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# E. PAPPA (2013), EARLY IRON AGE EXCHANGE IN THE WEST: PHOENICIANS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AND THE ATLANTIC (ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN STUDIES SUPPLEMENT SERIES 43), LEUVEN - PARIS - WALPOLE, MA.: PEETERS. ISBN: 978-90-429-2907-4. PP. XX + 373; 91 B/W AND COLOUR FIGURES, 5 TABLES. CLOTH. €98.

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After a keynote book on the tombs of Malta, studies on several private Maltese collections and two proceedings devoted to ceramic studies and chronological markers, all due to the efforts of Claudia Sagona as author, co-author or editor, the publication of another volume in the *Ancient Near Eastern Studies Supplement Series* devoted to the "Phoenician world" is especially welcome.

This book, based on the author's Ph.D. dissertation (University of Oxford, 2010), offers a re-analysis of the earliest stages of Phoenician presence and exchange networks in the Mediterranean West (ca. 9<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> centuries BC), on the basis of recent archaeological investigations (unevenly updated to 2012), new approaches to the so-called colonisation/colonialism issue and its outcomes, and long-term and regional perspectives. The analysis does not take into account Sicily and (in part) Sardinia, since other authors have already examined these islands, whereas the absence of Malta<sup>1</sup> remains unexplained.

The volume is divided into nine chapters in addition to the introduction, the conclusions and, as an appendix, a synthetic catalogue of the main sites discussed in the text.

After the acknowledgements, in the introduction (xiii-xx), the traditional theoretical framework of Phoenician expansion is outlined, as well as some terminological, typological and chronological issues, in order to stress the need for an updated analysis.

In Chapter 1 (pp. 1-8), a general survey of the boundaries of Phoenicia, the relevant ethnonyms, and the relations between the Phoenicians and Assyrians is sketched on the basis of some textual sources. The author also addresses the identity of the Levantine groups involved in the "colonisation" process and the chronological framework of the Phoenician migration westwards on the basis of both the textual and archaeological evidence, with a reference to the current debate on the gap between Greek pottery and radiocarbon dates.

Other well-known terminological and theoretical debates are summarized in the following chapter (pp. 9-14), defining Phoenician expansion (colonialism vs. colonisation) and Phoenician settlements in the West according to Greek and modern categories (e.g. *apoikia, emporia*, ports of trade and commercial establishments). Finally, the lack of data on the economic structures of Phoenician cities is emphasized, since very few textual sources are known that deal exclusively with the Syro-Palestinian area.

Therefore, these initial pages provide the tools for the non-specialist reader to tackle the following chapters, although adding a short section on theories and methodologies for studying ancient economies would have been useful.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> However, these perspectives have been recently adopted in Sagona 2014.

In Chapter 3 (pp. 15-47), a picture of cross-Mediterranean contacts from the 12<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> centuries is offered. The author analyses a few case studies from two regions, Sardinia and the Iberian Peninsula, showing reliable evidence regarding maritime connections in the so-called pre-colonial period. From a long-term perspective, the aim of this survey is to determine who was involved in Late Bronze/Early Iron Age trade, what the exchange systems were, and if there was a continuity of contacts between earlier and later journeys to the Mediterranean West.

Starting from Sardinia (pp. 19-26), the evidence is represented especially by bronze items and Nuragic pottery. The selected contexts are the hoards of Monte Sa Idda and Sardara, where objects belonging to the Atlantic and Cypriote/Levantine Late Bronze Age were retrieved, and the settlement of Sant'Imbenia.<sup>2</sup> Within the pre-colonial phase, the author has also placed three well-known early Phoenician inscriptions from Sardinia (p. 25): the two from Nora (CIS I, 144-145), and the one – now lost – found at Bosa (CIS I, 162).

Moving on to the Iberian Peninsula (pp. 26-37), the contexts taken into account are mainly hoards (such as those retrieved at Villena, Ría de Huelva, Berzocana and Baiôes), where metallic items (e.g. weapons, vessels, rotary spits, fibulae and torques) and occasionally amber pieces, were discovered. Notwithstanding, two LH IIIA2/IIIB Mycenaean sherds and about fifty Plain Ware imported fragments were retrieved at the settlement at Llanete de los Moros. Furthermore, the author includes in this group an Atlantic Late Bronze Age Rosnoën sword from the Loukkos river (nearby Lixus), as well as the unstratified findings from Plaza las Monjas no. 12/Calle Méndez Núñez nos. 7-13 at Huelva (pp. 32-36), and considers the so-called Iberian or warrior stelae (pp. 30-32) as possible evidence of a Levantine influence, on the basis of the comparison offered by a stele from et-Tell/Bethsaida in Galilee.

Although they are included in this chapter dealing with the so-called pre-colonial stage, a few of the contexts and findings the author discusses clearly belong to a phase when Phoenicians had already settled in the Western Mediterranean. In particular, when analysing Sardinia and Sardinian products found abroad, the current debate on the Final Bronze/Early Iron Age sequence should be taken into account,<sup>3</sup> as well as new perspectives,<sup>4</sup> such as the chronological revision convincingly proposed by Nicola Ialongo<sup>5</sup> on the basis of the correlation between reliable stratigraphic sequences and assemblages in Sardinia and Peninsular Italy. In any case, to this selection of case studies, at least one recent and relevant finding should be added: the Nuragic jar with inverted elbow handles

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The excavations at this site have been resumed since 2008; see, for instance, Depalmas - Fundoni - Luongo 2011; Rendeli 2013.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Usai 2007; Depalmas 2009.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> For an inventory, see, most recently, many of the essays in: Bernardini - Perra eds. 2012 and van Dommelen -Roppa eds. 2014, both with extensive bibliography.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ialongo 2010; 2011; 2013.

from Pyla-Kokkinokremos (ca. late 13<sup>th</sup>-early 12<sup>th</sup> BC),<sup>6</sup> where the analysis of both the clay and lead clamps points to its import from Sardinia.<sup>7</sup>

Chapters 4-8, representing the bulk of the book, are structured in a repetitive format, as testified by the recurring titles, which demonstrate the author's efforts to organise a great deal of data using the same criteria.

Chapter 4 (pp. 49-82) focuses on the settlements in the Iberian Peninsula. Firstly, the author questions the markers usually adopted for recognizing the indigenous settlements (e.g. the inner location of the sites and some ceramic types: the so-called *Cruz del Negro* amphorae, the thistle vase, the *pithoi* and the Gray Ware). Afterwards, brief summaries on the sanctuaries, the languages and the burial costumes in the Iberian Peninsula are provided, as well as the several patterns in the size and position of the settlements, type of buildings and presence/absence of fortifications.

Chapter 5 (pp. 83-96) is dedicated to the analysis of the Phoenician evidence in North-West Africa, corresponding to the territory of Morocco and Algeria. Firstly, the discrepancy between the current research in these two countries is outlined: there are many recent discoveries and multidisciplinary projects in Morocco (such as those at Lixus, Mogador and Ceuta), whereas in Algeria little archaeological fieldwork has been carried out since the 1960s.<sup>8</sup> The author contrasts the paucity of settlements in Algeria, especially those of an early date (only eight settlements apparently date back to the 7<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries BC), with the numismatic and textual evidence. Due also to the lack of settlements preceding the Phoenician presence, the distinction between *ex nihilo* Phoenician foundation and indigenous sites, with or without a Phoenician community, is usually based on the material culture, producing different interpretations, as testified – for instance – by the cases of Sidi Driss, Ras Kebdana, Kach Kouch and Ceuta.

The author also tackles these issues – the distribution and chronology of the Phoenicians in this area, as well as the distinction between Phoenician and indigenous markers – through the analysis of some necropolises. The focus is mostly on the *nécropole du phare* at Rachgoun,<sup>9</sup> which is the only cemetery associated to a settlement and which is seemingly representative of the community, whereas apparently indigenous funerary traditions (inhumations in a contracted position, graves lined with slabs and the funerary assemblage) are recognizable at Late Bronze Age necropolis at Mers.

On account of a heterogeneous and scant archaeological record, which has at times been over-interpreted, especially in the case of handmade pottery, as the author has recently pointed out,<sup>10</sup> nothing can be stated about social organization, culture change and continuity in North-West Africa. The existence of a connection with Southern Iberia, testified by some shared pottery shapes, can be recognized in bare outline, although its

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Karageorghis 2011, 89-91, fig. 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Fragnoli - Levi 2011; Gale 2011.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> See the catalogue of a recent exhibition: Manfredi - Soltani eds. 2011.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> A re-examination of the findings from this site has been carried out in Torres Ortiz - Mederos Martín 2010 and Bartoloni 2012.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Pappa 2013, 33-36.

cause still cannot be clarified (commercial connections or the establishment of Phoenicians from the Iberian Peninsula?).

In Chapter 6 (pp. 97-138), commercial exchanges in Iberia and North-West Africa are examined. The chapter starts with a thorough investigation of activities fundamental to the economy of these areas – farming, timber exploitation, pastoralism, fishing and metalworking – examining a variety of sources and scientific analysis. As a result, some changes occurring in the aftermath of Phoenician settlement seem to be recognizable (e.g. the introduction of cereals, legumes, olives and wine, <sup>11</sup> and an increase in deforestation), even though some relevant issues, such as the dating of the cupellation techniques, remain uncertain (pp. 103-112). Among luxury products, the author lists metal objects and ivories, even though their "Phoenician" or "indigenous" manufacture cannot usually be ascertained. Although this dichotomy could be useful in analysing the early stages of Phoenician expansion, other approaches – such as detecting regional or settlement features instead through archaeometric analysis, distribution patterns and stylistic considerations – are to be preferred for the later phases when the distinction between locals and newcomers becomes vague.

As concerns the Greek connection (pp. 122-132), testified mainly by ceramics (*skyphoi*, *kotylai*, Corinthian Type A and Attic SOS amphorae), the author, as already stated (pp. 37-41), supports the hypothesis of Phoenician traders bringing Greek imports to Iberia during the early stages (8<sup>th</sup>/mid-7<sup>th</sup> centuries BC), and later transporting them to North-West Africa (e.g. Mogador, Rachgoun).

Lastly, the modes and mechanisms of commercial exchanges are debated starting from a theoretical point of view rather than from the archaeological evidence (pp. 132-138). The hypothesis of conflicted relationships between the indigenous people and the Phoenicians, based on representations of weapons in the warrior stelae and the presence of fortification walls in some sites, is considered indicative of isolated episodes of war instead of a Phoenician *modus operandi*. After rejecting other theories (e.g. the Phoenician quest for land and the trading diaspora), the author emphasizes the limitations of a monocausal explanation for Phoenician expansion and proposes, as a working hypothesis, the existence of several "trading companies", which could explain the differences recognizable in this process.

Chapters 7-8 (pp. 139-176) deal with the settlements, the resources and the exchanges in central North Africa. This section suffers from the exclusion of Sardinia and Sicily (and Malta)<sup>12</sup> and, therefore, especially Sulky/Sulcis<sup>13</sup> and Motya<sup>14</sup> (except for pp. 129-130),

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> The introduction of the grapevine in Europe has usually been attributed to the Phoenicians. However, the recent finding of *Vitis vinifera L.* seeds at Sa Osa (Cabras, Oristano) dating back to ca. 1350-1150 BC proves that the grapevine cultivation was already taking place in Sardinia before the arrival of the Phoenicians (Ucchesu *et al.* 2014).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> As concerns Malta, two recent discoveries must be pointed out. Firstly, an agate crescent-shaped object with a cuneiform inscription, originally dedicated at Nippur, has been retrieved in the Tas-Silg sanctuary, on the south-east coast of the island of Malta. Although the dating of its context is uncertain (and therefore the chronology of its arrival/deposition in the sanctuary), this object can be assigned to around 1300 BC according to the text (Cazzella - Pace - Recchia 2011). Also, the GROPLAN Project funded by the French National Research Agency has located, a mile off Gozo, a Phoenician shipwreck, whose cargo – containing

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which are the main counterparts of Carthage during these early stages. Consequently, the debate – although it includes Utica, Sousse/ancient Hadrumetum, and Lepcis – is based mainly on Carthage.<sup>15</sup> In fact, the archaeological data from Sousse are limited to the Tophet, <sup>16</sup> from whose earliest stratum (ca. 650/625-580/560 BC) only three urn typologies are currently known:<sup>17</sup> all of them testify to a connection with the North African metropolis. Furthermore, any reflection based on the archaeological data from the late 7<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> centuries BC Lepcis (i.e. a rectangular building dated on the basis of three shards)<sup>18</sup> is speculative. Finally, the evidence taken into account from Utica is limited to the excavations carried out by P. Cintas. However, the preliminary results from the new archaeological investigations undertaken by French, Spanish and British teams in collaboration with the Institut Nationale du Patrimoine have started to be published,<sup>19</sup> indicating an earlier stage of the Phoenician presence in North-Africa and testifying to a connection with Iberia, Sardinia and central Italy. Hence, the observations outlined (p. 173) might profit from some updating.

The Carthaginian data set is, therefore, the focus of these chapters, providing a useful summary of some often neglected studies, such as those regarding the archaeobotanical and zooarchaeological records, while others are on long-debated issues (e.g. the Carthaginian craft production and trade), as well as recently updated subjects (such as the topography of

around 20 lava grinding stones and 50 amphorae so far – has been preliminary dated to approximately 700 BC, see: http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20140825/local/ancient-phoenician-boat-believed-found-in-maltese-waters.533133 (15<sup>th</sup> May 2015).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> In any case, its foundation, here assigned to the second half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC (p. 4), dates back to – at least – the first quarter of the 8<sup>th</sup> century (lastly, Bartoloni 2014, with extensive bibliography). Therefore, the most recent findings not only bring Sulky chronologically close to Sant'Imbenia, but also confirm it as both a key-site and a case study for the analysis of the earliest stages of the Phoenician westward movements and, considering the recovery of a shard belonging to a Mycenaean *alabastron* (Pompianu - Soro 2011), of its connection with Late Bronze Age frequentations.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> The results of the renewed excavations by «La Sapienza» Archaeological Expedition (since 2002) have brought fresh data and new perspectives on this settlement (see, for instance, Nigro 2015, with extensive bibliography).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Debating the Late Bronze Age frequentations in the Mediterranean West, a LH IIIB/C stirrup jar – reportedly retrieved in a garden in Le Kram at Carthage (Rakob 1996; Vegas 1996) – must not be neglected, although its authenticity has been questioned by Nota Kourou (2002, 100).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> For the last summary and a detailed analysis, see: D'Andrea 2014, 73-97.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Cintas 1947, 4-5, figs. 3-5. The fourth urn (Cintas 1947, 5, fig. 31) is a later type (late  $5^{th}-4^{th}$  centuries BC), which can be recognized as a cooking pot based on the Greek *chytra*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Carter 1965, 125-126.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Monchambert *et al.* 2013; López Castro *et al.* 2014. However, in 1995, at the bottom of a sounding carried out by Fethi Chelbi, Euboean and Nuragic shards (preliminary assigned to the second quarter/mid- and last quarter of the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC, respectively) were retrieved. Primary information were provided in: Kourou 2002, 100, note 70; Khelifi 2008, 94 and in the poster, entitled "La métallurgie du fer à Utique: nouvelles données", presented by Foued Essaadi at the *VII<sup>ème</sup> congrès international des études phéniciennes et puniques*, Hammamet, 10<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> November 2009. Another unpublished sounding reaching the early levels of Utica was excavated by Taoufiq Redissi at the beginning of this century.

Carthage)<sup>20</sup>. Regarding the debate on the central Mediterranean, the problem of Tophets arises, <sup>21</sup> and here a synthetic overview is provided (pp. 153-157).

On the basis of the previous analysis, some preliminary assumptions are outlined in Chapter 9 (pp. 177-188). Following Maria Eugenia Aubet, the author – taking into account the recent radiocarbon dates (ca. late 9<sup>th</sup> century BC) in the Phoenician West, which correspond to a period of Assyrian decline – suggests that Phoenician expansion was not related to Assyria's quest for metals, <sup>22</sup> which is here considered to belong to a later stage. Then, returning to the working hypothesis previously advanced in Chapter 6, several patterns observed in the Mediterranean West are explained by the heterogeneity of the purposes and the peoples/city-states (such as Sidon in a previous phase) involved in this process, perhaps promoting a degree of competition between different trading groups.

After recognizing the central role played by the temples, a "symbiotic relationship" of commerce and religion in the process of Phoenician expansion is proposed (p. 181). Hence, several hypotheses are put forward, such as the religious syncretism as a regulating economic mechanism, facilitating the trade and transfer of technology between Phoenicians and indigenous peoples. Although all of them are highly suggestive, evidence is lacking to support these claims. The attention here is on Melqart, but the well-established role of Astarte (and her sanctuaries) cannot be neglected. Furthermore, postulating on the basis of later evidence is always risky, as is the case of a 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC inscription from Carthage used to suggest the involvement of guilds (p. 183, note 29) in 9<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> century BC commerce.

Notwithstanding the length of these nine chapters, the conclusions come down to little more than three pages (pp. 189-192). A catalogue of the settlements analysed in the text has been added as an appendix (pp. 193-229), where an overview of each site and its related findings (usually distinguishing ceramics and other finds) is presented.

Finally, a nearly 60-page bibliography is provided, although it is oriented to Englishlanguage books and papers and does not take into account the extensive literature in related fields in other languages. Additionally, some previously quoted references are missing (e.g. Horden - Purcell 2000; Schmitz 2009; Stampolidis 1998; Valerio 2008; van Dommelen 2007) or repeated (Bonanno 2007 and Bonnano 2007).

At the end of the volume, along with five black and white tables (pp. 231-235), are ninety-one figures in both black and white and full-colour (pp. 237-316), although not always of good quality and useful to the reader. In fact, some other site-plans (this is especially the case with Toscanos and Las Chorreras) would have benefitted the reader. However, photos of unpublished findings from Tavira and new high-quality and detailed maps are provided (figs. 39-44), even though their inventory numbers and sources could have been indicated and the location of some sites are imprecise (see – for instance – Motya in figure 77).

By necessity, such a challenging and wide-ranging study forces the author to suffer from two major problems that particularly affect Phoenician and Punic studies: 1) the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Fumadó Ortega 2013.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> See, most recently, Xella ed. 2014; D'Andrea 2014 and – with a focus on the time span here examined – Orsingher 2015.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> However, see the observations in Gilboa 2013, 329.

language barriers and 2) the difficulty of access to recent publications, even though social networking websites are beginning to overcome this obstacle, and to fresh archaeological data, now available as fast reports or brief news on websites much earlier than the research published in traditional academic venues.

The first issue accounts for the minor linguistic mistakes/misprints (mainly linked to the contexts of Sant'Imbenia), while those recognizable in some Levantine toponyms (pp. 40, 54, 181, and fig. 4), along with Red-on-Black instead of the Black-on-Red (p. xix, note 54), apparently reflect a lack of familiarity with the Near East, as emphasized by the case of the citation of the so-called Tophet of Tyre (p. 163, note 164), which is not a Tophet, and can safely be identified as part of the necropolis of Tyre-Al Bass.

Some out-dated data may result from the latter problem. But one remarkable absence in Chapter 4 (pp. 64-65) is the lack of reference to the recent excavations in several sites of Cádiz/ancient Gadir and its surroundings - Teatro Cómico, <sup>23</sup> C/ Marqués del Real Tesoro no. 13, <sup>24</sup> C/ Cánovas del Castillo no. 38, <sup>25</sup> C/ Ancha no. 29, C/ Hércules no. 7, Casa del Obispo <sup>26</sup> and Chiclana de la Frontera/Cerro del Castillo.<sup>27</sup> There, stratigraphic sequences starting at least from ca. 820/800 BC or later and belonging to dwelling quarters, a sacred area and a burial grave have been discovered.<sup>28</sup> These fresh data provide a preliminary micro-regional view of the Phoenician settlement dynamics in the bay of Cádiz, and will permit us to make a comparison between this area and those of Huelva, <sup>29</sup> Málaga and La Fonteta, <sup>30</sup> as well as set up the basis for a methodological analysis of the various stages of the Phoenician establishment, starting from the archaeological evidence and leaving aside modern categorisations and out-dated theories.

This extensive and well-organized data set is based mostly on analyses and theories developed and published by other scholars, whereas, especially when dealing with sites excavated a long time ago, a fresh and in-depth re-examination of the context could have been useful. Furthermore, a different approach would have been more valuable to the reader: providing firstly the data (following a diachronic perspective and distinguishing clearly between archaeological and textual evidence), then carrying out a separate analysis (adopting the proper method for each subject) and, finally, comparing the results.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Zamora *et al.* 2010; Gener *et al.* 2012.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Lavado *et al.* 2000, 870.

<sup>25</sup> Córdoba - Ruiz Mata 2005.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Perea *et al.* 2004, 231.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Bueno - Cerpa 2008.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> See, lastly, Botto ed. 2014.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> In the micro-region of Huelva, we can enlist now also the necropolis at Ayamonte (García Teyssandier -Marzoli 2013). A recent stratigraphic sounding was carried out in 2009-2010 at Calle Concepción no. 3; the preliminary results have been presented by M. García Fernández, F. González de Canales Cerisola, L. Serrano Pichardo, J. Llompart Gómez, J. Ramon Torres, A. Domínguez Monedero in the poster entitled "New data about the beginning of the Phoenician colonization in Huelva" at the conference *Contestualizzare la "prima colonizzazione" Archeologia, fonti, cronologia e modelli interpretativi fra l'Italia e il Mediterraneo, Rome, Valle Giulia Koninklijk Nederlands Instituut, Academia Belgica, British School at Rome, 21<sup>st</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> June 2012.* 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> The first two volumes of the final reports on the Spanish excavations at La Fonteta have recently been made available, see: González Prats ed. 2011; 2014.

Nevertheless, despite these shortcomings, and the lack of an index which would have facilitated the book's utility as a reference tool, this volume provides a much-needed baseline and well-organized inventory of key issues, and will serve as a useful starting point for further consideration.

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