

The Place of the Achaemenid Persian Period in Archaeological Research in Cilicia and Hatay (Turkey)

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Introduction and Summary

This paper evaluates the place of the Achaemenid Persian period within archaeological research carried out in Cilicia and Hatay (Turkey). The Persian period has never been the initial focus of research projects in this region, I conclude, but at certain sites, the remains from this period have proved to be of considerable importance.

My own interest in this subject stems from my participation in the excavations at Kinet Höyük (Dört Yol, Hatay). Levels excavated under my supervision have included remains dating to 550-300 B.C.

Geographical region examined

This paper will explore results from archaeological investigations in the Turkish provinces of Antalya (east), İçel and Adana (these together = Cilicia, “Rough”, or “Tracheia” or “Aspera”, in the mountainous west, and “Smooth”, or “Pedias” or “Campestris”, in the mostly alluvial plains of the east), and of Hatay, the provinces that line the northeast Mediterranean corner (see *fig. 1*: Map). Kinet Höyük

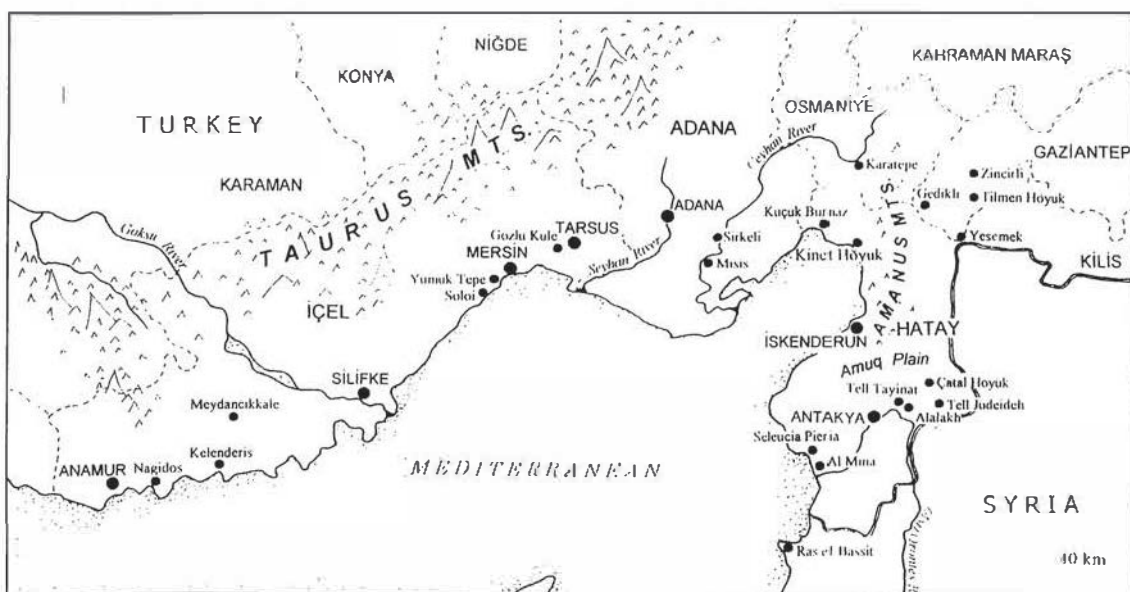


Fig. 1—Map: Archaeological sites in Cilicia and Hatay (Turkey) [prepared by Neslihan Yılmaz, Ben Claasz Coockson, Jacques Morin].

is located in the center of this region geographically at the southeast corner of Smooth Cilicia, but in modern administrative divisions, in the northwest corner of Hatay province. A limit is drawn at the Turkish-Syrian border. This is an artificial border, for clearly problems concerning Cilicia and Hatay need to be examined in a larger context. The next larger circle of context would include Syria and Cyprus, as well as south-east Turkey. For Syria in the Achaemenid Persian period, see Elayi 2000 (with further references) and the journal *Transeuphratène*. For Cyprus in the Persian period, see Buitron-Oliver and Herscher 1997 and accompanying papers in *BASOR* 308.

The area should be promising for information about trade, economy, and rural and urban life in the period 550-300 B.C. (as indeed for all periods). It includes two mountain chains (Taurus and Amanus), sources of timber and metals; a long coastline which in its eastern sector gives quick access to Upper Mesopotamia (the Fertile Crescent); a rich agricultural area (Smooth Cilicia, today's Çukurova plain) with a city prominent in written sources (Tarsus); and a smaller but also fertile plain (the Amuq, or, in Turkish, Amik) dominated in the Bronze Age by important cities and in Hellenistic and Roman imperial times by the great city of Antioch. In addition, the Battle of Issos took place in this region—a distinction, although of little importance for the archaeological record.

Archaeological evidence for the Achaemenid period in this region: aims of this paper

I aim to evaluate the place of the Persian period in the larger context of archaeological research in the region, in all periods.¹ Evidence from excavations and surveys is my interest. I will highlight the research goals of excavators, and then, if a project has indeed revealed pertinent evidence, I will summarize findings from the Achaemenid period, assess the problems that they have generated, and characterize the studies undertaken in order to solve them. I will rarely consider textual evidence, and will have little to say about coins (because they rarely come from excavated contexts).²

My starting hypothesis was that no archaeological project in this region began with the express aim of illuminating the Achaemenid period. Instead, I believed, all projects were directed toward other periods and problems. Remains of the Achaemenid period were thus by-products of archaeological research. My conclusion is that this hypothesis is indeed true—but that the by-products have proved in some cases to be fascinating and valuable.

Archaeological projects begun before World War II

No formal excavations were conducted in this region either before the First World War, during the Ottoman Empire, or after the war until the 1930s³ (for early travellers and scholars, see Dussaud 1927: iii-xviii, 413-447; Braidwood 1937: 2-3; Downey 1961).

After World War I, most (but not all) of today's Hatay province was controlled by France, administered as the Sanjak of Alexandretta, until ceded to the Turkish Republic in 1939. The remainder of our region was part of the Turkish Republic, right from its start in 1923.

¹ For a broader perspective on the history of archaeological research in Turkey, see C. Gates 1996. For comments on the history of archaeological research in Cilicia, but with a focus on the pre-Persian Iron Age, see Laflin 2001a and 2001b.

² For a historical perspective, see Desideri, Jasink 1996: 177-202; Casabonne 1998 (with a revised version: Casabonne 2004).

³ Zincirli, Salkıngözü, Iron Age sites excavated in the late Ottoman period, lie nearby, east of Cilicia, north of Hatay, see North-East Cilicia and north Hatay, below.

During the 1930s, five major archaeological projects were undertaken, three in the Sanjak of Alexandretta, and two in (Turkish) Cilicia. The projects in the Sanjak focused on Antioch, the Amuq Plain, and Al-Mina together with, principally, Archana (Alalakh). The Cilician projects explored occupation mounds in Tarsus (Gözü Kule) and Mersin (Yumuk Tepe).

Antioch

Exploration of Hellenistic-Roman Antioch was the first of the archaeological expeditions to take to the field in today's Hatay province. The sponsoring institution was Princeton University, perennially strong in late antique—medieval studies, and with an established scholarly interest in the region, thanks to the important study of Early Christian churches in northwest Syria undertaken before World War I (1904-1905, 1909) by one of its distinguished professors, Howard Crosby Butler (died in 1922). Co-sponsors were the Louvre and the Musées Nationaux de France, the Baltimore Art Museum, and the Worcester Art Museum, with the Fogg Art Museum and Dumbarton Oaks joining later (C.R. Morey, in Elderkin 1934: vii; Kondoleon 2000: 5-8).

Excavations were conducted annually from 1932 to 1939, without resumption after World War II. The aim was to reveal the city of Antioch, one of the four great cities of the Roman Empire, from Hellenistic to medieval times. This goal was believed possible because antique Antioch, unlike the other three great cities (Rome, Constantinople/Istanbul, and Alexandria), was, in the 1930s, overlain by only a small city, not a metropolis (C.R. Morey, in Elderkin 1934: viii; W.A. Campbell, in Stillwell 1938: vi). Excavations were conducted not only within the ancient city itself, but also in its port town, Seleucia Pieria; in a wealthy suburb, Daphne; and in miscellaneous places (Elderkin 1934; Stillwell 1938, 1941; F. Waagé 1948; D. Waagé 1952; Lassus 1972; Kondoleon 2000).

It quickly became apparent that, thanks to the Orontes River, extremely deep silt deposits overlaid the ancient city. Exposing the late antique city was not going to be easy, even with the unnuanced approach to clearing buildings that was characteristic of archaeological excavations of the time. Eventually, after the villas of Daphne began yielding one fine mosaic after another, the excavators (with the blessing of their museum sponsors) made a virtue of necessity and, giving up on the vast deep soundings, concentrated on the mosaics (Lassus 1983: 253).

In all this work, the Achaemenid Persians—indeed any pre-Hellenistic cultures—were neither sought nor encountered.

Amuq Plain

From 1933-1938, the "Syrian Expedition" of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago carried out its exploration of the Amuq Plain, to the north and east of Antakya. The aim of this expedition was to find monumental remains and written records of Iron Age "Syro-Hittite" kingdoms (Breasted 1933: 87-89, 301-309; McEwan 1937: 8; Yener *et al.* 2000: 163-165). The Persians were not a concern for this project. After all, the Oriental Institute had just formed its own Persian Expedition, with a concession to excavate at Persepolis (Breasted 1933: 89-91, 310-336).

The Amuq project concentrated excavations at three sites: Chatal (Çatal) Hüyük, Tell Tainat (Ta'ynat, Tayinat), and Tell al-Judaidah (Judeideh). The first yielded much pottery and other artifacts but nothing of the desired monumentality. The second site, Tell Tainat, did give the monumental architecture and large-scale sculpture of the earlier Iron Age that the expedition was hoping for (McEwan 1937). The third and last, Tell Judeideh, provided evidence for a complete ceramic sequence of the region, at first called periods XIV-I (Braidwood 1937: 6-7; McEwan 1937: 10), later relabeled, for unspecified reasons, as Phases A-V (this terminology first appeared in Krogman 1949: table I).

In the Amuq Project terminology, the Achaemenid Persian period was not given its own distinct slot—surprising, considering the text-based orientation of traditional archaeology in the Near East and eastern Mediterranean—but fell at the end of the long Phase O (formerly period IV), "Syro-

Hittite, ca. 1000-500 B.C.” and in Phase P (formerly period IIIb), “Syro-Hellenic, ca. 500-300 B.C.” (McEwan 1937: 10; Haines 1971: 1-2).

In spring, 1936, as part of the larger project, Robert Braidwood conducted a three-week surface survey of the plain. He was looking specifically for pre-classical mounds (Braidwood 1937: 1-2). Braidwood and his wife, Linda Braidwood, would later publish comprehensively the evidence for the earliest Amuq phases, A-J, ca. 5500-2000 B.C. (Braidwood, Braidwood 1960; now ca. 6000-2000 B.C., *in Yener et al.* 2000: 165). Architecture of later phases K-S was eventually published by Richard Haines (1971). The pottery of phases K-O was presented only in a Ph.D. dissertation of limited distribution (Swift 1958), but never in a formal publication.

Pottery and other finds from Phases P-V have never been published. Any archaeological identity for the Persian period (Phase P) thus rests on architectural remains presented by Haines. The picture is not particularly striking. If we stick to Phase P, latest Phase O being impossible to distinguish from earlier Phase O, we learn the following. Chatal Hüyük yielded no architectural remains from Phase P (Haines 1971: 3-25). At Tell Tayinat, modest remains of a “fifth building period” dated to the sixth century B.C. were uncovered on the top of the mound: Room G of building I, a fragmentary baked-bricked paving on Platform XV, and Building X, surviving only in its lower courses, made of dressed limestone blocks (Haines 1971: 61, 66).

At the third major site, Tell Judeideh, architectural remains of Phases P, Q (= Hellenistic), and R (= Roman) were discovered in certain places in the four highest levels on the mound (Haines 1971: 26, 31, 34-36; site plan pl. 53; plans and photos in pl. 46A, 50B, 54A, 60, 63C, 65C). In one area, squares D-F 7-10, deposits were 1.5 m deep, but the remains of foundations of naturally shaped stones were extremely fragmentary (Haines 1971: 31). In all such find spots, it is not clear which structures can be assigned to Phase P, which to Phases Q and R. In essence, they are lumped together, the chronological significance of the stratigraphical differences not being explored. Publication of the relevant pottery and other finds might, of course, help develop a clearer picture of the chronology of these architectural remains.

Amuq Plain: the Oriental Institute returns

In 1995, after a hiatus of 57 years, the Oriental Institute began a new series of explorations in the Amuq Plain (Yener *et al.* 1996, 2000). These projects include both surface survey and excavations at selected sites. If, because of focus on the Iron Age and earlier, the OI projects of the 1930s shed virtually no light at all on the Persian and later periods in the Amuq, hope is now higher for a more equitable treatment of all periods encountered. Although the interests of Ashlan Yener, the guiding spirit of the projects, are centered on the Chalcolithic and Bronze Ages, with a special emphasis on metallurgy, the projects of her colleagues are already chronologically much more wide-ranging, and have received her blessing and support. Since the ethos of archaeological research has developed over the decades to include responsibility for recording finds of all periods, we can expect that information about the Persian period will be forthcoming. The surface surveys are the most promising in this regard (I know of no excavations planned at sites with the Persian period attested, with the exception of Tell Tayinat).

Al-Mina, Sabouni (Sabouniyeh), and Alalakh

Al-Mina, Sabouni, and Alalakh are three of the sites in the Hatay explored by Leonard Woolley in the 1930s and 1940s. Alalakh, a major Bronze Age site, will be mentioned only in passing; Sabouni, although of interest for this paper, has only been briefly surveyed. Focus here will be on Al-Mina.

Of the five projects begun in the 1930s, only Al-Mina has significant remains from the Persian period. This site is important, with bearing on the economy and the ethnic identities in the region, and deserves our closer attention. Publication of these levels has been partial, and the findings have been subjected to a great variety of interpretations.

Al Mina: History of excavations; summary of the findings

Al-Mina is a low mound located at the mouth of the Orontes River, along the Mediterranean coast. Its ancient name is unknown. Possibilities include Ab-ta-[a] (Zadok 1996, reference from Fantalkin 2001: 121; *contra*: Boardman 2002: 328), Kašpuna (Kuhrt 2002: 18, citing S. Parpola), and Poseideion, a town named in ancient itineraries. This last was Woolley's original suggestion (Woolley 1938: 3, 28-30, 1959: 159-160). Poseideion is now generally believed, however, to be the more southerly site of Ras el-Bassit, not Al-Mina (references in Waldbaum 1997: 4).

Al-Mina was excavated by Leonard Woolley in 1936-1937, with much of the work done in a three-month season in 1936 with 180 workers—a speed and scale unthinkable today (Woolley 1937, 1938a, b; Perreault 1993: 63). The site was surveyed again in 1999 by H. Pamir and S. Nishiyama for the Orontes Delta Archaeological Project (ODAP) of Mustafa Kemal University (Antakya) and the University of Chicago (Pamir, Nishiyama 2000: 294-302). Woolley's excavation was part of a larger campaign in the years 1936-1949 (excluding the war years) to search for direct connections during the Bronze Age between the Aegean world, notably the Minoans, and the Near East (Woolley 1937: 1, 1959: 4). The region attracted Woolley because of the proximity of the Mediterranean to upper Mesopotamia. Because the Orontes River valley offered the easiest access from the seacoast to the interior plain, he selected sites for excavation that lay on this route (1938a: 1-5). As a complement to coastal Al-Mina, he excavated at Tell Atchana (Alalakh), a mound that lies just over the mountains from the seacoast, where the river valley opens up into the Amuq Plain (for Alalakh: Woolley 1955, 1959).

Alalakh rewarded Woolley's Bronze Age interests, but Al-Mina did not. He discovered remains from Al-Mina that date from the 8th c. B.C. (some have said late 9th c. B.C.: Taylor 1959: 91; Fantalkin 2001: 121) to the late 4th c. B.C., with some late Roman-early Byzantine material and a substantial medieval occupation (9th-13th centuries). The 1999 ODAP survey found Hellenistic and Roman pottery as well (Pamir, Nishiyama 2002: 300-301, 312). Woolley, clearly disappointed, maintained that earlier levels had been washed away by the Orontes when flowing in a different place (1938: 6-8). Late Bronze Age remains noted on the nearby hill of Sabouni demonstrated to his satisfaction the firm LBA presence here at the river's mouth (Woolley 1938: 6-8, 1948, 1959: 4, 153-154). For Sabouni, yes, but for Al-Mina—wishful thinking on Woolley's part, for LBA occupation is completely unproven.

Woolley's excavation report (1938a, b) established the stratigraphy and chronology of the site, ten architectural levels (including the medieval), and presented the architecture and, in summary fashion, the finds—with the important exception of the pottery. The publication of the pottery was left to others, but the duty was never satisfactorily completed. Beazley wrote up the Attic red-figure (1939), but without any mention of find spots; his article was an "exercise in connoisseurship" (Waldbaum 1997: 13, n. 2), essentially useless for understanding the role of this pottery in Persian period Al-Mina. The following year Robertson published a selection of early Greek pottery (1940), from levels 9-5 only. Of the non-Greek pottery, the Cypriot and Syrian examples had to wait until 1959 before they appeared in public view (Taylor). Like Robertson's report, Taylor's covered only early levels: 10-5. Cypriot pottery, also that from Levels 10-5, would later be the focus of Einar Gjerstad (1974); he included, for reasons not clear to me, comments on the Attic black-figure and red-figure of Level 4, a review of Beazley's 1939 findings.

In none of these reports were finds from the nearby site of Sabouni presented in any detail. In 1999, Sabouni (Sabouniyeh) was freshly surveyed by ODAP, and has thus been brought back into the scientific eye (Pamir, Nishiyama 2002: 302-311). Survey finds confirm a long occupation from MBA to the Islamic period.

At Woolley's death in 1960, only a very fragmentary picture of the ceramic finds at Al-Mina was available. Nonetheless, the site was entering the archaeological discourse in a major way. The inde-

fatigable John Boardman had already identified Al-Mina as providing key evidence for early Greek contacts with the Near East and begun his now numerous publications on the site⁴ (see, most recently, 1999a for the broad perspective; 1999b, 2002). Many others have written on Al-Mina, especially on the early levels, 10-5 (Descodres 2002; for a recent bibliography, see Lehmann 1996: 172-174). In many of these articles, the lack of a comprehensive ceramic report has been keenly felt. Indeed, much controversy has surrounded exactly what was found at Al-Mina, and the frustration of arguing from incomplete evidence lingers on. But preparing an authoritative report is made all the more difficult because the finds were distributed among several sponsoring institutions, in the UK, Australia, and the US, as well as the site's home base, the Antakya Museum. The practicalities of collecting this data are daunting.

The Persian period at Al-Mina: Levels 4, 3, and 2

The Persian period at Al-Mina is represented by three architectural levels, 4-2 (from earlier to later). Woolley's dates for them, based on finds of coins and Attic pottery, are: Level 4, ca. 520-430 B.C.; Level 3, ca. 430-375 B.C.; and Level 2, ca. 375-300 B.C. (1938: 20, 1959: 163-164, 174; for a later dating of the start of Level 4, see Gill 1988: 180). A gap in finds occurs below Level 4. The date of the end of the earlier Level 5, and hence the length of the gap in occupation, is controversial. Woolley proposed that Level 5 ended in 550 B.C.; others, all ceramic specialists, have dated that end earlier, to ca. 600 B.C. or early 6th c. B.C. (Robertson 1940: 21; Taylor 1959: 92; Perreault 1986: 146). Since this gap falls in the early Achaemenid Empire, its length and causes are of interest to us. Because early Attic black-figure pottery datable from his 30-year gap, was found at Sabouni, Woolley believed Al-Mina was in use during that time (1938: 21). The relevant material from Al-Mina, later Level 5, was swept away, he proposed, by the builders of architectural Level 4 when they prepared the site for new construction. This explanation would be more persuasive if the architecture of Level 4 repeated that of Level 5, but it does not (Woolley 1959: 163); the degree of change between the two levels suits an abandonment of the site for some 30 or even 80 years. A gap in occupation of Al-Mina, assuming that it did occur, might well indicate some important shift in the commercial relations between the Aegean and northern Syria, part of the larger world of Babylonian and then Persian concerns with the Mediterranean region. A local decline is also possible, perhaps the result of Nabonidus's deportation of 2,850 captives from Cilicia (Vanderhoof 1999: ch. 1, n. 6).

The character of the three Persian levels is similar. Level 4 sets the model, and Levels 3 and 2 are successive rebuildings of it (Woolley 1938: 133-150). The overall town plan is regular, with streets crossing at right angles. The architecture consists of large buildings, similar but not identical in plan, that Woolley identified as warehouses. There are no structures that can be characterized as civic or religious buildings, or even private houses.⁵ These warehouses are rectangular in plan, with rooms arranged on three sides around a central court that opens directly onto the street (= the fourth side) (Woolley 1959: plan on 156, fig. 27a; reconstruction on 157, fig. 17b—but evidence for an upper floor was not attested during the excavations, as Waldbaum has noted; Waldbaum 1997: 3). This architectural plan has not been found elsewhere in the Achaemenid Empire, although it has loose correspondences with storage buildings at Minet el-Beida, and buildings with the court/fourth side partially closed that are attested in the southern Levant (Nunn 2000: 517-518).

⁴ Boardman has also written extensively about Greek-Persian relations. For a bibliography of his writings, 1952-1999, see Tseiskhadze, Prag, Snodgrass 2000: 403-410.

⁵ An interpretation of these buildings as private houses, not warehouses, has been suggested by F. Praemer although, as of 1993 at least, not yet published (Perreault 1993: 65, n. 28).

Certain standard construction techniques were used in these levels, as indeed in earlier times: foundations of naturally shaped stones, with mudbrick superstructures. The mudbrick has been poorly preserved. No roofing tiles were found, so roofs must have been flat, constructed of mud clay on a base of poles, branches, and reed matting (Woolley 1938: 10-11, 1959: 155).

The functions of the warehouse rooms, determined by their contents, are best attested in Level 3. Because this level was destroyed by a fire, ca. 375 B.C., a rich harvest of objects was preserved *in situ*. Each room was typically devoted to the storage of one particular type of object. For example, oil or wine jars filled one room, locally produced lekythoi another, and so on (Woolley 1938: 11-12, 24-26, pl. IV, 2). Such finds have been interpreted as the stock of merchants, and thus show the commercial function of the buildings (1938: 13).

A few buildings of Levels 3 and 2 (but not 4) have tombs beneath the floors, stone sarcophagi or stone-lined cists, a burial practice seen in much earlier Ugaritian houses, for example (1938: 155-157). Thus, these buildings may have been residences, on the unstated assumption that a person would not be buried beneath a warehouse. In general, though, Woolley believed that most people lived elsewhere, at Sabouni, a site located in a higher, more healthy spot than the marshy land at the river's mouth (1938: 13).

Woolley's view of the essentially commercial function of Al-Mina Levels 4-2 has not been contested (but see my footnote 5). We might wish to know more about the trade network in which it played a part, however, and one result of future excavations and surveys will surely be to amplify the role of this region in the Persian and Mediterranean economy.

What has been contested is Woolley's view that Al-Mina was a Greek town. « These merchants must have been Greeks », he wrote. « At Al-Mina, where the foreign trade was exclusively with Greece, the handling of the trade can scarcely have been done by others than Greeks or Levantines of Greek origin » (1938: 15-16). The indicators seemed clear. Although certain non-Greek items, such as Egyptian glass amulets and Syrian/Mesopotamian weights, demonstrated the international nature of the trade (1938: 157-168), the key objects were Greek. The imported pottery during the Persian period was Attic; local pottery imitated Attic shapes. Of the coinage found, Attic silver tetradrachms made up the large denominations, used for the large-scale purchases, whereas only coins of small denominations, for daily life transactions, came from regional mints (Robinson 1937; Woolley 1959: 166). Moreover, by publishing his reports in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, by assigning the Greek pottery as the subjects of the first separate reports by specialists, and by devoting space to arguing for the identity of Al-Mina as the ancient town known as Poseideion, Woolley had fully conditioned his readers to accept this conclusion (see Waldbaum 1997: 2-4).

This view is now challenged. The interpretation of Al-Mina as a Phoenician establishment is widespread. Taylor was the first to publicize the Levantine (Cypriot and Syrian) aspects of the site (1959). For A.J. Graham (1986), nothing in the material or literary record proved conclusively that the town was Greek; Perreault agrees, stressing the Levantine or Phoenician features of the early settlement (Perreault 1993: 60-68). Nonetheless, scholars such as Boardman and Kearsley continue to favor the view that the site was founded and inhabited by Greeks (Kearsley 1999; Boardman 2002); for them, the high percentage of Greek pottery from the early levels leaves no doubt.

In this debate, one needs to distinguish carefully between different levels. The ethnic affiliations of the earliest residents of Al-Mina might have been quite different from those of later centuries. A town founded by Greeks could very well have become, eventually, a Levantine center. Indeed, key for the interpretation of the Persian period levels was the publication by Bron and Lemaire of the inscriptions, graffiti scratched on sherds (1983). Called "Greek" by Woolley (1938: 15), the inscriptions are instead almost entirely Semitic, most being Phoenician, some Aramaic. The letter forms give a date range of late 5th-4th centuries B.C. A more restricted dating of late 5th-early 4th was suggested by the black glaze sherds on which the inscriptions were incised; this would correspond with Level 3 (Bron, Lemaire 1983: 677-678).

This important publication made credible the interpretation of Al-Mina during the Persian period as a Phoenician center. Although Boardman recently labeled Levels 4-2 as the “Classical” levels, not the Persian (1999b: 139), we can no longer think of this as a “Classical Greek” settlement. The case for Levels 4-2 as Phoenician has been best articulated by Josette Elayi (1987, 1992). Elayi, focusing exclusively, unlike Graham, on the Persian period, claims that the excavated finds do not simply cast doubt on the Greekness of the town, but in fact clearly indicate its Phoenician character. Only one of the warehouses of Level 3, Building H, had exclusively Greek items; the others had local products only, or a mix (Elayi 1987: 257, 1992: 317). The Attic pottery imports need not have been handled exclusively by Athenians; Phoenicians traded it, too (1987: 256, 1992: 317). Likewise for the Attic silver tetradrachms; they were common currency throughout the eastern Mediterranean, used by all ethnic groups, like the dollar today (1987: 256-257, 1992: 317; Kroll 2001, for contemporary Egypt). Most telling for Elayi are the fractional coins. A large percentage came from Arados, the nearest large Phoenician city. Whatever the ethnic diversity of the population at Al-Mina (see Waldbaum 1997), or the mixed Greek and Phoenician components of trade in Syria (Lehmann 1998: 32), these fractional coins indicate clearly that Al-Mina was a political dependency of Arados (Elayi 1987: 261-263, 1992: 310).

Elayi avows that her case is strongest for Level 3, from which come the coins, the inscriptions, and the burials under the floors that recall Late Bronze Age Ugaritic practices. For the previous and subsequent levels, the distinctive features are not so clear. Level 4 has some Phoenician finds. Level 2, not so well preserved, she finds difficult to interpret. Accordingly, she proposes only a significant increase in the Phoenician presence in the town and the region in the later 5th c. (1987: 266). Elayi may well be correct, but one would feel more secure in evaluating her interpretation (and in comparing and contrasting Level 3 with adjacent Levels 4 and 2) if all available finds (pottery included) were properly published, with illustrations (for the currently established ceramic corpus for Levels 4-2, see Lehmann 1996: 312-315, with references to his catalogue of shapes 358-512).

Gözlü Kule (Tarsus)

As known from historical sources, Tarsus was the important regional center during the Achaemenid Persian period. The potential for a rich reflection in the archaeological record is thus high. However, the remains from Gözlü Kule, the only archaeological excavations at Tarsus that have touched on the Persian period, give only a modest sample of the material culture. The Persian city center was surely located elsewhere, as yet to be discovered—although like ancient Antioch, Persian Tarsus may well be buried deep under meters of river-born silt. Current excavations in the center of the modern city have shown that to be the case for at least parts of Roman Tarsus.

Gözlü Kule is a large mound located on the south-west edge of the center of modern Tarsus. It was selected for excavation by Bryn Mawr College after a inspection tour of sites, including some soundings, undertaken in 1934 in Syria and Cilicia by Emil Forrer (Albright 1935: 146; Goldman 1935: 526). Under the direction of Hetty Goldman, excavations were carried out from 1935-1939 and 1947-1949. Goldman’s interests were wide-ranging; before Tarsus, her last and largest field project, she had excavated at sites with both classical and Bronze Age remains, in Greece (Halae and Eutresis), Yugoslavia (Starčevo), and Turkey (Colophon) (Thompson *et al.* 1974). Although the purpose of the excavations at Gözlü Kule was the « establishing of the cultural sequence in Cilicia of prehistoric times » (Goldman 1935: 528), it seems clear that she was prepared to deal fairly with whatever periods might appear in the trenches. Uncovering evidence about the Persian period was not, however, one of her stated aims. Indeed, these centuries are referred to as the “Hellenic period” (Goldman 1950: 29, 150).

Thanks to the excellent publications of the results, Gözlü Kule quickly became a type-site for the region (Goldman 1950, 1956, 1963). The site is best known for its Bronze Age remains (Goldman

1956), and for the reports on the pottery of the Iron Age and the Hellenistic-Roman periods (respectively, G. Hanfmann in Goldman 1963: 18-332; F. Jones in Goldman 1950: 149-296). Iron Age and Roman architecture, although recorded, is less impressive. The Roman city is now much better represented by the magnificent basalt street and adjacent shops, revealed by the on-going excavations of Levent Zoroğlu (Selçuk University, Konya). For Iron Age architecture and sculpture, one thinks first of sites to the east, such as Karatepe, Zincirli, and Carchemish (as well as Tell Tayinat, in the Amuq, presented above).

The Persian period is poorly represented at Gözli Kule. The last of the Iron Age architectural levels, dated to ca. 600-530/520 B.C., would have been in existence at the beginning of Achaemenid rule (Goldman 1963: 11-14, 20, 23, 145). This settlement follows the plan established by the preceding level, with a main east-west street and, off it, smaller streets at right angles, and buildings made of "low foundations of large and small stones laid at random", with mud-brick superstructures, the fashion typical for the region (Goldman 1963: 11).

After this, there was a gap in occupation of some 200 years, from the late 6th-late 4th centuries B.C. (Goldman 1963: 11, 23). Only 22 sherds could be attributed to these centuries, imported plain black glazed ware and imported decorated pottery (Goldman 1950: 5, 21, 29, 36, 150-152, 210-212; but in 1963: 153-30 Attic sherds dated to 550-330 B.C.). Hanfmann wondered why this should be, when the city was clearly an important place (Goldman 1963: 143). Noting a similar gap in material evidence at nearby Yumuk Tepe (Mersin) (see below), he speculated that perhaps the Persian conquerors required the locals to give up fortified positions on high places such as Gözli Kule (Hanfmann 1956: 166-167; and in Goldman 1963: 21, 145). But he does not explain why the Persians would not take advantage of such installations and simply occupy them in turn.

Current excavations in Tarsus: a Roman street and, again, Gözli Kule

Reference has already been made to the ongoing excavations of a Roman street and adjacent shops and other buildings, a project that began when digging for a multi-storied underground car park hit interesting things (Zoroğlu 1996). But the street is already many meters below modern ground level, a depth that discourages a look for remains from several hundred years earlier.

As for Gözli Kule, work has recently resumed there under the direction of Aslı Özyar of Boğaziçi University, Istanbul. The prime aim of this new series of excavations will be the clarification of problems concerning the Bronze Age, leftovers from the Goldman excavations.

Yumuk Tepe (Mersin)

The last of the excavation projects begun before World War II was carried out at Yumuk (Yümüük) Tepe, a mound on the outskirts of the modern city of Mersin, by John Garstang, a specialist in the Hittites and the Ancient Near East. The site had been visited earlier by E. Gjerstad in 1930, during a survey in Cilicia, from Anamur east to Misis, and from Adana south to Karatagiş on the Mediterranean coast (1934). Gjerstad, the director of the Swedish Cyprus Expedition of 1927-1931, was looking for connections with Cyprus, Iron Age and earlier; the Persians *per se* were not of interest for him.

Garstang came to Yumuk Tepe by a surprising turn of events. Francis Neilson, a wealthy gentleman from Chicago with an interest in archaeology, had endowed a research expedition in Palestine ("Bible Lands"), with Garstang, a professor at the University of Liverpool, as director. Garstang began work in 1935 at Tell Keisan, in northern Palestine, but was forced to stop because of civil disturbances. Compelled to find a new site, he settled on Yumuk Tepe. After a preliminary survey in 1936, he continued in 1936-1937 with soundings at a handful of sites, including Sirkeli, east of Adana. Sirkeli is notable for a rock relief of the Hittite king Muwatalli, but Garstang also found "some possibly Persian wares" in his Trench C, a large step trench (1937: 64-66, 1938: 20-22). But Yumuk Tepe was the project's key site, and here he excavated from 1936-1939 and again in 1946-1947.

Garstang wrote movingly about this fate: « When civil disturbance made it necessary to choose another spot, I found myself responsible for carrying out at the age of sixty what I had longed to do thirty years before » (1943: 1). What exactly he had wanted to do, and why, he answered in the Introduction to his final report: « During my early journeys of exploration in Anatolia, dating from 1904, I formed the impression that the fertile plain of Cilicia in southern Turkey, shut off as it was by the great ranges of Taurus from the Anatolian plateau and by bold Amanus from northern Syria while open to the Mediterranean Sea, seemed designed by nature for a history of its own, and I had always wished to investigate its past » (Garstang 1953: 1).

Yumuk Tepe is best known for its prehistoric sequence, dipping down into the Neolithic and Chalcolithic. Like Gözli Kule (Tarsus), although it has Iron Age deposits, the site has yielded few remains of the Persian period. Level III is dated to the 7th-6th c. B.C. (Barnett 1939-1940: 99). Only a few sherds of the 5th-4th centuries B.C. were identified (Barnett 1939-1940: 127-130; Garstang 1939-1940a), but no architectural level could be assigned to this period. After this, there is a long-lasting gap in occupation at the site, from the 4th c. B.C. to the 8th c. A.D., the result, according to Garstang, of the prominence of the nearby city of Soloi/Pompeïopolis (1939-1940b: 90-91).

The architectural remains tentatively attributed to Level III consist only of a small house, destroyed by fire, with rooms arranged on three sides of a small courtyard. The courtyard, paved with gravel, opened onto a gravel-paved street (Lloyd 1939-1940: 97, pl. XXIV; comments reproduced in Garstang 1953: 253, 252, fig. 159). This plan looks very much like the “commercial” buildings at Al-Mina, Levels 4-2 (see above), although not nearly so neat in its lines. But if I have read the scales correctly, the Mersin house is, with outer walls ca. 15 m long, considerably bigger than the Al-Mina examples (e.g., House E of Al-Mina Level III measures ca. 8.25 x 5.95 m). It is a pity that more architecture was not found, to amplify our understanding of settlement at Yumuk Tepe in the 7th-6th centuries B.C. The Greek pottery from Levels IV (8th c. B.C., especially) and III was published by Barnett (1939-1940; also Garstang 1953: 253-255), with a small amount of Cypriot from Levels VI-III presented in Garstang 1953 (256-257). Local pottery of Level III was not published.

New excavations at Yumuk Tepe (Mersin)

After a hiatus of 45 years, excavations resumed at Yumuk Tepe in 1993, now under the direction of Veli Sevin (Istanbul University) and Isabella Caneva (University of Rome). The aim is to amplify the findings of Garstang, especially concerning chronology, with Sevin exploring the Iron Age settlements and Caneva the Neolithic. An additional goal is to reach out to the public by creating an archaeological park (Sevin, Caneva 1995).

Archaeological projects begun after World War II

After a fairly quiet start in the 1940s through the 1980s, our region now hosts a lively roster of archaeological projects, both renewed work at previously active sites (noted above) and new projects. The establishment in the early 1990s of the Department of Classical Archaeology at Mersin University and its allied Research Center for Cilician Archaeology with its journal, *Olba*, has proved a great stimulus for regional research (web site: <http://kaam.mersin.edu.tr>). The newer Department of Archaeology at Mustafa Kemal University, Antakya, promises to do the same for research in Hatay province.

On a larger, country-wide scale, information about archaeological activities in Cilicia and Hatay have come from various sources. Newsletters in the *American Journal of Archaeology*, *Anatolian Studies*, and *Archaeological Reports* have been invaluable. The annual Symposium of Excavations and Research, organized by the Ministry of Culture, has, since 1979, required that every project

present a public summary of its results (*KST* and *AST*). Most recently, the inventory of sites being established by the TAY⁶ Project (begun in 1993; web site: <http://www.tayproject.org>) has already made a huge contribution for prehistoric periods; one hopes for comparable treatment of first millennium B.C. sites.

In this section, we shall examine projects begun after World War II. The treatment will be less detailed than in the earlier part of this paper, because with a few exceptions, most projects are still ongoing: excavations continue and final publications have not yet appeared. In such cases, the trajectory of research has not been completed, and thus the scientific impact of a project cannot be fully evaluated.

As in earlier times, projects are begun for a variety of reasons: interest in a particular period or sub-region, the chance find of important objects that demand further research, and now, more and more, the need to protect the region's cultural heritage as industry, tourism and holiday facilities, and urban centers develop. Also as in earlier times, the Achaemenid Persian period has played a minor role in the development of research projects.⁷ But if excavation and survey were to provide abundant evidence for the period 550-300 B.C., researchers would certainly respond with interest.

Surface surveys

In general, because pottery from ca. 550-300 B.C. is difficult to recognize, with only a few distinctive types as yet well known (notably Attic imports or imitations; also diagnostic sherds from certain amphora types), surface surveys will not be an important source of information about Cilicia and Hatay in the Achaemenid centuries. Results from stratigraphical excavations could change this situation, however, by making pottery shapes and decoration of the period better known, and thus easier to identify when collected during survey.

Surface surveys have taken place sporadically since the 1940s, in Smooth and Rough Cilicia as well as in the Hatay. R.O. Arık, explaining the region's antiquity for a Turkish readership, described the ancient landscape as he journeyed in 1942 from Ankara to Belen, via Adana, and reviewed archaeological research in the Hatay (1944: 355-384). In Smooth Cilicia, V. Seton-Williams, a member of Garstang's original team at Yumuk Tepe, surveyed the Cilician Plain in June-July 1951 (1954). Her purpose was to record pre-classical sites, but she included later sites as well. This project still remains a fundamental inventory of sites, even a half century after it was carried out. In addition, Seton-Williams was the first to report Persian period findings in a separate section, labelled exactly that, "The Persian Period" (1954: 138-139). The section is short, citing only Levantine green wares, Attic black glazed pottery, and certain East Greek ceramics. In her conclusion, she notes having found "little material evidence for the Persian period" (1954: 145). Nonetheless, this attention paid to the Persians in the archaeological record represents an important moment in Cilician archaeology.

Soon after, in late 1951 and in April-November 1952, James Mellaart surveyed a huge area, from Mersin west to Miletus, also looking, as did Seton-Williams, for prehistoric sites; Cilicia formed but one sector of the survey (Mellaart 1954: 175-178). Later surveys include a 1991 exploration by a team from Bilkent University along the north coast of the Gulf of Iskenderun, an area largely untouched by Seton-Williams (Özgen, Gates 1992; Steadman 1994), with Jennifer Tobin amplifying in 1994 Bilkent's examination of the late Roman coastal site of Küçük Burnaz (Tobin 1995). In the Hatay, the Amuq Valley Regional Project and the Orontes Delta Archaeological Project (ODAP), mentioned

6 TAY = Türkiye Arkeolojik Yerleşmeleri [The Archaeological Settlements of Turkey].

7 Note, in a recent colloquium devoted to Cilicia, 2nd millennium B.C.-4th c. A.D. (Jean, Dinçol, Durugönül 2001), the rarity of papers concerning the period 550-300 B.C.

above, have conducted surveys. With the exceptions of Tobin's work and ODAP, new information about pre-classical sites has been the main hope of these projects.

In contrast, in Rough Cilicia, at the west end of our region, the exploration of quite different periods has inspired survey work. The first scholar active in the area after World War II was Michael Gough. Classical (esp. Roman) and Late antique/Early Byzantine remains were his main interest. Although he began in Smooth Cilicia in 1949 (Gough 1952), he moved westward in ensuing years, along the coast and then up into the mountains, his research regularly reported in *Anatolian Studies*. He is best known for his excavations at the 5th-7th c. monastery complex at Alahan, high in the Taurus Mountains.

Subsequent surveys in Rough Cilicia have also featured Hellenistic and Roman remains (e.g. Rosenbaum, Huber, Onurkan 1967). More specifically focused surveys have included the Greek/Roman epigraphic surveys in 1961-1968 of George Bean and Timothy Mitford (1962, 1965, 1970); in recent years, the tradition of epigraphic survey has been taken up by Mustafa H. Sayar. Among other examples, R. Lindley Vann has examined the coast of both Cilicias for ancient harbors (1992); Serra Durugönül has explored rural rock reliefs, towers, and other structures of Rough Cilicia (1989; 1998); and, for the later Middle Ages, the magisterial work of R. Edwards analyzes the many castles that line the entire Cilician coast, with inland examples as well (1987).

A problem of early Roman/Hellenistic history set in motion the largest and longest lasting of the surveys, "The Rough Cilicia Archaeological Survey Project." Begun in 1996, this project still continues, under the direction of Nicholas Rauh and Luann Wandsnider (website, with annual reports: <http://pasture.ecn.purdue.edu/~rauhn>; see also Blanton 2000). The initial aim of this survey was to look for traces of the Cilician pirates who, according to ancient literary sources, established their home base in this region in the later Hellenistic period, 139-67 B.C. Although the pirates have been elusive, the project has carried out full-scale intensive survey in an area in westernmost Rough Cilicia, from the coast inland, recording architectural and other finds regardless of period. A few fragments of pottery dating to the Persian centuries have been collected: "Phoenician" amphora rims of ca. 500 B.C. at Selinus, and a basket handled amphora handle.

In none of these projects, then, has the wish to illuminate the Achaemenid Persian period been the inspiring force.

North-east Cilicia and north Hatay: Karatepe and Tilmen Hüyük

Let us turn now to excavations. The first major project to begin in the post-WW II period was the exploration of Karatepe, an early Iron Age site located in the forested foothills of north-east Cilicia. In late 1945, Helmut Bossert (a professor of pre-classical Anatolian languages and civilizations) and colleagues from Istanbul University were investigating possible Iron Age routes from Kayseri (on the Anatolian plateau) across the Taurus Mountains to south-east Turkey/north Syria, the heartland of the Neo-Hittite kingdoms. A report reached them of a lion monument seen near Kadirli. In 1946 and 1947, the report was investigated, and survey work was conducted at the site; full-scale excavations began in the fall of 1947 (Allam 1948). Research, site preservation, and publication have continued to the present day, under the direction of Halet Çambel.

One of Bossert's early associates was U. Bahadır Alkım. Also a specialist in Anatolian Bronze and Iron Ages, he eventually conducted his own survey, to the south-east of Karatepe, in the area of İslahiye (eastern Cilicia/north Hatay), with a particular interest in ancient road systems (1965). He then excavated at two sites east of the Amanus Mountain, Tilmen Hüyük, 1959-1964, and Gedikli, 1964-1968 (Allam 1969); and explored a third, the Iron Age sculpture workshop at Yesemek (1974). This larger region, in the heartland of the Neo-Hittite kingdoms, had seen excavation during the late 19th century at Zincirli and in 1908 and 1911 at Sakçagözü, both important Iron Age sites. Tilmen Hüyük, although a multi-period site, is of particular interest for its Bronze Age remains. Thus, in

these projects in east Cilicia/north Hatay, the interest was, from the start, pre-classical, pre-Persian even: the Iron Age and Bronze Age.

South-east Cilicia and coastal Hatay:⁸ Kinet Höyük

This region contains Kiner Höyük, one of the important sources of archaeological evidence about the Achaemenid Persian period. But the site's excavator, M.-H. Gates, did not begin this project in order to learn more about the Persians. Like others in this region, she hoped for illumination of the Bronze Age. Predecessors included H. Bossert, the specialist in Bronze Age and Iron Age Anatolia, who excavated at Misis-Mopsouhestia from 1956 until his death in 1961, attracted by the link, attested at Karatepe where he had previously worked, with the transitional BA and IA hero, Mopsus. But Misis has a substantial Roman and medieval overlay, and little was learned about earlier periods (Mellink 1956: 376-377, 1961: 80). In 1992, B. Hrouda began a new campaign at Sirkeli, resuming work where Garstang had left off before World War II (Hrouda 1997). Hrouda, also a Near Eastern archaeologist, surely was hoping that the rock relief of Muwatalli indicated that good evidence for the Hittites was close at hand. However, the site is multi-period, including EB-MB, Iron Age, and Hellenistic-Roman, and the LBA has not been particularly forthcoming. Gates herself had studied the mid-second millennium B.C. Levels VI and V at Alalakh/Tell Atchana for her Ph.D. dissertation. In selecting Kiner Höyük for excavation, she hoped for information on connections between the Mediterranean world and the inland Near East, in particular in the second millennium B.C. (M.-H. Gates 1999).

Excavations began at Kiner Höyük in 1992 (M.-H. Gates 1994, with regular reports in *KST*). The great scientific value of the site comes from its stratigraphic sequence of hundreds of years of continuous habitation. The site was inhabited from at least the Early Bronze Age (with Halaf sherds found as well, although out of context so far) through the mid-first century B.C. A long gap ensued, with only a brief Crusader-period reoccupation, in the late 12th-early 14th centuries.

The Achaemenid Persian period (Late Iron Age, Phase III: 1) duly takes its place in this long sequence (C. Gates 1999, summarizing findings from 1992-1997). Three architectural levels have been identified for this period: Periods 5, 4, and 3 (this last reaching into Early Hellenistic), all found on the west side of the mound; Period 3 has also been exposed on the north and east. Period 5, the earliest, ca. 550-450 B.C., is still shadowy, with only fragments of stone wall foundations. Period 4, with two levels, 4B and 4A (ca. 450-400/early 4th century B.C.), in contrast, has yielded substantial and coherent architectural plans of rooms. The function of these rooms is unclear, but the many amphora fragments found in 4A suggest a warehouse or other commercial activity. The amphora types represented—such as basket-handled, Chian, and Solokha I—belong to the Cypro-Levantine and east/south-east Aegean, and speak of trade connections between Kiner Höyük and the larger eastern Mediterranean world in the second half of the Achaemenid Empire.

Period 3, with two architectural levels of Late Persian—Early/Middle Hellenistic date, Levels 3B and 3A, saw dramatic changes. A new city wall was built around the mound in the early fourth century B.C.: stone foundations, with towers or buttresses included, and a stone glacis. Amphora fragments (of types noted above) and Attic black-glazed sherds have supplied the date (C. Gates 1999: 326). On the west side, the wall connected with the unusually well-built foundations of a grand entrance. The foundation of a single course of large limestone blocks, cut flush on top but left irregular in the invisible sections below, was covered with cement-like mortar and, above, gravel. This

⁸ The coastal Hatay also contains important Paleolithic sites, such as caves near Mağrak explored in the late 1950s-1960s by M. Şenyürek and others, and Üçağlı cave, excavated in the 1990s-present by, first, A. Mizzoni-Déroche, later by E. Güleç and S. Kuhn.

gateway, 5 m wide, was marked at the end by upright limestone blocks, of which the southern example was still covered with traces of painted plaster, red (west face) and yellow (north face). The elegance of this construction is unparalleled elsewhere at Kinet Höyük. This wall system, with a network of attached rooms, continued in use well into the Hellenistic age.

The circuit wall has also appeared on the north side of the mound, discovered in 1992. Work in 1998 and 1999 has amplified our understanding of this section of the fortification and the connected complex of rooms, used, apparently, for military purposes. Pottery finds, such as basket-handled amphoras, confirm the dating of ca. 400 B.C. for this construction. And, as on the western side of the mound, these rooms continued in use for some 200 years (M.-H. Gates 2001: 208-210).

On the east side of the mound, only one level attributable to the Persian period has been identified. A portion of a building with thick mud brick walls was recovered; however, it contained few finds. Its date in the Persian period is certain, because of its stratigraphic placement between Period 6 below (mid seventh-early/mid sixth centuries B.C.) and Early Hellenistic above. Because construction details, such as brick size, correspond with the architecture of Period 3 discovered on the north side in 1998-1999, this building is now dated to 400 B.C. or soon thereafter (M.-H. Gates 2001: 209). Clearly an important structure, its function is unknown. However, its architectural form and construction details recall contemporary buildings from inland sites to the north-east, at Hacinebi on the Euphrates (McMahon 1996, 1997) and at Oylum Höyük, near Kilis (E. Özgen, Helwing 2001: 100-101).

The above results are preliminary; full analysis of the architecture and the finds, notably the pottery, and, of course, an informed discussion of their significance remains to be undertaken. But this summary should indicate the importance that these stratigraphic excavations of Achaemenid Persian period levels have for our understanding of the region in the years 550-300 B.C.

Rough Cilicia and south-west Smooth Cilicia: Meydancikkale

Excavations undertaken since World War II in the western part of our area have overwhelmingly concentrated on Classical (and late antique) periods. Such projects reflect the interests of the excavators, as one would expect. The earliest project was at Anemurium, a Roman and early Medieval town, initiated in 1965 by E. Rosenbaum (Campbell, Russell 1993), continued after 1970 well into the 1980s by J. Russell (Russell 1980). The Roman period is the interest of other researchers as well, at Elaiussa-Sebaste (Equini Schneider 1999) and, up in the hills, Olba/Diocaesarea (this last has a pre-Roman past).

Greco-Roman towns explored more recently include (west to east) Nagidos (regular reports in *KST*; the latest is Durugönül, Durukan, and Aydmolu 2003); Kelenderis (Zoroğlu 1994; 2000; and regular reports in *KST*; the latest in 2001); and Soloi/Pompeiopolis (regular reports in *KST*; the latest is Yağcı 2003). Like Anemurium, all are on the Mediterranean coast. Unlike Anemurium, the above three were all founded by Greek settlers from the Aegean (the first two from Samos, the third from Rhodes and Achaia; Keen 2002: 37), and so offered right from the start the promise of remains from the Persian period and indeed earlier in the Iron Age—an attraction, for specialists in Greek archaeology, of excavating at these sites. The necropolis at Kelenderis has yielded graves from the Persian period (Zoroğlu 2000). At Nagidos, coins, pottery, and fortifications attest to Persian period occupation (Durugönül 2001). A secondary reason to excavate such coastal sites is protection of the cultural heritage, now that beach-front property has become increasingly valuable.

Until now, little evidence concerning pre-Classical periods has emerged, with the important exceptions of Yumuktepe (Mersin) and Gözli Kule (Tarsus). Texts indicate an earlier presence, however, but it may be that Hellenistic and Roman reuse of earlier sites has destroyed earlier remains or simply, by overlying them, made reaching them difficult. The Persian period is attested here in fragments. Although certain coastal sites have yielded such evidence, as noted above, the most tantalizing remains from this period come from Meydancikkale, some 15 km inland as the crow flies.

Meydancıklale is a fortress on a hilltop. I have not visited the site, but the descriptions are dramatic: a large rocky plateau ca. 710 x 150 m, 710 m high. Excavations began in 1971 under the direction of Emmanuel Laroche; Georges Le Rider and then Alain Davesne continued the work from 1981 until 1997 (Laroche, Davesne 1981; Davesne, Lemaire, Lozachmeur 1987; Davesne, Laroche-Traunecker 1998). The initial attraction for Hittitologist Laroche was certainly a report of Hittite reliefs. The reliefs turned out to be Persian, but Laroche forged ahead anyway, and eventually found Hittite reliefs. Protection of the site, threatened by natural forces and by locals in search of building stone, was also cited as an aim of the project.

The citadel was used by Hittites, 7th-6th centuries pre-Persian dynasts, Achaemenid Persians, Hellenistic Lagids and Ptolemies, and the Byzantines (Davesne, Laroche-Traunecker 1998: 63-67). Why? The access is difficult; today the site lies tortuously off the main road from the coast (Silifke) to the Anatolian plateau (Karaman). Davesne speculates that the location had value as a fortified outpost from which both the coast and the timber-rich Taurus Mountains could be patrolled (Davesne, Lemaire, Lozachmeur 1987: 379-381; see also Davesne, Laroche-Traunecker 1998: 280).

The Persian period remains are scattered (Davesne, Lemaire, Lozachmeur 1987; Laroche-Traunecker 1993; Casabonne 1998: 200-208; Davesne, Laroche-Traunecker 1998: *passim*). Because of the rocky nature of the site, cultural deposits barely accumulated, and construction in all periods routinely sought bedrock for a firm foundation. Finds such as pottery, so typical of ancient settlement sites, were consequently rare. Attention focused on blocks with relief sculpture, men in procession in manner and style similar to those processing at Persepolis (even if much less well-preserved). These blocks were not found *in situ*, but had been reused in Hellenistic times. Perhaps, thought Davesne, they originally came from Building A, the large building at the south end of the site (Davesne, Lemaire, Lozachmeur 1987: 361-365; Davesne, Laroche-Traunecker 1998: 293-306; see also Laroche-Traunecker 1993: 25-28). Other Persian period finds include the fortified entrance (rebuilt in various periods) (Laroche-Traunecker 1993: 21-25; Davesne, Laroche-Traunecker 1998: 73-244) and a tomb on the west slope of the site, robbed, but dated thanks to an Aramaic inscription.

The Aramaic inscriptions (Davesne, Laroche-Traunecker 1998: 307-344) have supplied an exciting detail, the ancient name of the site: "KRŠBYRT", which has been vocalized as Kirši/Kiršu birtâ, meaning the "fortress of Kirshu" (Davesne, Lemaire, Lozachmeur 1987: 377). This place appears in Neo-Babylonian chronicles, and from those documents we learn more. This fortified city belonged to Appuašu, king of Pirindu; it contained a palace; and it was burned by Neriglissar in 557 B.C. (Davesne, Lemaire, Lozachmeur 1987: 379). Appuašu, however, managed to escape. During the Persian period, Lemaire and Lozachmeur speculate, our fortress could have been the seat of a governor, a provincial center (Davesne, Laroche-Traunecker 1998: 323-324).

Such details, fascinating and important as they are, shift the study of Iron Age Meydancıklale from a discourse based on excavated finds to one of text-based history. Continuing publication and evaluation of the findings, architectural, epigraphical, and other, should lead to a balanced understanding of this exceptional site in the Achaemenid Persian period.

Conclusions

The Achaemenid Persian period has never been a focus of archaeological research in Cilicia and Hatay. Nonetheless, material remains from the period have been recovered in certain excavations and surveys. Three sites in particular have yielded significant information: Al-Mina, Kinet Höyük, and Meydancıklale. Each site presents a different facet of ancient life, which makes the contribution of each valuable, the combination of all three of great import. Al-Mina speaks about commerce, Kinet Höyük about commerce and then 4th century B.C. fortifications, and Meydancıklale also about

regional defense, but with relief sculptures that suggest grander connections with imperial authority. However, the evidence recovered from these sites has not yet been fully published; the potential of these research projects has thus not yet been realized. The finds of Al-Mina Levels 4-2 still need systematic attention. Further reports from Meydancikkale may yet be forthcoming. As for Kinet Höyük, because excavations are still continuing, final reports lie in the distant future. When they do appear, such publications will advance greatly our understanding of this region and of its connections with Cyprus, Syria-Palestine, and the Upper Euphrates basin in particular.

Other sites have as yet yielded bits and pieces, but the potential for more substantial evidence is always there: in the Amuq Plain and at the coastal towns founded by Greeks in pre-Classical times. Persian Tarsus, which we would love to see, must lie buried deep in silt; the chances of exposing it are slim.

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