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Networks of Commerce and Knowledge in the Iron Age: The Case of the Phoenicians

Michael Sommer

Regarding the Phoenicians' expansion in the Iron Age, controversy continues over chronology, areas affected, scale of migration, organization of trade, modes of interaction between Phoenician traders/colonists and the respective indigenous populations and means of maintaining contact and of transmitting information between 'colonial' settlements and the mother cities in the Levant. Critical problems arise from the textual evidence from the Phoenicians' neighbours; the archaeological material is also ambiguous regarding the ethnic and cultural identities of the populations involved. The paper uses available evidence to construct a model of how a diasporic network of commodity, population and information exchange could arise and be maintained in the power vacuum of the Early Iron Age Mediterranean, how it was adapted to political and economic change, so as to provide a tertium comparationis to the Greek model of 'colonization'.

Keywords: Phoenicians; Long-distance Trade; Colonies; Mediterranean

'Unde interrogati rustici nostri quid sint, punice respondentes Chanani.'¹ Thus wrote Saint Augustine as late as in the late fourth century CE, giving expression to his surprise that Punic was still alive as a language, and was spoken in the area surrounding Hippo Regius (modern Annaba), in Numidia. Not only did the peasants speak Punic, but they also regarded themselves as *chanani*, an expression of ethnic identity which links them directly to the Levant in the Iron Age whose inhabitants were called 'Sidonians' or 'Phoenicians' by the Greeks. Philo of Byblus, who wrote in

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the second century CE, called them *chna* (Canaanites), a term also derived from the western Semitic root *kn'n*.² Saint Augustine's *rustici* were by no means an exception: the Roman Emperor Septimius Severus, who grew up in Lepcis Magna, spoke Punic as his mother tongue and apparently felt himself close to the inhabitants of Syria (where his second wife Julia Domna came from), which benefited considerably from his rule. Heliodorus of Emesa, where Julia Domna was born, dubbed himself, in the third or fourth century CE, as a man 'from Emesus [Emesa], a city in Phoenicia, son of Theodosius who fetched his pedigree from the sun'.³ Another case is offered in the Gospels, which relate that when Jesus came to Tyre, he met a woman 'whose daughter was possessed by an impure spirit',⁴ a Greek (*Hellēnis*) and by origin a Syro-Phoenician (*Syrophoinikissa*). We have countless examples of individuals who defined themselves as Phoenicians, or were so defined by others.

The remarkable persistence—or, more accurately, revival—of Phoenician or Punic identities in the Imperial period is a complex matter that deserves some explanation. Certainly, the Phoenicians of the Iron Age were as much 'frogs around a pond' as their Greek neighbours.⁵ Furthermore, the Phoenicians' seafaring and commercial activities were likewise impressive, as were their colonial ventures which, like those of the Greeks, encompassed the entire Mediterranean, and even beyond.⁶ And yet, in terms of colonial diaspora, the migration of the Phoenicians had a fundamentally different pattern from that of the Greeks. Far fewer people were involved, and rather than an escape from the growing pressures of population, the Phoenician merchant adventurers were seeking new opportunities to make profits, new markets, and new sources of raw materials. Whether in Italy, North Africa, or Spain, the Phoenician settlements overseas were different from the Greek *apoikia* in almost every respect: first, their material culture displays far more 'indigenous' traits than that of Greek colonies;⁷ second, their settlements were much smaller in size, at least in the early phases; and third, with the significant exception of Carthage (to which we will return later), they disposed of no hinterland comparable to the Greek *chōra*, although the Phoenician presence undoubtedly influenced the material culture of neighbouring indigenous settlements. To sum up, while the Phoenician model of expansion in the Mediterranean is as specific and characteristic as the Greek one,⁸ the cultural element brought in by Phoenicians and Carthaginians is generally not regarded as a constituent influence in the formation of the classical world that took shape while Greeks and Phoenicians settled the Mediterranean coasts.⁹

It is fair to say that the Phoenician model of opening up, settling, and colonizing the Mediterranean differed in many respects from the patterns we know from the Greek world. In this volume, many types of networks set up by Greeks over various centuries are discussed. In order to point the way for a comparison we will have to address a number of questions:

1. Is the 'network' paradigm an appropriate heuristic tool to describe the development and organization of the Phoenician trading diaspora in the Mediterranean? In order to get to the bottom of this, we obviously need a little theory of social networks.

2. If so, what were the driving forces which led to the establishment of trading posts and settlements overseas? What impelled the tradesmen of the Levantine coastal cities to leave the security of their homes in exchange for an uncertain future in distant parts of the Mediterranean?
3. What factors enabled this network to endure over many centuries, surviving various critical turning points in the Mediterranean's history, and why did the network prove so relatively coherent? What kinds of knowledge management were practised, and how were information, commodities and people exchanged within the network? And finally, how did the network established by them develop diachronically?

It goes without saying that the evidence provides only sketchy answers to many of these questions, and the overall image we can draw from our sources is inevitably incomplete. Networks have been the subject of social theorizing for half a century or so, spawning a well-established sub-discipline of system theory, and a sub-sub-discipline of social sciences, that deal with social networks, for which there are now dedicated chairs, journals, organizations, annual conferences, and online discussion groups.¹⁰ There is an abundance of definitions, the most general one claiming that a network is a social structure consisting of vertices or nodes (individuals or collectives) which are linked to each other.¹¹ The maximum number of vertices within one system is generally given to be 150, beyond which the network becomes dysfunctional.¹² Networks require repeated (and not just occasional) and formalized interaction over longer periods of time. Beyond formal barriers and boundaries, a network comprises various kinds of relationships.¹³ Economically, a network is a middle-range phenomenon, half-way between market and organizational hierarchy.¹⁴ Network theorists distinguish between 'open' networks, which tend to be rather large and have relatively loose connections ('weak ties') between the vertices, and 'closed' ones, which feature strong but often redundant edges, and are usually smaller. 'Open' networks with weak ties are generally believed to accelerate the exchange of goods and ideas more than 'closed' ones.¹⁵

Though networks are by definition multi-polar and decentralized, in most cases they are nevertheless hierarchic. The hierarchic structure of a network is mirrored by the different numbers of connections (edges) that the various vertices have. A high quantity and/or quality of edges means access to a wide range of information, material, and symbolic resources, and accordingly reflects a high status within the system.¹⁶ As in von Thünen's famous ring model, there are nodes with different degrees of complexity and connectivity: central places of various levels with catchment areas of different size.¹⁷

With this in mind, it is easier to decide whether or not the 'network' paradigm is suitable for analyzing the cluster of entrepôts and settlements established everywhere in the Mediterranean from the Early Iron Age onwards by people coming from the Levant. Of course, this cluster did not come into being overnight. Rather, it was the result of a long process starting probably in the third millennium BCE, when first

contacts between the Levant and the Mediterranean west were established. In the second millennium BCE, copper in the form of the famous oxhide-ingots found its way from Sardinia via Crete to the Levant.¹⁸ It is probably stretching the issue to call such occasional contacts a 'network', but the situation changed dramatically after the collapse of the palatial centres shortly after 1200 BCE: after a short period of decline in the trans-Mediterranean trade (in which, however, the exchange of commodities continued to take place on a smaller scale), the commercial contacts between east and west became more intense than ever from the tenth century onwards.¹⁹

The resurgent production of luxury commodities in the Levantine coastal cities, which we find echoed in the biblical account of the construction of the Temple in Jerusalem, in the Homeric Epics and of course in the findings of precious artefacts of Near Eastern origin in Lefkandi²⁰ and Crete²¹ (Knossos and the Idaean Cave), required access to raw materials and markets. It also required knowledge: knowledge of navigational and nautical techniques, but first of all knowledge of places to procure such raw materials, and where to sell the finished products. The Levantine coastal cities with their relatively high degree of continuity between the Bronze and the Iron Ages could possibly build on the experiences of their forefathers, but more importantly on information acquired by visiting other places and establishing contact with different peoples. Scholars have described this process of gradual rapprochement as 'pre-colonization'.²² Though the material evidence is sketchy, it provides some notion of the stage that precedes the establishment of full-fledged settlements.

A quite instructive passage is offered by the tale of Eumaios in the *Odyssey*,²³ in which a group of Phoenicians visit the island of Syria to trade luxury items (i.e., prestigious high-value goods of no immediate practical use), and stay for more than a year, exchanging information with the locals, but kidnap the king's son. They bring young Eumaios to Ithaca and sell him to Odysseus's father.²⁴ The account gives us some idea how the exchange of goods and knowledge in the period of pre-colonization might have worked. The activity of visiting distant coasts and evaluating their potential for subsequent commercial interchange does not appear to require a centralized organization, like that of a royal palace.²⁵ Rather, it was propelled and performed by small groups of tradesmen operating on a modest scale, possibly individual ship-owners or trading companies sharing one vessel.²⁶ The apparent informality of relations, coupled with a certain regularity in the exchange of goods and information, makes 'network' a suitable category to describe the Phoenician's trade involvements.

Another story from the Homeric epics affords similar insights into the process: in a running contest, Achilles offered

a mixing-bowl of silver, richly wrought; six measures it held, and in beauty it was far the goodliest in all the earth, seeing that Sidonians, well skilled in deft handiwork, had wrought it cunningly, and men of the Phoenicians brought it over the murky deep, and landed it in harbour, and gave it as a gift to Thoas; and as a ransom for Lycaon, son of Priam, Jason's son Euneos gave it to the warrior Patroclus. This bowl did Achilles set forth as a prize in honour of his comrade, even for him who so

should prove fleetest in speed of foot. For the second again he set an ox great and rich with fat; and a half-talent in gold he appointed for the last.²⁷

The krater, in this case made by Sidonians, was not only by far the most precious prize awarded at such contests, but as an artefact it significantly also had a long prehistory as a gift and counter-gift. From a Greek perspective, it was regarded as normal that Phoenicians (the traders, the term is not necessarily restricted to people from the Levant) and Sidonians (the originators) as well as Greeks, all mutually formed part of each others' gift exchange system and *proxenia* networks.²⁸

This is admittedly an outsider's perspective, but nonetheless a revelatory one. Though Greeks and Phoenicians each conformed to their own model of expansion, it is impossible to draw a neat division between a 'Phoenician' and a 'Greek' network. Knowledge and goods flooded to and fro, quite unimpeded. In its early stages, this large, loose Mediterranean trade network was relatively unhierarchical, though the Levantine traders were obviously in the front line in the scramble for markets and sources of raw materials; whereas the Greeks, making their appearance on the scene later, remained at the periphery of the system. Being intermediate traders, the Phoenicians, as they were called by the Greeks, did the bulk of the transport and hence linked up the nodes within the system.²⁹

The relatively sudden revival of trade in the later Dark Ages was prompted by a conjuncture of assorted variables,³⁰ the focal point of which was the coastal plain of modern Lebanon. According to data contained in the Egyptian account of Wenamun, in the eleventh century the Phoenician cities traded in timber, including cedar and other types of wood from the Lebanon mountain forests.³¹ Even though they had skilled labour forces at their disposal, they ostensibly remained mere exporters of raw materials. This changed dramatically in the subsequent centuries. The biblical accounts of Solomon claim that, in joint venture with King Hiram of Tyre, the Israelite king equipped an expedition to Spain (Tarshish) every three years.³² At the same time, Hiram contributed substantially to the construction of the Temple in Jerusalem.³³ Be this historical fact or not, the rise of Tyre to hegemonic power in the Levant in precisely this period is echoed by other evidence, and trade contacts between the Levant and the Mediterranean west can be traced, for example, in the tombs of Francavilla Marittima in central Italy, in the emulation of Phoenician techniques in early Italic pottery (*impasto rosso*), in a Levantine bronze bowl from the Late Bronze Age hoard in Berzocana (Estremadura), and in the occurrence of visual motifs from the Levant (like the Herzprung shield on tomb stelae in south-western Spain).³⁴ While all this is too little to prove the precocious foundation dates proffered for some of the Phoenician colonies in Spain and North Africa (Gadir in 1104/3 BCE, Utica in 1101 BCE), it makes it equally impossible to dismiss the Phoenician presence in the west altogether.³⁵

Why the Phoenicians? What made possible the Phoenician coastal cities' sudden breakthrough from being suppliers of raw materials to being protagonists of intercontinental long-distance trade? Were they, like the Greeks, reacting to the growing population pressure and the shortage of arable land?³⁶ To be sure, the

Lebanese coastal plain is narrow, but it is immensely fertile and, according to the biblical tradition, Tyre imported huge amounts of foodstuffs from nearby Palestine. Were they driven into the sea by the expansion of the Neo-Assyrian Empire towards the Levant from the ninth century onwards, just as the Phokaians were expelled by the Persians much later (as some scholars believe)?³⁷ Or was it just the urge for profit-making that attracted them towards unknown strands?

Though they cannot be quantified as such, all the above factors figured in the genesis of the Phoenician colonial diaspora, but not necessarily directly. While land shortage was a problem in Phoenicia at all times, turning peoples' attention towards the sea and towards other means of subsistence, especially craftsmanship and trade, it did not urge the Phoenicians to leave their home cities and to settle elsewhere; nor did the expanding Assyrian Empire, though this was a source of substantial political pressure. In the long run, the Assyrians proved unable to assert more than a fairly indirect rule over the Levant, and this fact left the Phoenicians plenty of leeway to do their own business, both economically and politically. Nevertheless, the military expansion of the Assyrian Empire was decisive for the commercial growth of the Phoenician cities. It resulted in a precarious symbiotic balance: avid for luxury commodities, the imperial elite provided an insatiable market for the Phoenician centres of production; the Phoenician long-distance trade, in turn, was vital for the social mechanics of the Assyrian Empire. Decisive, however, for the quick expansion and initial openness of the Phoenician-dominated trade network of the Early Iron Age was the absence of highly centralized power structures. Though the institutions of kingship and royal palace survived in the Phoenician cities, they were merely weak replicas of palace centres such as Ugarit or Byblos.³⁸

The absence of centralized control was only transitional, however. While the ninth century BCE saw the resurgence of imperial power on a large scale, Tyre became, almost simultaneously, the hegemonic power within the Levant's regional system. Tyre integrated its neighbour and major rival city, Sidon, in one territorial state denominated the 'Kingdom of the Sidonians', stretching from the Nahr el-Kelb north of Beirut to present-day Israel to the south and asserting indirect rule over Cyprus.³⁹ Within this state, virtually everything was devised to serve Tyre's trade and its merchant classes. The kingdom featured a sophisticated settlement hierarchy, with Tyre sitting like a spider in its web and dedicated especially to long-distance trade, surrounded by major centres of production such as Sidon⁴⁰ (where the dyeing industry occupied large parts of the town) and Sarepta⁴¹ (a centre of pottery production) and with rural centres at the periphery. The transformation of the Levantine system had direct repercussions on the Mediterranean trade network. The open network of the Early Iron Age turned into a full-fledged world-system, focused exclusively on Tyre. The vertical relationship between Tyre and the various parts of the world-system are echoed in the famous 'Lament over Tyre' in the book of Ezekiel:

The inhabitants of Sidon and Arvad were your rowers; your wise men, O Tyre, were aboard; they were your pilots. The elders of Gebal and her wise men were with you

repairing your seams; all the ships of the sea and their sailors were with you in order to deal in your merchandise. Persia and Lud and Put were in your army, your men of war. They hung shield and helmet in you; they set forth your splendour. The sons of Arvad and your army were on your walls, all around, and the Gammadim were in your towers. They hung their shields on your walls all around; they perfected your beauty. Tarshish was your customer because of the abundance of all kinds of wealth; with silver, iron, tin and lead they paid for your wares. Javan, Tubal and Meshech, they were your traders; with the lives of men and vessels of bronze they paid for your merchandise.⁴²

This passage—in all likelihood a text⁴³ originating in Tyre herself and dating back to the eighth century BCE—clearly illustrates the city's central position in the Mediterranean trade network, whereas the role of other Phoenician cities (Sidon and Arvad) was largely to support Tyre's trade and provide soldiers for its army; the same did Persia, Lud (Lydia) and Put (probably Libya); Tarshish (Southern Spain⁴⁴) imported luxury commodities from Phoenicia and in turn supplied metals; Javan (Ionia), Tubal (the Iberian peninsula?) and Meshech (Cappadocia?) were Tyre's 'traders', an odd expression which could imply that Tyrians were resident there to perform their trade, or alternatively, that Tyrian commodities were traded via these places. Although the 'Lament over Tyre', for obvious reasons, exaggerated the city's importance, it cannot be dismissed that in the eighth century BCE the Phoenician metropolis was a veritable global player, the one focal point of the Mediterranean network that maintained direct links to most of the more peripheral nodes, much like a spider in its web, as noted before.

The links between Tyre and its colonies remained close. According to Diodorus Siculus (20.14), the Carthaginians sent a delegation to the sanctuary of the Tyrian Melqart year by year, for centuries. Diodorus claims that the sacrificial offerings brought to Melqart accounted for one-tenth of the Carthaginian fiscal budget, although the proportion diminished with time. If this is true, the Carthaginians were, in sharp contrast to Greek colonists, liable to the payment of tribute. Nothing prevents us from assuming that other Phoenician colonies did the same, thus making the Melqart sanctuary not only a steady source of revenue for the mother city, but also a marketplace of information and knowledge. The paramount importance of Melqart throughout the Phoenician colonial diaspora, especially his association with seafaring, suggests that the god played a key role in keeping the network alive—different from, but analogous to, the oracle of Delphi.⁴⁵

From the early seventh century BCE onwards, however, the patterns of the network changed dramatically. Old peripheries gradually developed into new centres, like North Syria and the Aegean; little by little, Tyre lost its focal position, and the network became polycentric once again. In the same period of time, what we call the 'Punic' civilization took shape in the western Mediterranean. The colonial diaspora in this area now featured a material culture strongly influenced by, but clearly distinct from, Tyre and the other centres in the Levant.⁴⁶ One element which set apart the Punic world from the rest of the Mediterranean (including Phoenicia proper⁴⁷) was the *tofet*,

a sanctuary whose precise function remains unknown, but which is generally associated with human sacrifice.⁴⁸ Also, other features of material culture (like the two-spouted lamps, whereas the ones used in Phoenicia proper were one-spouted⁴⁹), the language used in inscriptions—and, apparently, the religious and ethnic identity—contrasted with what we know from the Levant.⁵⁰ Less evident in the material evidence, but certainly more decisive for Mediterranean history, was the gradual transformation of the Punic world into a powerful albeit informal empire controlled by Carthage.

Why did the balance in the Phoenician world shift towards the west? And why to Carthage? Why did the Punic world display such cultural homogeneity, though most of the settlements in the western Mediterranean were no foundations of Carthage, but rather fellow colonies established by Phoenicians from the Levant? Many scholars tended to believe that the big shift followed a master plan devised to deal with political decline in the east; that the foundation of Carthage and the western colonies was a long-term strategy designed by far-sighted statesmen in Tyre.⁵¹

Flattering as the attribution of such a political vision may be for the Phoenicians, the idea of a master plan seems a post-festum notion contrived by modern scholars. First, the political and economic decline of the Phoenician centres in the east cannot be traced in the evidence. To be sure, there was political pressure, but documents such as the so-called treaty between Baal and Asarhaddon, dated to the 670s BCE, rather prove the persistent efficacy of the symbiotic balance between Assyria and Phoenicia.⁵² And not even the Chaldaeans, who put Tyre under siege a century later (581–68), succeeded in imposing a lasting supremacy over Phoenicia.⁵³ Achaemenid rule was a period of prosperity for the coastal cities, though Tyre's hegemony in terms of *realpolitik* now clearly belonged to the past.⁵⁴ There was probably no *political* reason to shift the centre towards the west.

Secondly, Carthage's assumption of leadership in the western Mediterranean was by no means instantaneous. As pointed out earlier, until the late fifth century BCE, the general image is rather diffuse. There was, obviously, some notion of belonging together, but the links between the various nodes had weakened again. It was within the renewed openness of the Mediterranean network that a distinct 'Punic' identity took shape, of which a common language, religious practices, along with participation in the long-distance trade and the growing political power of Carthage, were constituent elements. By no means foreseen by wise politicians, this process was totally contingent, though its ingeniously chosen location at the crossroads of the Mediterranean and trans-African trade routes, and at the heart of the most fertile coastal strip of present-day Tunisia, contributed substantially to Carthage's later success. The Carthaginian empire was essentially the fruit of the dynamism inherent in an open network: the free flow of information, people, and material reinforced existing ties and created new ones. The result was a complete reshuffle of the Mediterranean system, from which the west largely benefited—not only Carthage, but in the long run also Rome.

To sum up, the ‘network’ paradigm is most apt for explaining the genesis of the Phoenician commercial diaspora in the Mediterranean, and its gradual transformation into an informal empire dominated by Carthage. It has become evident, however, that network links did not necessarily connect existing cultural, linguistic, or ethnic identity groups. In this respect, we should not speak of a ‘Phoenician’ or a ‘Greek’ network, but rather of a composite Mediterranean network to which Phoenicians, Greeks and ‘indigenous’ populations, settled and mobile groups, traders and producers of commodities, mercenaries and slaves each contributed to a specific extent. Finally, far better than other models, the network paradigm explains the shift from east to west, from Tyre to Carthage, that took place gradually from the seventh century onwards. Sketchy as this outline had to be, due to the evidence available it has hopefully managed to provide a paradigm for comparison, a ‘non-Greek model of expansion’ that fits into the aforementioned single, composite Mediterranean network, whose many facets are the subject of this volume.

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Notes

- [1] August. Epist. 13.
- [2] Referring perhaps to the colour red and the artisanship of purple dyeing. In the Hebrew bible, Canaan is the son of Ham and the father of Sidon (Genesis 9:18; 10:15).
- [3] Helioid. 10.323. For additional information on the author and his work Nesselrath, ‘Heliodor’.
- [4] Marcus 7:25–26.
- [5] The notion of the Mediterranean as a common ground of the people living next to it, very present in Braudel, *Mediterranean*, has recently been revitalized and universalized by Horden and Purcell, *Corrupting Sea*. Cf. the instructive review by Shatzmann.
- [6] On the Phoenician expansion in the Mediterranean in general, among others, see Whittaker, ‘Western Phoenicians’; Sznycer, ‘Expansion’; Bunnens, *L’expansion*; Aubet, *Phoenicians*; Sommer, *Europas Ahnen*, 99–121; Sommer, *Phönizier*, 113–43.
- [7] For the pottery, see Schreiber, *Cypro-Phoenician Pottery*.
- [8] Niemeyer, ‘Phoenicians in the Mediterranean’; Niemeyer, ‘Phoenician or Greek’, 45–46. Although the importance of agriculture in the Phoenico-Punic west has been re-emphasized in recent years (by among others Ameling, *Karthago*), the typological differences between the Greek and the Phoenician ‘colonial’ diasporas in this respect are quite straightforward. Even though Carthage relied heavily on agricultural production for its subsistence, the city was never dominated by an elite of landholders. For a survey of Carthage’s economic and political patterns, see Sommer, *Europas Ahnen*, 221–22 and 248–49.
- [9] See *pars pro toto* Boardman, *Greeks Overseas*, 8, where Phoenicians figure merely as ‘powerful rivals’ of the Greeks.

- [10] For an excellent summary see Rauner, 'Ziemlich verknotet'. On the development of social network analysis as a sub-discipline of the social sciences, see Scott, *Social Network Analysis*, 7–38. For more detail on network theory, see Ian Rutherford's paper in this volume.
- [11] Newman, 'Structure', 167: 'A network is a set of items, which we will call vertices or sometimes nodes, with connections between them, called edges. Systems taking the form of networks (also called 'graphs' in much of the mathematical literature) abound in the world. Examples include the Internet, the World Wide Web, social networks of acquaintance or other connections between individuals, organizational networks and networks of business relations between companies, neural networks, metabolic networks, food webs, distribution networks such as blood vessels or postal delivery routes, networks of citations between papers, and many others.'
- [12] The so-called Dunbar's number; see Dunbar, 'Social Network Size'.
- [13] 'Community structure' is a property shared by most social networks: Vertices are not distributed equally and homogeneously within the network, but they form clusters ('groups', 'communities') which again are linked to each other. The links between individuals are usually more frequent than links between groups. Newman, 'Structure', 17–19.
- [14] Powell, 'Neither Market', 300–305.
- [15] On weak ties and the accelerated spread of ideas within open networks, Granovetter, 'Weak Ties'; Granovetter, 'Revisited', 214–20. The innovative forces of open networks is now best exemplified by the rapid distribution of open-source software via the internet.
- [16] Scott, *Social Network Analysis*, 166–75.
- [17] Beckmann, 'Von Thünen'; Mills, 'Efficiency'.
- [18] Catling, *Knossos Area*; Coldstream, 'Greeks and Phoenicians'; Niemeyer, 'Die phönizischen Niederlassungen', 46–47.
- [19] On the collapse, see Liverani, 'Collapse'; Zaccagnini, 'Ceremonial Exchange'; Sommer, 'Untergang'. On the resurgence of the Mediterranean trade in the Early Iron Age, see Liverani, *Antico Oriente*, 629–60; Sommer, *Europas Ahnen*, 97–99.
- [20] Popham *et al.*, *Lefkandi I*.
- [21] Gehrig, 'Phönizier', 27–31.
- [22] Niemeyer, *Das frühe Karthago*, 23–25; Niemeyer, 'Phönizier am Mittelmeer'; Aubet, *Phoenicians*, 172–84; Sommer, *Phönizier*, 113–15.
- [23] The Homeric epics are, of course, not historical writing in the proper sense; like their origin, their historical context is still the subject of fierce debate, but they can be read as reflections of basic social and mental patterns of the period when they came into being. Equally, Homer's Phoenicians are not historical figures, and even as fictitious protagonists they would make sense in their literary context only if they were recognizable to the contemporary audience (for a critical assessment see Latacz, 'Phönizier'; Winter, 'Homer's Phoenicians'; Sommer, 'Peripherie'). No less disputed is the historicity of the Hebrew bible. Modern scholarship tends towards a sceptical point of view which puts emphasis on the narrative's functioning as 'intentional' history. The bulk of the texts was compiled during, and in the aftermath of, the Babylonian Exile, i.e., centuries after the period in which the events described supposedly happened (most notably now, Liverani, *Oltre la bibbia*). This does, however, not basically rule out the inclusion of earlier texts into the corpus, such as the 'Lament over Tyre' (Ezekiel 27, see below).
- [24] *Od.* 15.388–483.
- [25] Counter to the opinion of Aubet, *Phoenicians*, 77–118, who believes that the model of centralized palace organization played a major role in the process of Phoenician expansion overseas. The details cannot be discussed here, but the author's point of view is exposed in Sommer, *Phönizier*, 97–105.
- [26] A possible typological parallel is the Hanseatic League in northern-central Europe in its period of expansion. On the Hanseatic merchants and their operation, see Dollinger, *Hanse*, 17–24;

- Schildhauer *et al.*, *Hanse*, 38–67; Friedland, *Hanse*, 36–71. For a detailed structural comparison, based on Weber, *Die Stadt*, see Sommer, *Europas Ahnen*, 156–72.
- [27] *Il.* 23.741–52.
- [28] This view is corroborated by a famous honorific inscription (367 BCE) for Straton, king of Sidon, with whom the *demos* of Athens agrees to exchange the *symbola*. Austin and Vidal-Naquet, *Gesellschaft und Wirtschaft*, 241–42.
- [29] This stage of the Mediterranean long-distance trade network seems appropriately illustrated by the ‘peer polity interaction’ model, once popular in the archaeologies and used as a panacea to explain the internal forces of change within a given system of societies (‘peer polities’). Renfrew, ‘Introduction’.
- [30] In more detail, Sommer, ‘Peripherie als Zentrum’, 233–35.
- [31] For the account and commentary see Goedicke, *Report*.
- [32] 2 Chr 9:21; 2 Chr 20:36–37; Ps 72:10. With reference to the Tarshish ships: 1 Kings 22:49; 2 Chr 9:21; Jes 2:16.
- [33] 1 Kings 5–7.
- [34] On Francavilla Marittima, see Maaskant-Kleibrink, ‘Early Cults’. On the adaption of oriental pottery styles in Iron Age Italy, see Piergrosi *et al.*, ‘Sviluppo’; Niemeyer, ‘Die phönizischen Niederlassungen’, 50–55; Niemeyer, *Das frühe Karthago*, 23.
- [35] Archaeological evidence for use in dating the settlements is scarce. Niemeyer, *Das frühe Karthago*, 24–26; Docter *et al.*, ‘Radiocarbon Dates’, 568–70.
- [36] Aubet, *Phoenicians*, 56–59.
- [37] Frankenstein, ‘Phoenicians’; Gittin, ‘Neo-Assyrian Empire’; more skeptical are Oded, ‘Phoenician Cities’; Garbini, ‘Fenici in Occidente’, 128–37. Contra, with strong arguments and with chronological considerations in mind, are Niemeyer, ‘Phönizier am Mittelmeer’, 188; Niemeyer, ‘The Phoenicians and the Birth’, 245–46.
- [38] On the political institutions of the Phoenician city-states, see Sommer, *Phönizier*, 203–19. On the Levantine bronze age cities, see Liverani, *Antico Oriente*, 546–61.
- [39] And possibly even direct control over Kition and its vicinity. For a detailed reconstruction of the political history, mainly based on the literary evidence, see Katzenstein, *History of Tyre*, 102–10. See also Aubet, *Phoenicians*, 27–35; Sommer, *Europas Ahnen*, 96–97; Sommer, *Phönizier*, 159–65 and the TAVO map by Röllig *et al.*
- [40] Ciasca, ‘Fenicia’, 145–47.
- [41] Pritchard, *Sarepta*, 111.
- [42] Ezek 27:8–13.
- [43] For a thorough analysis of the Ezekiel passage, see Liverani, ‘Trade Network’.
- [44] Or, in my opinion, less likely Tarsos in southern Anatolia. See Koch, *Tarschisch*.
- [45] On Melqart as a focal point of urban identity throughout the Mediterranean Garbini, ‘Continuità e innovazioni’, 154–55; Bonnet, ‘Culte’; Bonnet, *Melqart*; Bonnet, ‘Héraclès’. On the cult of Melqart in Thasos, see Berchem, ‘Sanctuaires’. The importance of Heracles-Melqart as a syncretistic mythic figure in the Mediterranean ‘middle ground’ is now highlighted by Malkin, ‘Herakles’. On Delphi as a centre of communication and information in Archaic Greece, see Dunbabin, *Western Greeks*, 26–39.
- [46] For an outline, see Huss, *Karthager*, 28–38; Moscati, *Chi furono*, 132–37; Garbini, ‘Fenici in Occidente’, 128–29, who speaks of ‘occidentalizzazione’ and a process of ‘trapianto’ towards the west. A truly comprehensive history of the Mediterranean in the period preceding the Roman expansion is still much desired.
- [47] Though there may be traces of *tofetim* even in the east: for Tyre see Seden, ‘Tophet’, for Cyprus (Amathus) see Karageorghis, ‘Cyprus’.
- [48] See Karageorghis, 155–56; Moscati, *Adoratori*; Moscati, *Chi furono*, 63–64. For the archaeology of the tofet, see Moscati and Uberti, *Scavi al tofet*.

- [49] Garbini, 'Fenici in Occidente', 136–37.
 [50] Ibid., 136–37.
 [51] Ibid., 135–36.
 [52] SAA 2, §5.
 [53] Katzenstein, *History of Tyre*, 322–34.
 [54] Elayi, 'Cités phéniciennes'; *Économie; Sidon; 'Phoenician Cities'*.

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