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## **Re-defining boundaries**

### **A critical assessment of fourth-century western Asia Minor**

Asia Minor between the sixth and fourth centuries BC is a privileged field for re-defining the boundaries of methodologies and disciplines such as Classics, Ancient Near East and Achaemenid Studies. In this period Asia Minor was a real mosaic of peoples and cultures which constituted the western fringe of the Achaemenid Empire. Here, diverse cultural horizons intertwined – long-standing local traditions, the Hellenic and Persian worlds – with original results.

In scholarly debate the time span of the Persian domination over Asia Minor tends to emerge as a uniform phase, whereas different cultural and political dynamics can be detected over more than two hundred years. Fourth-century western Asia Minor offers an interesting case study. It was characterised by distinct features in art and architecture, since local rulers expressed their ideology of power in an innovative language. In Lycia, for instance, the dynastic funerary monuments of this period embodied a marked departure from the earlier phases.

Which were the main elements of change and continuity? Which role was played by multiple cultural horizons in this area? This paper explores social and artistic phenomena in fourth-century western Asia Minor examining a wide range of evidence (literary, artistic, material etc.) and methodologies from various fields. This interdisciplinary approach will contribute to a better understanding of western Asia Minor in the Persian period within the broader framework of the eastern Mediterranean.