

13^e Rencontres d'Archéologie de l'Institut Français d'Études Anatoliennes

Istanbul, 24-25 septembre 2026, Liszt Institute – Hungarian Cultural Center

Participants, titles and abstracts

Ignasi-Xavier Adiego, Universitat de Barcelona, Spain

The Lycian “diamond-letter”

To date, no satisfactory explanation has been found for the diamond-shaped letter in Lycian. The scarcity of examples, combined with their appearance in diverse contexts that apparently point to contradictory uses, has hindered the identification of a unified phonetic value and etymological explanation. Recent contributions by Diether Schürr (“Zum lykischen Rautenzeichen $\diamond$ ”, *Philia* 3, 2017, 167-171; “Nachtrag zum lykischen Rautenzeichen $\diamond$ ”, *Philia* 5, 2019, 84-86) have not, in my view, reached a definitive solution. This paper intends to revisit the issue and formulate a hypothesis regarding the value and use of the “diamond-letter” that can adequately explain all its occurrences.

Pierre Briant, Collège de France, France

À propos de la Dependenz Theorie de Jürgen Borchhardt: retour sur l'Ethno-Classe Dominante (ECD)

Dans une série d'interventions datées des années 1960-1970, Jürgen Borchhardt, fort de sa pratique d'archéologue à Limyra, a revisité les principaux documents lyciens, et a réinterprété les relations entre l'aristocratie lycienne et les dominants perses, insistant plus particulièrement sur le fait que, selon lui, les relations étaient moins fondées sur une opposition radicale entre des aspirations dominatrices (perses) et un nationalisme local (lycien) que sur une collaboration entre deux classes dominantes, perse (impériale) et lycienne (locale). Il a plus tard étendu son interprétation à Sidon. Dans quelle mesure ce schéma théorique peut ou non nourrir la réalité politique et sociale de ce que j'appelle l'ethno-classe dominante (ECD)?

Fabienne Colas-Rannou, Université Clermont Auvergne / Centre d'Histoire “Espaces et Cultures” – UR 1001, France

Patterns and details, realia and symbols. How can we analyse and interpret references to Achaemenid imagery in Lycia?

The impact of the Achaemenid imagery in Asia Minor, in the western part of the Achaemenid Empire, and more specifically in Lycia, has long been a central focus of research. Several different approaches and methodologies have been proposed. The political and social approach, which uses images to understand the relationship between Achaemenid power and Lycian society (particularly dynasts and elites) occupies an important place in historiography. Recent studies highlight an Eastern Mediterranean horizon that considers both cultural heritage and the economic framework (which affects craftsmanship), opening up new perspectives. Based on the thesis that Lycian imagery is the result of a selective process, this paper will examine the existence of different levels of reference to Achaemenid iconography in Lycia.

Erkan Dündar, Akdeniz Üniversitesi, Antalya, Türkiye, and **Jonathan Kagan**, independent scholar, USA

Patara in the Achaemenid period: new perspectives in light of the Tepecik excavations and recent coin finds

Recent archaeological investigations at Patara, one of Lycia's primary port settlements, have yielded significant new data regarding the city's status and local political structure under Achaemenid rule. Excavations conducted at Tepecik, located north of the city center and east of the ancient harbor, demonstrate that the settlement was fortified by the late 7th century BC at the latest. By ca. 500 BC, the presence of an authority titled *pddēnhr̥mme/i-*, whose exact status remains uncertain but was likely subordinate to the *xñtawate/i-* and functioned on behalf of a dynasty, highlights Patara's role within the Achaemenid administrative network and its relationship with local dynastic structures.

The numismatic record, recently re-examined, complements this framework by emphasizing Patara's function as a dynastic mint. As suggested by the archaeological evidence, the city's emergence as a mint in the 5th century BC reflects its regional importance. The discovery in the excavations of a coin of Kheriga from a hitherto unidentified mint provides critical data for re-evaluating the history of the city during the period of Harpagid ascendancy.

Consistent with the broader Lycian landscape, there is a notable scarcity of archaeological data at Patara for the 5th century BC, particularly between 460–410 BC. During this interval, defining local ceramic production is nearly impossible, while imported goods show a dramatic decline, almost to the point of disappearance. Fortunately, the numismatic evidence for precisely this period has only now been put on a firm chronological footing and may help explain some of the questions raised by the archaeological record. This presentation aims to synthesize this varied evidence to give us a better understanding of Patara during the Dynastic period.

Francesca Gazzano, Università degli Studi di Genova, Italy

Ethnography and empire: Greek literary representations of Lydians and Lycians under Achaemenid rule

The Persian conquest of Asia Minor, precipitated by Croesus of Lydia's aggression, proved a decisive event not only for the Greek communities of the coast but also for the Anatolian peoples compelled to adapt to it. In Herodotus' *Histories*, the processes of resistance, submission, and accommodation among different ethnic groups are articulated in detail; within this broader outline—though centred on the Greek poleis—the contrasting representations of Lydians and Lycians stand out as opposite poles of possibility, ranging from the former's complete subjection, marked by a transformation of their *modus vivendi*, to the latter's self-immolation. Building on this Herodotean account, the Greek literary tradition developed a parallel representation of these two peoples in relation both to Achaemenid authority and to Greek cultural models. This essay aims at exploring the divergent and nearly antithetical evolution of their ethnographic portrayal, highlighting how narratives of submission and autonomy are constructed and deployed across the tradition, and how they reflect the interplay between imperial power, local agency, and Greek interpretive frameworks.

Wouter F.M. Henkelman, École Pratique des Hautes Études, France

Lycians in Parsa: institutional contexts

In the Persepolis Fortification archive, Lycians are one of the most numerous non-Persian groups. Typically deployed as dependent workers but also appearing in other roles, they occur in teams of different sizes all over ancient Parsa, the centre of the Achaemenid empire. The paper gives an overview of their rations, numbers, and places of deployment. In doing so, it tries to better understand their status while working in the imperial heartland. One dossier to be highlighted is that of the Lycians (temporarily) assigned, but not formally transferred, to the royal woman Irdabama.

John Hyland, Christopher Newport University, USA

Dynastic Lycia revisited: Achaemenid contexts and satrapal interactions from Artaphernes to Tissaphernes

Almost three decades have passed since the publication of A.G. Keen's *Dynastic Lycia*, the last monographic survey of the Lycian polities in the age of the Achaemenid empire. The subsequent advances in the field of Achaemenid Studies, above all in the publication and interpretation of documentary evidence from Persepolis, along with progress in the study of Lycian numismatics, epigraphy, and archaeology, call for new synthetic approaches to Lycia in the Achaemenid imperial context. This paper will trace some emerging patterns of interaction and connectivity between Lycian dynasts, Carian and Ionian communities, and the satraps of Sardis from Artaphernes to Tissaphernes.

Koray Konuk, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique / Ausonius, France

Between Lycia, Caria and Lydia: reassessing the enigmatic script of a Kuprlli stater in the light of a new specimen

The silver staters of the Lycian dynast Kuprlli bearing an enigmatic non-Greek legend constitute one of the most puzzling issues of early Lycian numismatics. Since their first publication, the interpretation of the inscription has given rise to considerable debate, particularly concerning the nature of the script employed and its possible linguistic affiliation. Initially identified as Carian, the legend was subsequently reinterpreted as Lycian, while alternative readings have highlighted the difficulties posed by the limited number of known specimens and the unusual forms of several signs.

The recent identification of a third specimen provides an opportunity to reassess this longstanding problem. This paper presents the new coin, discusses its die links and epigraphic features, and compares it with the previously known examples. Particular attention is devoted to the reading of the inscription, the orientation of the legend, and the palaeographic significance of individual characters. The new evidence may allow a more secure assessment of several disputed signs and may shed new light on the relationship between Lycian and other writing traditions in southwestern Anatolia during the Classical period.

The paper also reconsiders the metrological position of the issue. Unlike the majority of contemporary Lycian silver coinage, two of the staters in question appear to have been struck according to the so-called Persic, or Lydian-Persic, weight standard. This metrological peculiarity, combined with the uncertain linguistic character of the inscription, suggests that the issue occupied a distinctive position within the monetary and cultural landscape of southwestern Anatolia. While the precise interpretation of the legend remains open to discussion, the new specimen contributes to our understanding of the coinage and invites a broader reconsideration of interactions between Lycia and its neighbouring regions during the fifth century BC.

Taner Korkut, Akdeniz Üniversitesi, Türkiye

Urbanism and architectural organization in Tlos during the Archaic and Classical periods

In general, the urbanistic development processes of Lycian cities during the Achaemenid Period present various interpretative challenges, as their urban structures cannot be traced continuously. Because remains dating to the Archaic Period have been identified at only a limited number of Lycian sites, discussions of Lycian urbanism generally begin with the Classical Period, during which these cities are characterized by broadly similar patterns of settlement organization. According to this model, a large palatial structure occupies the center of elevated and fortified acropoleis, surrounded by residential quarters associated with the civilian population. Cult areas are generally situated within the fortified settlement enclosed by substantial fortification walls, while the necropoleis are located beyond the defensive circuit. These necropoleis contain rock-cut tombs characteristic of the Lycian region, together with Lycian-type sarcophagi. At first glance, the ancient city of Tlos appears to conform to this general model of urban organization. However, excavations, which had reached their twentieth year by 2026, have yielded highly significant data concerning the Classical Period urban structure of Tlos. Furthermore, unlike other Lycian cities, Tlos appears to have possessed a secondary residential area within the urban center, exhibiting uninterrupted occupation from the Early Chalcolithic Period through the Archaic Period. Stratigraphic sondage excavations conducted in this area since 2009 have yielded architectural remains and small finds from various settlement layers, providing significant evidence for the long-term continuity of occupation. Within the scope of this presentation, the urbanistic development of the city will be evaluated in light of the data obtained from excavations carried out at Tlos over the last twenty years, and the settlement development of Tlos during the Archaic and Classical Periods will also be discussed.

Helmut Lotz, Universität Wien, Austria

From Lycian coins to history

During the Achaemenid period, the political landscape of Lycia was highly fragmented. Local rulers resided in fortified settlements on hilltops or cliffs and passed on their reign in the family over generations. These dynasts, as they are commonly called, continuously fought each other for priority and – eventually – hegemony over the whole of Lycia. Between the late 6th and the mid-4th centuries Lycian dynasts issued large quantities of silver coins, primarily to pay mercenaries. In my paper, I will explore these coins as a historical source. Coin inscriptions preserve the personal names of more than 50 dynasts and the toponyms of at least 15 mints. Since a dynast could only use mints within his own dominion, the coins shed light on the political topography of the region. Recent numismatic research including analysis of coin hoards and die studies has established a more accurate chronological framework and allows for a better understanding of how the dynastic system worked.

James D. Moore, Ohio State University, USA

The Achaemenid imperial program for Lycia

The database of the Digital Editions of Aramaic and Phoenician Sources (DEAPS.osu.edu) includes nearly all sources from the Achaemenid period. This paper surveys the Achaemenid-period sources from Asia Minor and contextualizes them within the larger Persian imperial agenda. In particular, the Lycian Xanthos Inscription is discussed in light of recent research on the Achaemenid structuring of its provincial territories into a complex landholding system built on taxation. The paper demonstrates how the political relationship of Lycia (and Caria) with the empire evolved from a vassal model into a provincial model over the course of Achaemenid rule.

Rostyslav Oreshko, Centre Antiquité Classique et Tardive – UMR 8167, France

Winged, uberous, and fateful. Luwian light on the birdlike creatures of the Harpy Monument

The half-woman, half-bird creatures carrying small human figures found on two sides of the Harpy Monument are among the most enigmatic figures of the Lycian visual universe. Initially dubbed 'harpies', and later commonly called 'sirens', they are probably neither. While the former are rapacious and sinister creatures connected with death and the Erinyes, the latter are archetypal seductresses associated primarily with sweet singing, lyric music and sea. In contrast, the winged creatures of the Harpy Monument are represented as stately and benevolent, holding the little humans with almost motherly tenderness. Although the visual program of this monument, commonly dated to the late Archaic period (ca. 480-470 BCE), makes an impression to be thoroughly Greek in style, the birdlike creatures represent apparently a non-Greek conceptual element in it – most probably local Anatolian, given that no counterparts of the figures are found elsewhere. In my contribution I will argue that the same winged creatures are found in a Luwian text. Both the context of the attestation, and two specific epithets associated with them imply that we are likely dealing with Fate Goddesses. Beside discussing relevant Luwian and Hittite textual evidence and its significance for the Harpy Monument, I will pay special attention to the semantics of the important Lycian concept of *tese-*, commonly interpreted as 'oath, vow', and of two related forms, *tesēnti* (*tesenti*) and *Tesm̃mi*.

Florian Réveilhac, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique / HiSoMA, France

Iranian names in the Greek inscriptions of Lycia

The settlement of populations of Iranian origin in Lycia is attested by the presence of Iranian anthroponyms in epigraphic sources. In a recent study (“Les anthroponymes iraniens dans la documentation lycienne : une réévaluation”, in R. Oreshko & F. Réveilhac [eds.], *Déplacements, migrations et contacts culturels en Méditerranée orientale au miroir de l’anthroponymie*, Genève, forthcoming), I highlighted several names of Iranian origin within the corpus of Lycian-language inscriptions, revising upwards their proportion compared to previous estimates. Here, I propose to extend this investigation to the Greek inscriptions of the region, in order to identify individuals bearing Iranian names. Given the tendency of anthroponyms to be transmitted within families, this analysis will help assess their significance in anthroponymy from Lycia during the Classical and Hellenistic periods. By comparing these data with those from Lycian sources, we will gain new insights into the cultural integration of Iranian families who settled in Lycia during the Achaemenid era.

David Sasseville, École Pratique des Hautes Études, France

The politics of Pajawa: a new edition of TL 40

The impressive sarcophagus of Pajawa from Xanthos is renowned for its architectural features and its peculiar inscription. Evidence suggests that this enigmatic Lycian figure had a unique connection with the Persian satrap Autophradates. More recently, the name of the Persian general Arttuñpara has been convincingly restored in TL 40c, thus making the inscription significantly more political in nature for the period in question. Nevertheless, a translation of the inscription that can be considered coherent is not yet available. This paper offers a new edition of the inscription, accompanied by a philological commentary, a historical interpretation of the monument, and a more precise dating.

Martin Seyer, Austrian Archaeological Institute of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Austria

The newly discovered sanctuary of Zeus at Limyra

During the 2025 campaign, the Austrian Archaeological Institute's excavation in Limyra succeeded in identifying a monumental cult area dedicated to Zeus. The building complex was consecrated as an extra-urban sanctuary by Pericles, who ruled Lycia as a petty king from around 380-360 BC. So far, parts of the foundations of the pronaos, the crepis, and the enclosure wall of the temenos have been uncovered, along with the foundations of the monumental propylon and several bases or foundations for votive offerings. A fragment of the altar names not only Zeus Hypatos as the recipient of the dedication, but also Pericles as its donor, which allows the site to be dated almost exactly to the decade. Another inscription provides information about additional deities worshipped in this sanctuary, while an extensive epigram on a pillar fragment describes in detail the “cult management” by the Neokoros in the Hellenistic period. Initial investigations of this building already indicate that Pericles consistently continued his building policy, which was already evident in his tomb on the acropolis of Limyra, discovered in 1966, with clear similarities to buildings on the Athenian Acropolis, above all the Erechtheion. The dedication of the temple to Zeus Hypatos and the form of the two-line dedication inscription can also be interpreted in this sense.

The lecture will present the initial scientific findings on this temple discovery in Limyra, which is undoubtedly one of the most significant discoveries of Austrian archaeology in Turkey in recent decades.

Margaux Spruyt, Université Clermont Auvergne, France

The iconography of the lion: from Persepolis to Xanthos and back

This paper focuses on Lycian iconography of the lion in order to distinguish its particularities and proper characteristics whilst taking into account Achaemenid, Assyrian and Greek influences. Following a comparative approach, this study intends to examine several occurrences of lions primarily drawn from Lycian and Achaemenid iconographic contexts. The various depictions of the lion will thus be examined from multiple angles, both in terms of the transmission of iconographic patterns and schemes, and through the anatomical, physiological and morphological rendering of the animal itself. Consequently, this study will address stylistic and iconological aspects as well as questions specific to the animal studies, considered through the lens of biological and veterinary sciences. The main purpose is therefore to provide a better understanding of the image of the lion conceived, defined and created by the Lycians.

Christopher Tuplin, University of Liverpool, UK

Symmachus of Pellana's poem for the dynast Erbbina

Ten years after its initial publication, Symmachus' poem for Erbbina/Arbinas was subjected to a *lecture iranisante* by Clarisse Herrenschmidt, and her article (in *REA* 1985) has regularly been mentioned in scholarly literature in the subsequent four decades. Sometimes references to it are relatively brief, raise no substantive issues (and may not even specifically mention Symmachus' poem), and serve simply to underpin a proposition of one sort or another about the nature of Achaemenid overlordship in Lycia or the iranisation of Lycian culture. On other occasions, the material dealt with by Herrenschmidt has received more specific attention – and attracted a degree of scepticism: right from the outset, indeed, there were those who felt that Symmachus' poem was overwhelmingly (and self-consciously) a Greek cultural artefact, and Ivana Savalli's article in *Antiquité Classique* 1988 soon became a point of reference for that perspective. The danger of a simple Iranian/Greek dichotomy has naturally been noted, with talk of the need for synthesis or subtlety in dealing with the situation. That is surely prudent, and yet we can still encounter a predominantly Greek-focused perspective, even Brett Evans's thought-provoking article in *Classical Quarterly* 2021. In this paper I wish to revisit Symmachus' poem and its interpreters, review what the latter have said about the former, and seek the right way to read the poem in the light of our current understanding of the culturo-political dynamics of Achaemenid Lycia and Anatolia.

Şafak M. Türkoğlu, Demre Müzesi, and **Recai Tekoğlu**, Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi, İzmir, Türkiye

A sarcophagus with Lycian inscription from Patara

A sarcophagus with a Lycian inscription from Patara will be the main topic of the present discussion. Although Patara was an important port city in the region, it did not provide as many Lycian inscriptions as other major Lycian cities in the classical period. Previously some Lycian fragmentary inscriptions on various coins and ceramic materials had been unearthed through excavations. The inscription which will be presented here has already been known in the Lycian epigraphy and it is registered Nr. 352 in the corpus of the Lycian inscriptions, but its full edition has not been published yet. In the presentation its analysis and features will be discussed both in epigraphic and archaeological context.

Pietro Vannicelli, Sapienza Università di Roma, Italy, and **Marco Ferrari**, Sapienza Università di Roma, Italy

Early traditions of the Persian conquest of Lycia: Herodotus and the elites of Achaemenid Xanthos

In his seminal essay, *Fra ellenismo e iranismo* (Bologna 1983), David Asheri identified Achaemenid Lycia as part of an «intermediate band» between the coast and inland regions of Anatolia, where processes of cultural interaction among Greek, Iranian, and Anatolian populations were particularly intense. Herodotus' *Histories* indeed provide several indications of the emergence of new local elites that appropriated Iranian cultural elements in order to further legitimize their position within the framework of Persian imperial administration. The formation of these elites can be traced back to the very earliest stages of the Achaemenid conquest, following the capture of Xanthos by the general Harpagus on behalf of Cyrus the Great. Herodotus' brief yet remarkably dense account of this event in Book 1 of the *Histories* appears to preserve traces of a tradition shaped by the elites of Xanthos, aimed at rewriting the history of the Persian conquest first in terms of heroic resistance and subsequently as the plain acceptance of the new imperial authority. Further evidence for a positive local reinterpretation of the Persian conquest may be found in the genealogy of the «Harpagid» family of Xanthos, preserved in the Greek epigram of the famous Inscribed Pillar in the acropolis of Xanthos (CEG 177). This paper analyses Herodotus' narrative and the Inscribed Pillar as complementary testimonies that shed light on the earliest phases of Achaemenid rule in Lycia and on the emergence of new pro-Persian elites. Both traditions can be understood as the direct outcome of a process through which local elites, after an initial phase of resistance to the Persian advance, sought to legitimize their position within the new structures of Achaemenid power.