

## Phoenician and the Phoenicians in the Context of the Ancient Near East

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During the last decades a consensus has emerged that the world of the Ancient Near East showed and, indeed, possessed a remarkable uniformity. This does not mean that no differences exist between the Babylonian-Assyrian culture in the east, multicultural Anatolia in the north, Egypt in the south and the area of Syria and Palestine which is central for our investigations. To be sure - there are differences, not only between the great cultures just named, but also between the political and geographical defined regions in Syria proper. Still one cannot overlook that in many spheres like language and literature, religion and custom, commerce and technology there are close interconnections which cannot be due to chance. Hence the reciprocal links between the cultures on the one hand, and the discrete differences on the other have always drawn my interest. The Phoenicians as a people who not only showed a special ability to assimilate foreign influences but who also played a prominent role in the transfer of cultural achievements therefore have stirred up my attention.

During my early student years I was much influenced by a book of an author who displayed a wide-ranging perspective coupled with an unusual competence in various fields of research; this was W. F. Albright «From Stone-Age to Christianity»<sup>1</sup>. Here for the first time the various cultures are brought into focus and compared over wide range, including not only the linguistic but the archaeological data, too. On another tack I had the good fortune to study under some scholars who very much stimulated me in my endeavors to transgress the border-lines between the separate disciplines: Albrecht Alt as an historian of Ancient Israel; Adam Falkenstein, Johannes Friedrich and Wolfram von Soden in Assyriology

<sup>1</sup> German translation *Von der Steinzeit zum Christentum. Monotheismus und geschichtliches Werden*, revised edition in Sammlung Dalp, Bd. 55 (Bern 1949).

with different points of main emphasis. So I received a good training in Ancient Oriental languages, but none of these scholars was especially concerned to delve into the mysteries of the Phoenician and Punic cultures. This meant I had to study on my own the voluminous and in some respects frustrating works of Movers<sup>2</sup> and Meltzer/Kahrstedt<sup>3</sup>. Both authors mostly refer to Greek and Roman sources, but I felt the desire to go back to the original inscriptions - though these in fact contribute less to our understanding of history and culture than I then expected.

What then ensued was a close study of the inscriptions and their languages where the famous but outdated «Handbuch der nordsemitischen Epigraphik»<sup>4</sup> forming a valuable adjunct to Zellig S. Harris' «Phoenician Grammar»<sup>5</sup>, soon joined by Johannes Friedrich's «Phönizisch-punische Grammatik»<sup>6</sup>. Of somewhat wider scope, the monograph by Z.S. Harris on Hebrew and Phoenician within the context of the Canaanite languages<sup>7</sup> was one of the best contributions to comparative semitics available in the fifties. It also showed with paradigmatic force, how far a comparative method in the field of language could go to yielding a better understanding of historical and cultural processes.

The first fruit of my attempts to integrate philology, palaeography and cultural history was the then moderately daring undertaking of the commented re-editing - together with Herbert Donner — of a selection of Canaanite and Aramaic Inscriptions<sup>8</sup>. The aim of this work was to present a reevaluation of the in this days available and, in our opinion, pertinent source material for the Phoenician, Punic, Moabite, pre-exile-Hebrew and

<sup>2</sup> F.E. Movers, *Die Phönizier*, 2 Bde., Berlin 1841-1856.

<sup>3</sup> O. Meltzer - U. Kahrstedt, *Geschichte der Karthager*, 3 Bde., Berlin 1879. 1896. 1913.

<sup>4</sup> Mark Lidzbarski, *Handbuch der nordsemitischen Epigraphik*, 2 Bde., 1898.

<sup>5</sup> Zellig S. Harris, *A Grammar of the Phoenician Language*: AOS, 6, New Haven 1936.

<sup>6</sup> J. Friedrich, *Phönizisch-punische Grammatik*: Analecta Orientalia, 32, Rom 1951.

<sup>7</sup> Zellig S. Harris, *Development of the Canaanite Dialects. An investigation in linguistic history*: AOS, 16, New Haven 1939.

<sup>8</sup> H. Donner - W. Röllig, *Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften*, 3 Vols., 1<sup>st</sup> Edition 1960-1964, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition 1978-80. A revised and enlarged edition of the 1<sup>st</sup> volume is in preparation, but a reedition of the 2<sup>nd</sup> volume is not intended. With respect to the Hebrew inscriptions, which had been somewhat neglected in KAI, in the next months will see publication of a comprehensive reedition, mostly compiled by Johannes Renz but with some contributions by myself.

Ancient Aramaic cultures, based on a palaeographical scrutiny of the originals and accompanied by a commentary of philological and material observations. The difficult financial situation of the time made it largely impossible to collate the original inscriptions; only photographs were used, but these had to be checked carefully. But I was well aware that many improvements could be achieved by a closer study of the original inscriptions - and, in the intervening years, many colleagues have contributed to this task. It should be remembered that, at that time, I could contact only W.F. Albright in Baltimore, James Fevrier in Paris and G. Levi Della Vida in Rome - and they gave me their unstinting support. Shortly after publication of *KAI*, the field of Phoenician and Punic studies was significantly enlarged by new discoveries and finds; these owed much to advances in the exploration of new regions of research initiated by Sabatino Moscati and his school in Rome, by F.M. Cross in the USA, by M. Szynger in Paris, by M. Fantar in Tunisia, and by scholars in Israel and elsewhere.

Looking at these developments over the last thirty years, it is possible to state that we now possess a fairly comprehensive documentation of written sources from the centuries of Phoenician and Punic penetration in the Mediterranean world. Just in the last years a substantial series of publications has been published which explores, on the basis of the material now available, the ramifications of different themes arising from the traditional Greek and Latin sources in comparison with the evidence from the northwest semitic inscriptions<sup>9</sup>. In addition, a keen and ongoing reevaluation of the material culture, together with vigorous on-the-ground exploration and excavation-activities have intervened, permitting publication of new compendia on the history and culture of the Phoenicians.<sup>10</sup> Then too, there was *mise en scene* of large-scale exhibitions<sup>11</sup>, which have promoted

<sup>9</sup> For example the book on Melqart by C. Bonnet, (= *Studia Phoenicia* VIII), Leuven-Namur 1988; the volume by F. Briquel-Chatonnet, *Les relations entre les cités de la cote phénicienne et les royaumes d'Israël et de Juda*: OLA, 46 (1992); the careful investigations on Baal Hammon by Paolo Xella (Roma 1991).

<sup>10</sup> S. Moscati, *I Fenici* (Roma 1965) = *Die Phöniker* (Zürich 1966); A. Parrot - M. Chéhab - S. Moscati, *Les Phéniciens* (Paris 1975) = *Die Phönizier* (München 1977). In the last years followed: M. Gras - P. Rouillard - J. Teixidor, *L'univers phénicien* (Paris 1989); C. Baurain - C. Bonnet, *Les Phéniciens. Marins des trois continents* (Paris 1992); M.E. Aubet, *The Phoenicians and the West* (Cambridge 1993).

<sup>11</sup> *Frühe Phöniker im Libanon*: Rheinisches Landesmuseum Bonn, 8<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1983 - 22<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1984; *Les Phéniciens et le Monde Méditerranéen. Aspects d'une civilisation cosmopolite*, Bruxelles, Générale de Banque, 6<sup>th</sup> March - 6<sup>th</sup> May 1986; *I Fenici*, Palazzo

not only a better understanding in the broader public but also stimulated further research.

But despite all the substantial progress that has taken place over the last decades, further research is absolutely necessary. Permit me to single out three fields of future investigation as representative of many others:

1. Meaning of words, i.e. a comprehensive dictionary.
2. Literary structure of the inscriptions, i.e. stylistic analysis.
3. Origin of the Phoenicians, i.e. history.

1.- To begin with an example of a disputed word I adduce a well known passage from the Karatepe inscription. In KAI 26 A II 18 - III 1 we read *yšb ʾnk bn bʿl krntryš wyk zbḥ l kl hmskt zbḥ ymm ʾlp ...* and in the parallel-text C IV 2-4: *wzbḥ ʾš y[ ]ʾlm kl hmskt z z zbḥ y[mm] ʾlp ...*, which has been translated for example by Gibson<sup>12</sup> «I made Baal KRNTRYŠ dwell in it. Now let people bring a sacrifice for all the images, the yearly sacrifice of one ox ...» and C IV 2-4<sup>13</sup> «And the sacrifice which [a man shall bring for] all the images of this god is this: the [yearly] sacrifice of [one] ox ...». It should be noted that in the inscription on the statue the «image of the god» is referred to twice - but with the expression *sm l ʾln* (KAI 26 A IV 15.19). F. Bron rightly notices in his commentary<sup>14</sup>: «En conclusion, on peut dire que cette phrase, si le sens général en est clair, n'a pas encore trouvé d'explication grammaticalement satisfaisante».

This situation lead G. Garbini<sup>15</sup> to another interpretation. Departing from Jes. 30,1 *linsok massekkah* he takes in consideration «le cerimonie religiose... di una alleanza» and comes for the Karatepe-inscription to an approximative translation «intronizzazione»<sup>16</sup>.

Grassi Venezia, March-Nov. 1988; *Die Phönizier im Zeitalter Homers*, Kestner-Museum Hannover, 14<sup>th</sup> Sept. - 25<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1990 etc.

<sup>12</sup> J.C.L. Gibson, *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions*, Vol. III (1982), pp. 50 s.

<sup>13</sup> TSSI III 52 s..

<sup>14</sup> F. Bron, *Recherches sur les inscriptions phéniciennes de Karatepe*, Genève-Paris 1979, p. 98.

<sup>15</sup> G. Garbini, *L'iscrizione fenicia di Karatepe*: AION, 41 (1981), pp. 156-160, espec. 158 ss.

<sup>16</sup> Precisely G. Garbini gave me in a private communication the translation «stringere un'alleanza» for Jes. 30,1 und «sarà offerto un sacrificio per ogni alleanza: un sacrificio an-

Some years ago D. Hawkins re-examined the hieroglyphic-luwian text<sup>17</sup> and stated his opinion, that *hmskt* corresponds in this text to the hier.-luw. *hapari-* «river-land(s)»<sup>18</sup>. This, however, poses some difficulties. Hawkins proposed to translate «and all the MSKT will cause to come a sacrifice to him...». This grammatical construction is indeed possible. The preposition *l* together with the pronominal suffix 3. masc. sing. (not represented in the script following the orthography of this text) can be found also in KAI 26 A III 16, i.e. quite close to our phrase<sup>19</sup>. The word-order with the accusative before the dative is the normal one and is also to be preferred here, since it stresses the combination of the verb «to go» in the Jiphil-form with «sacrifice» as object. The subject of this verb, *kl hm-skt*, is what poses the major problem<sup>20</sup>.

The translation «all the images», used in most of the earlier translations of the text, can refer to the root *nsk* with the meaning «to pour out» or «to cast», which is sometimes documented in Phoenician-Punic inscriptions<sup>21</sup>. But it has been noted, too, that the derivation «cast image of a

nuale...» for Karatepe II 19 - III 1 and «il sacrificio che sarà offerto alla divinità, analogamente (*k-l-*) a questa alleanza, è questo: un sacrificio annuale...» *ibid.* Statue IV 2-4. In this context it should be stressed that the text of the statue is corrupt at this place: The scribe came from the end of line 2... ʾLM to line 4 Z ZBH ʾ Y[mm], noted this mistake and inserted the missing words plus a superfluous Z in smaller letters above line 4 and began again, with ZBH but without erasing the first Z. The text should be read: (2)...l ʾLM (3) KL HMSKT <Z> (4) <Z> ZBH ʾ[mm... and is therefore identical with the text from the Lower Gate-inscription A.

<sup>17</sup> A. Morpurgo Davies - J.D. Hawkins, *The Late Hieroglyphic Luwian Corpus: Some New Lexical Recognitions*: Hethitica, 8 (1987), pp. 270-272.

<sup>18</sup> It should be called attention to the fact, that this form of the noun is somewhat abnormal. The usual form is *hapati-*, cf. J. Tischler, *Hethitisches etymologisches Glossar*, I (1983), pp. 163 s. with references and F. Starke, *Untersuchungen zur Stammbildung des keilschrift-luwischen Nomens*: StBoT, 31 (1990), p. 514 with note 1898.

<sup>19</sup> Compare also *ytn l* «he gives to him» in the Cebel Ires Dagi-inscription 2 B and 7 A.

<sup>20</sup> H.P. Müller in his translation of the Karatepe-inscription (TUAT I [1982/5], p. 643) felt this problem and translated «und sie werden all den (Götter-)Statuen Opfer darbringen» together with the commentary. «Da ʾnk nach *wjlk* fehlt, ist nicht Azitawadda Subjekt: Im folgenden scheint an das Opfer der Laien bei drei großen Festen gedacht zu sein».

<sup>21</sup> Cf. DISO p.180, in addition *nsk hrš* Nkarth.line 6; *bn nsk* «the son of the smith» G. Garbini: St.Etr., 45 (1977), pp. 58 ss. (Schale Tyskiewicz); PN *hnsk* as a profession also in Nea Paphos M. Szyner: RDAC, 1985, pp. 253 ss.

god» is a hapax legomenon in Phoenician<sup>22</sup>; also that it is improbable that the image of the god received a sacrifice and not the deity itself<sup>23</sup>. On the other hand the term «river-lands» has no equivalent in the Phoenician dictionary. But the root behind the noun *mskt*, namely *nsk*, is well known not only in Phoenician (and Ugaritic) with the meaning «to pour, to cast»<sup>24</sup> but also in Akkadian with the more general meaning «to shoot, to hurl, to scatter, etc.»<sup>25</sup>, where derivations such as *nasiktu* «horizontal», *nasku* in combination with *šiddī* «faraway stretches (of land)» and *nasikātu* (pl.) «far away lands» are also known<sup>26</sup>. With reference to this usage I propose to interpret *mskt* as a noun of the *maqal(t)*-formation, designating localities, in the fem. plural (i.e. *massakot*) and with the meaning «(river)-plains». It designates — in contrast to *ʿmq* «plain», which together with *ʿdn* «Adana» only occurs in our text, — all the river valleys (both smaller and larger) in the Taurus mountain range, where human habitation and agriculture were possible. This expression has its correspondance in the wellknown Šeḡa-river-land of Hittite sources, the modern Meander (Büyük Menderes) valley<sup>27</sup>. Again this example makes it clear that only by bearing in mind the different cultures of the Ancient Near East we can find satisfactory explanations for the phenomena behind the epigraphic evidence.

2. - With regard to the literary structure of Phoenician and Punic inscriptions some first steps have already been taken<sup>28</sup>. Some texts, for ex-

<sup>22</sup> The comparable term «the statue of the divine Augustus» in KAI 122 (= IPT 22) 1 reads *hnskt š ʿlm ʿwgsts*, therefore giving a derivation in the form *qatl/qil* from the root *nsk*. - On the other hand, the derivation is supported by the Hebrew term *massekāh* «image of a deity», cf. for example Ch. Dohmen, *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament*, 4 (1982-84), pp. 1009-1015. The proposal of G. Garbini, in the two attestations of *mskt* in the Karatepe-inscription and *msk ymm* in KAI 14,3 and 12/13 (Eshmunazor) to translate «alleanza» does not fit the hieroglyphic-luwian text on the one side and makes no satisfactory sense in the phoenician text on the other. Cf. the discussion in the aforementioned article of Dohmen in ThWAT, also with respect to the notion «alliance».

<sup>23</sup> G. Levi Della Vida, *Osservazioni all'iscrizione fenicia di Karatepe*: ANLR, 8/4 (1949), pp. 285 s.

<sup>24</sup> DISO, p. 180.

<sup>25</sup> CAD N<sub>2</sub>, pp. 15 ss.

<sup>26</sup> References cf. in CAD N<sub>2</sub>, p. 26 s.

<sup>27</sup> See G. del Monte -J. Tischler: RGTC, 6/1, pp. 547 s.; 6/2, p. 144.

<sup>28</sup> See Y. Avishur, *Stylistic Studies of Word-Pairs in Biblical and Ancient Semitic Literatures*: AOAT, 210 (1984); F. Stéphan, *Les inscriptions phéniciennes et leur style*,

ample the Kulamuwa inscription (KAI 24), attracted the attention of scholars - with the result that their formal structure was repeatedly studied<sup>29</sup>. Others, however, were set aside and never subjected to close formal analysis. Thus F. Bron made a careful investigation of the Karatepe inscription — but without assigning a chapter to the formal aspects of this longest Phoenician inscription so far known. On the other hand, many very instructive and enlightening examples towards a structural analysis of this text may be found in the article co-authored by M.G. Amadasi Guzzo (on the Phoenician text) and A. Archi (on the Hittite text)<sup>30</sup>. It is no surprise to find this very instructive article placing its central focus on comparison of both texts, the Hittite one and the Phoenician one. Further, it is possible to go deeper into the literary and rhetoric structure of this text — also by means of comparison with Assyrian royal inscriptions<sup>31</sup>. As far as the general structure of the Karatepe inscription is concerned it is fundamental to realize that it follows the pattern of a building inscription. The formal parts are:

1. Self-introduction of the author,
2. Expanded self-introduction with deeds,
3. Building inscription,
4. Requests concerning the builder, the city and its inhabitants.
5. Curse formula,
6. Concluding request for the author.

But if one goes deeper into the rhetoric structure one sees surprising similarities in sentence-patterns. I cite one passage only:

Beirut 1985, and the unpublished PhD thesis of Omar Al-Ghul, *Der Aufbau der nordwest-semitischen Weihinschriften (vom 10.-4. Jh. v. Chr)*, Tübingen 1991.

<sup>29</sup> T. Collins, *The Kilamuwa Inscription - a Phoenician Poem*: WO, 6 (1970-1), pp. 183-188; M. O'Connor, *The Rhetoric of the Kilamuwa Inscription*: BASOR, 226 (1977), pp. 15-29; S.D. Sperling, *KAI 24 Re-examined*: UF 20 (1988), pp. 323-337.

<sup>30</sup> A. Archi - M.G. Amadasi Guzzo, *La bilingue fenicio-ittita geroglifica di Karatepe*: Vicino Oriente, 3 (1980), pp. 85-102.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. M.G. Guzzo Amadasi, *Influence directe de la Mésopotamie sur les inscriptions en Phénicien*: H.-J. Nissen - J. Renger (Edt.), *Mesopotamien und seine Nachbarn*: Berliner Beiträge zum Vorderen Orient, Bd.1 (1982), pp. 383-394. For further akkadian, aramaic and hebrew parallels see J.C. Greenfield, *Scripture and Inscription: The Literary and Rhetoric Elements in Some Early Phoenician Inscriptions*: H. Goedicke (Ed.), *Near Eastern Studies ... W.F. Albright* (1971), pp. 265-268.

I 6-13: *w-ml*ʔ ʔnk ʕqrt pʕr  
*w-p*ʕl ʔnk ss ʕl ss  
*w-mgn* ʕl mgn  
*w-mḥnt* ʕl mḥnt bʕbr bʕl w-ʔlm  
*w-šbrt* mlšm  
*w-trq* ʔnk kl hrʕ ʔš kn bʔrš  
*w-yḥn*ʔʔnk bt ʔdny bnʕm  
*w-p*ʕl ʔnk lšrš ʔdny nʕm  
*w-yšb* ʔnk ʕl ksʔ ʔby  
*w-št* ʔnk šlm ʔt kl mlk  
*w-ʔp* bʔbt pʕln kl mlk bšdqy  
*w-bḥkmty*  
*w-bn*ʕm lby<sup>32</sup>

It should be noted that the clauses repeatedly begin with *w-* plus a verbal form and the following pronoun of the 1.Pers.Sing.; also that nearly every sentence is identical in length. In places where this scheme is not used, alliteration is used instead — thus *ss* ʔl *ss* - *mgn* ʕl *mgn* - *mḥnt* ʕl *mḥnt*<sup>33</sup>. The following formula *bʕbr bʕl wʔlm* is emphasized by its position at the

<sup>32</sup> Translation:

And I filled the granaries of Pahar,  
 And I added horse on horse,  
     and shield on shield  
     and army on army,  
                     by the grace of Baal and the gods.  
 And I shattered dissenters,  
 And I extirpated every evil which was in the land.  
 And I founded the house of my lord on pleasure.  
 And I acted kindly towards the offspring of my lord,  
 And I let him sit on his fathers throne.  
 And I made peace with every king.  
     And indeed every king treated me as a father  
         because of my righteousness, and  
         because of my wisdom, and  
         because of my goodness of heart.

<sup>33</sup> On metonymy in *ss*, *mgn* and *mḥnt* and parallels with the OT cf. J. Greenfield: JSS, 11 (1966), pp. 103-105.



end of the list and is also used so in II 6 and III 11. As to *bʾrṣ* and *bnʿm* the preposition *b-* is used invariably, while the second sentence ends with the same noun as the third. Again the series of homogeneously formulated sentences is followed by three parallel expressions, each of them introduced by the preposition *b-*. Clearly an intensification is intended by using longer words or a word pair. I could also take the analysis deeper by including the following sentences, too, for example the parallelism between *ʾš bl ʾš ʿbd kn lbt mpš ...I 15f.* and *ʾš bl ʿn kl hmlkm ʾš kn lḫny ... I 19*. However, my concern here was only to show the need for careful investigation of the literary structure of the inscriptions — and this is possible for most of the non-economic texts. I am convinced that the way to improved grammatical and substantival understanding of the content of the sometimes very condensed texts (which can only be understood with difficulty) is through paying attention to the literary structure of the inscriptions — as has been the case in OT studies ever since Gunkel. But it has to be admitted that for the literary heritage of most of the Ancient Near Eastern cultures this accurate analysis of the texts is not yet done.

3. - Origin of the Phoenicians. A better understanding of lexical items and of the literary structure of inscriptions - as well as progress in other scholarly branches - is indispensable if a deeper understanding of Phoenician history and culture is to be achieved. Many new inscribed objects have been found in recent decades and an increasing stream of information has resulted. Nevertheless, the primary sources of Phoenician history are scarce and our picture of the development of the different cities, their political and economic institutions, their religious and cultural life remains imperfect and is indeed in a deplorable state. Even the definition of the object of our research, the «Phoenicians», is widely disputed<sup>34</sup>. Here not only the scarcity of available epigraphic material, but also the debate over basic methodology have been responsible for a far-reaching misapprehension. Nevertheless, in the recent years a minimal consensus has

<sup>34</sup> Cf. the recently published article by Helena Pastor Borgonon, *Die Phönizier: Eine begriffsgeschichtliche Untersuchung*: Hamburger Beiträge zur Archäologie, 15-17 (1988-1990), pp. 37-142 and the reply by S. Moscati, *Nuovi studi sull'identità fenicia*: Mem. mor. Acc. Lincei, Ser.9/4 (1993), pp. 9-14. Some years ago I tried to collect the evidence for a philological founded definition of the character of the «Phoenicians» in an article «On the Origins of the Phoenicians» in *Berytus*, 31 (1983, published 1985), pp. 79-93. I am sure that the methodological estimation was right, but in the light of broader evidence, collected by G. Garbini and P. Xella (see the following notes), I have to alternate my conclusions.

been achieved insofar as the beginning of the so called «Phoenician» history coincides (archaeological speaking) with the Iron I-Period. But - as G. Garbini and P. Xella have shown with the help of the Ugaritic source-material - the cultural tradition from the Bronze-Age is unbroken<sup>35</sup>. Garbini adduces a text<sup>36</sup> with a list of «families» from ( in Akkadian) *āl Alašia*<sup>37</sup> which contains besides Hurrian, Anatolian and other names some semitic names of the particular phoenician type. The central question with reference to this document is, how far it can be interpreted as evidence of a type of «Phoenician» population group at Cyprus or in the Mediterranean, or if it demonstrates a specific type of personal names in Ugaritic. This list nowhere refers to «Phoenicians» or to inhabitants of one of the well known phoenician cities. But the evidence collected by P. Xella is much stronger with respect to the interconnections between Ugarit and the cities at the seashore and the continuation of not only the onomastic but the cultural heritage at all during the «dark ages». This poses further problems insofar, as the specific cultural modifications which led to the formation of the «Phoenician» culture, registered as a special entity by foreign peoples as the Greeks, should have had specific reasons not yet explained.

In this respect, the investigation of a surprisingly increased inci

<sup>35</sup> I refer to G. Garbini, *Sull'origine dei Fenici: La Parola del Passato*, 272 (1993), pp. 321-331 and a very substantial unpublished paper of P. Xella entitled *Ugarit et les Phéniciens. Identité culturelle et rapports historiques*.

<sup>36</sup> UT 119 = KTU 4.102. Garbini further on adduces the newly found funerary urns and inscriptions on stelae from Tyre and concludes from his investigation that the burning of the dead is uncommon in Phoenicia: «questa significa che la componente non semitica della popolazione della Fenicia si era integrata molto rapidamente con l'elemento semitico...» (p. 331). In the light of the publication of the stelae and the archaeological and anthropological observations published by H. Seeden, J. Conheeny, A. Pipe and H. Sader in *Berytus*, 39 (1991) pp. 39 ss. and with respect to the well-founded article of M. Gras - P. Rouillard - J. Teixidor on *The Phoenicians and Death* in the same volume, pp. 127-176 this interpretation cannot be granted as valid. It seems obvious that also in historical periods cremation of young individuals took place besides the inhumation of adult and older human beings. This question should be discussed in a wider context and is of special significance for our understanding of the phoenician culture in contrast to the surrounding cultures in the Mediterranean.

<sup>37</sup> The «city» or «country» Alašia is often named in hittite sources and identified since 1952 with the island of Cyprus, cf. G.F. del Monte, *Die Orts- und Gewässernamen der hethitischen Texte: Répertoire Géographique des Textes Cunéiformes*, 6/1 (1978), p. 6 (with references); 6/2 (1992), p. 2.

dence of early arrow heads by B. Sass<sup>38</sup> is of special interest. It gives hints to an increasing influence of a younger semitic superstratum especially in the field of onomastics. Though the onomasticon of the early pieces, well defined by their special kind of early alphabetic script, bears a suspicious resemblance to the onomasticon of the Late Bronze Age tradition as represented by the texts from Ugarit and the Amarna correspondence<sup>39</sup>, the younger texts - judged by their script - show a more common Phoenician (and to an extent Hebrew) onomasticon. If it is proven now that no cultural and political change took place in the cities of the Phoenician motherland and its hinterland, but that archaeological and linguistical continuation is stated, than it should be explained why alternations in customs took place which gradually led to this typical formation of a culture as the Phoenician of the First Millennium has been. If the roots of this culture are in the Second Millennium, also — for example — in such a sensitive domain as the religion, we should evaluate the principles which defined the specific culture which came in contact to the Israelite Monarchy on the one side, the Assyrians on the other, - and which spread with such a surprising success in the Mediterranean. Again, I think, comparison with other Near Eastern political, economical and religious institutions and their models of development and interaction must be taken in consideration - but this goes far from my subject today.

If this is true in such a limited case it is much more obvious for the real facts of political, economic and religious history<sup>40</sup>. It should be remembered that tradition has not handed down a complete series of events sufficient to reconstruct the political history of even a single city state on

<sup>38</sup> Benjamin Sass, *The Genesis of the Alphabet and its Development in the Second Millennium B.C.*: Ägypten und Altes Testament, 13 (1988). After the publication of this synthesis cf. the summary in the article *Flèches phéniciennes inscrites: 1981-1991 I*, by P. Bordreuil, RB, 99 (1992), pp. 205-213 and F.M. Cross, *Newly Discovered Inscribed Arrow-heads of the Eleventh Century BCE in the Bible Lands Museum in Jerusalem: Eretz-Israel*, 3 (1992, A. Biran-Volume), pp. 21\*-26\*.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. now the volume of R.S. Hess, *Amarna Personal names*: ASOR Diss. Ser., Vol. 9 (1993) and his paper on *Cultural Aspects of Onomastic Distribution in the Amarna Texts*: UF, 21 (1989), pp. 209-216.

<sup>40</sup> To cite again an example from the Karatepe inscription: The article J. Deshayes - M. Sznycer - P. Garelli, *Remarques sur les monuments de Karatepe*: RA, 75 (1981), pp. 31-60 demonstrates the achievement possible by a close cooperation of several specialists in the field of the Ancient Near East.

the Phoenician coast<sup>41</sup>. Thus there is little prospect of achieving a satisfactory explanation of the complex interaction between the Phoenician heartland, its hinterland, its colonies and its neighbors in the Mediterranean. What is needed now is a search for new source material coupled with a better understanding of the existing texts, and a consideration not only of written documents but also of remnants of the material culture. Thus a close cooperation between archaeologists, epigraphists and historians only, as practised for example during the investigations in Sardinia, brings us to a position from which a satisfactory picture of the Phoenician-Punic culture and its interrelationship with neighbouring cultures is to be assembled. Let us proceed step by step towards this goal.

<sup>41</sup> This is also true for so well known places as Tyre, cf. the carefully treated *History of Tyre* by H. J. Katzenstein (Jerusalem 1973).