

THE HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY
OF PHOENICIA

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Hélène Sader

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ABBREVIATIONS

AA	<i>Archäologischer Anzeiger</i>
AAAS	<i>Annales archéologiques arabes syriennes</i>
ABSA	<i>Annual of the British School at Athens</i>
ActAr	<i>Acta Archaeologica</i>
ADPV	<i>Abhandlungen des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins</i>
AeL	<i>Ägypten und Levante</i>
AfO	<i>Archiv für Orientforschung</i>
AHA	<i>Annales d'Histoire et d'Archéologie</i>
AHL	<i>Archaeology and History in the Lebanon</i>
AION	<i>Annali del Istituto Orientale di Napoli</i>
AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
Anab.	<i>Arrian, Anabasis</i>
ANESSup	<i>Ancient Near Eastern Studies Supplement Series</i>
AnOr	<i>Analecta Orientalia</i>
AnSt	<i>Anatolian Studies</i>
Ant.	<i>Josephus, Jewish Antiquities</i>
Ash-Sharq	<i>Ash-Sharq: Bulletin of the Ancient Near East: Archaeological, Historical and Societal Studies</i>
Atiqot	<i>'Atiqot</i>
AUSS	<i>Andrews University Seminary Studies</i>
AW	<i>Antike Welt</i>
AWE	<i>Ancient West and East</i>
BA	<i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>
BAAL	<i>Bulletin d'Archéologie et d'Architecture Libanaises</i>
BAH	<i>Bibliothèque Archéologique et Historique</i>
BaM	<i>Baghdader Mitteilungen</i>
BAR	<i>Biblical Archaeology Review</i>
BARIS	<i>Biblical Archaeology Review International Series</i>
BASOR	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BeirTS	<i>Beiruter Texte und Studien</i>

<i>Berytus</i>	<i>Berytus: Archaeological Studies</i>
<i>Bibl. hist.</i>	Diodorus Siculus, <i>Bibliotheca historica</i>
<i>BMB</i>	<i>Bulletin du Musée de Beyrouth</i>
<i>BO</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Orientalis</i>
<i>BolA</i>	<i>Bolletino d'Arte</i>
<i>BSFE</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société Française d'Égyptologie</i>
<i>C. Ap.</i>	Josephus, <i>Contra Apionem</i>
<i>CAM</i>	<i>Cuadernos de Arqueología Mediterránea</i>
<i>CAM</i>	<i>Cuadernos de Arqueología Mediterránea</i>
<i>CHANE</i>	Culture and History of the Ancient Near East
<i>CRAI</i>	<i>Comptes-rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et belles-Lettres</i>
<i>CSF</i>	Collezione di Studi Fenici
<i>DRBZ</i>	Dynastensarkophage mit szenischen Reliefs aus Byblos und Zypern
<i>DE</i>	<i>Discussions in Egyptology</i>
<i>DWO</i>	<i>Die Welt des Orients</i>
<i>EA</i>	El-Amarna tablets. According to the edition of Knudtzon, Jørgen A. <i>Die el-Amarna-Tafeln</i> . Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1908–1915. Repr., Aalen: Zeller, 1964. Continued in Rainey, Anson F. <i>El-Amarna Tablets</i> , 359–379. 2nd rev. ed. Kevelaer: Burzon & Bercker, 1978.
<i>EBR</i>	Klauck, H.-J., et al., eds. <i>Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception</i> . Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009–.
<i>EpAn</i>	<i>Epigraphica Anatolica</i>
<i>ErIsr</i>	<i>Eretz-Israel</i>
<i>Geog.</i>	Strabo, <i>Geographica</i>
<i>HACL</i>	History, Archaeology and Culture of the Levant
<i>HBAI</i>	<i>Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel</i>
<i>Hist.</i>	Herodotus, <i>Historiae</i>
<i>IA</i>	<i>Internet Archaeology</i>
<i>IEJ</i>	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>
<i>IJNA</i>	<i>International Journal of Nautical Archaeology</i>
<i>Il.</i>	Homer, <i>Iliad</i>
<i>IN</i>	Ivories from Nimrud
<i>JAEl</i>	<i>Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections</i>
<i>JArSci</i>	<i>Journal of Archaeological Science</i>
<i>JASR</i>	<i>Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports</i>
<i>JB</i>	Jerusalem Bible
<i>JEA</i>	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i>

JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
KAI	Donner, Herbert, and Wolfgang Röllig. 1973. <i>Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften</i> . Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
KTU	Dietrich, M., O. Loretz, and J. Sanmartín. <i>Die keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani und anderen Orten</i> . Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 2013.
KUSATU	<i>Kleine Untersuchungen zur Sprache des Alten Testaments und seiner Umwelt</i>
LT	<i>L'Archéo Théma</i>
MAA	<i>Mediterranean Archaeology and Archaeometry</i>
MadBeit	Madriider Beiträge
MadMit	Madriider Mitteilungen
Méd	<i>Méditerranée</i>
MDOG	<i>Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft</i>
MUSJ	<i>Mélanges de l'Université Saint Joseph</i>
Nat.	Pliny, <i>Naturalis historia</i>
NEA	<i>Near Eastern Archaeology</i>
NEAEHL	Stern, E. <i>New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land</i> . 4 vols. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993.
NIV	New International Version
NMN	<i>National Museum News</i>
NumC	<i>Numismatic Chronicle</i>
OBO	<i>Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis</i>
OBO.SA	<i>Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis, Series Archaeologica</i>
Od.	Homer, <i>Odyssey</i>
Op.	Hesiod, <i>Opera et dies</i>
Or	<i>Orientalia</i>
QDAP	<i>Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine</i>
QR	<i>Quaternary Research</i>
QSS	<i>Qatna Studien Supplementa</i>
P.Bologna	<i>Papyrus Bologna</i>
PAM	<i>Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean</i>
PBSR	<i>Papers of the British School at Rome</i>
PCEP	<i>Publications of the Carlsberg Expedition to Phoenicia</i>
PNAS	<i>Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America</i>
PRU	<i>Palais Royal d'Ougarit II</i> . Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1965–1970.
RB	<i>Revue biblique</i>

RDAC	<i>Report of the Department of Antiquities Cyprus</i>
RÉS	<i>Répertoire d'épigraphie sémitique</i> . Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres. Paris: Commission du <i>Corpus Inscriptio-num Semiticarum</i> , 1905.
RGTC	Répertoire géographique des textes cuneiforms
RIMA	The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods
RINAP	Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period
RLA	<i>Reallexikon der Assyriologie</i>
RS	Ras Shamra
RSF	<i>Rivista di studi fenici</i>
SAA	State Archives of Assyria
SAAB	<i>State Archives of Assyria Bulletin</i>
ScrHier	Scripta Hierosolymitana
Sem	<i>Semitica</i>
SER	<i>Salvage Excavation Reports</i>
SMA	Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology
SMEA	<i>Studi Micenei ed Egeo-Anatolici</i>
StEb	<i>Studia Eblaitica</i>
StMosc	Studi in onore di S. Moscati
StPhoe	Studia Phoenicia
StPohl	Studia Pohl
SupTranseu	Supplément à Transeuphratène
TAJA	<i>Tel Aviv Journal of Archaeology</i>
Transeu	<i>Transeuphratène</i>
VBBK	Verlag Butzon & Bercker Kevelaer
VHA	<i>Vegetation History and Archaeobotany</i>
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WF	Wege der Forschung
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
ZDPV	<i>Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins</i>

PREFACE

The last three decades have witnessed the publication of several monographs dealing with the history and material culture of the Phoenicians: Glenn Markoe (2000), Brian Peckham (2014), Mark Woolmer (2017), Josette Elayi (2018), and Josephine Quinn (2018) published in English; Michael Sommer (2008) and Morstadt (2015) in German; and Michel Gras, Pierre Rouillard, and Javier Teixidor (1989); Claude Baurain and Corinne Bonnet (1992); Véronique Krings (1995); and Elayi (2013a) in French, to name only some recent examples. An Oxford Handbook dealing with all aspects of Phoenician and Punic history and archaeology has just been published. Several exhibitions, such as *I Fenici* (Moscatti 1988), *Les Phéniciens et le Monde Méditerranéen* (Gubel 1986), *Liban, L'Autre Rive* (Matoïan 1998), *La Méditerranée des Phéniciens* (Badre, Gubel, and Thalmann 2007), and *The Sea-Routes: From Sidon to Huelva; Interconnections in the Mediterranean Sixteenth–Sixth c. BC* (Stampolidis and Karagheorgis 2003), to name only the most comprehensive ones, have also focused in recent years on Phoenician culture, expansion, and commerce. The Phoenicians are thus still calling for the attention of scholars and able to raise the interest of the public.

The novelty of the present study is that it approaches the subject from a divergent perspective: it focuses exclusively on contemporary written sources and on the archaeological evidence of the homeland. To date, in the reconstruction of Phoenician history and material culture, almost all publications relied heavily on the accounts of classical authors and on the results of excavations in the Phoenician settlements of the Mediterranean because of the lacunar evidence of the homeland. To focus exclusively on the archaeological results from the homeland in order to reconstruct Phoenician history and daily life is possible today because the available archaeological documentation from Phoenicia is substantial enough to allow new insights into its material culture, in spite of the unequal distribution of the evidence between its northern and southern parts. New, illu-

minating evidence has and still is emerging from the Iron Age settlements of Dor, Akko, Akhziv, Tyre, Tell el-Burak, Sidon, and Beirut in south Phoenicia. Important investigations are also taking place at Tell Kazel, 'Amrit, Tell Sianu, Tell Iris, and Tell Tweini in north Phoenicia, adding new substantial information to the older Tell Sukas excavation results. The study of the local remains of the Phoenician kingdoms will correct the rather skewed image of Phoenician culture and economy that has been proffered by examining so-called Phoenician materials found outside Phoenicia. Indeed, the issue of defining what is *Phoenician* based on objects from the colonies has been repeatedly criticized (Martin 2017; Quinn 2018).

Furthermore, while most publications have dealt with Phoenicia as one state and the Phoenicians as one people, recent studies (most recently Quinn 2018) have rightly questioned these assumptions and have argued that there was no unified country known as Phoenicia but four different kingdoms spread on the territory of the Levantine coast that the Greeks called Phoenicia, and that there was nowhere evidence that their inhabitants considered themselves as one people and identified themselves as such (also Woolmer 2017, 2). While it is obvious why the Phoenicians never referred to themselves as Phoenicians—since this term was coined and used by the Greeks—they also never used a generic term of their own to speak of the inhabitants of all four city-states and never referred to all these inhabitants as one people. In short, “the identity and history of the Phoenicians have long been defined by outsiders” (Woolmer 2017, 1), and scholars who used and still use the term *Phoenicians* seem to imply an ethnicity and a feeling of belonging to one nation that are nowhere attested in the written sources. When a citizen of one of these kingdoms identifies himself, he does it always in relation to his home city. The absence in the Phoenician language of a term equivalent to the Greek words *Phoenicians* and *Phoenicia* is indeed problematic, and Quinn (2018, xviii) is correct in pointing out that the Phoenicians never presented themselves as a people or ethnic group. She suggests that they were invented when nation-states came into existence: “In the case of the Phoenicians, I will suggest, modern nationalism invented and then sustained an ancient nation,” and she concludes that one cannot speak of the Phoenicians as “a people” but simply as “people.” However, nowhere in her book does Quinn define what she means by *nation* and *people* in order to test whether these definitions would accurately apply to the Phoenicians.

Even if we acknowledge with Quinn that the Phoenicians were not “a people” but “people” living in four different kingdoms, on a coastal stretch

referred to as Phoenicia by the Greeks, it is precisely these people that this book intends to investigate without a priori ideas about their ethnic belonging or identity. Whether the inhabitants of this coastal strip shared common cultural features that can justify identifying them as “a people” partaking in the same Levantine koine, or whether they turn out to have radically different cultural characteristics that would not support labeling them by the same generic term, is what the evidence collected exclusively from the homeland will assess.

Despite the fact that the term *culture-history* has been criticized (see Quinn 2018, 68–69, for a review), it seems useful to apply it here in order to understand why ancient Greeks perceived the Levantine coast as a geographic unit and its inhabitants as one undifferentiated group. Their assumption raises the following question: did all the inhabitants of the four Phoenician-speaking kingdoms share one common way of life dictated by similar environments and/or by their proximity to one another, as suggested by the Greek designation, or can one detect a clear distinction in lifeways in various parts of the Phoenician coast?

Another novelty this book claims is that it does not present a global history of Phoenicia but rather the history and archaeology of the geographical area occupied by the four kingdoms of Arwad, Byblos, Sidon, and Tyre. It will attempt to reconstruct and understand the way of life of these people in their home environment without filling in gaps with information from the western Mediterranean, as has been done previously. The latter approach has been largely misleading, as would be, for example, a history of Lebanon based on the achievements of the Lebanese diaspora. In this process, many of the clichés and stereotypes attached to the Phoenicians will prove to have no or little historical value.

In other words, the book focuses exclusively on the Levantine coast whose inhabitants spoke the same West Semitic dialect known as Phoenician during the Iron Age. Using the term *Phoenicians* to refer to the inhabitants of these four coastal kingdoms is comparable to the use of the term *Aramaeans* to speak of the population of the Syrian polities in the Iron Age: in spite of the fact that there were several kingdoms, sometimes with substantial differences in their material culture, all publications speak about *the Aramaeans*, implying that they formed one people with the same origin and culture (see Younger 2016), although there is no evidence that the Aramaeans themselves expressed this kind of awareness (Sader 2010, 261). What led scholars to consider them as such is first and foremost that they shared the same language and the same social structure based on kin-

ship. The same applies to the Phoenician polities, whose inhabitants spoke the same language. This may justify continuing to call them Phoenicians despite the ambiguous and often misleading use of the term. In his critical approach to the Phoenician question, Erik van Dongen (2010, 471–74) agrees that “Phoenicia may be defined linguistically.”

Notwithstanding the abovementioned reservations regarding the use and misuse of the terms *Phoenicia* and *Phoenicians*, the name coined by the Greeks to refer to the Levantine coast and to its inhabitants has survived for three millennia and has come to mean to any reader or Near East historian the geographical area that includes the territory occupied by the four kingdoms of Arwad, Byblos, Sidon, and Tyre. It therefore remains expedient to continue using it to refer to this area and to its inhabitants. So, for lack of a better term, we will keep calling the geographical area including the four Phoenician-speaking kingdoms *Phoenicia* and their inhabitants *Phoenicians*. Since this designation has been used for many centuries, there is no harm in continuing to use it, provided one is aware of the political subdivision of that area and the absence of evidence for a common Phoenician identity.

The approach employed here finds an additional justification in the description of Phoenicia as presented in the *Periplus* of Pseudo-Scylax, a Greek author who lived in the fourth century BCE. This author defined the area called Phoenicia and enumerated all the cities included within this geographical concept, acknowledging that some of them were royal seats that incorporated other cities (see 1.3.1.1).

This investigation will also provide the opportunity to set the record straight regarding the understanding and the historical implications of the terms *Phoenicia* and *Phoenicians* for modern Lebanese. Since the most famous cities of Phoenicia were located on the coast of modern Lebanon, the Lebanese found it justified to appropriate the Phoenicians for themselves. By the same token and in the absence of hard data from Lebanon itself, they adopted uncritically all the clichés, myths, and false information relating to some issues such as the invention of the alphabet as well as other discoveries ascribed to the Phoenicians, and these became part of the more recent historical memory of a large part of the Lebanese population. Scholars have discovered and discussed recently the impact of Phoenician history on the search of the Lebanese for their identity after the formation of the Grand Liban, which was created by the mandatory authorities with amputated segments of former Ottoman provinces: while some of them saw themselves as heirs of the Phoenicians, others have denied this

ascendance and acknowledged an Arab origin (Sader 2001, 221; Quinn 2018, 14–16; Kaufmann 2014). All this highly speculative discussion had, of course, political motivations, which led to some groups using part of the past to serve present political interests. A few researchers have gone as far as to study the DNA of modern Lebanese to try to prove their genetic connection to the ancient Phoenicians (National Geographic 2004; University of Cambridge, Research News 2017). Elayi mentions these analyses without approving or rejecting them and cautiously says that “the latest fashionable research on the identification of Phoenicians by means of their DNA is extremely fragile.”¹ With all sorts of questionable information now on the internet and in the media (such as <https://phoenicia.org>), it has become extremely difficult to correct the wrong assumptions relating to the Phoenicians. In addition, most of these stereotypes continue to be taught in schools and constantly repeated by officials on public occasions. There can be an immediate negative and even a hostile reaction if one expresses doubts about some of the achievements ascribed to the Phoenicians because people feel that someone is stealing something away from them. This book hopes to contribute to a more sober view of Phoenician history based on reliable historical and archaeological evidence rather than on myths and legends.

1. Elayi 2013a, 19: “les dernières recherches à la mode sur l’identification des Phéniciens par leur ADN sont extrêmement délicates.”

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