

Ancient city of Patara uncovered in Turkey

20 September 2005

Patara, the ancient Turkish city that housed the Lycian League -- which drafters of the U.S. Constitution used as a model -- is being unearthed.

Alexander Hamilton and James Madison considered the Lycian League an example of the form of republican government they wished to emulate. The league was mentioned twice in the Federalist Papers, the New York Times reported.

Teams of Turkish and German archeologists have been slowly uncovering the small Mediterranean Sea town, with its parliament building still much intact.

The Times noted it's often said Turkey has more Greek ruins than Greece. Patara is a Greek ruin -- as well as a Roman, Byzantine and Turkish ruin as well.

The archeologist in charge of the project, Fahri Isik of Akdeniz University in Antalya, said he's hopeful the site will help scientists better understand what often are referred to as the "dark ages" of early Mediterranean history -- the 12th to 8th Centuries B.C. -- about which little is known.

Mentioned in "The Iliad," Patara was a port city used by the Persians in the 5th Century B.C.

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