

ON THE ORIGIN OF THE PHOENICIANS

BY

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I

The question of the clear ethnic classification of the Phoenicians has not been satisfactorily settled — so far as it has been posed at all. It has been treated most recently by G. Garbini in the first chapter of his latest book, “*I Fenici*”. There he takes issue primarily with W.F. Albright, without, however, Albright’s broad material basis, which would have been necessary for a clear assessment. To the question “*chi furono i Fenici*” he answers: “*per Fenici sono da intendere e intendiamo i Cananei, di Fenicia e Palestina, posteriori al 2000 a.C., in quanto linguisticamente (ed etnicamente) diversi dai Cananei del III millennio a.C. a causa degli apporti amorrei.*”¹

We are confronted here with a rather imprecise concept of the Phoenicians. This need not surprise us unduly since the nation itself never developed an idea of “*phoenician*” as a national concept. In contexts where we might expect such an ethnonym to occur we find only the term “*Canaanite*” used. We need not pursue this further here, but we must make it clear that the term “*phoenician*” was first employed by the Greeks, and we are still not certain about its etymological derivation.²

If we nevertheless wish to come to a sharper delimitation of the people of the Lebanese coastal region now conventionally referred to as Phoenicians then we must seek criteria which are less vague than those commonly employed. We cannot simply proceed from the assumption that we know what we are talking about, when in actuality we are only stating highly divergent opinions.

Let us consider the two extreme positions. In 1950 Otto Eissfeldt in his article “*Phoiniker*” in the “*Realenzyklopädie*” expressed the opinion that the history of this people began about 3000 B.C.³ He states expressly: “*Immerhin zerlegt sich die Zeit von der um 3000 v.Chr. anzusetzenden Einwanderung der Phönizier bis etwa 1200... in vier*

¹ G. Garbini, *I Fenici. Storia e Religione* (1980), p. 11.

² Cf. most recently G. Bunnens, *L’expansion phénicienne en Méditerranée* (Rom/Brussel 1979) p.

292, note 3.

³ O. Eissfeldt, *Phoiniker*, Pauly-Wissowa; *RE* 20 (1950), 350-380. esp. 355ff.

Epochen.⁷⁴ A similar view can be found, for example, expressed by G. Contenau when he writes with respect to Ras Shamra, "... deux faits importants sont à noter au cours de la période; l'apparition de la céramique dite cananéenne... et des vases en terre rouge lustrée ... à dater de 2600 à 2100 environ. Donc, à cette période, installation des Phéniciens sur le site et rapports avec Chypre prouvés par ces deux variétés céramiques."⁷⁵ It is not only the ceramics which lead him to this conclusion but also the influx of Semites — evidently combined by him with the Amorites.

On the other hand D. Baramki claimed in 1961, "Aus der Vermischung dieser zwei Rassen, der protophönizischen, semitischen Kanaaniter und der indo-europäischen, agäischen Einwanderer, entstand ein neues starkes Volk son Seefahrern",⁶ and these he calls Phoenicians. This is evidently based on the assertion of W.F. Albright (not, however, later repeated) that, "the Canaanites... after a long eclipse and a fresh transfusion of blood they were to emerge as a vital new people, the Phoenicians."⁷ This would have occurred likewise around 1100. The assertions of both writers, however, have yet to be proved. W. Culican is somewhat more cautious when he writes, "The origin of both these cities (i.e. Tyre and Sidon), and indeed the origin of the Phoenician civilization generally, is lost, for neither excavations nor written documents throw much light on the eleventh and tenth centuries B.C. It is indeed possible that the birth of 'Phoenicia' was brought about by the formation of a new population group composed mainly of sea-raider settlers and coastal Canaanites."⁸

Other writers try to leave the way clear for a more flexible solution. M. Dunand describes the history of the Syro-Lebanese coast and terms its original historical inhabitants Phoenicians.⁹ D. Harden would also have their history begin in the 3rd millennium.¹⁰ Only S. Moscati resists the tendency to develop a theory of their origins since he considers that there was in fact no Phoenician nation, for which a unique origin might be claimed but a certain homogeneity of the different city-states, depending on the natural setting can be stated.¹¹ Finally G. Garbini has recently expounded the theory to which I referred at the beginning of this paper, which postulates a common history for the Phoenician-Palestinian area after the year 2000 B.C. This theory, however, can be proved neither linguistically nor ethnically, for it is quite uncertain whether the Phoenicians can be identified with the Canaanites of the early 2nd millennium B.C.

If we take up the question again here, it is only because ancient tradition repeatedly and decidedly rejected the idea that the Phoenicians were autochthonous¹² and also because the question of settlement continuity and discontinuity in the Syro-Palestinian area has been the subject of renewed interest in recent years and finally because the older

⁴ *ibid.* 355 f.

⁵ G. Contenau, *La civilisation phénicienne* (Paris 1949), p. 35, said it is true with reference to Byblos, but it accords well with the further chronological and ethnic discussions in the book.

⁶ D. Baramki, *Phoenicia and Phoenicians* (1961), German edition *Die Phönizier* (1965), p. 19.

⁷ W.F. Albright, *The Archaeology of Palestine* (1949), p. 109. In the *CAH*³, II/2 (1975) 516ff. he seems rather to proceed from the idea of a cultural and historical continuity on the Phoenician coastal area and stresses the continuity with the Amarna period.

⁸ W. Culican, *The First Merchant Venturers* (1966), p. 72.

⁹ M. Dunand, *Phénicie*, in: *Suppl. au Dictionnaire*

de la Bible VII (1965), cols. 1141-1204.

¹⁰ D. Harden, *The Phoenicians* (1962), pp. 21ff.

¹¹ S. Moscati, "La questione fenicia", *ANLR* 8. sér. 18 (1963), 490; cf. 504-506.

¹² The ancient tradition in Herodotos (I 1; VII 89), Strabo (I, 2,35; XVI 4,27), Pliny (*Hist. Nat.* IV 36) and finally Justin (XVIII 3,2-4) is fairly unanimous in the idea that the Phoenicians were immigrants, supposedly from the Red Sea. It is rather easy to see in this an aetiological explanation of the name of the Phoenicians, and we may consequently ignore the historical-geographical aspect. The tradition of a non-autochthonous settlement of Phoenicia, however, seems to be clearly indisputable.

schemata of language classification have evidently not proved conclusive. I will also attempt to develop more fully a few theses I have developed over the past few years which I have hitherto only given in outline. In so doing I should like to proceed first of all from the constants of topography and archaeology, through the more mutable subjects of language and religion and finally to the greatest of Phoenician cultural achievements, the transmission of the script.

II

Topography. Due to the nature of the land there was a continuity of settlement which can be shown for various localities especially the larger ones. Nevertheless it is not without interest to bring together the places attested in the Amarna letters, the Ugarit texts and the 1st millennium tradition. It must be borne in mind, however, that the attestations for the Phoenician coastal region are rather sparse from Ugarit since it lay outside actual Phoenician territory and since it tended to look to the north rather than to the south.

A division of localities is relatively simple. There are those large cities mentioned in both the Amarna correspondence and in the Ugarit texts. They are, from north to south: Arwad/Ruād,¹³ Gubla/Byblos/Gebeil,¹⁴ Berūta/Beirut¹⁵ (not to be confused with Bīru), Šiduna/Šaida¹⁶ and Šūri/Šūr.¹⁷ We have here the always important harbour cities, the continuous settlement of which was determined by their naturally advantageous location. This, of course, says nothing about the ethnic composition of their populations at any given time.

A smaller locality, namely Ardatu¹⁸ is also mentioned in both archives. The Amarna letters make it clear that it lay north of Byblos in a region directly threatened by Aziru of Amurru. Thus it is to be sought in the region of Tripoli.¹⁹ It does not seem to be attested in the 1st millennium.

The place name Šuksi is found — probably due simply to chance — only at Ugarit. It was apparently located on the southern border of the country, on the road to the land Sijannu. Šuksi has been identified with Tall Sūkās a few kilometres south of Gibala,²⁰ and this is probably correct. Here we may pose the question as to the extent of Phoenician territory in its “classical” period, for only if we postulate a much greater extent to the north than is usual — let us say approximately to Ruād — can we include this settlement, which remains unfortunately without any intelligible text,²¹ in our consideration.

¹³ Amarna: *uru_{ar}-wa-da*, v. VAB 2 p. 1572 and esp. 1199. Ugarit: *uru_a-ru-a-di-ja* PRU 6,79,8, cf. PN *arwdu*, F. Gröndahl, *Die Personennamen... aus Ugarit* (1967), p. 366.

¹⁴ Amarna: *urugub/gu-ub-li/la* etc. v. VAB 2, 1574, v. p. 1149ff. Ugarit: *urugu-ub-li* PRU 6,126,10; *urugu-ub-la²-a²* *ibid.* 81,2'. 3'.5'; *gbl* PRU 5, 106, 13.15; 159,3,8; *KTU* 1.3 VI 7; *gbl* PRU 5, 121, 2.

¹⁵ Amarna: *urube-ru-ta/A.PÚ.MEŠ*, v. VAB 2,1527 and esp. p. 1183. Ugarit: *KUR bi-ru-u/ut-ti* PRU 4, 162, 14. 17; *KUR PÚ.MEŠ-ti* PRU 3, 12, 1. Keep separate the references of *bir*, *biry*, *birym* and *URU PÚ*, cf. H. Klengel, *GS* 2 (1969), 401.

¹⁶ Amarna: *uru_{si}/ši-du-na* VAB 2,1582, v.p. 1162f. Ugarit: [*uru_{si}/si-du-un-ni* *CR AIBL* 1963, 133, 2(25.430); *kur_{si}-du-[na]* PRU 3,9, 2 cf. 6,81,4'. —

šdynm *KTU* 1.14 IV 36.39 (Keret epic).

¹⁷ Amarna: *uru_{sur}-ri* VAB 2, 1580, v. p. 1178f. Ugarit: *uru_{su}-ri-ja* PRU 6, 79, 6. — *sr* PRU 2, 110,4; 5, 59, 3.12; 63,1; *šrm* *KTU* 1.14 IV 38 in PN v. f. Gröndahl, *Personennamen ...* 412.

¹⁸ Amarna: *uru_{ar}-da-ta/at* VAB 2, 1572, v. p. 1156f. Ugarit: *uru_{ar}-dā-at* *Ugaritica* 5,20 V^o 5'.

¹⁹ More exactly on Tall Arda, v. H. Salamé-Sarkis, *MUSJ* 47 (1972), 123-145; *BMB* 26 (1973), 99-102, cf. also E. Edel, *Bonner Bibl. Beiträge* 25 (1966), 31f.

²⁰ *uru_{su}-uk_{si}* PRU 4, 230f.:17.123, 2.9.18; 18.01,4; 291:19.81, 11. See most recently P. Riis, *Ugaritica* 6 (1969), 441 for the identification.

²¹ For a nearly unreadable graffito on an amphora see *AAAS* 11-12 (1961/2), 140f.

Furthermore there are places which are only known from the Amarna archive and which no longer appear later, i.e. in 1st millennium sources. These are the localities Ambi, Šigata and Ulluzā²² from the region north of Byblos, some of which at least were quite small and unimportant.

Finally we should mention those places that are mentioned in the Amarna letters and not at Ugarit, but which appear later in 1st millennium sources. To be sought in the same area as those just mentioned is the frequently attested Šumur, in the event that, as is commonly accepted, it is to be identified with the later Simyra, the modern Tall Kazāl.²³ Batruna, Greek Βότρυς, is also there. It is the modern il-Baṭrūn which lies on the coast south of Tripoli.²⁴ In addition, Azu, called Ušū by the Assyrians and Πυλαίτιρος by the Greeks, the present-day Tall Rešīdiye, occurs for the present only at Amarna.²⁵

Thus it seems that as far as topography is concerned, the tradition is not especially rich. Of the 13 place-names of later Phoenicia occurring in the Amarna corpus only 5 are also attested with certainty at Ugarit, and one place name known from Ugarit does not occur in the Amarna archive. Continued habitation of the large cities which lay on natural harbours can be demonstrated. On the other hand however, smaller settlements, such as Ullaza, Irqata, Ambi and Šigata are already missing at Ugarit. Furthermore, other places, such as the three localities Maḥalat, Maīsa and Kaiša, mentioned by Aššurnaširpal²⁶ around 875 B.C., do not occur elsewhere in the tradition.

The question then arises as to the value of the often accidental and sporadic cuneiform tradition for the problems of settlement continuity. If we take into consideration the sound maxim "absence of evidence is no evidence of absence", we can then concede it no special argumentative force for our primarily historical inquiry into the historical-topographical tradition. On the one hand it does not prove settlement discontinuity, and on the other hand it can only be conditionally used as evidence of continuity. Moreover, it is clear that conclusions about the ethnic composition of the population of this territory cannot be drawn solely from the transmission of place names.

III

Archaeology. In almost all Phoenician coastal cities, archaeological investigations carried out until now have, unfortunately, not been adequate and thus no clear statements about settlement continuity or discontinuity can be made on the basis of excavation reports.

²² Ambi has been connected with modern Anfi, which also appears as Enfe, v. St. Wild, *Libanesische Ortsnamen* (1973), p. 175, but the place seems to be archaeologically unproductive.

According to F. Abel, *Géographie* 2 (1938), 4, Šigata is identical with Šaqqa, which according to St. Wild, *op. cit.* 156, however, is to be read Šikkā. Location? — Irqata is in all probability to be sought in Tall 'Arqa, see J.D. Hawkins, *RIA* 5, 165f., J.P. Thalmann, *Syria* 55 (1978), 1-52; *BMB* 30 (1978), 61ff.; *IFAPO* 1980, 6-12. — Ulluzā probably corresponds to al-Ḥāna, v. K. Galling, *ZDPV* 70 (1953), 181ff.

²³ *uru_{su}-mu-ur|ra|ri*, *uru_{su}-mur*, v. *VAB* 2, 1580, v. p. 1138ff., see R.J. Braidwood, *Syria* 21 (1940), 208; M. Dunand - N. Saliby, *AAS* 7

(1957), 3-16; M. Dunand - A. Bounni - N. Saliby, *AAS* 14 (1964), 3-14.

²⁴ *urubat-ru-na* *VAB* 2, 1572, v. p. 1165; for the modern il-Baṭrūn between Tripoli and Ḡebel see St. Wild, *Liban. Ortsnamen* (1973), p. 197.

²⁵ *uru_u-zu* *VAB* 2, 1581, v. p. 1247f. with the already proposed identification with Palaityros. Cf. H. J. Katzenstein, *The History of Tyre* (1973), p. 15 with note 59.

²⁶ L.W. King, *The Annals of the Kings of Assyria* (1902), p. 200, 28-30; 373, 86; A. Layard, *Inscriptions in the Cuneiform Character* (1851), pp. 43, 10f. (in each case with Nisbe). For Maḥalat see most recently H. Salamé-Sarkis, *MUSJ* 49 (1975), 549-563. For Kaiša see R. Zadok, *On West Semites in Babylonia* (1977) p. 259.

This is especially true for the large coastal cities, and the explanation for this is quite simple: over the millennia the important settlements were constantly being rebuilt due to their favourable location. Thus, 1) the sequence of levels was often disturbed by the clearance of earlier buildings. Nevertheless, 2) deposition of cultural remains often reaches a considerable height, so that the levels of the late 2nd millennium lie quite deep. Finally, 3) recent settlements there permit excavation only in a quite confined area. This, of course, adds to the fortuitousness of the finds. Thus the less imposing sites will probably prove more revealing in the end though they are only gradually being investigated.

The result of this is that Sidon has not provided us with coherent levels for the period with which we are concerned, i.e. the transition from the Late Bronze to the Iron Age.

In Tyre a short excavation of a small area has been undertaken by P.M. Bikai in 1973/74. This test dig reached virgin soil at Stratum XXVII which corresponds to the Early Bronze Age. Concerning the Late Bronze Mrs. Bikai declares: "The archaeological evidence from Stratum XIV presents an entirely different picture: a marked drop in imported pottery and evidence that some of the walls built during Stratum XV fell into disuse. ... There was no evidence of a massive destruction level between Strata XV and XIV but in so limited an area this is not decisive. On the other hand, it does seem that Tyre went into a period of decline."²⁷

At Byblos, which remains the most thoroughly investigated Phoenician site, we do not seem to have any marked break in settlement continuity, judging from the reports presently available.²⁸

Such a break, however, has been established at Tall Kazāl, where the Iron Age I level produced pottery of a sub-Mycenaean painted type similar to that at Enkomi, while Level V, dated to the Late Bronze Age, contains mainly Cypriot "milk bowls" and Mycenaean rhytons, as well as monumental architecture.²⁹ Here, then, we have signs of change, though — comparable to Tyre — occupation of the settlement continued without interruption. It cannot be determined whether this change was the result of military action there.

A noticeable hiatus in settlement continuity has been established at Tall Sūkās,³⁰ and this is also a marked feature at Tall ʿArqā, where Iron Age I does not succeed the Late Bronze — although there is no indication that the latter was brought to an end as a result of destruction by the Sea Peoples.³¹ Finally, at Tell Abū Hawam in the south near Haifa destruction occurred at the end of the Late Bronze period. This is frequently attributed to the Sea Peoples, even though proof of this is strictly speaking wanting.³²

Unfortunately, these findings do not permit us to draw any far reaching conclusions, which are for the most part the ones which also occur in historical sources, and must

²⁷ P.M. Bikai, *The Pottery of Tyre* (1978), p. 73, cf. p. 74: "There was no evidence that Tyre was at this time completely abandoned, but it may well have been seriously depopulated."

²⁸ Apparently layers from the early Iron Age are missing completely in the excavation zones which is in complete contrast to the historical tradition, cf. M. Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos* 1 (1937/39), pp. 64 and 79. The excavator states that the old fortifications were no longer used at the beginning of the Iron Age. But were they destroyed?

²⁹ M. Dunand/N. Saliby, *AAAS* 7 (1957), 16; M. Dunand/A. Bounni, *AAAS* 14 (1964) 3-14.

Cf. note 23 for the identification.

³⁰ P. Riis, *Tell Sukas* I (1970), pp. 24, 26-27, fig. 7a period J.

³¹ Cf. J.-P. Thalmann, *Syria* 55 (1978), 103. Even the end of the Late Bronze Age cannot be proved archaeologically. One should perhaps examine other parts of the tell than those which have already been excavated.

³² R.W. Hamilton, "Excavations at Tell Abu Hawam", *QDAP* 4 (1935), 1-69; B. Maisler, "The Stratification of Tell Abu Huwâm", *BASOR* 124 (1951), 21-25.

remain outside the field of our archaeological investigation. Still, the destruction of Ugarit, so near the Phoenician coastal cities, and its complete disappearance as a state around 1180 B.C. show that even well-defined settlements could not withstand the pressures of the migrations at the end of the Late Bronze period. Nevertheless, the report of Wenamun depicts such cities as Tyre, Sidon and Byblos as flourishing centres in the 11th century, and thus it seems unlikely that only a few decades earlier they had lain fully in ruins.

Finds from Palestine caution us against putting too much weight on archaeological results. We have come to learn that many destruction horizons at prominent sites there are unconnected with those historical upheavals with which they have been so blithely coupled — whether because they occurred earlier (e.g. Jericho) or because they were the result of natural causes, such as the ravages of local fires, earthquakes, etc. Consequently it is widely assumed for the Palestine area that the decisive population movements took place first of all on the plains, in farming areas. The fortified cities were spared at the outset and were only gradually and for the most part peacefully absorbed by the general political and ethnic changes.³³ Naturally, this is difficult to ascertain archaeologically and then only after a considerable lapse of time, e.g. through changes in pottery, building patterns, etc.

IV

Language. If in the following we are to discuss the linguistic arguments for the special position of the Phoenicians, then we cannot avoid stating several qualifications. The material available for comparisons is, to a most annoying degree, incomplete and fortuitous. It is scattered throughout a large span of time and hence must be used with caution. Texts which are far removed temporally from those with which we are concerned — say the Execration Texts from Egypt of the Middle Kingdom or the cuneiform texts from Alalakh of the 14th century or the Phoenician texts from the 7th century B.C. — are certainly not suitable for comparison. On the other hand the material for Phoenician is quite limited geographically — Byblos being practically the only place which comes into question, since Tyre and Sidon have not produced any old texts. Written material from the beginning of the 1st millennium from outside Phoenicia must also be considered since it contains some interesting and important features which have a bearing on the questions discussed here and since in recent times a close connection has been perceived between it and the Phoenician material.³⁴

The material is further restricted by the script. Instead of the syllabic cuneiform writing of the Amarna letters and at Ugarit one finds in the later period a consonantal script which is quite defective at the beginning. It goes without saying that linguistic peculiarities indispensable for any conclusive judgements are thereby obfuscated. Finally, it must be quite clearly emphasized that the extremely narrow material basis does not allow us to make any completely certain statements. This holds true for any position taken on the basis of analysis of this material.

Personal names are the most widely transmitted section of this material. They have the disadvantage, however, that they are elements bound in large measure to tradition, and thus reflect linguistic change more slowly than ordinary texts. Moreover, they are

³³ For summary see M. Weippert, *Die Landnahme der israelitischen Stämme ...* (1967), esp. pp. 124 ff.

³⁴ Cf. G. Garbini, "I dialetti del Fenicio",

AION 37 (1977), 283-294; G. Garbini, "Fenici in Palestina", *AION* 39 (1979), 325-330. Cf. also B. Delavault-A. Lemaire, "Les inscriptions phéniciennes de Palestine", *RSF* 7 (1979), 1-39.

subject to certain predilections and fashions — a factor most pronounced in the choice of deities.

If, keeping in mind these qualifications, we compare the personal names from the Amarna texts relevant to the Phoenicians with the entire Phoenician-Punic onomasticon,³⁵ we see a remarkable picture: of the total of 52 “Phoenician names” from the Amarna letters³⁶ only 4 (or 5) also appear in later texts — and these are the ones which are common to almost all Semitic languages, and hence not characteristically Phoenician. They are:

1 *Abdi* (İR)-*milki* (LUGAL) EA 203,3 cf. *bdmlk* Benz p. 155 and 369ff.

1 *A-bi-mil-ki* see VAB 2 p. 1556 cf. *ʾbmlk* CIS 5854,3 and Benz, p. 257f.

1 *Bin* (DUMU)-*a-na* EA 170,37 cf. *bn^cn* KAI 22 (11th cent. B.C.)

1 *Ša-mu-daddu* (IM) EA 225,3 and *Šum-ad-da* EA 224,3 cf. *šm^cb^cl* RÉS 1215,2 and Benz p. 421

1 *Ši-ip-ti-dba^clu* (IM) EA 330,3 and the like, see VAB 2,1568 cf. *šptb^cl* KAI 7,1.5; 9,1; CIS 179,4 and see Benz p. 184 and 423f.

1 *Mu-ut-ba-ab-lum* (|^dIM) EA 255,3; 256,2.5 has only apparently an equivalent in *mtb^cl* CIS 4743,3 f. Since this is a woman's name it should be taken as an abbreviation for *ʾmtb^cl*. Furthermore there are a number of names which have at least loose correspondences in the later onomasticon. Here we might mention:

1 *Abdi*(İR)-*dUraš*(IB) EA 170,36 cf. the numerous Phoenician names formed with *bd* and the name of a deity.

1 *Iddin*(SUM)-*dAddu* (IM) EA 123,37, cf. *ytnb^cl* and similar names.

³⁵ Cf. the collection of material in Frank L. Benz, *Personal Names in the Phoenician and Punic Inscriptions* (1972).

³⁶ I have limited myself to such names which can be connected with towns which were settled by the Phoenicians at a later date:

Abdi-irama from Byblos Nr. 123,36

Abdi-milki 203,3

Abdi-Ninurta, Rib-Addi's servant 84,39

Abi 138,8.107(?)

Abimilki of Tyre (p. 1245)

Aduna of Irqata 75,25; 140,10

Ammunira of Beirut (p. 1242f.)

Amur-^dIM (p. 1274)

Anati from Byblos Nr. 170,43

Arzaja from Šumur Nr. 62,27

Ba^clu-meher (p. 1320f.)

Bati-ilu 161,20; 170,3.28

Ben(DUMU)-Ana (p. 1274)

Ben-enima 256,15

Bišitanu from Šumur 62,26

Ha-a-bi 149,37

Ha-ti-ib(?) s. p.1265f.

Iddin-Addu from Byblos 123,37

Ili-Milu s. p. 1324.

Ili-rabiḥ from Byblos 128,21; 139,2; 140,3

Mut-Ba^clum s. p. 1318

Pu-Ba^clu s. p. 1265

Puḫiya from Byblos 84,40; 85,31

Rab-ili of Byblos s. p.1274

Rab-zidqi s. p.1274

Raḥmānuma 284,9

Rib-Addi of Byblos s. p. 1151ff.

Ruḥmanya of Saruna s. p. 1305

Šabilu from Šumur 62,26

Šamu-Adda of Šamḫuna 225,3 s. p.1299

Šaratum of Akko s. p.1027; 1175; 1301

Šipti-Ba^clu of Laḫiš s. p.1354

Šipturi 226,3

Šubandu 301,3; 302,4; 393,4; 304,4; 305,4; 306,3

Šum-(H)adda/i s. p.1027; 1299

Yabni-ilu of Lakiša 328,4

Yaḫtiri 296,4

Yaḫzib-Adda s. p.1329

Yanḫama 366,30

Yami^cuta s. p. 1278

Yapaḫ-Addi, s. p.1168; 1175; 1192 etc.

Yapaḫi of Gazri s. p.1346f.

Yaptiḫ-Adda s. p.1341

Yašuya 256,18, s. p.1319

Yidya of Askalon 320,5 etc.

Yiktazu 221,4; 222,3

Zimrida of Sidon s. p.1244

of Laḫiš s. p.1354

Zitrijara 211,3; 212,2; 213,3

Zura-šar of Aḫtirunna 319,4.

¹*Mi-il-ki-li* and the like, see VAB 2 p. 1244; cf. *mlkytn* etc.

¹*Zi-im-ri-da* from Sidon, see VAB 2 p. 1244; from Laḥiš, *ibid.* 1354, cf. *zmr* CIS 2755,5 and often, s. Benz, *Personal Names*, 109.306.

There are, however, 16 names which have their equivalents in the old Babylonian onomasticon from Mari, i.e. in an area which was strongly influenced by the Amorites, although one must state that this influence occurred a few centuries earlier. It is less surprising that the connections between the Amarna evidence and the just slightly later Ugarit names are more numerous; the spatial connections with Ugarit were great. It is, however significant and decisive with respect to every aspect of the Phoenician question that the Amarna onomasticon is in a wide range different from that of the Phoenician inscriptions — and this can hardly be a coincidence.

In the case of other linguistic phenomena this is not so obvious but is still important enough particularly when one includes the Ugarit evidence in the examination, which is inevitable.

In the case of the phonemes the interdental, in particular, underwent characteristic changes in Phoenician (and Hebrew). This is nothing new and thus requires only a few examples:

t is usually differentiated from *š* in Ugarit;³⁷ it is, however, usually missing as a consonant in all “early linear alphabets” cf. e.g. ugar. *mṯpt* — phoen. *mšpt*. ‘power, authority’.

d is used in words which have an *c* or a *r* in Ugarit³⁸ but is usually written as *d*.³⁹ All Canaanite languages use *z* instead and do not have the letter for *d* cf. ugar. *ḏbb* — phoen. *zbb* “sacrifice, victim”.

t is still found in Ugarit (although it is usually transcribed as *z*). In Canaanite it appears as *s* cf. ugar. *ḫzr* — phoen. *hsr* “courtyard”.

d has already changed into *s* in Ugarit⁴⁰ as is also the case in Canaanite e.g. ugar. and phoen. *ʿars* “earth”.

The postvelars *ḫ* and *g* are differentiated from the pharyngals *ḥ* and *ʿ* in Ugarit but have already become indistinguishable in Canaanite cf. ugar. *ʿab*, phoen. *ʿb* “brother”, ugar. *rgb* hebr. *r^cb* “to be hungry”.

In all these cases it is not possible for the cuneiform signs of the Amarna tablets to differentiate as the consonants were unknown from early on in Akkadian.

It is striking that the change *-a'- > -e'-* which took place in Ugarit,⁴¹ Akkadian and Aramaic has not been entirely completed in Canaanite, which suppresses the *aleph* and changes *ā* to *ô*. Notice, that the same development found in Ugarit can be seen at Amarna-age Byblos: *še-ti* < **ša'ti* “hour” EA 138,76.

In Phoenician and occasionally in Hebrew the “*n*” when next to a dental becomes assimilated with the latter. In Ugarit, however, it remains separated, cf. ugar. *šnt* — phoen., moabit., hebr. (Samaria) *št* “year”.

It is immediately obvious that the demonstrative pronouns e.g. “this” (near-deixis) and “that” (far-deixis) are missing in Ugarit and thus are also missing in the Amarna letters but are widely developed in early Canaanite. It is clear that linguistic changes were taking place when one examines the development during the first centuries of the 1st millennium B.C. of the article (prefixed in Canaanite, suffixed in Aramaic) which is unknown in the earliest Phoenician inscriptions.

³⁷ For exceptions, particularly from left-handed alphabets in which the *t* and *š* are combined, see. C.H. Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook* § 3.6; 5.1.

³⁸ Usually rendered as *d*; see Gordon, *UT*, § 5.3.

³⁹ Exceptions in Gordon Text Nr. 77, see

Gordon, *UT* § 5.8.

⁴⁰ Exceptions in Gordon Text Nr. 75, see Gordon, *UT* § 5.7.

⁴¹ Cf. Gordon, *UT* § 5.16.

The Relative-Pronoun ζ which is to be found in old Phoenician as well as in Hebrew⁴² was recently discovered by P. Bordreuil on a fragment of a jar from Sarepta which was inscribed in Ugaritic cuneiform⁴³. Unfortunately, the archaeological context in which the fragment was found or its age is not mentioned. Should it be contemporary with the earlier Ugarit texts (i.e. the 13th century B.C.) which is highly probable, then one can refer to the fact that the Relative-Pronoun in the form d is well known in Ugaritic.⁴⁴ It is, therefore, possible that we have here a mere scribal variant ($\zeta < d$) which is practically identical with the Phoenician form of the pronoun. Nevertheless, this small text has some interesting specialities with respect to the choice of words and their position in the sentence which means that it approaches the oldest Phoenician texts which have a linear alphabet.

The verbal system of the Amarna letters which is more instructive than the Ugaritic system due to the syllabic cuneiform has been traced to its West Semitic background through the studies undertaken in the last decades by W.L. Moran and A. Rainey.⁴⁵ "The so-called 'perfect' simply designated the occurrence of an action and could, therefore, function with reference to the past, present or future. There is a clear tendency to use the suffix conjugation with reference to past time. The Byblos texts show that the suffix conjugation was replacing the yaqtul- \emptyset for most instances, but outside of Byblos such was not always the case".⁴⁶ "The West Semitic el-Amarna scribes used the Akkadian subjunctive forms for their own indicative, the Akkadian 'Ventive' for their own 'Volitive', and the Akkadian indicative for their own jussive."⁴⁷ However, the defective spelling in the early alphabet-inscriptions from Phoenicia means that one cannot conclude that this system was also valid for the Phoenician language.

A few specialities shall be named here: the causative stem is formed in Ugaritic as Šafel whereas in all Canaanite languages there is a Hifil and in Phoenician alone a Yifil whose origin remains unexplained. The Hifil was, however, already in use in the Amarna period (*hi-ih-bi-e*, "he hid," EA 256,7) and thus is not a special form from a later date.⁴⁸

There are few forms with infix *-t-* in Phoenician and Moabite which are also to be found in Ugarit and are usually reflexive.⁴⁹ They are so rare,⁵⁰ that it seems clear that they are old lexemes which were already absent in most cases in the living language.

This short summary of the linguistic development from the time of the Amarna letters to the oldest Phoenician inscriptions has shown that some of the linguistic changes have their origins already in Ugaritic, and that they at least became apparent in the inscriptions using the much simpler linear alphabet with its scarce phoneme-stock. The defective spellings mean, unfortunately, that we are unable to recognize changes in the modi of the verbal system. However, change or continuation of use cannot be used as means of establishing age. This becomes obvious if one examines the really "late" Arabic language. It also means that one should not over-estimate the value of these examples. However,

⁴² Cf. J. Friedrich/W. Röllig, *Phönizische-punische Grammatik*² § 292.

⁴³ P. Bordreuil, "L'inscription phénicienne de Sarafand en cunéiformes alphabétiques", *UF* 11(1979), 63-68.

⁴⁴ Cf. Gordon, *UT*, § 5.3-5.5.

⁴⁵ W.L. Moran, "The Use of the Canaanite Infinitive Absolute as a Finite Verb in the Amarna Letters from Byblos," *JCS* 4 (1950), 169-172; idem, "New Evidence on Canaanite *taqtulu(na)*", *JCS* 5 (1951), 33-35; idem, "Amarna *šumma* in Main Clauses," *JCS* 7 (1953) 78-80; idem, "Early Canaanite *yaqtula*", *Orientalia* 29 (1960), 1-19; A.R. Rainey, "Verbal Forms with Infix *-t-* in the West Semitic El-Amarna Letters," *Israel Oriental Studies*

1 (1971), 86-102; idem, "Reflections on the Suffix Conjugation in the West Semitized Amarna Tablets," *UF* 5 (1973), 235-262; idem, "KL 72::600 and the D-Passive in West Semitic," *UF* 8 (1976), 337-341.

⁴⁶ According to A.F. Rainey, *UF* 5(1973), 237.

⁴⁷ According to A.F. Rainey, *IOS* 1 (1971), 87.

⁴⁸ Cf. C.H. Gordon, *UT* § 9.38.

⁴⁹ A.F. Rainey, *IEJ* 21 (1971) 86ff. also for the use of Akkadian forms with the infix *-t-* in the Amarna letters.

⁵⁰ Two examples (*tbtsp* and *tbtpk*) in the Aḥīrōm inscription *KAI* 1; often in connection with the root *lḥm* "to fight" in the Meša-stela *KAI* 181, 11. 15. 19. 32.

special developments such as the Yifil in Phoenician prove that the linguistic development was discontinuous.

V

Religion. The Ugarit texts have beyond any doubt increased our knowledge of Syro-Palestinian religion in the second millennium B.C. enormously. Above all we are much better informed about the pantheon, about which I need not go into detail here.⁵¹ Of course it cannot be proved that this pantheon existed in the same or a similar form in all those cities which were later to become Phoenician. On the other hand, aside from specific local gods, there is no reason to doubt that we have represented at Ugarit the elements of a broad and varied general Syrian religion. The evidence of the theophoric elements in personal names in the Amarna letters favours this generalization on the basis of the Ugaritic information.

If we compare the Ugaritic material with the unfortunately much more meagre remains of Phoenician religion, we find some — though not basic — differences between the two traditions. For the Phoenician tradition, however, we are forced to combine elements from different centuries instead of preserving historical differentiations. In terms of method this is, of course, a somewhat problematical procedure. Having done this, however, we find several deities in prominent positions who played little or no rôle in the Ugaritic religion.

Melqart, the city-god of Tyre, is attested for the first time in a 9th century Aramaic stele, the Bredsch inscription.⁵² This is in itself a remarkable and as yet not fully explainable phenomenon! In Tyre itself this god is first encountered much later, namely among the gods in the oath of the treaty between Esarhaddon and Ba'al, the king of Tyre.⁵³ Thereafter he appears — partly in his Hellenized form as Hercules — throughout the whole Mediterranean area, in Thasos, Cyprus, Malta, Sicily, Sardinia, etc.⁵⁴ He radiated from Tyre to the furthest Phoenician colonies. He is not yet attested at Ugarit. It is possible that the god Milk comes into the picture here,⁵⁵ if one assumes that the basis of the name Melqart was "Milk from..." rather than "king of the city (Tyre)". A god Milk of a city, however, is likewise unknown at Ugarit.

Ešmun probably belonged originally to Berytos, but he had a large sanctuary in Sidon, where he also appears in royal names. The derivation of the name is still a matter of dispute.⁵⁶ He is also not attested with certainty at Ugarit. Some years ago M. Astour proposed a deity *šm* as the origin Ešmun,⁵⁷ but a god *šmn* has recently been discovered in an offering text from Rās Ibn Hāni, who is equated with the god Ešmun.⁵⁸ Even if this

⁵¹ Cf. good summary and discussion in J.C. de Moor, "The Semitic Pantheon of Ugarit," *UF* 2 (1970) 187-228.

⁵² H. Donner/W. Röllig, *KAT²* Nr. 201, cf. F.M. Cross, *BAJOR* 295 (1972), 36ff.; R. Degen, *Altaramäische Grammatik* (1969), p. 8; E. Lipinski, *Studies in Aramaic Inscriptions and Onomastics* 1 (1975), pp. 15ff.

⁵³ R. Borger, "Die Inschriften Asarhaddons," *AO Beih.* 9 (1956), § 69 IV 14.

⁵⁴ Cf. Chr. Grotanelli in: *La religione fenicia, Studi Semitici* 53 (1981), 116ff. with references.

⁵⁵ The problems are stated but not examined in more detail by S. Ribichini/P. Xella, *RSF* 7 (1979), 145-158.

⁵⁶ The interpretation from the classical times appears to have been "the eight". At present one associates it more with *šm* "name", see H. Gese, *Die Religionen Altsyriens* (1970), p. 190, cf. J. Ebach, *Weltentstehung und Kulturentwicklung bei Philo von Byblos* (1979), pp. 250-54 with other titles; E. Lipiński, "Ešmun 'Healer,'" *AION* 23 (1973), 161-183.

⁵⁷ M. Astour, *JAOs* 86 (1966), 277ff. cf. J.C. de Moor, *UF* 1 (1969), 178.

⁵⁸ P. Xella, *Atti del I. Congresso Internat. di Studi Fenici e Punici, Roma 1979* (1983, 401-407) and idem, *I testi rituali di Ugarit, Studi Semitici* 54 (1981), 69.

is so it is clear that the Phoenician healing god, who, to judge from the onomasticon and classical tradition, was quite popular, was practically without importance there, as he appears neither in the main offering lists nor in the god lists. The same can probably also be assumed for this period and for the later Phoenician cities.

The case of Adonis presents difficulties. He has not yet been attested in even a single Phoenician inscription, but is known solely from secondary tradition. Most of the Greek authors list him as the chief god of Byblos,⁵⁹ which, however, on the evidence of the inscriptions had a goddess Ba^calat, i.e. probably an Astarte, as the main deity. Consequently, attempts have been made to relate the Adonis tradition to Ugaritic mythologems, which would have undergone later literary transformation and been transposed into a Greek setting. This idea of C. Colpe⁶⁰ has recently been criticized by O. Loretz,⁶¹ who points out that Ba^cal as the head of *rpum* at Ugarit probably could have borne the title *adn*. Thus the old mythologem of Ba^cal conquered by Mot and banished to the underworld could well have been behind the tales of Adonis. S. Ribichini argues along very similar lines in his recent book *Adonis. Aspetti 'orientali' di un mito greco*.⁶² This argument is very appealing even though a title *adny* has not yet been found in Ugaritic for Ba^cal. It is all the more appealing, however, when we remember that in later Jewish tradition the title *adonay*⁶³ was pronounced in place of the name Yahweh, a phenomenon different in origin it is true, but not in result. That would mean that the older Ugaritic Ba^cal myth lived on in Phoenician tradition, albeit in a modified form and probably under the encroaching title of Adon(ay?), even though it cannot be proved that the specific Ugaritic concept of Ba^cal featured him as lord of the spirits of the dead. Ba^cal in Phoenician sources will be discussed directly.

Phoenician religion recognized several less important deities who have yet to find any correspondences in Ugarit: Šadrapa, Šid, Tinnit. Šadrapa has as yet only been found in rather later sources for the most part outside central Phoenician territory, and may have undergone special developments.⁶⁴ The hunting and fishing god Šid remains a faint figure for us since he is known for the most part only from names.⁶⁵ His alleged contact with Sidon probably was only the result of a *Volksetymologie*.⁶⁶ Nor does he appear to have been of any particular importance. This cannot be said of Tinnit, however. It has been established that she is not entirely absent from the Phoenician motherland,⁶⁷ although her position there was certainly of no great importance. In Carthage, however, she is in a prominent position with Ba^cal Hammon and consequently could not have been unknown in the mother city Tyre.

Even though the Phoenician cities give evidence of religious manifestations entirely their own — ignoring completely here the question of the colonies — it cannot be said

⁵⁹ See S. Ribichini, *Adonis. Aspetti 'orientali' di un mito greco*, *Studi Semitici* 55 (1981).

⁶⁰ C. Colpe, "Zur mythologischen Struktur der Adonis-, Attis- und Osiris-Überlieferung, *lišān mīthurti*", *AOAT* 1 (1969), 23ff.

⁶¹ O. Loretz, *UF* 12 (1980) 287-292.

⁶² P. 200: "Un personaggio dai connotati ctonii così evidenti da farne ad Ugarit il 'signore dell'oltretomba': si deve infatti probabilmente identificare proprio con Baal quell'*adn* capo dai Refaim, invocato per guarire dalla malattia, e che presenta da questo punto di vista contatti fin troppo chiari con quell' Adonis re dei morti che abbiamo visto testimoniato in qualche fonte di tradizione occidentale."

⁶³ Cf. O. Eissfeldt, *Theol. Wb. zum AT* 1 (1973), 62-78, where for example *'adōnāy* is given the

meaning "Allherr".

⁶⁴ Šadrapa: see W. Röllig in F. W. Haussig (ed), *Wörterbuch der Mythologie* 1 (1962), pp. 287f.; H. Gese, *Religionen* (1970), pp. 198ff.

⁶⁵ Šid: see also *il^b. d. Myth.* 1, 310f., M. Sznycer, *Karthago* 15 (1969/70), 69-74; M.G. Guzzo Amadasi, "Note sul dio Sid," *Studi Semitici* 30 (1969), 95-104.

⁶⁶ Cf. J. Ebach, *Weltentstehung und Kulturentwicklung ...* (1979), pp. 175 ff.

⁶⁷ Tinnit: see the exhaustive study from F.O. Hvidberg-Hansen, *La Déesse TNT* (Copenhagen 1979) and for the inscription in Sarepta (next to Astarte) see J.B. Pritchard, *Recovering Sarepta, a Phoenician City* (1978) 104-108; idem in H.G. Niemeyer (ed.) *Phönizier im Westen* (1982), pp. 83-92.

that the pantheon of the 2nd millennium had completely vanished. It is certainly not the case that there was no religious continuity within the Syro-Semitic area. There was neither a marked break nor a completely new beginning. Rather we can discern a remarkable continuity even from the 3rd millennium. The new cultural and political developments, however, did bring about changes in emphasis, which can be ascertained in the respective cultures — in this case the Phoenician.⁶⁸

Such changes in emphasis should be outlined here. El, who had already lost some of his importance at Ugarit, now lost his ruling position. But it should be noted, that the *'el qōn'āres*, well known as Elkunirša from a myth in Hittite tradition, can be found in the 7th century B.C. at Karatepe as well as in the 2nd century B.C. in Leptis Magna.⁶⁹ Ba^cal is no longer considered the omnipotent god but rather, as can be seen by his various epithets, was dispersed into various functions or avatars (Ba^cal Biqā^c, Ba^cal Karmelos, Ba^cal Marqōd, Ba^cal Qarnaim etc.). Ba^cal Šamēm and Ba^cal Hammōn were especially important, although there is no trace of either at Ugarit. Even the fact that a Ba^calat can appear in a ruling role, as for example at Byblos, is doubtless a new development. As a consequence, 'Anat recedes into the background and is practically without importance, even though she survived into the 1st millennium. Aštar takes on a new importance, and in Sidon, Askalon and many other cities becomes simply the goddess par excellence.⁷⁰ Aštar, her masculine equivalent, on the other hand, who even at Ugarit was apparently not a powerful figure, occurs in some personal names only.⁷¹ It is noteworthy that both the sun and the moon-god are not recorded at all in the inscriptions and are of minor importance in the onomasticon.⁷² It may be that here the accidents of transmission have created a misleading impression. We should not fail to mention here that Rašap, the god of epidemics⁷³ and Horon, the lord of incantations,⁷⁴ both survive — clear signs of the otherwise nebulous chthonic conceptions in the Phoenician area.

The preceding description makes it clear that there was an essential qualitative difference between the culture of the Late Bronze period, which is manifested so well at Ugarit, and that of the Iron Age. Ideas which were received were transmitted further, even into the Hellenistic period, but the emphasis was placed differently. The introduction of new deities and the modification of the spheres of action of already existent numina cannot simply be explained as the effects of evolution through time, but rather are based on changes in the ethnic sphere resulting from political events.⁷⁵

⁶⁸ Contrary to G. Garbini in: *La religione fenicia. Studi Sem.* 53 (1981), 30f. who argues that the problem concerning the origin of the Phoenicians is rendered irrelevant through linguistic, literary and religious continuity.

⁶⁹ Cf. M. Weippert, "Elemente phönikischer und kilikischer Religion ...", *ZDMG Suppl.* 1 (1969), 203f.

⁷⁰ For the continuity in change can be adduced the "Hurrian Astarte" (*'štrt hr*) which appears in a Phoenician inscription found in Spain cf. inter alia M. Weippert, *Biblica* 52 (1971), 431f.

⁷¹ Sometimes but seldom *'Aštar* appears in personal names such as *'štrhn* and *'bd'štr* in Phoenician, *'bd'štr* and *'štršlk* in Punic. For references see Frank L. Benz, *Personal Names* (1972), pp. 385f.

⁷² Names with the moon god are *yrh* CIS I 6000b, 8(pun.) and *'bdyrh* on a Phoenician seal (Clermont-Ganneau, *JA* 1883, 123ff. No. 22) only; there are more with the sun god: *šmššlk*, *'dnšmš*, *brkšmš*, *'bdšmš*, see Benz, *Personal Names* for references. The god Aštar may be an astral phenomenon also.

⁷³ Cf. D. Conrad, *ZAW* 83 (1971), 157-183; M. Schretter, *Alter Orient und Hellas* (1974) *passim*; W. F. Fulco, *The Canaanite God Rešef*, *AOS Essay* 8 (1976).

⁷⁴ For this god see M. Szyner, *Karthago* 15 (1969), 69ff.; P. Xella *AION* 32 (1972), 271-286.

⁷⁵ This is documented for other regions too. In Ammon the god Milkom appears; in Moab Kamoš gets more meaningful and becomes indeed a national god.

VI

Script. Continuity and discontinuity can be particularly clearly seen in the area of that achievement which the Greeks ascribed to the Phoenicians, namely in the script. On the basis of numerous discoveries in the last few decades it is clear that the "invention" of the alphabet, or better the consonantal script, was not simply the work of the Phoenicians. Rather there occurred during the period from the 16th to 14th centuries B.C. in various localities in Palestine-Syria which for the most part did not lie on the seacoast (Sinai, Gezer, Lachish, Sichem), the first steps toward the development of a script which differed from both the cuneiform and the hieroglyphic/hieratic system. This is generally termed the "proto-Canaanite script".⁷⁶ The "early linear script" from the 13th to the 11th centuries follows this and is found in such places as Tell el-Ajjul, Kāmid el-Lōz, Lachish, Megiddo, Hazor, Bet-Shemesh, El Haḍr, Tell eṣ-Şārem, Qubur al-Walaydah, Raddana, Byblos, Izbeth Şartaḥ, Tell el-Heṣi and Manahat. The markedly linear alphabets can be seen from the end of the 11th or 2nd half of the 10th centuries in the Phoenician and Hebrew areas and a little later in the Aramaic areas. This introduces an almost continuous development.

It cannot be disputed that even the creators of the Ugaritic writing system had before them a Canaanite alphabet, which was in form quite close to the later Phoenician script — many of the consonants written in cuneiform resemble the linear forms. But above all the sequence of the consonants was for the most part already firmly established, as we can see not only from the Ugaritic cuneiform alphabet but also from several of the linear alphabets which have come to light for the period prior to the alphabet's having been taken over by the Greeks.⁷⁷ Here we can disregard minor variations.⁷⁸ Thus we must assume that the "Phoenician script" was already in existence before the Phoenicians entered the light of history.

Several points, however, arise. I was not aware that a small piece of the "early linear script" was also found at Ugarit. One might ask: "Why was only cuneiform used at Ugarit?". Was it simply because of the familiarity with clay tablets as media for the script? Was cuneiform easier to master for those scribes who also used the Babylonian word-syllable script? We simply do not yet know. Still, this cuneiform script was not confined to Ugarit. Texts, albeit short, have been found at Tell Sūkās and Tell Taanak, at Bet Shemesh and on Mount Tabor, at Tell Nebi Mend and at Tell Kāmid el-Lōz,⁷⁹ and now Sarafand/Sarepta.⁸⁰ That probably means that the linear script was at first unable to prevail and that after a phase of groping and development and after the taking over of the cuneiform system it stagnated.

The decisive development of a Phoenician alphabet which was not bound to cuneiform began only in the 11th century and then in the hinterland extending into the Negev as

⁷⁶ Cf. to this complex and the following: F.M. Cross: "Early Alphabetic Scripts," in: *Archaeology and Early Israelite History* (1979), pp. 97-123; idem, *BAŠOR* 238 (1980), 1-20.

⁷⁷ These are the tablets with the letters of the Ugarit-alphabet which were found by Cl.f. Schaeffer. See Ch. Virolleaud: *Le Palais royal d'Ugarit II* (1957), pp. 199 ff. No. 184-189. The linear alphabets are just summarized in A. Lemaire: *Les écoles et la formation de la Bible dans l'Ancien Israël* (1981), pp. 7 ff.

⁷⁸ In the alphabet from Izbet Şartaḥ the se-

quence of the letters *het* and *zain* and *pe* and *ʿain* is changed. The last two letters are changed also on a fragment found at Kuntilat Ajrud.

⁷⁹ Cf. the summation by P. Bordreuil, *UF* 11 (1979), 63, notes 1-6.

⁸⁰ For this short inscription see note 43. Besides this little text there has been found a dipinto in alphabetic characters, cf. J.A. Pritchard, *Sarepta* (1975), P. 101 fig. 55,1; F.M. Cross, *Early Alphabetic Scripts. The Era of Israelite Origins* (1979), pp. 97f., 113.

well as in the coastal cities, above all Byblos. Here we encounter from the very beginning an alphabet reduced to 22 consonantal signs, which consequently corresponds to the Phoenician phonemic system. Thus it is correct that the Greeks became acquainted with and took over the *phoinikeia grammata* (Hdt. 5,58). But again that means that a decisive change occurred at the end of the Late Bronze period, without which the following development is not understandable.

VII

The question concerning the origins of the Phoenicians was the starting point for this short summary of the contemporary research in a number of relevant subjects. It is an important question for the historian because these new masters of the coastal towns soon extended their political and economic influence. This was, however, by no means first brought about through the pressure of the Assyrian expansion. Through their colonies in the Mediterranean region they improved the contact between Orient and Occident and helped the Greeks to extend their political influence to Italy, Sicily and other areas. One clear answer to this question is not yet possible and laborious examination of ambiguous statements cannot take the place of the original written sources. There is no tradition of territorial annexation among the Phoenicians, there are no historical reports and there are no indications (except in very dubious Greek sources) of migration in the relatively late Phoenician written sources. An extract from the chronicle of the city of Tyre from Pomponius Trogus to be found in Justin⁸¹ states that one year before the fall of Troy the Sidonians were conquered by the king of the Askalonites, i.e. one of the Philistine princes of Askalon. They are said to have fled in their ships and to have founded (or refounded) Tyre.

This brings us to the historical upheavals in connection with the so-called "Sea Peoples" who finally brought about a completely new power-constellation in the Middle East and decidedly influenced the first millennium B.C.⁸² It also brings us to the annexation of territory by the tribes of Israel in connection with which one must examine the Phoenician question. This is because nearly every one of the problems within the fields of archaeology, settlement continuity, language and religion cannot be seen as isolated phenomena to be found only in the Phoenician coastal area but are relevant also for Palestine, Israel and Judea, for Moab, Edom and Ammon in Jordan and, although modified, for the Aramaic states in northern Syria and northern Mesopotamia.

Obviously, sudden breaks cannot be proved. If it were not for the tradition of territorial annexation in the Bible, we would know very little about the peculiarities of the newcomers in Palestine. However, language, religion and script-characters changed along with the political shape of the region.

It can hardly be a coincidence that script and language, onomasticon and religion in Phoenicia and Canaan (in the widest sense) have so much in common although there are indeed some differences. In the case of Palestine, there is much agreement that the country was attacked (as were many others) by the "Nine-bow people" as is stated by

⁸¹ Justin 18,3,5, see at least P.M. Bikai, *The pottery of Tyre* (1978), pp. 73f.

⁸² Cf. for example R. de Vaux, "La phénicie et les peuples de la mer," *MUSJ* 45 (1969), 481-498; H. Müller-Karpe, "Das Ende der spätanaaniti-

schen Kultur," *Jahresbericht des Institutes f. Vorgeschichte ...* (Frankfurt 1976), 57-77; G.A. Lehmann, "Die Seevölker-Herrschaft an der Levanteküste," *ibid.*, 78-111; and in general N.K. Sandars, *The Sea Peoples* (1978).

Ramses III.⁸³ The native population apparently fled to the cities or indeed to Egypt as is suggested by the reliefs in Madīnat Hābu which show Syrian women.⁸⁴ The areas left empty were gradually filled by tribes belonging to the Semitic newcomers who had no ethnic or linguistic homogeneity — Israelites, Moabites, Edomites, Ammonites. It is possible that they were driven out of their native areas by the Aramaeans who were their neighbours. They settled, first of all, on the periphery of the region, then they moved toward the cultural centre and finally they became participants in the traditional Canaanite Culture. Religion, literature, script and officialdom were not founded anew but taken over and modified. Even the traditional form of government — the monarchy which was usually confined to the small city-states — was accepted, although this occasionally meant conflict with the religiously active nomadic tribal chiefs as was the case in Israel.

We have no direct proof that this process took place also in Phoenicia, the coastal region which had been plundered by the pirates of the "Sea Peoples,"⁸⁵ and was re-settled by immigrants from the Canaanite area. The only regions which were not affected were those belonging to the fortified and defended cities. The inclusion of the city areas probably followed a procedure similar to that which has been described for Palestine. The tradition quoted above concerning the refounding of Tyre offers perhaps an isolated proof of this. Afterwards the Phoenician technical skills expanded over the entire Mediterranean region, the purple material became a luxury item at all the courts and the script, which was propagated by the Phoenicians, acted as a means of communication between peoples and a method of transmission with respect to their cultures.

⁸³ W. Helck, "Die Seevölker in den ägyptischen Quellen," *Jahresbericht ...* (Frankfurt 1976), 14.

⁸⁴ W. Helck, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

⁸⁵ W. Helck, *op. cit.*, p. 17f., states in connection with the Sea Peoples, "dass die Texte weniger historische Tatsachen überliefern, als vielleicht bisher manchmal angenommen. Der Ägypter sah in ihnen

Seepiraten, die die Verbindung mit der Heimat verloren, die anscheinend als kriegsgefangene Landsknechte gern ihrer Tapferkeit wegen eingesetzt wurden, und die sich unvermittelt in Amurru festsetzten, von da aus die umliegenden Stadtstaaten vernichteten und dann zu ihrem Zug nach Ägypten aufbrachen."