TRANSFORMATIONS AND CRISIS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

"IDENTITY" AND INTERCULTURALITY IN THE LEVANT AND PHOENICIAN WEST DURING THE 5TH-2ND CENTURIES BCE

EDITED BY

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With this volume, the third in the TCM series, we have reached the final stage of the path traced by the project of the same name, dedicated to investigating the forms of self-determination implemented by ancient communities, manifested in the most varied cultural expressions. As we have pointed out on several occasions, the research was developed through the presentation of numerous case studies set – thanks to the participation of Italian and foreign colleagues, specialists in different disciplines – in the lands of the "Middle Sea", our "sea of mediation", starting from the Levantine regions, reaching the westernmost shores of the Mediterranean and extending as far as the Atlantic coasts of North Africa and the Iberian Peninsula. At the centre of the project were placed the peoples of eastern origin and tradition – the Phoenicians in the first place – observed both from a *longue durée* perspective and with a special attention to individual, local phenomena and events, particularly in the dimension of interaction and exchange.

The possibility of starting and completing the TCM – although of course the conclusion of the project certainly does not mean the end of research dedicated to the themes addressed in our three volumes – was offered first of all by the site where our own "encounter" took place ten years ago, and thus where everything started, namely the (then) *Istituto di Studi sulle Civiltà Italiche e del Mediterraneo Antico* of the CNR.[1] It is therefore only right that we once again thank our first Director, Paola Santoro, who supported us greatly at the beginning of the project. Our warm thanks also go to our present Director, Costanza Miliani, at the new *Istituto di Scienze del Patrimonio Culturale*, who continues to believe in our research, and to Lorenza Ilia Manfredi, who kindly agreed to host this volume in the series of the *Supplementi alla Rivista di Studi Fenici*.

In addition, we are truly grateful to all those colleagues, both within and beyond the CNR, whether belonging to Italian and foreign institutions or working as independent researchers, who have enthusiastically participated in the volumes, bringing their knowledge and skills, stimulating lively scientific debate and – which is no less important – ensuring that dialogue could take place in an atmosphere of profound respect. All the authors of the three books – TCM I, II and III – have, with their different voices, helped to create what seems to us a rich (and, we hope, innovative) "polyphony" on the much-discussed themes of ancient and modern "identity", culture and interculturality, and on the processes of transformation that take place through the (continuous and inevitable) encounter and clash between different perspectives, different world views and different perceptions of the meaning of events and objects.

Last but not least, we wish to sincerely thank all our friends and colleagues working in the administrative and technical sections of the Institute, who have offered their professionalism to the realization of the project in its various stages, from the organization of the Conference in 2013 to the production of the present volume. In particular, we are grateful to Laura Attisani, who has applied her expertise to curate all the graphic aspects of this work and its layout, and to CNR Edizioni, the book's publisher.

For both of us, then, the TCM has undoubtedly been a wonderful theatre of confrontation, which, thanks to the support of all those who took part in it, has become a place of scientific and personal maturation, and for this we can only be profoundly grateful. In these times of crisis

[1] It then became ISMA (*Istituto di Studi sul Mediterraneo Antico*), which subsequently merged, in turn, with the recently established ISPC (*Istituto di Scienze del Patrimonio Culturale*).

and transformation, in which human mobility and encounter are strongly put to the test all over the world, we hope that we will soon experience again that dynamism and that possibility of lively but peaceful interrelations and cultural contacts that should characterize our multicoloured Mediterranean.

Giuseppe Garbati, Tatiana Pedrazzi
ISPC – CNR

THE TCM PROJECT: FROM BIRTH TO CONCLUSION

Sandro Filippo Bondì

The publication of the third volume of the series dedicated to the theme "Transformations and Crisis in the Mediterranean. 'Identity' and Interculturality in the Levant and Phoenician West" brings to completion a project that has required great commitment; it has been conceived and elaborated over almost a decade by Giuseppe Garbati and Tatiana Pedrazzi, who have put to good use their different but complementary skills as orientalists and scholars of the ancient world.[1]

It must be recognized that the project – certainly ambitious and apparently challenging to implement – has achieved significant results in many respects. First of all, it should be emphasized that, as evidenced by the three volumes that have marked the project's stages, scholars of different origin and training and very varied skills have been invited to contribute, with the result that opportunities have been created for comparison and debate from the point of view of the various disciplines involved, of the different periods discussed, and of the horizon that constituted the geographical framework of the research.[2]

With regard to methodologies and disciplines, the range of the contributions is particularly significant. Scrolling through the collections of essays in the three published volumes, one is struck first of all by the variety of approaches. These include (without claiming to be exhaustive): the study of ceramics, numismatics and urban planning; the analysis of funerary rites, epigraphy and writing, and the art of war; and the study of various aspects intrinsic to the societies examined and elements of law.

Specific insights were dedicated to the cultural realities of the various areas being compared, on an expansive scale that is typical of studies on the East and the Mediterranean in antiquity, which is testament to the practicability of the experiment conducted by this project in different places and times. Here, too, it is worth remembering that the contributions range (again the list is not exhaustive) from Mesopotamia to Asia Minor, from the eastern coast of the Mediterranean to Cyprus, from Sicily to North Africa, from Sardinia to the Iberian Peninsula. And in each of these areas we appreciate the variety of approaches that have helped to clarify important elements of the cultural dynamics that took place in the individual regions.

No less relevant is the chronological aspect, organized in the volumes into three phases (12th-8th, 8th-5th and 5th-2nd centuries BCE). The validity of the overall system, in my opinion, is

[1] On the project, see the following articles by its two coordinators: G. Garbati – T. Pedrazzi, *"Identità", incontri fra culture e prospettive plurilinguistiche nel Mediterraneo antico. Il progetto* Transformations and Crisis in the Mediterranean, in M.E. Cadeddu – C. Marras (edd.), *Linguaggi, ricerca, comunicazione. Focus CNR*, Roma 2019 (= *Plurilinguismo e Migrazioni*, 1), pp. 39-52 (https://www.cnr.it/it/plurimi.2019); G. Garbati, *The TCM Project: Studies and Reflections on (Phoenician) "Identity"*, in S. Celestino Pérez – E. Rodríguez González (edd.), *Un viaje entre el Oriente y el Occidente del Mediterráneo. Actas del IX Congreso Internacional de Estudios Fenicios y Púnicos* (22-26 octubre 2018), Mérida 2020 («Mytra», 5), pp. 917-923; T. Pedrazzi, *The TCM Project. Interculturality and "Mediterranean-Centric" Perspective*, in S. Celestino Pérez – E. Rodríguez González (edd.), *Un viaje entre el Oriente y el Occidente del Mediterráneo. Actas del IX Congreso Internacional de Estudios Fenicios y Púnicos* (22-26 octubre 2018), Mérida 2020 («Mytra», 5), pp. 961-967.

[2] Together with the present volume, see: G. Garbati – T. Pedrazzi (edd.), *Transformations and Crisis in the Mediterranean. "Identity" and Interculturality in the Levant and Phoenician West during the 12th-8th centuries BCE. Proceedings of the International Conference held in Rome* (May 8-9, 2013), Pisa-Roma (*Rivista di Studi Fenici*, suppl.); G. Garbati – T. Pedrazzi (edd.), *Transformations and Crisis in the Mediterranean. "Identity" and Interculturality in the Levant and Phoenician West during the 8th-5th centuries BCE*, Roma (*Rivista di Studi Fenici*, suppl.).

shown by the recurrence of many themes throughout the time frame considered, which gives depth to the system itself and dispels any sense that the contributions might have been casually chosen.

All this even before one recalls the fundamental core of the project, that is, the analysis of aspects of identity, of the transformations that have occurred as a result of the relations between various "ethnic groups" and of the crises that sometimes followed. With regard to the first aspect, one cannot fail to note that the concept of identity, in the sense in which it is commonly used today, is essentially foreign to the ancient world. Only one example comes to mind: Herodotus (VIII 144) defines Greek identity (*to hellenikón*) as the commonality of blood and language, places of worship, sacred rites and more generally of customs. This may also give rise to the same difficulty in modern thought, not only in defining the identity of ancient cultures but also – and perhaps above all from the TCM's perspectives – in recognizing in the term/concept of identity itself a fully operative research tool that is applicable to historical investigations. In recent years, a comprehensive debate has been under way on this issue, to which the two scholars who conceived the TCM project have recently made various contributions, mainly focused on the Levant and the Phoenician world.[3] One must remember, moreover, that in the last decade the Phoenician field has enjoyed a privileged position, with individual research, collective publications and study meetings dedicating a series of analyses to the subject.[4]

In the TCM volumes, alongside the attention paid to the methods of use and "management" of the notion of identity, emphasis is also placed on the notion of interculturality, another key term/concept of the research; and this interculturality has been explored, as already mentioned, in relation to different geographical quadrants and chronological phases, thus confirming the validity of a project that unfolds over a wide horizon of time and space. In all three volumes derived from the project, therefore, what clearly emerges is the centrality of cultural interactions, which matured at various levels, in the different territories examined (from the Levant to Atlantic Spain), as well as the formation of mixed communities (of which numerous settlements in Cyprus and Sardinia are now very evident examples) and the presence of individuals and/or communities of Levantines, mostly "Phoenicians", in foreign lands (Etruria and Egypt are both emblematic in this respect). Such dynamics of encounter, which on the level of historical analysis must (rightly) entail the adoption of very nuanced visions of the concept of "culture", force us to see the different degrees of interaction and exchange (which may be more or less conscious and more or less marked, at times, by moments of conflict).

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[3] *E.g.* G. Garbati, Fingere *l'identità fenicia: Melqart "di/ sopra* ṣr", in «RStFen» 40, 2012 [2014], pp. 159-174 and T. Pedrazzi, Fingere *l'identità fenicia: confini e cultura materiale in Oriente*, in «RStFen» 40, 2012 [2014], pp. 137-158.

[4] To mention some examples: P. Xella, *I Fenici e gli "Altri". Dinamiche di identità culturale*, in M. Congiu – C. Miccichè – S. Modeo – L. Santagati (edd.), *Greci e Punici in Sicilia tra V e IV secolo a.C. Atti del Convegno* (Caltanissetta, 6-7 ottobre 2007), Caltanissetta-Roma 2008, pp. 69-79; C. Bonnet, *On Gods and Earth. The Tophet and the Construction of a New Identity in Punic Carthage*, in E.S. Gruen (ed.), *Cultural Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean,* Los Angeles 2011, pp. 373-387; C. Bonnet, *Lorsque les "autres" entrent dans la danse ... Lectures phéniciennes des identités religieuses en contexte multiculturel*, in P. Payen – É. Scheid-Tissinier (edd.), *Anthropologie de l'Antiquité. Anciens objets, nouvelles approches*, Turnhout 2012, pp. 101-119; J.C. Quinn – N.C. Vella (edd.), *The Punic Mediterranean: Identities and Identification from Phoenician Settlement to Roman Rule*, Rome 2014 («Archaeological Monographs of the British School at Rome»); P. Xella, *"Origini" e "identità"*, in «MEFRA» 126, 2014 (on line: http://journals.openedition.org/mefra/2278); F. Porzia, *"Imagine There's No Peoples". A Claim against the Identity Approach in Phoenician Studies through Comparison with the Israelite Field*, in «RStFen» 46, 2018, pp. 11-27; J.C. Quinn, *In Search of the Phoenicians*, Princeton 2018; I. Oggiano, *Who Were the "Phoenicians"? A Set of Hypotheses Inviting Debate and Dissent*, in «JRA» 32, 2019, pp. 584-591.

As we can see, aspects of interculturality remain prevalent in the set of achievements that the project has generated in the course of its development. In the climate that we have been experiencing in recent decades, in which many people prefer to emphasize identity differentiations rather than commonality, this may be a useful reminder to us of the substantial unity that in many respects the ancient world knew in the Mediterranean area: not *mare nostrum*, but everyone's sea.

HEGEMONIES, CONNECTIONS AND CONTEXTUAL SPECIFICITIES. TOWARDS THE PHOENICIAN WEST (5TH-2ND CENTURIES BCE)

Giuseppe Garbati*

1. Preliminary note

In the introduction to the "western" section of the second TCM volume, which was dedicated to the period spanning the 8th to 5th centuries BCE,[1] I tried to highlight some of the most significant lines of interpretation and methodological perspectives on which recent research has particularly focused in relation to the study of the Phoenician settlements of the West. In that contribution, I took the opportunity to emphasize, in particular, an aspect that has largely characterized the scientific approaches of the last years, and which has gradually become an unavoidable component of our sector of studies. I refer to the growing centrality assumed by the examination of *local specificity* and *variability*, which, beyond the shared cultural aspects among different contexts, marked very complex processes, such as the arrival of the Phoenicians in the western Mediterranean and the progressive emergence of the hegemonic role played by Carthage (Fig. 1).[2] The centrality of such factors has been translated – as is clearly shown by the contributions collected in TCM II – into the study of the situational and local dimensions and also, inevitably, into the analysis of the dynamics of interaction maintained by the Phoenicians with the indigenous communities and with the other great interlocutors of the time (above all, the Greeks). This perspective has entailed, in part at least, the rereading of those same macro-processes – the Phoenician diaspora and Carthaginian hegemony – using more nuanced approaches, so as not to yield to the tendency to see such processes as monolithic systems, but rather as complexes of dynamics that took on specific and differentiated forms in the various times and places concerned.[3]

As I tried to underline in that introduction, the attention paid in recent studies to local specificity and variability has been accompanied, more or less directly, by reflections specifically focused on some terminological problems, which have returned resoundingly to the centre of the scientific debate. Indeed, the study of a "colonial" world characterized from the very beginning by a variety of situations[4] has raised the thorny question of how that world should and/or could be conceptually delimited and concretely defined (as a whole and in its various phases). From this viewpoint, criticism was particularly levelled at the traditional terminology used and, more specifically, at the words "Phoenician" and "Punic", considered by many to be non-operative by virtue, *in primis*, of their "invention" and external adoption – Greek and Latin – with respect to the civilization to which they have been attributed, as well as their modern, historiographic and disciplinary reinvention as denominations of a culture and its developments.[5] On this level there was vigorous discussion on the possibility of outlining a common "Phoenician" (and "Punic")

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[1] Garbati 2016; Garbati – Pedrazzi 2016.

[2] Cfr. Bondì 2014.

[3] Cfr. also Garbati – Pedrazzi 2015.

[4] See, for instance, the internal situation of Sardinia: Bernardini 2011.

[5] Prag 2006; van Dommelen – Gómez Bellard 2008a; Bondì 2014; Prag 2014; Ercolani 2015; Quinn 2018, pp. 44-62.

identity that might be assigned to different regions and contexts as a result of recognizing (beyond variability this time) characteristics of homogeneity and coherence.[6]

Fig. 1. Map of the main Phoenician settlements of the western Mediterranean (author's elaboration after Bondì *et alii* 2009, p. 95, fig. 3).

Now, without going into the merits of all the issues raised by such historical and methodological reflections, which have already been partially addressed in the above-mentioned contribution,[7] it should be stressed that the question of local specificity and variability – together with the related terminological uncertainties – is also highly pertinent (and it could not be otherwise) to the period explored in this third and final TCM volume, which after all overlaps with the preceding volume at the upper chronological border. For the western Mediterranean, the 5th to the 2nd centuries BCE were certainly a very complex and in some ways troubled period; indeed, they were marked by rather precarious balances, constantly oscillating between tendencies towards centralization and connection – more or less forced and traumatic, if not violent – and deep local differentiations, between the affirmation of shared languages and the local variations that those languages took on. It is therefore worth dwelling briefly on some features of the historical context behind the contributions that make up the second section of this book. The intention is not of course to offer

[6] Van Dommelen – Gómez Bellard 2008a; Gómez Bellard 2014, p. 75. In recent years, in the Anglo-Saxon environment there has been widespread use of the expression "Phoenician speakers" as a common descriptive term for multiple regions and contexts. However, it is a usage that contributes little to research dedicated to the Phoenicians and risks further complicating the lexicon of a problem without providing a concrete solution to the problem itself.

[7] See also Porzia 2018; Garbati – Pedrazzi 2019, pp. 41-44.

a detailed description of the processes and phenomena – ranging from contextual peculiarities to pressures to connect – that occurred during the period in question, as that would be unachievable in a limited space; rather, the aim is to set the case studies that will be presented within a general framework, and perhaps to suggest some food for thought.

2. The 5th-2nd Centuries BCE

2.1. *Hegemonies and Connections*

Throughout its development, and unlike the previous ages, the period from the 5th to the 2nd century BCE was characterized by strong centralizing forces and by moments of opposition and belligerence between different entities, mostly represented by those cities (primarily Athens, Carthage and Rome) that gradually emerged as "international" powers, claiming from time to time their own positions of dominance.[8] Of course, one cannot help agreeing with M. Giangiulio when, specifically in relation to the 5th century, he reminds us that «una rappresentazione del Mediterraneo classico in termini di zone di dominio o di influenza costruite dalle politiche di potenza delle unità politiche attive in quel contesto imposta in termini estremi una contrapposizione con il Mediterraneo arcaico che va invece evitata, o perlomeno circostanziata assai attentamente»;[9] on the other hand, the classical Mediterranean (and, later, that of the Hellenistic period), beyond the emerging powers and as in the previous ages, was involved in the «capillare e in gran parte irrecuperabile vicenda della mobilità individuale (…). Il riferimento è naturalmente agli spostamenti degli artigiani e degli artisti, dei retori e dei filosofi, dei commercianti e degli avventurieri, dei mercenari e dei condottieri, dei generali e degli uomini politici…».[10] If human mobility, in its various facets, continued therefore to plow the seas and the lands without any evident break with earlier times, it is true that from the 5th century BCE onwards, innovative developments materialized: as already mentioned, some cities acquired a dominant position in the international arena and, at the end of these processes, many settlements and regions experienced substantial changes of original configuration; moreover, the same processes certainly also influenced, in their various phases, that human mobility.

Focusing in greater detail on the western Phoenician Mediterranean, the beginning of the period in question first saw the affirmation of the hegemonic role of Carthage. Although there is lively discussion about the times and ways in which the dominance established by the metropolis developed,[11] it is undeniable that as early as the 5th century, with warning signs appearing in the second half of the 6th century or earlier, the city implemented territorial and commercial control strategies that far exceeded the North African borders.[12] Contrary to what has often been claimed

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[8] On the historical framework cfr. generally the chapters devoted to the western settlements in Bondì *et alii* 2009.

[9] Giangiulio 2008, pp. 13-14.

[10] Giangiulio 2008, p. 15.

[11] On the various phases in which the overseas projection of Carthage developed see Maraoui Telmini *et alii* 2014 and, most recently, Secci 2018 and 2019, with bibliography.

[12] These dynamics find a correspondence in the material data: «Specific elements of Carthaginian, and in some cases more generally North African, material culture are indeed seen to enter the repertoires of material culture in other central and western Mediterranean areas by the sixth century. As well as the introduction of certain new pottery types, ceramic figurines and decorated ostrich eggs into burial assemblages and household contexts, one could mention in particular burial customs, such as the shift from cremation to inhumation» (Maraoui Telmini *et alii* 2014, p. 115; on the question of funerary rituality cfr. *infra*). In this period, as is well known, the literary sources place the campaigns of Malchus and the Magonids in North African territory, in Sicily and Sardinia (Garbati 2018a and 2018b), as well as

in past historiography, the 5th century did not represent for the city, as it was for the rest of the Phoenician settlements, a moment of generalized crisis: what for a long time has been observed and understood as an enigmatic period – apparently poor in data and, for precisely that reason, interpreted as a critical phase – appears today to be marked by evident processes of growth, recognizable in various contexts.[13] The dominant position occupied by the city of Elissa, then, manifested itself mainly (as has been clarified by more or less recent studies) in the management of a dense network of commercial connections which, partly founded on the circuits created in the previous ages, involved a number of Phoenician settlements (with particular reference to Sicily, Sardinia and the Balearics, in addition to North Africa), without being translated, however, into forms of territorial occupation.[14] One of the central elements of these connections was the excellent relationships that the city had with the other great power of the time, Athens, which in the 5th century, at the end of the Persian wars, was enjoying a period of tremendous prestige: the "Mediterranean centrality"[15] acquired by the *polis* materialized in the weaving of an extensive network of contacts, attested by, among other things, the widespread diffusion of ceramics that replaced the productions of the previous age (especially Corinthian). During the 5th century BCE, and in particular in its mature and final stages, Carthage was therefore a destination for Attic products, particularly both figured and black-glazed pottery, which perhaps reached the metropolis after passing through the ports of Sicily and the Ionian coast of Calabria.[16] Within such a framework, as has recently been argued, the city was probably «a major node in a trade network that brought Athenian products into the central and western Mediterranean».[17]

In the period that followed the 5th century BCE, the centralizing tendencies of the North African metropolis became more defined and intrusive,[18] to the extent that they gradually hardened into conflict, which, through various phases and with different protagonists, would definitively change the political configuration of the Phoenician regions of the West. On the one hand, the age between the end of the 5th and the end of the 4th centuries BCE saw close and violent confrontation between Carthage and some of the Greek components of Sicily, Syracuse in

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the signing of important diplomatic agreements, as in the case of the treaty between the metropolis and Rome in 509 (Pol. III 22,1-13) or of the very close relationships that Carthage had in roughly the same period with the Etruscan Caere (very well attested by the Pyrgi inscriptions; see Bellelli 2016).

[13] The 5th century issue was specifically addressed in the international conference *La Sardegna nel Mediterraneo occidentale dalla fase fenicia all'egemonia cartaginese: il problema del V secolo*, held in 2013 in Santadi (SU, Sardinia); the proceedings of the conference are to be published. On this topic see, generally, Bondì in press; I warmly thank the author for allowing me to read his contribution before its publication. The remarkable growth of some Phoenician settlements in this phase is well documented in various contexts, such as in Carthage itself: «During the sixth and fifth centuries BCE, the city witnessed internal changes in the urban fabric, including expansion, restructuring, and the introduction of a waste-management system. These important changes were contemporaneous with Carthage's rise as an economic, religious and political power in the central and western Mediterranean, as well as – and partly as a result of – a strengthened cultural influence upon the areas concerned» (Maraoui Telmini *et alii* 2014, p. 146).

[14] See, among others, Whittaker 1978; van Dommelen 1998; van Dommelen – Gómez Bellard 2008b; Maraoui Telmini *et alii* 2014; Secci 2018 and 2019.

[15] The phrase is taken from Giangiulio 2008, p. 15. It is precisely in the 5th century that the foundations were laid for the birth and development of what would become a common Greek language, of Attic basis, used in the Hellenistic and Imperial age as a standard written variety (Ciancaglini – Kaczko 2008).

[16] Maraoui Telmini *et alii* 2014, pp. 133-136; cfr. Morel 1995.

[17] Pilkington 2019, p. 112.

[18] Quinn 2018, pp. 87-89, with references.

particular.[19] It is perhaps not accidental, from this point of view, that from the very moment that the belligerent phase began, Greek literary sources showed, as has been suggested, less vagueness in their perception of the Phoenicians, attributing to them a "community" character that was more recognizable and distinctive than in previous ages: political and military opposition probably called for the attribution of greater cultural unity to those regarded as "enemies" (perhaps this could be read as an indirect testimony to a sort of successful attempt at cohesion, at least on the propaganda front, on the Carthaginian side).[20] On the other hand, the 4th and 3rd centuries were marked by the definitive consolidation in Italic territory of what would shortly become the Mediterranean power par excellence – Rome.[21] Of course, the famous and lengthy phase of confrontation between Carthage and the *Urbs* in the 3rd-2nd centuries BCE was preceded by an even longer period of agreements and diplomatic relations, with the continuous redefinition of the respective areas of influence (even to the point, in certain phases, of recognizing and tackling common enemies, as happened in the case of Pyrrhus, king of Epyrus). In the 60s of the 3rd century, however, Sicily was again the scene of the start of conflict; the war, which notoriously lasted for 118 years with alternating phases, reached across and shook the whole western Phoenician world until the fateful year of 146 BCE, when Carthage was destroyed.

2.2. *Common Languages*

Alongside the forms of domination and centralization, the affirmation of individual city powers and the associated moments of military confrontation, other quite different dynamics took hold in the period in question. The Phoenician West was affected by cultural phenomena which, partly in continuity with the previous phases, helped to build a framework of deep interconnections and sharing, and which gave life, in some ways, to a globalized panorama that far exceeded the sphere of conflict. Three examples stand out as perhaps the most significant.

Firstly, as early as the second half of the 6th century BCE (if not earlier), and even more widely during the 5th century, the "colonial" settlements experienced a significant change in funeral customs: the cremation rite, prevalent in the most ancient phases of the presence in the West – with the significant exception of Carthage –, was replaced by inhumation, which became the most commonly used ritual.[22] There is intense debate about the reasons behind this change. In recent years, in particular, several uncertainties have arisen concerning the traditional interpretation, which assigned a primary role in the phenomenon to the hegemony assumed by Carthage, a city in which the inhumatory rite had been the main form of burial from the beginning. The doubts in this regard were essentially based on the fact that other Mediterranean regions experienced similar transformations in the same period (for example, Attica).[23]

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[19] A date at the end of the 370s is attributed to the formation in Sicily of what the Greeks call Punic "epicracy" or "eparchy" (fully established only in the last quarter of the same century), which is the creation of a province militarily controlled by Carthage. Cfr. Bondì 1990 and 2006; S.F. Bondì, in Bondì *et alii* 2009, pp. 166-169; De Vincenzo 2013.

[20] After all, «the fifth century did see a distinct hardening of the boundaries between Greeks and non-Greeks in Greek literature, and the development of a more (though by no means entirely) oppositional and hierarchical sense of Greekness. The new characterization of the Phoenicians as "barbarians" fits into this trend, as does evidence for the assimilation of the Phoenicians with other barbarians in opposition to Greeks» (Quinn 2018, p. 54).

[21] De Cazanove 2008; Schettino 2008.

[22] Gómez Bellard 2014.

[23] I. Morris states that in Attica «by the mid-sixth century, inhumation was becoming more common for adults, generally

Secondly, from the end of the 5th century, and even more clearly in the following centuries, most of the territories of the Phoenician tradition, as well as other Mediterranean regions, following a "global trend" that involved the whole central-western Mediterranean,[24] were affected by the transformation of the rural landscape, partly dependent on a significant and generalized increase in population: numerous agricultural settlements, ranging from small farms and villages to large centres, began to crowd the countryside.[25] The phenomenon reached its climax in the Hellenistic period, gradually giving the territories a new physiognomy and new social and economic configurations. In many cases, moreover, the small settlements were the site of lively cultural interactions. We see a clear example of this in Sardinia after 238 BCE, the year of the Roman "conquest": on the island, the proliferation of rural sites was accompanied by the attendance of sacred rural areas that saw local communities adopting traditions and languages from the Italic world, if not also interacting with new individuals and groups from there.[26] As in the case of inhumation, it is not yet completely clear whether – and possibly how – the process was linked (also) to the hegemony of Carthage (and then of Rome). If most critics recently have preferred not to establish a direct link between the two phenomena,[27] it is still possible that the Carthaginian dominion, with its connective capacity, may at least have influenced, or even partially "directed", the dynamics that took place in the hinterlands.[28]

Thirdly, and certainly not least importantly, the "colonial" Phoenician world was the destination and theatre – from as early as the 6th century but in an even more meaningful way in the following centuries – of a renewed and extended human mobility (as mentioned at the beginning): it implied new encounters, goods' circulation, exchanges and the sharing of experiences.

extended and supine in pit graves» (Morris 1987, p. 22). On this question see Quinn 2013, p. 24, with references, and Secci 2018, in particular pp. 356-357 (which also suggests the possibility of an eastern Phoenician influence for the change in the funeral ritual, in the context of the reopening of relations between Phoenicia and the "colonies"). For the Phoenician world of the West, however, it should be emphasized (see Garbati 2016, pp. 141-142, note 13) that the awareness of the spread of inhumation, as a ritual prevalent in several (not only Phoenician) regions of the Mediterranean, cannot implicitly justify the complete denial of some role played by Carthage, where, we repeat, inhumation had been the main rite since the origins of the city. Tracing the transformations in funerary practices (only) to a largely Mediterranean dimension can mean, in fact, the decontextualization of the internal dynamics of the western Phoenician world, in which the affirmation of the Carthaginian hegemony represented one of the most characteristic and distinctive processes; of course, this does not imply putting the cultural transformations in direct relation with (discussed) conquest actions, as in the case of military episodes narrated by literary sources.

[24] Terrenato 2007, p. 142.

[25] On the configuration of the rural landscape in the various regions of the Phoenician West see van Dommelen – Gómez Bellard 2008b; Roppa – van Dommelen 2012; Roppa 2013 and 2014.

[26] Garbati 2017.

[27] Similar readings have been suggested for the Italic context; in fact, there has been little debate about the possible relation between the process of the increase in the rural population and Rome's conquest activity (cfr. Terrenato 2007).

[28] In the case of Sardinia, for example, it remains legitimate to ask whether some regions had a specific "destiny", being perhaps at the centre of the North African city's interests (see Garbati 2014-2015, p. 105, note 93). The creation in some territories of a hierarchical structure (such as those of Nora and Monte Sirai) suggests the possibility that the application of management methods coordinated by Carthage might be traced behind this "system". It is rather difficult to accept that, in a period marked by important diplomatic and political relations in which the major Phoenician colony was the protagonist, the mainly commercial "connections" managed by the city did not lead to more invasive projects or strategies of control in certain phases and places. This does not imply that one should see Carthage as the power that must have forged the countryside of the island, resulting in military and colonial actions, but rather that one should understand it as the impulse that contributed to the new configuration of some areas of Sardinia, although as part of a process that developed within the island communities.

On the one side, between the end of the 6th and the first half of the 5th century BCE, the western communities lived a renewed phase of opening relations with Phoenicia, thanks to the liberal policy implemented by the Persians in the cities of the Levantine coast. Expanding also into Cyprus and Egypt, the contacts brought to the West people, products and ideas that stimulated local traditions, affecting various aspects of social and individual life (from art to crafts, from architecture and urban planning to the religious dimension).[29] On the other side, new impulses, which this time came from different regions of the Greek world, both from the motherland and the colonies (the role played by Athens in the 5th century has already been mentioned), reached and were adopted in the western Phoenician centres, progressively becoming elements of an extended and widely shared Mediterranean language; in the past, such sharing has often been traced back to the much-discussed and questionable phenomenon that goes by the name of "Hellenization".[30] As exemplified by specific productions such as the terracotta figurines, the Greek impact began to be felt significantly as early as the 6th century BCE, taking on more marked forms in the 5th-3rd centuries, until often coming to the fore during the full Hellenistic age, compared to the models and influences of the previous periods.[31] Last but not least, one should remember that it was precisely during the Hellenistic age that a considerable contribution was made by Alexandrian culture, which found expression in various forms, from art to religion.[32] To give just one example, one might think of the cult of Isis in Carthage, attested in the 3rd-2nd century BCE, which perhaps arrived in the metropolis thanks to commercial contacts with Egypt, or the action of the Memphite priests, if not also the mediation of Cyrenaica.[33]

Overall, therefore, the Phoenician settlements of the West between the 5th and 2nd centuries BCE were part of an extremely interconnected world, both through internal networks of contacts and within the framework of very wide-ranging relationships; it was also a world that gradually entered a phase of profound transformations; a world, not least, largely affected by the diffusion of common, almost global and globalized languages that brought it closer – for some processes and phenomena (from the transformations of the rural lands to the adoption of Hellenic, classical and Hellenistic stimuli) – to other Mediterranean regions. In such a context, a central position was occupied by the affirmation of Carthage. Indeed, the hegemonic role of the city may have been manifested above all in the performance of a connective, commercial and cultural function, thanks to which it was possible to promote and facilitate the interrelations between the various Phoenician

[29] Ferjaoui 1992; I. Oggiano, in Oggiano – Pedrazzi 2013, pp. 53-86. This phenomenon is clearly shown, for instance, by the high-relief figure in tomb n. 7 of the *Sulky* necropolis (Sardinia, dated to the second half of the 5th century), which borrows from Levantine, Cypriot and Egyptian figurative languages (Bernardini 2005).

[30] Since the end of the twentieth century, especially following the new footprint offered by postcolonial studies, the effective operativity of the term "Hellenization", as is well known, has been widely questioned. In particular, the ethnocentric perspective inherent in the word/notion has been increasingly criticized due to its function of defining a historical process on the basis of the role played by a single cultural component – the Hellenic, considered in monolithic terms – in the context of interaction dynamics. Cfr. Péré-Noguès – François – Moret 2006 and Prag – Quinn 2013.

[31] Already marked in the archaic age by Greek influence of wide and varied origin, between the 5th and 4th centuries the production of clay figurines widely adhered to new trends, gradually adapting to the common language of Hellenism. The technique used for the manufacture of the products – the double mould – contributed to this success: it not only simplified and sped up the production processes, but also favoured the circulation of the models and their reproduction (with the respective local modifications).

[32] Ensoli 2016.

[33] These possibilities, as suggested by S. Ensoli (Ensoli 2016, p. 68), are not mutually exclusive.

regions, and between the latter and the entire Mediterranean (without excluding, at the same time, the development of direct relationships, not managed by the city, between the various Phoenician settlements and the other interlocutors of the time).[34] But beyond the role played by the metropolis, the tendencies towards connection and, in some cases, towards the spread of a "globalized" language, manifested itself strongly in that human mobility which, in concrete terms, was the real protagonist of the connection networks: indeed, the main theatres of exchange and shared experience, among the Mediterranean people, could only be ships, shops, ports, markets, streets, squares, cult places[35] and even battlefields, where the relationships also matured independently of political directions and military clashes.

3. Local Variabilities

The thrusts towards centralization, together with the stimuli for connection and sharing, which partially delineated an almost globalized landscape, represented only one of the trend lines of the historical framework that was established between the 5th and 2nd centuries BCE. Indeed, the processes of encounter and confrontation varied according to the regions, areas and contextual situations in which the new impulses and the new orientations (including political orientations) necessarily came into contact with the pre-existing communities and traditions, which continued to be decidedly active and largely autonomous (even after the Roman conquests): they contributed, in an area as vast as that of the western Phoenician Mediterranean, to the construction of a multifaceted panorama.

The affirmation of Carthage's hegemonic power, for instance, certainly did not translate into homogeneous forms or into predefined models applied repeatedly in the various phases and territories that became part of the city's sphere of influence.[36] Rather, the interference of the metropolis, which, as we have seen, initially asserted itself (at least until the end of the 5th century) above all on the commercial level and on that of the management of a network of connections, assumed different physiognomies based on the times and areas in which it materialized. It appeared very early (if one recalls the general situation) between North Africa, Sicily, Sardinia and the Balearics, while it occurred in later phases in southern and Atlantic Spain;[37] in Sicily, moreover, competition with the Greek colonies pushed the metropolis towards some strategic "choices" that were more invasive than those applied in other non-African areas. Even the impact made by the Greek world on the Phoenician settlements was not in the least uniform, nor did it involve all the centres in the same way,[38] still less was it implemented passively. The places from which the new impulses originated

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[34] On the direct relations between Sardinia and Sicily in the Hellenistic age see van Dommelen – López Bertran 2013.

[35] Emblematic of the Hellenistic age in this respect is the image of Alexandria as a very crowded city during a royal feast evoked by Theocritus (*Id.* XV 44-46) and used by C. Franco (2008; from whom the following is taken): «Per gli dèi! Quanta folla! Come ce la faremo? Quando si dovrà affrontare questo malanno? Come formiche sono, non si riesce a contarli e riconoscerli. Davvero, Tolomeo, hai compiuto molte e grandi opere!». The crowds and confusion «richiamano i "molti" che popolavano il Mediterraneo ellenistico, nelle metropoli come Alessandria, Antiochia, Efeso, Cartagine, la stessa Roma, ma anche grandi "scambiatori" come Rodi o Delo» (Franco 2008, pp. 625-626).

[36] Cfr., for instance, van Dommelen 1998.

[37] In the latter region, it appeared mainly from the 4th century and subsequently, even more markedly, at the time of the conflict with Rome, with the famous Barca family; see the recent Machuca Prieto 2019.

[38] For example, the contribution of Greek art to the production of steles in Carthage and *Sulky* was remarkable; similar influences did not intervene, however, in the productions of Tharros and Nora (S.F. Bondì, in Bondì *et alii* 2009, pp. 303-313).

were quite diverse – from mainland and island Greece to the settlements of Sicily and southern Italy and, in the Hellenistic age, Alexandrian Egypt – as were the ways in which those influences were transmitted – for example through direct contacts or through mediated relationships – selected and reworked locally, so as to be adapted to the culture that adopted them (with the consequent elaboration of original cultural products). Last but not least, according to recent research, the process that led to the widespread diffusion of settlements in the countryside, mentioned above, which gave a new physiognomy to the internal territories, did not follow generalized schemes; on the contrary, it manifested itself with results that developed independently in the various regions, based on the pre-existing cultural contexts. This differentiation – it should be emphasized – was read as evidence of the absence of predetermined strategies of occupation and exploitation imposed on the territories from outside by the dominant powers of the time (Carthage in this instance), as in the case of colonial type.[39] Finally, within and beyond the larger processes and their local variabilities, each region, each centre and each community obviously continued to undergo its own cultural developments, based on its history, more or less influenced by the "great" events of the period, by the choices, policies and movements of people.

At this point, bearing in mind the complexity of the phase we are discussing, marked by the maturation of common cultural aspects and by the different local variations, it may be useful to recall C. Franco's insightful words, which relate to the Hellenistic age but which might well be applied to the whole period under consideration: alongside the attempts to «dare coerenza a una varietà di forme sociali maturate in un arco cronologico e geografico molto ampio», as I tried to do in the previous page, it is «sempre più chiaro all'indagine moderna che la molteplicità prevalse (…). Per una riflessione non del tutto inadeguata sarebbe dunque necessario considerare separatamente ciascuna regione, per non dire ciascuna comunità, anzi ciascun individuo».[40] Of course, it would be impossible to carry out such an investigation, at least in our case: not only is this not the place to initiate and develop such a study (as it is beyond one's scope and skills and the space available), but if one were to attempt it, as Franco himself admits, one would run the risk of producing «una frammentazione d'analisi troppo dispersiva».[41] Nevertheless, it is possible to follow, at least in principle, some of the ways in which, in a framework of cohesions and connections, specificity and variability were expressed. To offer an image of the differentiations, albeit limited and partial, may complement the case studies that constitute, as already mentioned, the second section of this volume.

3.1. *Local Variabilities and (Western) Phoenician Perspectives: The TCM III Case Studies*

Between the 5th and 2nd centuries BCE, first of all, some western Phoenician contexts were characterized by an evident cultural fluidity due to the long-term phenomena of interaction. For some communities, such fluidity was expressed in the possibility of re-functionalizing elements belonging, at least originally, to different cultural traditions, on the basis of contingent needs. In TCM III, the example of North African tophets is indicative in this sense. In his contribution, Bruno D'Andrea shows how such a particular typology of sacred area was a very effective tool for claiming identity not only for the North African people of Phoenician origin, for whom it was a strong characterizing element, but also for the Lybio-Numidic groups. According to the

[39] Van Dommelen – Gómez Bellard 2008b; Roppa 2013.
[40] Franco 2008, p. 595.
[41] Franco 2008, p. 595.

author, starting from the 3rd century, and even more with the fall of Carthage, these groups "appropriated" the sanctuary, rooted for centuries in local culture, as an element of a renewed sense of unity in the face of the advancement of a new "other", represented by the Romans. In a difficult phase of transformation, therefore, the Lybio-Numidian populations conceived the tophet as a factor of cohesion against a centralizing pressure from outside. Confronted by Rome, the sacred place acquired a sort of transversal character from a cultural perspective; to vary – or to be adapted – was the function assigned to it in the specific context that, being directly dependent on the new historical framework, made it an original product, especially when compared to the perhaps more "traditional" tophets that were widespread in other regions (in Sicily and Sardinia).

Remaining in North Africa, the encounter between communities of different origins – Phoenician and indigenous specifically – led to different results in individual contexts belonging to the same region. For the age coinciding with the last phase of the Carthaginian hegemony in North Africa (between the 3rd century and the first half of the 2nd century BCE), the necropolises of Cap Zbib and Beni Nafa, in the area of Bizerte (north-eastern Tunisia), discussed in the work of Imed Ben Jerbania, are emblematic in this respect. In the two funerary areas, the differences were expressed in almost all the elements that made up the sepulchral contexts, from the architectures to the rituals and funerary goods: in these elements the interaction between the indigenous and the Phoenician components was modulated according to local, autonomous choices, with outcomes that did not coincide each other. If, for example, Beni Nafa maintained a very strong link with the indigenous traditions, while certainly not closing itself off to external stimuli, Cap Zbib was more embedded in the network of circuits in which Carthage was one of the main actors. The necropolises presented in the two case studies therefore responded to a very fluid climate, so much so that they seem to belong to two distinct, albeit connected, dimensions. What has been ascertained so far about the Bizerte region, after all, has made it possible to reconstruct a picture of a territory in which cultural encounters resulted in the various contributions – particularly Numidic and Punic – being mixed together each time in original ways, without following a consistent model.

In a highly variable cultural dimension, different communities could also follow similar paths. Shifting the focus to Sicily and, more specifically, to the settlements of Motya and Panormos, the article by Meritxell Ferrer revolves around the different functionalities that the sepulchral areas of the two sites, in the context of social life, assumed in the transition from the more ancient phases to those that began in the second half of the 6th century BCE (coinciding with the above-mentioned change of the funerary ritual). The author highlights how the two necropolises were conceived at first as central places for building a sense of community; this function was accompanied by the expression of an image of uniformity, which aimed perhaps to mask social differences and was manifested in the configuration of the sepulchral space. From the mid-6th century, however, a greater internal heterogeneity began to distinguish the cemetery areas, to the extent that both became sites where, in a more accentuated way, social and family differences were expressed. Among the factors in this change, according to the author, a central role was played by the preference for other places in the settlements (temples, for example) as seats of the community dimension, as spaces more concretely used for the representation of the collective. Thus, the participation of two different communities – those of Motya and Panormos – in a shared historical process, despite the local peculiarities, calls for balance in our historical evaluation: while the variability and differences should certainly be investigated, as we have seen above and will see again below, the analogies and similarities also undoubtedly remain fundamental elements, which need to be analysed and interpreted.

Variability found a further manifestation in the apparently divergent paths that certain settlements in the period in question followed with respect to a more general and common cultural "climate". This is what happened, for example, in Tharros, which was perhaps an early "Punic" site within the panorama of "Phoenician" settlements in Sardinia. Based on some recent hypotheses focused on the possibility that an economic and cultural expansion of Carthage had already occurred between the 8th and 7th centuries BCE,[42] the work of Anna Chiara Fariselli highlights the cultural ties that the Sardinian centre had with the North African environment in the very earliest stages, before the mid-6th century – *i.e.* before the time traditionally understood as the starting point of the metropolis's overseas policy. In this sense, Tharros seems to experience a specific cultural continuity that renders the classic distinction between "Phoenician" and "Punic" inoperative, at least in this particular case. Rather, it is from the 5th and even more clearly during the 4th century BCE that the settlement must have undergone a phase of change, marked by considerable economic growth and, at the urban level, by evident monumentalization activities. The article puts forward the idea that similar transformations were probably promoted, among the possible causes, by the progressive rise in Sardinia of Carthaginian hegemony, which was certainly not marked by traumatic events. Comparing it to other Sardinian settlements, distinguished since their birth in an "oriental" sense, one cannot exclude the possibility, therefore, that the Oristano site soon took on a kind of "Punic" characterization, which increased in the course of time.

In some cases, then, a decisive role in the construction of peculiarities was played by the specific environmental, social and natural framework, the theatre of historical processes. Remaining in Sardinia, Andrea Roppa's study, which focuses on the phenomenon of the use and reuse of nuraghi in the Punic age, clearly shows how, starting from the end of the 5th century BCE, the island territory was affected by the proliferation of sites, especially small farms, which significantly changed the configuration of the countryside areas. The ancient Nuragic structures were also participants in this new configuration, and many of them, having been abandoned for some time, were frequented again (while others had continued to be used by local communities). This process, as the author stresses, did not take on a monolithic aspect, with modules and forms consistently repeated in the various parts of the island. The renewed attention to the nuraghi did not involve the whole of Sardinia but rather characterized the internal areas, far from the main sites of Phoenician tradition. Even the ways in which, and purposes for which, the buildings were reused – especially housing and worship – did not produce a homogeneous picture: on the contrary, they followed the characteristics of the individual contexts – their location, the structural features – as well as the possible reference to some symbols of the past. Once again, therefore, a broad and general phenomenon – the populating of the countryside, documented in many Mediterranean regions – was matched by local and situational variables; in this particular case, it was the environment itself that acquired new configurations, arising in part from the reinterpretation of some of its centuries-old settlement components (the nuraghi).

Finally, in certain contexts and at certain moments, local peculiarities expressed themselves with great force as a direct, albeit limited, response to new historical conditions. The example of the city of Cadiz is emblematic in this respect. In her contribution, Ana Niveau places at the centre of the investigation some distinctive structures of the Andalusian city and particularly of its necropolitan landscape: these are numerous ritual wells, the presence and use of which strongly characterized the city culture in the Barcid era, from the last third of the 3rd century BCE. According to the scholar,

[42] Secci 2018; 2019.

the proliferation of similar structures in the period, together with the associated sacrificial practices, was due to a phase of crisis that the city experienced following the arrival of the Barca: the activation of dynamics of profound Carthaginian interference, which also resulted in a significant increase in population, must have led to severe forms of both social and political imbalance within the local community. In some ways, then, the ritual wells constituted one of the ideological responses to the crisis, based on the search for a new community cohesion and a new civic identity – in other words, a form of reaction to the tensions of the particular moment. It is not clear whether or to what extent the Carthaginian authorities participated in the activation of this renewed collective sense; certainly, the adopted ritual solution had a short duration: it was linked specifically to Barcid politics and the crisis that ensued, to the extent that it was abandoned a few years later, with the entry of Cadiz into the Roman orbit.

The analysis of the processes of building civic identity is one of the central themes of Manuel Álvarez's contribution, which again is dedicated to the Atlantic city. His work, which concludes the volume, focuses on what represented perhaps the most characteristic aspect of the Gaditan community throughout its history: the cult of Melqart and, with it, the famous Herakleion, around which revolved a large part of the tendency towards cohesion by local communities. Through worship, Gaditan specificity was manifested in two particular aspects. On the one hand, there was the very close link between the cult of the Tyrian god and the local landscape: the latter, fluctuating between earth and water, meant that the functions of the divinity, in a complex game of references to Levantine traditions, were aimed at defending humans from the chaotic power of the ocean (and more specifically from natural disasters such as tsunamis, which must have hit the bay between the 8th and 3rd centuries BCE). On the other hand, there was the conception of the area as the limit of the known world, documented with certainty since at least the time of Pindar. These two elements – which were inseparable from each other (the established limit was neither to be exceeded, in one direction, by chaotic waters, nor to be breached, in the opposite direction, by people) – helped to build the "singularity" of Cadiz and to ensure that this singularity, which had already matured in the archaic phases, was maintained throughout the history of the settlement, right up to the Roman era.

The examples briefly discussed above, therefore, are indicative of the ways in which situational connections and specificities manifested in different contexts. The affirmation of the hegemonies, for example, translated into moments of adhesion to the dominant culture, as in the case of the relationship between Carthage and Tharros, or in reactions against domination (in phases of much clearer interference), as evidenced by the wells of Cadiz in the Barcid age or by the tophets in certain parts of North Africa in the face of Rome's arrival. In some circumstances, however, the local peculiarities were clearly expressed in the different gradations that the intercultural relations assumed within the same region, as attested by the necropolises of the Bizerte region. In still other circumstances, the key components of local specificities were the transformation of the landscape and its symbolic rereading: one might think, respectively, of the population of the Sardinian countryside after the end of the 5th century and of the cultural reworking of the landscape of earth and water that was distinctive of Phoenician Cadiz. Last but not least, as we saw at the beginning of these reflections, variability was accompanied by common (or comparable) paths of transformation that characterized different contexts; despite the obvious peculiarities, Motya and Panormos are instructive in this sense.

In essence, the collection of case studies, to which I would like to leave the floor now so as to proceed to the heart of the discussion, clearly reveals the complexity of the relationship between the great processes that took place in the Mediterranean, particularly in the Phoenician West between

the 5th and 2nd centuries, and the different local situations (more or less related to those processes), along with the corresponding specificities that matured, as we have seen, within each context.

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