

Abstract

Cultural interconnections in the Achaemenid West: the testimony of the Cypriot archaeological record

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Until about three decades ago, research on Cypriot interaction with the Achaemenid world focused almost exclusively on the written records of Graeco-Persian political and military conflict. Growing recent interest in the investigation of the material culture of the Persian period, in Cyprus and in the territories of the Achaemenid Empire at large, has broadened the study of cultural phenomena connected with Persian rule over the island.

Though limited in number, the relevant archaeological finds from Cyprus (such as precious vessels and jewelry, sculptures in stone, terracotta figurines and seals) allude to developments that are more widely attested in the Achaemenid realm and linked to Persian presence.

This presentation considers the significance of such artifacts, both as indices of Achaemenid impact on contemporary Cypriot expressions and worldview as well as manifestations of the ongoing cultural dialogue between the Achaemenids and their various vassals.