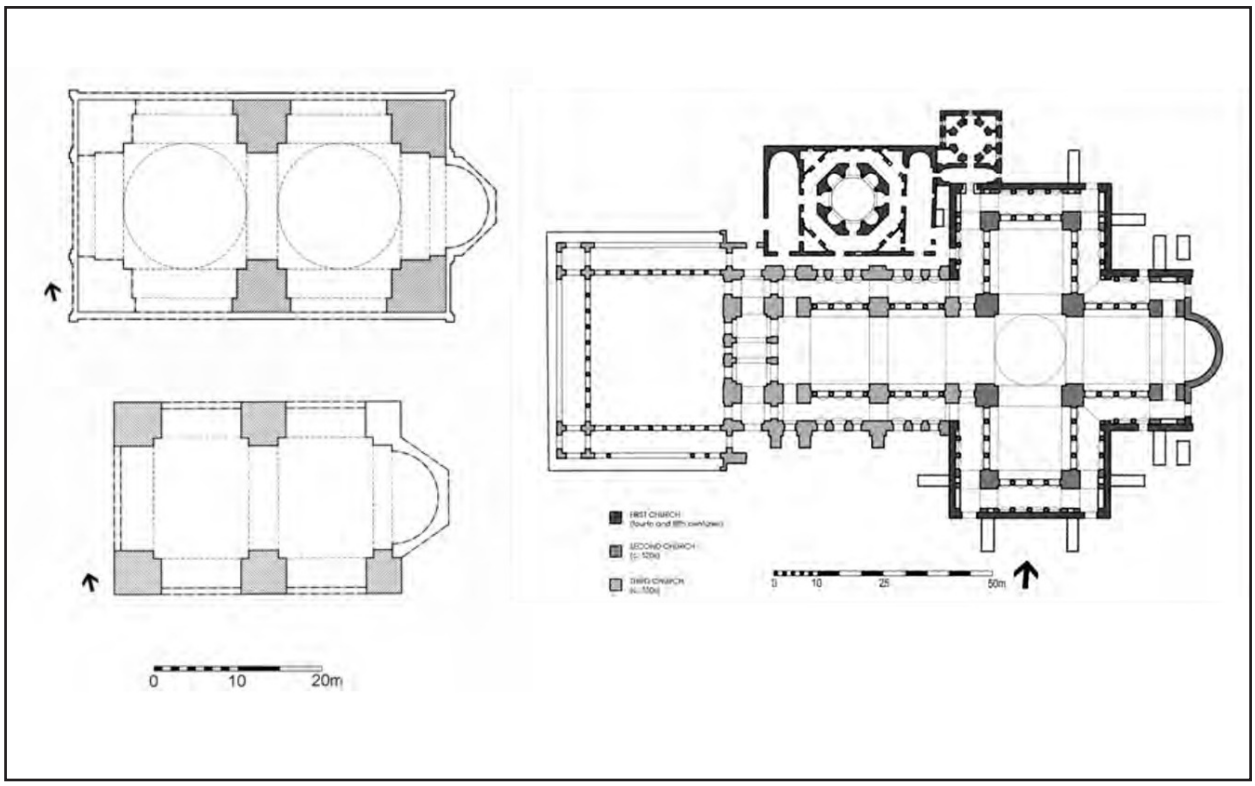

Figure 15

The estimated dome form and plan of the Oikoi building (C. Ardıl, M. Özbek; Inspired by Lancaster, 2015, p. 72-74)