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SOME CONSIDERATIONS ON THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF COASTAL SYRIA IN THE IRON AGE

DOMINIK BONATZ

Since Woolley's excavations at Al Mina brought to light first evidence of the Iron Age culture of the Syrian coast, further investigations have extended our picture of this part of the Levant. The quality of these investigations varies vastly and publications of materials often remain incomplete. Tell Kazel, Tabbat al-Hammam and Tell Daruk provide little evidence because of limited excavations; Tell Sukas offers, concerning the duration of excavations and the size of publication, up to this day the most complete picture of an Iron Age site on the Syrian coast; more recently excavations at Ras Ibn Hani and Ras al Bassit have yielded important new information, but are waiting still for detailed publication¹. Above all, during the sixty years after the first publications from Al Mina

1. Al Mina is situated at the mouth of the river Orontes, today in Turkey. Excavations were there realized in the 1930's. The main publications concerning the Iron Age of this site are: WOOLLEY L., «Excavations at Al Mina, Suedia» I, II, *JHS* 58 (1938), 1-30; 133-170; ROBERTSON M., «The Excavations at Al Mina, Suedia IV, The Early Greek Vases», *JHS* 60 (1940), 2-21; DU PLAT TAYLOR J., «The Cypriote and Syrian Pottery from Al Mina, Syria», *Iraq* 21 (1959), 62-92; BOARDMAN J., «Greek Potters at Al Mina?», *AnSt* 9 (1959), 163-169; idem, *The Greek Overseas*, London 1980; idem, «Al Mina and History», *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* 9,2 (1990), 169-190. The ancient name of Al Mina remains unknown.

Tell Kazel is situated in the lower valley of 'Akkar near the river Nahr-al Kabir, the ancient Eleutheros. Investigations were effected in 1956, 1960 and 1961. See: DUNAND M., et al., «Fouilles de Tell Kazel», *AAAS* 14 (1964), 3-14. Recent excavations of the American University of Beirut Museum were retaken since 1985. See: BADRE L., «Tell Kazel (Syria), Excavations of the AUB Museum, 1985-1987, Preliminary Reports», *Berytus* 38 (1990); for the Persian period at Kazel; GUBEL E., «Tell Kazel à l'époque perse», *Transeuphratène* 2 (1990), 37-49. An identification with the ancient Sumur/Simyra has been proposed. For the history of this site see: KLENGEL H., «Šumar/Simyra und die Eleutheros-Ebene in der Geschichte Syriens», *Klio* 66 (1984), 5-18.

Tabbat al-Hammam is situated on the coast near the mouth of the river Nahr al-Kabir. See: BRAIDWOOD R. J., «Report on two Sondages on the coast of Syria, South of Tartous», *Syria* 21 (1940), 183-221.

Tell Daruk is located on the river Nahr as-Sinn, 2 km east of the coast and about 10 km south of Ġabla. A sounding was made during the Danish Carlsberg Expedition in 1959. See: OLDENBURG E. and ROHWEDER J., *The Excavations at Tall Darūk (Usnu?)* and «Arab- al-Mulk (Paltos)», Copenhagen 1981. An identification with the ancient Usnu has been proposed.

Tell Sukas is situated on the coast about 26 km south of Latakia, on the edge of the fertile Ġabla-plain. The Danish Expedition excavated the Tell from 1958 to 1963. The main results concerning the Iron Age are published in a series of Sukas publications: RIIS P. J., *Sūkās I, The North-East Sanctuary and the First Settling of Greeks in Syria and Palestine*, Copenhagen 1970; PLOUG G., *Sūkās II, The Aegean, Corinthian, and Eastern Greek Pottery and Terracottas*, Copenhagen 1973; BUHL M. L., *Sūkās VII, The Near Eastern Pottery and Objects of other Materials from the Upper Strata*, Copenhagen 1983; LUND J., *Sūkās VIII, The Habitation Quarters*, Copenhagen 1986. The Tell could be identified with the ancient Suksu.

Ras Ibn Hani is situated on the promontory south-west of Ugarit and about 9 km north-west of Latakia. Excavations were effected since 1975. Preliminary reports to the Iron Age are published in: BOUNNI A. et al., «Rapport Préliminaire sur la Première Campagne de Fouilles (1975) à Ibn Hani (Syrie)», *Syria* 53 (1976), 233-279; idem, «Rapport Préliminaire sur la Deuxième Campagne de Fouilles (1976) à Ibn Hani (Syrie)», *Syria* 55 (1978), 233-325; idem, «Rapport Préliminaire sur la Troisième Campagne de Fouilles

the way of looking at things has changed frequently. As a result the material culture of the Syrian coast remains quite undefined, as can be seen from the usual determination «Syro-Phoenician» coast, regarding the Syrian coast as the appendage of Phoenician homeland.

But since more detailed information is available about North Syria, which has become the main source of Orientalia inspiring Greece's orientalising period², about Phoenicians in their homeland³ and finally about the Greek-Phoenician relations in the Aegean⁴, it should now be possible to include the Syrian coast in this picture. Some new remarks could be put forward on architecture and pottery to illuminate the character of the material evidence and on other finds like seals and ivory, to illustrate the role of Syria within the trade of the early first millenium. Including also the political background of the Levant in the Iron Age, an attempt might be made to define the cultural borders and relations within coastal Syria and with its Levantine neighbours, Phoenicia, North Syria and Cilicia.

A proposition of periodisation of certain sites is given here with the restrictive remark that for some sites probably existing phases of occupation have not been recorded and absolute dates are difficult to obtain⁵ (Fig. 1).

(1977) à Ibn Hani (Syrie)», *Syria* 56 (1979), 217-324; idem, «Rapport Préliminaire sur la Quatrième Campagne de Fouilles (1978) à Ibn Hani (Syrie)», *Syria* 58 (1981), 215-299; BADRE L., «Les Peuples de la Mer à Ibn Hani»; in: *Congresso Internazionale di Studi Fenici e Punici*, I, Rome 1979, 203-209; LAGARCE J., «Rapports de Ras Ibn Hani avec la Phénicie et la Méditerranée Orientale à l'Age du Fer», in: *Congresso Studi Fenici* I, 223-226. The ancient Greek name of Ibn Hani could have been Diospolis.

Ras al Bassit is situated on the bay of Bassit, at the foot of the Mount Casius, the present Ġabal al'Aqra. Excavations on the Tell of Bassit were realized from 1972-1984. See: COURBIN B., «Bassit», *Syria* 63 (1986), 175-204; BRAEMER F., «La céramique à engobe rouge de l'Age du Fer à Bassit», *Syria* 63 (1986), 221-243. The identification with the ancient Posideion has been accepted for Bassit instead of Al Mina.

2. For North Syrian metal works: WINTER I. J., «North Syria as a Bronzeworking Centre in the Early First Millenium B. C.», in CURTIUS J. (Ed.), *Bronzeworking Centres of Western Asia c. 1000-539 B.C.*, London/New York 1988, 193-225. For North Syrian ivory: WINTER I., «Phoenician and North Syrian Ivory Carving in Historical Context: Questions of Style and Distribution», *Iraq* 38 (1976) 1-22. For seals; BOARDMAN J., «The Lyre Player Group of Seals. An Encore», *AA Heft 1* (1990), 1-17. For *orientalia*: RATHJE A., «Oriental Imports in Etruria in the eighth and seventh centuries B.C.: their origins and implications», in: RIDGWAY D. & F. (Ed.), *Italy before Romans*, London 1979, 145-183.

3. For recent excavations in the Phoenician homeland: PRITCHARD J. B., *Recovering Sarepta, A Phoenician City, Excavations of Sarafand, Lebanon, 1963-1974*, Princeton 1978; BIKAI P. M., *The Pottery of Tyre*, Warminster 1978; BRIEND J. and HUMBERT J. B., *Tell Keisan (1971-1976), une cité phénicienne en Galilée*. Orb. Bibl. Orient., Series Archaeologica I, Fribourg 1980; ANDERSON W. P., *Sarepta I, The Late Bronze and Iron Age Strata of Area II, Y*, Beirut, 1988. For Phoenician pottery: CHAPMAN S. V., «A Catalogue of Iron Age Pottery from the Cemeteries of Khirbert Slim, Joya, Qrayé and Qasmieh of South Lebanon, with a Note on the Iron Age Pottery of the American University Museum, Beirut», *Berytus* 21 (1972), 55-194; ANDERSON W. P., «The Beginnings of Phoenician Pottery: Vessel Shape, Style and Ceramic Technology in the Early Phases of the Iron Age», *BASOR* 279 (1990), 35-54. For historical aspects: MUHLJ J. D., «Phoenicia and the Phoenicians», in: *Biblical Archaeology Today (Proc. Int. Conference Biblical Archaeology)*, Jerusalem, 1985, 177-191; BOTTO M., *Studi Storici sulla Fenicia, L'VIII e il VII Secolo A.C.*, Pisa 1990.

4. COLDSTREAM J. N., «Greeks and Phoenicians in the Aegean», in NIEMEYER H. G. (Ed.), *Phönizier im Westen*, Madr. Beitr. 8, 1982, 261-275, BUCHNER G., «Die Beziehungen zwischen der euböischen Kolonie Pithekoussai auf der Insel Ischia und dem nordwestsemitischen Mittelmeerraum in der zweiten Hälfte des 8. Jh. v. Chr.», in NIEMEYER H. G., *Phönizier im Westen*. Madrider Beiträge 8, Mainz am Rhein 1982, 238-260.

5. The division of the Iron Age in three phases (Iron I, Iron II, Iron III) follows the periodisation, which

Chron.rel. Syria	Chron.rel. Palestine	Chron. abso.	Tyre	Hama	T.Kazel	Tabbat al Hamman	Sukas	Ibn Hani	Bassit	Al Mina	Tarsus
	A	1200	XIV				H2	building in W 65			
Iron I	Iron I B	1100		F2/I		?		building in X 67	1		Early Iron
			XIII	F1/II		square X					
		1000	XII		?			pits in V 63 V 68			
	A		XI								
		900		E2/III					2		
	B		X			break- water and quarry in T-T1			3		
Iron II	Iron II	800	IX- VIII VII- VI	—	Iron II occupat.		H1		Ens.A		Middle Iron
			V-IV II-III	E1/IV					4 4b	X ? IX	
									Ens.B	VIII	
	C	700	I						5	VII	Assyr. period
									6	VI	
A							G3		Ens.C/D 7	V	
Iron III		600							Ens.E/F		Late Iron b
							G2		8 Ens.G		
									9 Ens.H		
B Persian Period	Persian Period	500			Persian Occupat.		G1			IV	
		400								III	

Fig. 1: Scheme of relative chronology of Iron Age northern Levant.

Architecture

The architectural horizon offers for the Iron Age settlements of coastal Syria an almost private-domestic character. Apart from the shrine of Sukas, there are neither monumental buildings, religious and palatine structures, nor administrative units or fortifications. The fact that during the Iron Age the domestic character did not change and that at certain sites architecture is quite scantily documented, makes it difficult to define cultural borders.

A complete sequence of Iron Age architecture has been revealed in the «habitation quarters» of Sukas⁶. During that time the architectural sequence in G 10 SE and G 11

has become the most practible in the Syrian area. It has been proposed in: MOOREY P. R. S., *Cemeteries of the First Millenium B. C. at Deve Hüyük, near Carchemish*. B. A. R. International Series 87, Oxford 1980. A modified form has been presented in: LEBEAU M., *La céramique de l'Age du Fer II-III à Tell Abou Danné, et ses rapports avec la céramique contemporaine en Syrie*, Paris 1983. As it is proposed there, it seems more reasonable to regard the so called period of Persian occupation rather in continuation of the Iron Age, as its last phase (Iron III B). Nevertheless, this period is not taken into consideration in this paper.

6. LUND, *Sūkās VIII*, 24-108; see also review by MAC ADAM H.I., «Book Review of Sukas VIII», *JNES* 50,2 (1991), 153-155.

SW/SE (Fig. 2) followed a quite continuous and conservative development. After partial destruction at the end of the Late Bronze Age – period J at Sukas –, an immediate reconstruction of the same domestic character took place⁷. The technique of walls consisting of rough ashlar blocks with mud-brick superconstruction remains the common method of house-construction on the Syrian coast. The first Iron Age structure at Sukas, Complex V from period H2 (Fig. 2.1), is a three-piece building, divided in a rectangular room with two joining rooms on its western flank. This ground-plan fits well in the typology established by F. Braemer, belonging to his type I B 2⁸. Late Bronze Age prototypes had been found at Tell Abu Hawam V-IV, at Hazor I-A and B, at Hama G1 and at Emar⁹. The significant appearance of this house-type at Emar has induced J. Margueron to relate its origin to the Hittite impact on Emar (Margueron 1980: 291 and 303). The same supposition of a Hittite, respectively South Anatolian origin has been accepted by F. Braemer¹⁰. The appearance of this house-type on the Syrian coast, at Sukas and also Ibn Hani (see Fig. 3), just at the beginning of the Iron Age, points to the obligation of this area to Syro-Hittite traditions.

The reconstruction of Complex V to Complex VI (Fig. 2.2) by reusing the preceding walls took place during Sukas H1 at the late eighth century BC, corresponding with a local reorganisation of this part of the Tell, which also included the installation of a storage area north of Complex VI. The end of this period was marked by a serious destruction¹¹. After that the reconstruction of Sukas G3 took place slowly, but offered new plans. Complex VIII (Fig. 2.3) was erected around the ruins of Complex VI. Its three building-phases correspond with the periods G1-G3. It presents quite an extensive rectangular building subdivided into rectangular and square rooms. In the northern room 9, which also includes a court, there is what might be the base of a pillar formed by two stone blocks. As J. Lund has already done, this building might be compared with F. Braemers type II B 1 «Maison à piliers»¹². The non axial position of the pillar dividing the room 9 and the differentiation of the building with a northern stone-paved dwelling-part and a southern unpaved economical and court part would well correspond with this type, which more recently has been redefined at Tell Keisan niv. 9a¹³. Certainly it would not be without interest to determine such a type on the Syrian coast, because it has already been recognized at Palestine and Phoenicia. At the end of period G2 Complex VIII was destroyed, after which only parts of the building continued to be used, indicating the general impoverishment of the settlement during period G1 and the subsequent abandonment for about 120 years¹⁴.

7. LUND, *Sūkās VIII*, 186-187.

8. BRAEMER F., *L'architecture domestiques du Levant à l'Age du Fer*, Paris 1982, 52.

9. Abu Hawam: HAMILTON R. W., «Excavations at Tell Abu Hawam», *QDAP IV* (1935), pl. IV and pl. XI. Hazor: YADIN Y. et al., *Hazor II*, Jerusalem 1960, pl. CCVIII. Hama: FUGMANN E., *Hama, L'architecture des périodes préhelléniques*, Copenhagen 1958, fig. 152c. Emar: MARGUERON J.-C., «Emar: Un exemple d'implantation hittite en terre syrienne», in *«Le Moyen Euphrat», Actes du Colloque de Strasbourg 1977*, Strasbourg 1980, fig. 1.

10. BRAEMER, *L'architecture*, 54.

11. LUND, *Sūkās VIII*, 129.

12. LUND, *Sūkās VIII*, 190, BRAEMER, *L'architecture*, 60-61.

13. BRIEND and HUMBERT, *Keisan*, 197-200, figs. 51-52.

14. RIIS, *Sūkās I*, 88-91.



Fig. 2: 1. Plan of Complex V, Sukas H2 (from Lund Sūkās VIII, pl. 9); 2. Plan of Complex VI, Sukas H1 (from Lund Sūkās VIII, pl. 11); 3. Plan of Complex VIII, Sukas G3 (from Lund Sūkās VIII, pl. 17). scale: 1/200.

Evidence of the Early Iron Age is best available from Ibn Hani. Following the general view of excavators, «South Palace», as well as «North Palace» of Ibn Hani succumbed to a violent destruction at the end of the Late Bronze Age¹⁵. But, however, Ibn Hani did not share the same fate as Ras Shamra, for an immediate reconstruction followed, certainly on a modest basis and with almost domestic character. Not far from the «South Palace» in W 65 a building was excavated, dating with two levels from the twelfth and the eleventh centuries BC (Fig. 3). The scheme of this house could be regarded as the four-piece variant of the house-type found at Sukas period H and already documented at the Late Bronze Age Emar¹⁶.

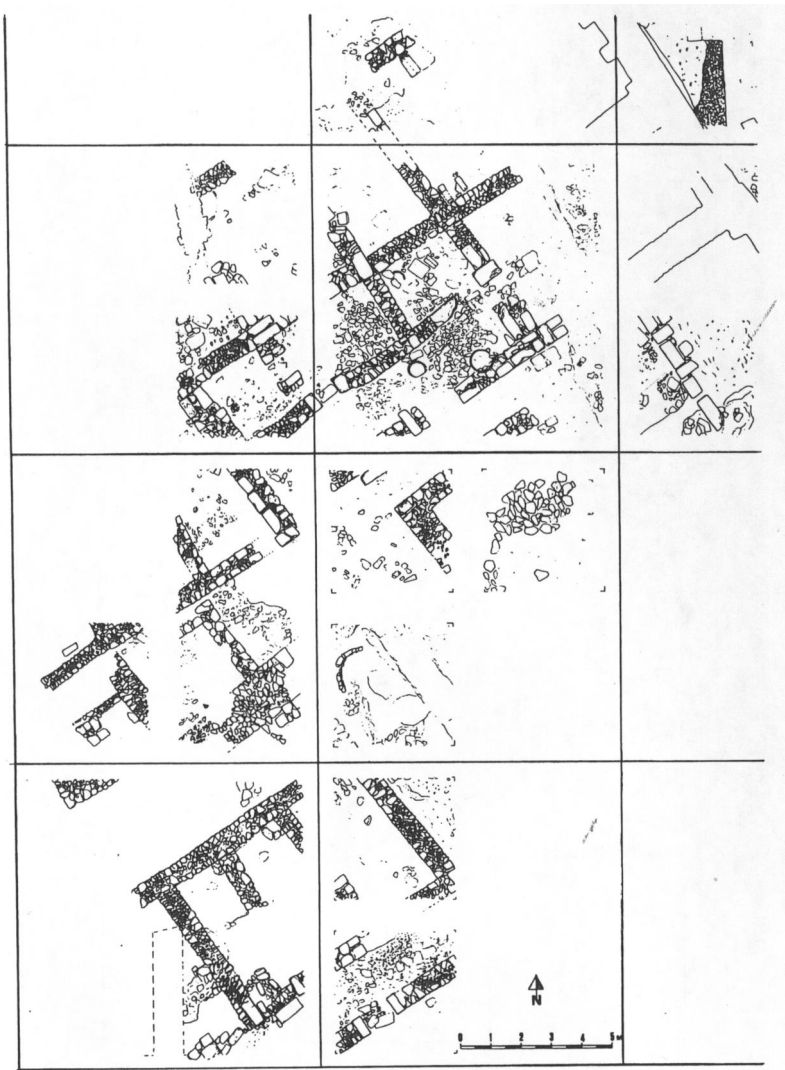


Fig. 3: Plan of Iron I structures at Ibn Hani (from Bounni et al., Syria 58, fig. 21).

15. BOUNNI et al., Syria 53 (1976), 239; idem, Syria 55 (1978), 278.
 16. MARGUERON, Emar, fig. 1c.

The building further north in X 67 (Fig. 3) with more than three rooms around a southern entrance-room or court marks an always advanced phase of the Iron I¹⁷. For the further Iron Age development at Ibn Hani architectural remains are missing, but pottery from trenches provides evidence of continuous occupation.

The first Iron Age levels X-VIII of Al Mina probably date from the mideighth century BC¹⁸. The level X was built on virgin soil and levels X-V enclose the late Iron II and the Iron III. During that time the architectural picture of Al Mina hardly changed, although extensive destruction of level VII took place around 700 BC. The settlement is composed of an agglomeration of buildings which irregular streets run through, mostly ending in blind alleys (Fig. 4). The buildings on rectangular or trapezoid plan are divided

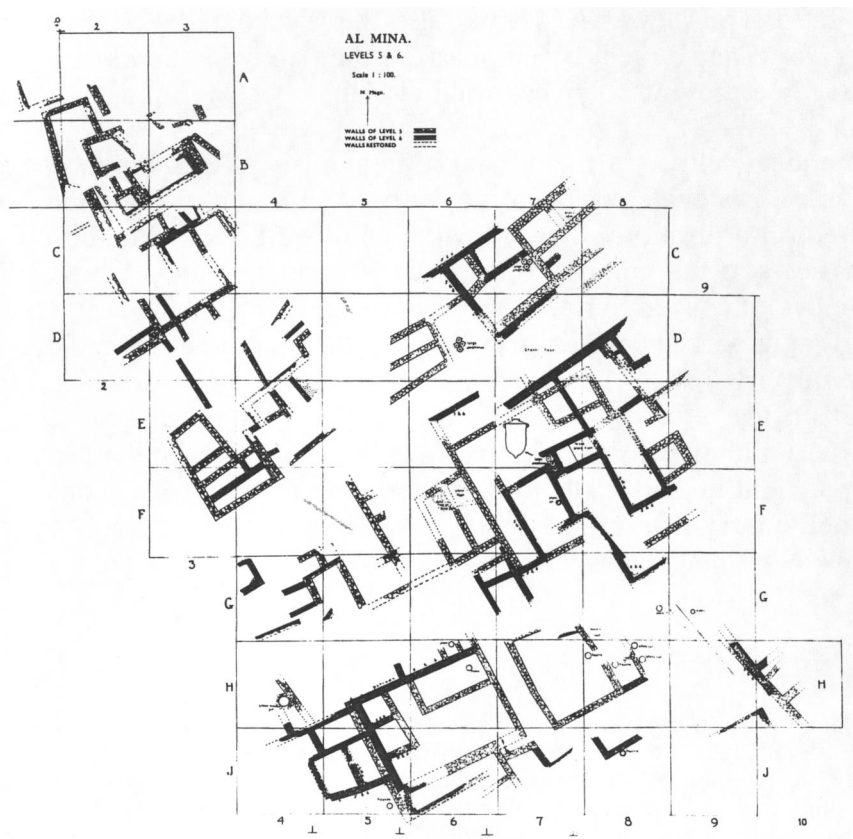


Fig. 4: Plan of Al Mina levels 5 & 6, Iron III (from Woolley, JHS 58, map n. 3).

17. BOUNNI et al., *Syria* 58 (1981), 256.

18. As for the chronology of the early levels at Al Mina, Woolley's and Robertson's low dates have been raised by Taylor (DU PLAT TAYLOR, *Iraq* 21 (1959) and GJERSTAD E., «The Stratification at Al Mina (Syria) and its Chronological Evidence», *Acta Arch.* 45 (1974), 107-123. Nevertheless, Taylor's suggestion of a foundation date of 825 BC is not acceptable. The reasons to date the levels IX and VIII rather in the second half of the eighth century BC have been comprehensively treated by R. Kearsley: "Since the majority of the Greek pottery from levels IX and VIII has already been dated to the Late Geometric period, and

into irregular pieces. Following traditional schemes¹⁹, the division in different parts allowed various activities; in levels VI-V cooking-places and store-rooms are very common²⁰.

The abandonment of Al Mina at the beginning of the sixth century BC lasted probably about 80 years, after which a reorganisation of the settlement took place, which diverged completely from the preceding one. Al Mina of level III shows a well-structured settlement, with houses combined in «insulae» and surrounded by a system of rectilinear streets²¹. The houses, forming a standard type, were ascribed a distinct mercantile use; a deep rectangular court opens with its narrow side onto the street, while the other three sides are surrounded by storage rooms. An assignment to a Greek town-plan might not be excluded²². The question of Greeks at Al Mina, who might have maintained a «apoikia» or an «emporion» there, has always been a central issue, regarding not only the Persian levels IV-II, but also the preceding levels X-V²³. Concerning the Iron Age Al Mina, it must be emphasized that from the architectural evidence of levels X-V Al Mina presents a typical oriental plan, where nothing could be assigned to Greek influence.

Discussing the local culture of the coastal settlements, the economic base must also be queried. As it follows evidently from the exposed situation of ports like Ibn Hani and Bassit, situated on a promontory, or Al Mina and Tell Kazel, situated on rivermouths with natural access to the hinterland, Mediterranean trade must have played a role in the economic life of coastal Syria. Nevertheless none of the Iron Age settlements presents a distinct commercial centre. Store-rooms, like these of Al Mina levels VI-V or of the eighth century BC Kazel²⁴ are rather seldom. But with the advanced Iron Age the installation of storage areas and silos became a widespread phenomenon. On the Syrian coast the earliest silo at Bassit level 2 dates from approximately the tenth century BC. Protected by a right-angled wall, the circular silo (Fig. 5.1) was constructed from a setting of rough quarry-stones, like those lining the inner silo, where they were coated with greyish-yellowish mortar. With a diameter of 2,20 m this silo had a storage-capacity of 6m³. The silo was followed by three more during the Iron II.

it is now clear that most pendent semi-circle skyphos fragments are also of that date, occupation is unlikely to have before ca. 750 BC., KEARSLEY R., *The Pendent Semi-Circle Skyphos*. Bulletin Supplement 44, London 1989, 145. In addition, Woolley's observation that levels IX and VIII appeared to represent only a short period of time, such as 50 years or so (WOOLLEY, *JHS* 58 (1938), 16), now appears firmly supported. It should also be noted that already Gjerstad has emphasized that virtually no Asiatic pottery occurs in level IX (GJERSTAD, *Acta Arch.* 45 (1974), 121). Thus level IX as well as level X can not be used to date the foundation of Al Mina in any case.

19. cf. MARGUERON, *Emar*, 294-295.

20. WOOLLEY, *JHS* 58 (1938), 154.

21. WOOLLEY, *JHS* 58 (1938), map 2, level III.

22. Although this is not evidently. Architectural plans of Persian Age sites are hardly known, but at least one well structured town plan is presented by the Assyrian new construction of Megiddo III, LAMON R. S. – SHIPTON G. M., *Megiddo I*. OIP 42, Chicago 1939, 62, fig. 7.

23. For a summary of discussion concerning the «Al Mina-Syndrom» see: BOARDMAN, *Oxford Journal of Archaeology*, 9, 2 (1990).

24. BADRE L., Kazel, in WEISS H. (Ed.), «Archaeology in Syria», *AJA* 95 (1991) 735, fig. 33.

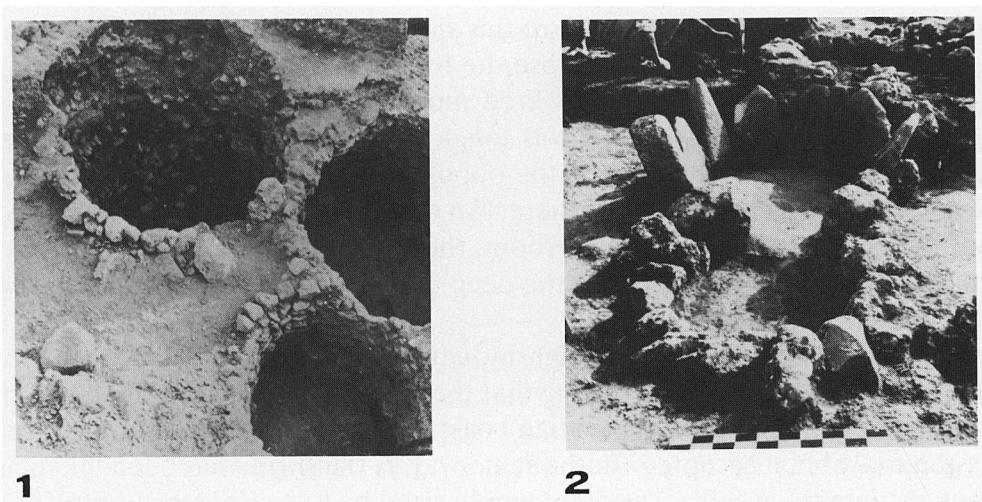


Fig. 5: 1. Silos at Bassit, Iron II (from Courbin, *Syria* 63, fig. 12); 2. Storage pits at Sukas, Iron II (from Lund, *Sūkās VIII*, fig. 17).

At Sukas the installation of a storage area north of Complex VI during period H1 can be observed. Two types of storage pits can be distinguished (Fig. 5.2): the one surrounded by one or two rows of rough quarry stones, the other enclosed by plain stones set up vertically. The diameter of these pits varied from 0,80 m to 1,00 m inner measurement. Likewise an extension of the storage area took place there during the Iron II. All these different types of storage installations were certainly used to store natural produce. There is definite evidence of cereals, fish and above all olives²⁵.

All this reflects the agricultural activity of coastal Syrian settlements, where the surrounding land, like the plain of Ġabla or the plain of ʿAkkar, yielded important natural produce. Especially for the southern settlements, agriculture was the essential factor of economy. Trade was probably of secondary importance and rather dependent from outside factors. This will be discussed later. So far this fits into the distinct local character of the Early Iron Age settlements, already underlined by the architectural evidence. The situation is also well comparable with other Levantine regions and the Syro-Palestinian area²⁶. Since no innovations of new ethnic element can be observed it would appear that local people of mostly Levantine and Syrian origin survived on a local basis after the enigmatic catastrophe at the end of the Late Bronze Age. Finally, the only religious building on the Syrian coast will be regarded in support of this argument.

In the G3 period of Sukas the installation of a sanctuary took place in the «eastern sector»²⁷. In the centre was the shrine, marking with its three building-phases the

25. LUND, *Sūkās VIII*, 188-189, COURBIN, *Syria* 63 (1986), 196.

26. The installation of storage areas and silos as a widespread phenomenon in the early Iron Age can be observed in sites like Tell Keisan niv. 9 in Galilee (BRIEND and HUMBERT, *Keisan*, 200, fig. 51); at Sarepta on the Phoenician coast (PRITCHARD, *Recovering Sarepta*, 88); at Hazor and Megiddo in Palestine, see YADIN Y., *Hazor*, London 1972, 184; and at Tell Afis in inland Syria, see MAZZONI S., «Afis», in WEISS, *AJA* 95 (1991), 731.

27. RIIS, *Sūkās I*, 40-59, fig. 19.

periods G3-G1 of Sukas. The structure of this shrine is best presented in the flourishing period G2 (Fig. 6.4). Over a podium rose the foundation-walls of ashlar blocks, which once were superposed by a stucco covered mud-brick masonry, without any marble facing. The rectangular temple-plan was longitudinally divided into three parts: The entrance-hall, in axis with the altar at the opposite western narrow wall; two column-drums without bases were set *in antis* there. An other single column-drum was set in the middle of the entrance into the second room, the *antecella*; a circular altar was found in the northern part of this room. Lastly the deep *cella*, where a rectangular altar stood in front of the back wall.

Taking into consideration that foreign influences on coastal Syrian architecture are difficult to determine, it is not surprising that the shrine of Sukas was taken for the main example of foreign impacts on the Syrian coast. An assignment to a Greek architect's plan has generally been accepted. In the same way as the shrine has been taken as proof of a Greek settlement at Sukas, as often emphasized by the excavator himself²⁸. But no matter how tempting the Greek assignment might be, from the architectural plan the Sukas shrine follows much older and local traditions. The plan of a longitudinal and tripartite building of distinct cultic character, with axial position between entrance and altar had been already established in the Paleosyrian period. The best example is the temple D of Mardikh III A (Fig. 6.1), which offers, in nearly all aspects, an astonishing resemblance with the shrine of Sukas. From that time on this plan developed continuously, from the temples of Alalakh IV and of Emar in the Middle Syrian period, down to the temple of Tell Ta'yinat in the 'Amq (fig. 6.2) and the shrine of Sarepta on the Phoenician coast (Fig. 6.3) in the Iron Age, which could be regarded as the direct predecessors of the shrine at Sukas (fig. 6.4). This line could be even followed down to the Persian Period, when the sanctuary of Amrith (Fig. 6.5) might be regarded in this tradition. Although the purpose of the Amrith temple as a water-sanctuary with a basin and the construction of a porticus, surrounding three flanks of the basin, seems quite singular, the longitudinal and axial ground-plan reproduces nothing else than the Syrian prototypes. The rectangular temple opened only with the north narrow flank, where two towers, as it were «*antas*» flanked the entrance situation and where a on a small mole the worshipper once stood opposite the altar, which, like an *aedicula*, housed the statue of the deity. This altar was set in the centre of the basin, thus in axis with the entrance.

The much-emphasized early evidence of a Greek architectural element, which is the roof-tile found in the debris of the G3 period shrine at Sukas²⁹, could be regarded as an indication for the participation of Greek craftsmen, but it might also have been imported by Phoenicians, who at that time were well-employed as craftsmen in the Aegean (see below). From the seventh century BC Greek might have participated in the cultic life of the Sukas sanctuary, but they could hardly have maintained there a shrine of their own, implanted in the centre of the Tell and in the direct neighbourhood of the local habitation quarters³⁰.

28. RUS, *Sūkās I*, 126ff. and RUS P. J., «Griechen in Phönizien», in *Phönizier im Western*, 246-248.

29. RUS, *Sūkās I*, fig. 17e.

30. The finds in this area are of virtual local character (LUND, *Sukas VIII*, 190).

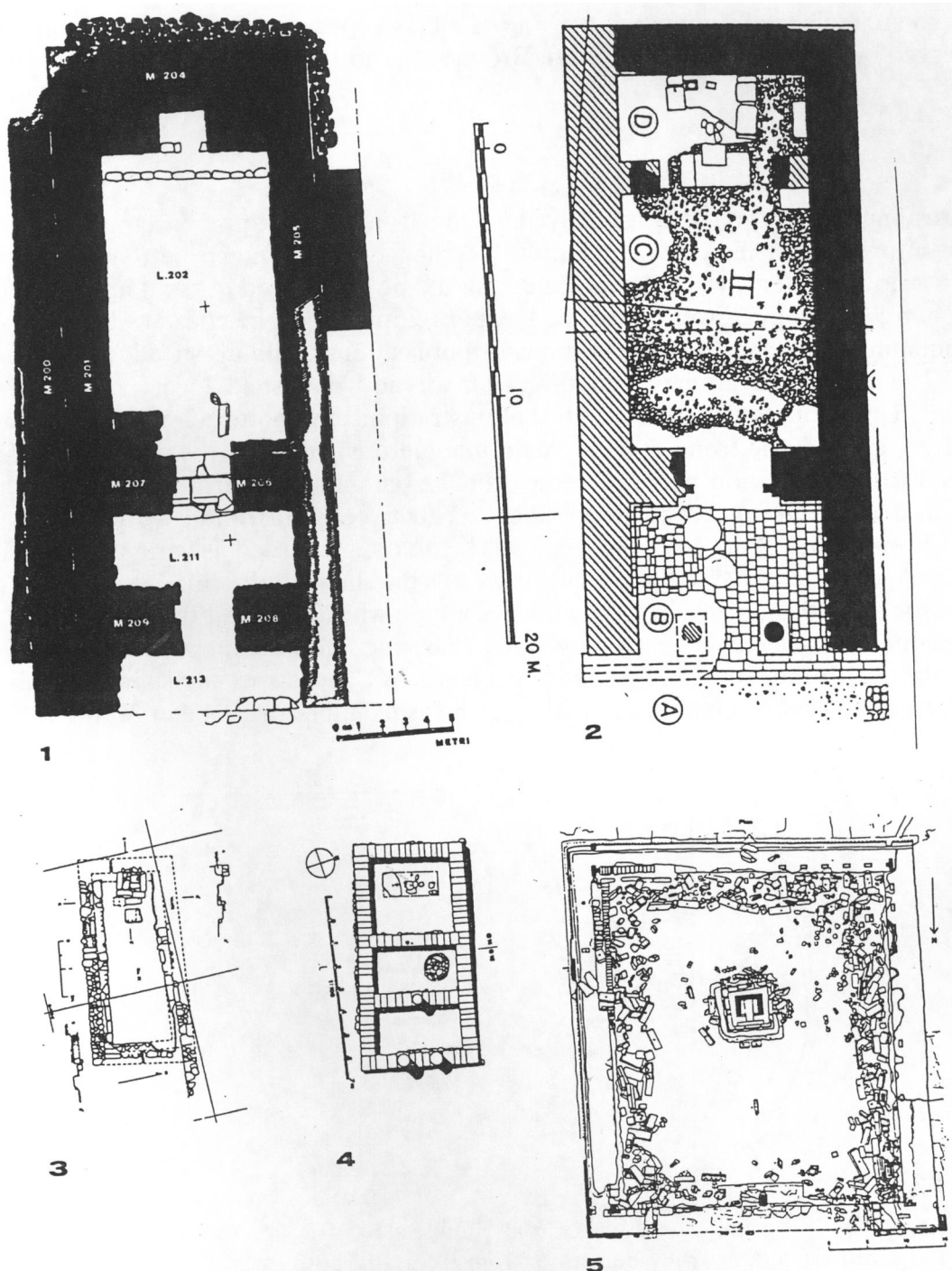


Fig. 6: 1. Temple D of Mardikh III A (from P. Matthiae, *Ebla. Un impero ritrovato*, Torino, 1989, fig. 35); 2. Temple of Tell Ta 'yinat (from R.C. Haines, *Excavations in the Plain of Antioch II*, O.I.P. 95, pl. 103); 3. Shrine of Sarepta (from Pritchard *Recovering Sarepta*, fig. 2; 4. Shrine of Sukas (from Riis *Sūkās I*, fig. 23); 5. Temple of Amrith (from M. Dunand and N. Saliby, *Le temple d Amrith dans la pérée d Aradus*, Paris, 1985, pl. 61). Figs. 1-4 are true to scale, fig. 5 is on reduced scale.

From archeological evidence the shrine of Sukas kept primarily local traditions, well-preserved beyond the end of the Late Bronze Age to the Iron Age.

Pottery

Concerning the pottery of coastal Syria in the Iron Age it must be emphasized that importations, as an indicator for cultural exchanges, were much better documented than was local pottery, which nevertheless should be considered of great importance for the inner chronology as well as for the local development of the coastal sites. But since documentation is scant, new excavations or publications could drastically alter the picture. The only excavation which offers an already published local pottery is Tell Sukas³¹. Unfortunately a great number of unstratificated pottery must be dealt with.

Pottery items of the Iron I at Sukas are not numerous, but nevertheless good evidence is given for continuation between Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age. Two craters with a decoration of broad wavy-lines set between horizontal stripes, the one monochrome, the other bichrome (Fig. 7.1)³² could be regarded as variants of the Late Bronze Age related Myc. III C:1 style; as well as the shape of the ring-based crater with two vertical handles form rim to shoulder is a type which survived that time and is still documented in other Iron I strata of Syria, Palestine and Phoenicia³³. But mainly the decoration with the wavy-line provides evidence of a more special aspect, concerning the northern Levant, inland Syria and Cyprus, as examples have been found at Sukas

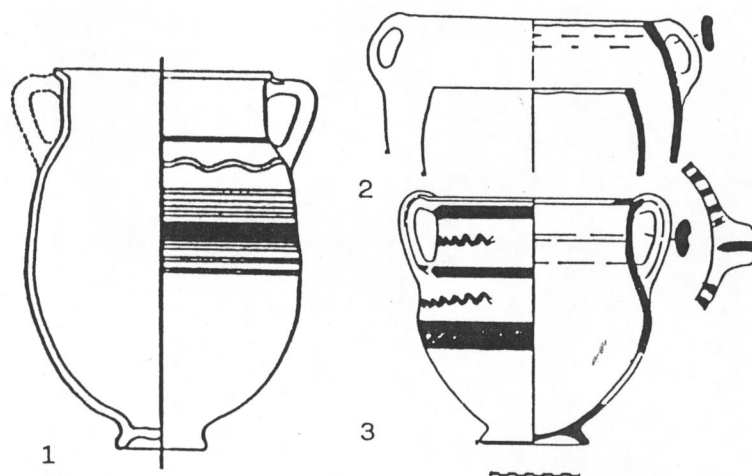


Fig. 7: 1. Wavy-line crater from Sukas (from Buhl, *Sūkās VII*, fig. 16.281); 2. Pottery «à la stéatite» from Ibn Hani; 3. Wavy-line crater from Ibn Hani (both from Bounni et al., Syria 56, fig. 27).

31. BUHL, *Sūkās VII*.

32. BUHL, *Sūkās VII*, fig. 16: 280 and 281.

33. AMIRAN R., *Ancient Pottery of the Holy Land*, New Brunswick 1969, pl. 69.5; BIKAI, *Pottery of Tyre*, pl. 47:7.

and Ibn Hani (Fig. 7.3), at Hama and in the 'Amq and on Cyprus³⁴. Certainly these craters provide some differences, but they have common roots in the Aegean world, and their appearance on the Syrian coast must have been seen in a Late Bronze Age tradition, which is local or related to Cyprus³⁵. The inland distribution of the wavy-line craters must consequently have been started from the Syrian coast and not vice versa.

Also pottery with a distinctly local character seems to have Late Bronze Age traditions. The Sukas excavations have documented some sherds of cooking-pots consisting of a very special greyish clay mixed with black particles or grits, which were called «céramique à la stéatite» at Ibn Hani, where a considerable number were found (Fig. 7.2)³⁶. This very distinct ware, apart from Sukas and Ibn Hani only documented at Daruk³⁷, holds quite a regional aspect, probably established in the Late Bronze Age Ras Shamra, when the same clay-ware had been used for cauldrons found in the «Maison aux Albâtres»³⁸. Keeping this ware, the Iron Age coastal settlements used it as cooking ware, which disappeared however in the tenth century BC.

Especially storage jars attest a closed development of local pottery at Sukas (Fig. 8). The Iron I types are completely in the Late Bronze Age tradition. The amphora with its ovoid body and vertical handles from the shoulders downwards, as on a ring base (Fig. 8.1), a flat base (Fig. 8.2), or a rounded base (Fig. 8.3) is very closely connected with the Late Bronze Age Canaanite jar. These amphorae might be exemplary for the common ware of the early Sukas period H2, which share many common features with the common ware at other Iron I strata in the Syro-Palestinian area. But it must be emphasized that this does not express reciprocal relations or influences, it is rather the reflex on a parallel development on a local basis, which was based on common Late Bronze Age traditions of a Canaanite population. Thus the cultural horizon of a coastal settlement like Sukas during the Iron I is distinctly local, apart from few Cypriot imports of White Slip I and White Painted I-II pottery.

This picture changed during the Iron II, at Sukas the late period H2 and the period H1. Cypriot imports increased considerably: White Painted III/IV, Bichr. III, Black-on-Red I (III), and also local imitations, which unfortunately are still difficult to distin-

34. Ibn Hani: BOUNNI, *Syria* 56 (1979), 253, fig. 27. Hama: RIIS P. J., *Hama II*, 3, *Les cimetières à crémation*, Copenhagen 1948, 59, nos. 214, 219, fig. 59, no. 223, BUHL, *Sūkās VII*, 114-115, fig. B-D. 'Amq: BOUNNI, *Syria* 55 (1978), 282, note 2. Cyprus: DIKAIOS P., *Enkomi, Excavations 1948-1958, I-IIIa*, Mainz 1969, pl. 105: 10.

35. The shape of the ring-base crater occurs among the Plain-White wheel-made I ware on Cyprus, see: GJERSTAD E., *The Swedish Cyprus Expedition, IV*, 2, 1948, 241ff., figs. 63-65. The wavy line occurs on Myc. III C:1b style pottery on Cyprus, cf. at Enkomi lev. IIIA, see: DIKAIOS, *Enkomi*, pls. 69.40, 76. 11, 12, 13, 15, 17, and frequently among the Granary class (Myc. III C:1b), cf. at Enkomi lev. IIIB and area I, room 12, floor II, see: DIKAIOS, *Enkomi*, pl. 79. 19, 24 (on semiglobular cups), pl. 124. 1, 6, 8, 10, 16 (on bell shaped bowls), pl. 105. 10, 11 (on amphorae).

36. BUHL, *Sūkās VII*, 27, 29, pl. 9: 96-100; BOUNNI, *Syria* 56 (1979), 254-255, fig. 27.

37. OLDENBURG and ROHWEDER, *Tall Darūk*, fig. 33: 169, 175.

38. LAGARCE E. et J., «Le chantier de la "Maison aux albâtres"», *Syria* 51 (1974), 8. It might be interesting that a very similar ware of greyish clay has been found in inland Syria from the Early Iron Age levels at Tell Afis, which eventually indicates first evidence of an inland distribution of this particular ware (examples will be published in 1994, in CECCHINI S. M., MAZZONI S. (Eds.), *Tell Afis (Syria), The 1988-1992 Excavations on the Acropolis. Preliminary Report*, Pisa, forthcoming).

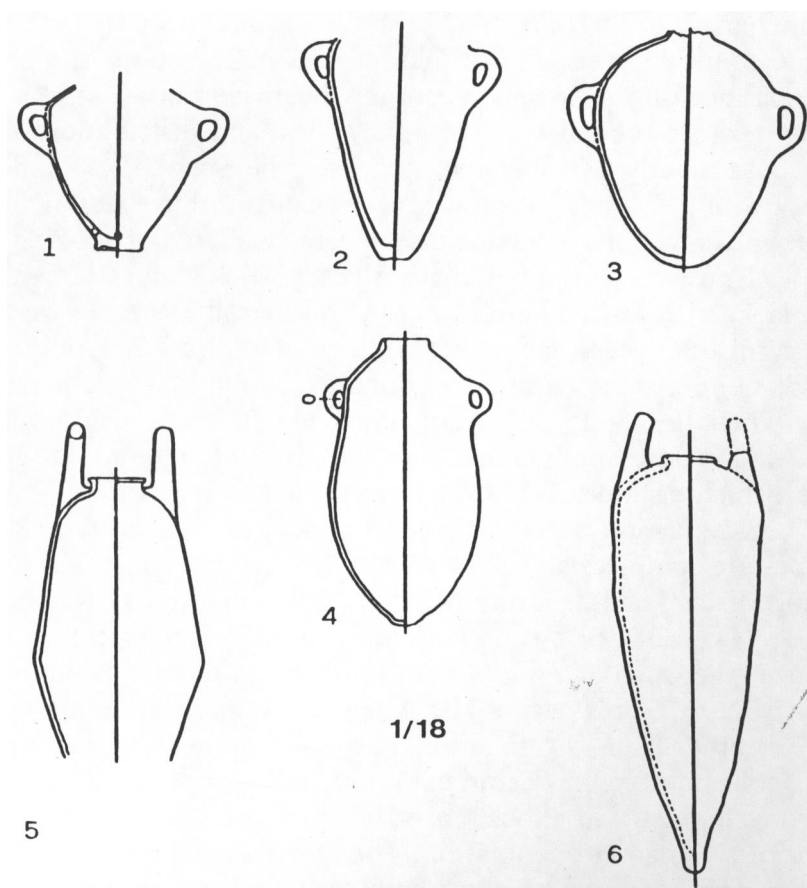


Fig. 8: 1-3. Storage jars from Sukas, Iron I (from Buhl *Sūkās VII*, fig. 1.1, 4, 11); 4. Storage jar from Sukas, Iron II (from Buhl *Sūkās VII*, fig. 4.38); 5-6. Storage jars from Sukas, Iron III-Persian Period (from Buhl *Sūkās VII*, fig. 5.57, fig. 6.67).

guish from the original Cypriot pottery, must have been played an important role. But more significant could be an inland Syrian influence, mainly starting from ninth century Hama. Of particular interest is the evidence of some red polished sherds³⁹ closely related to the characteristic red polished pottery from Hama⁴⁰. The same pottery was found in a limited amount at Daruk at Tabbat al-Hammam and more abundantly at Tell Kazel⁴¹; at Kazel the types of the bell-shaped bowls and the ovoid amphora with rounded base have close parallels with items at Hama⁴².

Today the red polished pottery from Hama, which occurs as well among the Iron II pottery of North Syrian and North Palestinian sites, can be well-distinguished from the

39. BUHL, *Sūkās VII*, 52-53, pl. 16: 274-277.

40. RIIS, *Hama II*, 3, 84-85.

41. OLDENBURG and ROHWEDER, *Tall Darūk*, 46, nos 196-201, 204-207; BRAIDWOOD, *Syria* 21 (1940), 194, fig. 4.3, 6, 8, 10, fig. 5.3; DUNAND, *AAAS* 14 (1964), 10, pl. 10.1-3.

42. RIIS, *Hama II*, 3, 70, fig. 96 and 56, fig. 48.

striking red-slip pottery, which has become known the hallmark of Phoenician ceramic technology⁴³. Apart from the fine technique of Phoenician red slip, there was also the tendency to coat the whole vessel with a tight slip; but in Syria either the rim, the inner or the outer site of the vessel were slipped. Concerning this ware, as well as other «classical» Phoenician pottery, an interesting remark could be drawn on Sukas and the southern coastline. Evidence of this pottery is almost completely lacking there⁴⁴. Sukas, a site which has often called the most northern centre of Phoenicia, at this time has evidently no close relations with the material culture of Phoenicia.

The repertoire of the common ware does not refute this impression. Loose connections with Phoenicia illustrates the pear-shaped – or sausage jar (Fig. 8.4), which is the most common type of the Iron II; well-known in Phoenicia, in the Iron II A-B Palestine⁴⁵, employed in the Phoenician trade of the eighth century BC⁴⁶. But at Sukas (Fig. 8.4) and also Daruk⁴⁷ its appearance demonstrates both, a local development from the ovoid-shaped amphora of the Iron I (Fig. 8.3) and an involvement in the widespread interrelations within the Levant during the Iron II. Apart from this commercial employed jars, which are more typical for coastal sites with Mediterranean trade, the other common ware types show stronger relations with inland Syria. Frequently occurs the pottery with mostly reddish-orange, often slightly polished finish. Certain bowls with different types of offset rims are found along the coast from Al Mina to Kazel⁴⁸, as well as they occur in inland Syria, at Abu Danne, at Afis and at Hama⁴⁹. These bowls kept common features down to the seventh century BC, at least confirmed by the bowls with triangular-shaped rim⁵⁰. In particular Kazel and the plain of 'Akkar seems to have hold close relations with inland Syria⁵¹.

During the Iron III in inland Syria the pottery evolution followed quite a conservative course. The types of storage jars did not change and the preference for reddish pottery continued. At the same time, considerable changes in the local pottery took place on the Syrian coast, which might indicate a divergent development of the material culture, starting after about 700 BC. A striking point is the abundant appearance of the amphorae with basket handles standing up above the rim; this ideal shape for a trading jar with

43. See especially ANDERSON, *Sarepta I*, 344-355.

44. Only two sherds from Tell Daruk are considered as Red Slip ware, see: OLDENBURG and ROHWEDER, *Tall Darūk*, 47-48, fig. 33: 196, fig. 34: 197.

45. cf. BIKAI, *Pottery of Tyre*, pl. 21: 1, 5, 11-13 (str. IX-VIII); BRIEND and HUMBERT, *Keisan*, pl. 54: 1,3 (niv. 8), pl. 48 1-9 (niv. 6-7); AMIRAN, *Ancient Pottery*, pl. 79:2.

46. BUCHNER, *Die Beziehungen*, 281, 283, fig. 4d.

47. BUHL, *Sūkās VII*, 11-15: OLDENBURG and ROHWEDER, *Tall Darūk* 97, fig. 33: 120-121.

48. Al Mina: DU PLAT TAYLOR, *Iraq* 21 (1959), fig. 6: 12, 14, 29, 34; Bassit: BRAEMER, *Syria* 63 (1986), fig. 2: 6; Ibn Hani: BOUNNI, *Syria* 53 (1976), fig. 27: 12, 13, 15; Sukas: BUHL, *Sūkās VII*, fig. 14: 189; Tabbat al-Hammam: BRAIDWOOD, *Syria* 21 (1940), fig. 5: 3; Kazel: DUNAND, *AAAS* 14 (1964), pl. 11:4.

49. LEBEAU, *Abou Danné*, types BL2, BL9, BL15, BL33; Mazzoni, S. «Tell Afis, Lo scavo dell'edificio del Settore D», *EVO* X, 2 (1987), fig. 27: 10-17; Riis, *Hama II*, 3, fig. 104.

50. DU PLAT TAYLOR, *Iraq* 21 (1959), fig. 6.31; BRAEMER, *Syria* 63 (1986), fig. 4.20; BUHL, *Sūkās VII*, fig.; 14: 191; LEBEAU, *Abou Danné*, type BL30; MAZZONI, *EVO* X/2 (1987), fig. 10: 1-3.

51. As it is for example proved by the red polished pottery (see note 41) and the for Hama typical high footed fruitstands which have been found in Kazel, for Hama see: Riis, *Hama II*, 3, fig. 116; for Kazel see: DUNAND, *AAAS* 14 (1964), pl. 11.4.

torpedo-shaped body had already in the sixth century BC substituted the more fragile pear-shaped jar. At Sukas different types occurred (Fig. 8.5-6) with certain culmination in the sixth and fifth centuries BC. M. L. Buhl gives a detailed introduction to this amphorae, assigning their appearance on the Syrian coast to Cypriot inspiration⁵². Examples have been found also at Kazel and at Al Mina III⁵³, indicating the late date for a great part of the this amphorae.

From the Iron III on, only few typical inland Syrian pottery types seem to have reached coastal Syria and the Assyrian respectively Babylonian predominance does not seem to have influenced the material culture. So far as the only example of the Syrian-Palestinian imitations of the carenated bowls of the Assyrian «palace ware» has been recorded at Kazel, what might be belonging to the fact that at this time Kazel (Simyra) was the residence of an Assyrian provincial governor⁵⁴.

An other interesting fact is that already with the seventh century BC the number of local bowls was quite reduced and with the sixth century BC they seem to have been replaced by the Greek drinking-cups. Thus it is the Greek pottery, which demonstrates the changes in this period. This will be discussed later.

Turning to the more northern sites of coastal Syria, special interest should be drawn on Ibn Hani, concerning the Early Iron Age development. The lower level of the building in W 65 has provided a pottery with a remarkable appearance at the very beginning of the Iron I. Characteristic examples are bell-shaped craters with tilted horizontal handles (Fig. 9.7) and deep bowls with a decoration of curve-stemmed, often antithetic spirals (Fig. 9.1-2), thus they could be regarded as variants of Myc. III C:1b pottery.

On Cyprus Myc. III C:1 pottery was already produced local at the end of the LC II C period and the appearance of the Myc. III C:1b style at the beginning of the LC III A period is referred to the emigration of Mycenaeans/Achaeans⁵⁵. Myc. III C:1b elements were also adapted by the Philistae pottery of South Palestine⁵⁶ and it occurs in limited amounts at other Levantine sites, as far as from Tell Keisan up to Tarsus⁵⁷. Lastly, one fine example of a deep bell-shaped bowl with curve-stemmed antithetic spirals, very similar to that of Ibn Hani (Fig. 9: 2), has recently been found in Tell Afis in inland Syria⁵⁸.

On the case of the Philistine pottery and its ambiguous relation to the «Seapeoples», L. Badre evokes this question also for an eventual presence of the «Seapeoples» at Ibn

52. BUHL *Sūkās VII*, 16-23, 112-113.

53. DUNAND, *AAAS* 14 (1964), 7; WOOLLEY, *JHS* 58 (1938), 18, pl. 4:1.

54. GUBEL, *Transeuphratène* 2 (1990), 39, noting one example of local imitation of the «Palace Ware» at Kazel.

55. DIKAIOS, *Enkomi*, 272ff; KARAGEORGHIS V. et al., *Excavations at Kition, The Pre-Phoenician levels*, Nicosia 1985, 271ff. Myc. III C: 1b style is most characteristic for level III A and B at Enkomi and for floor III in areas III/I at Kition.

56. AMIRAN, *Ancient Pottery*, 266-269; DOTHAN T., *The Philistines and their Material Culture*, New Haven and London 1982, 98-106.

57. BADRE, «Les Peuples de la Mer», 204, notes 3-6.

58. TA.92.E.416/1 from level 9 in area E1; will be published in 1993, «Tell Afis, The 1988-1992 Excavations on the Acropolis».

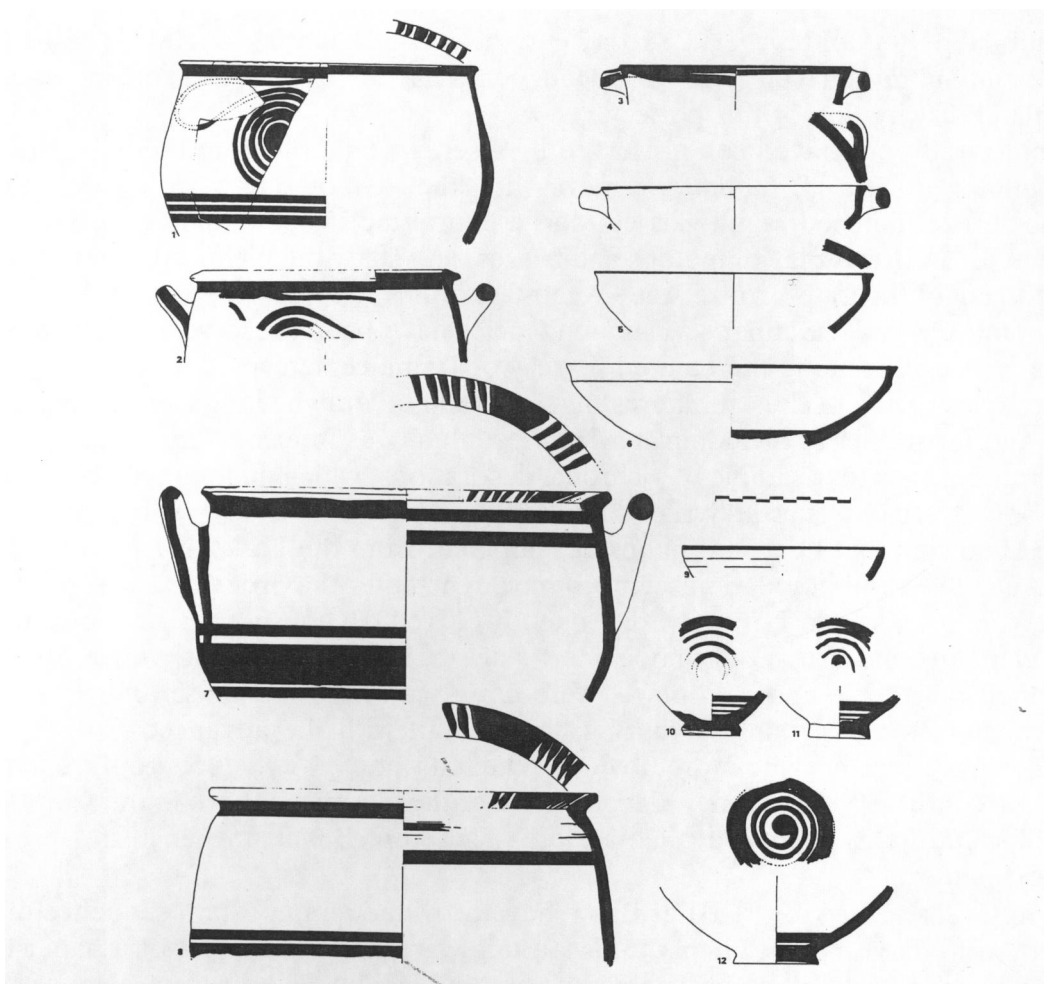


Fig. 9: Submycenaean pottery from Ibn Hani (from Bounni et al. *Syria* 56, fig. 25).

Hani⁵⁹: but as her paper already indicates, there is no proof for a real implantation of new ethnics at Ibn Hani. When the destroyed town of the Late Bronze Age was immediately rebuilt, Myc.III C:1b style pottery was transmitted to Ibn Hani by external, probably Cypriote, stimuli. Soon after, this style was incorporated in the local pottery repertory and mixed with persisting local elements. That is exemplarily shown by the already noted craters with wavy-line decoration.

They have been found both at Ibn Hani, with bichrome decoration (Fig. 7.3) from the upper level of the building in W 65 and with monochrome decoration⁶⁰ from the upper level of the building in X 67. These craters retain both, local traditions with their shape and the bichrome decoration but the wavy-line recalls Aegean traditions. Thus Ibn Hani shows best continuation from the Late Bronze to the Early Iron Age, passing the

59. BADRE, «Les Peuples de la Mer».

60. BOUNNI, *Syria* 55 (1978), fig. 27: 3, fig. 29; BOUNNI, *Syria* 58 (1981), fig. 25.

transitional pottery of Myc. III C: 1b style to the wavyline craters and bowls of the Myc. IIIC:2 and Submycenaean style⁶¹ Ibn Hani could have been a logical starting point for the inland distribution of this pottery.

Similar traditions have been preserved by a series of sherds from the upper level of the building in X 67⁶². Geometric motifs like the «Union Jack», rows of triangles, rhombs-frieze, hatched «sand-glasses» and a figural motif – a nursing capride –, their syntax with a distinct play of metops and friezes, and lastly the bichrome decoration are reminiscent of the Late Bronze Age «Ageo-Cypriot» style, typical for the Ras Shamra region and Cyprus⁶³. Similar stylistic tendencies have been preserved in inland Syria, where, especially among the painted pottery of Hama cemetery I⁶⁴, Late Bronze Age Syrian styles revived. Thus an interesting line could be drawn along Cyprus, the Syrian coast and inland Syria, including Ibn Hani eventually as intermediary of Late Bronze Age traditions; as for example of bichrome decorations, which might have been reintroduced on Cyprus by coastal Syrian stimuli.

Ibn Hani shows quite a continuous development from the Late Bronze to the Early Iron Age. The local population seems to have reacted to the processes, which affected at that time the whole Levant. Consequently, Myc. IIIC:1b pottery was mixed with local elements and it marked only a short stage in the development, which after that continued on a local basis. Contacts were quite scarce in this phase and of a rather ambivalent nature, certainly favouring Cyprus, but with the advanced Iron Age the Syrian connections became more obvious. The later pottery evidence from trenches at Ibn Hani confirms a striking new development of the material culture in the Iron II, but stratified items are not available there. Therefore Bassit further north, provides the best material.

Eight levels of the Iron II-III at Bassit have provided an important sequence of red-slip pottery, altogether 140 items. This striking ware was the subject of a paper by F. Braemer, who ordered it according to «ensembles» A-H corresponding with the architectural levels 3-9⁶⁵. As it could already be gathered from his paper, an important amount of this ware at Bassit evidently forms part of the Phoenician red-slip pottery, well-known from Phoenician homeland excavations at Tyre and at Sarepta⁶⁶. From ensemble B down to ensemble F Bassit provides a nearly classical repertoire of Phoenician metropolitan red-slip pottery; the carenated thin-ware plates from ensembles B-D (Fig. 10.1-3), which were common at Tyre strata V-I, at Sarepta Y, D1-C and at Kition⁶⁷, the hemispherical bowls from ensembles C/D (Fig. 10.4), which occur at Tyre,

61. A bell shaped bowl with wavy-line decoration in the handle zone has been published in: BOUNNI, *Syria* 58 (1981), fig. 30.

62. BOUNNI, *Syria* 58 (1981), figs. 26-29.

63. BOUNNI, *Syria* 58 (1981), 264, note 1.

64. Compare geometric motifs (RUIS, *Hama II*, 3, fig. 130A), the caprides (RUIS, *Hama II*, 3, fig. 130B.104-105), as well as their syntax on the vessels (RUIS, *Hama II*, 3, figs. 51-52, fig. 58, fig. 122-128).

65. BRAEMER, *Syria* 63 (1986).

66. BIKAI, *Pottery of Tyre*, 26; ANDERSON, *Sarepta I*, 344-355.

67. BIKAI, *Pottery of Tyre*, 26-29, type FWP; ANDERSON, *Sarepta I*, 162, type F1; BIKAI P. M., *The Phoenician Pottery of Cyprus*, Nicosia 1987, pl. 18: 163, 439, 515.

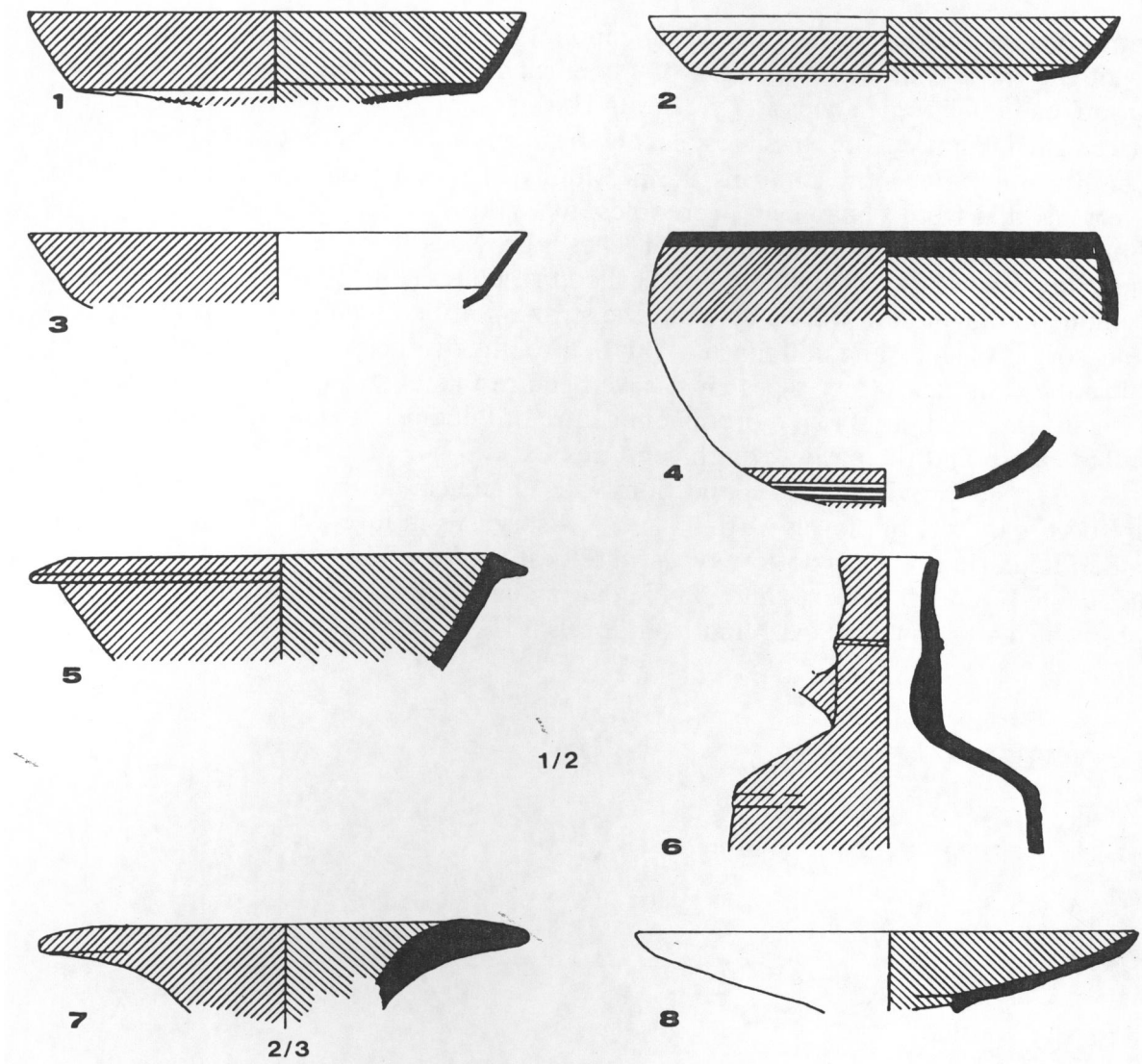


Fig. 10: Red-slip pottery from Bassit (Drawings after Braemer Syria 63).

at Sarepta Y, D1-B and at Kition⁶⁸, the conical bowls with triangular-shaped rim from ensembles C/D (Fig. 10.5), with its parallels at Sarepta Y, C1-C2 and on Cyprus⁶⁹. A very significant example is the jug with pronounced shoulder-carenation and cylindrical, in the upper part slightly concaved neck (Fig. 10.6). Two horizontal ridges separate these two parts of the neck. The mouth of the jug had already been cut off and transformed into a simple rim in antiquity. But an original mushroom-like mouth (Fig. 10.7)

68. BIKAI, *Pottery of Tyre*, 28, type FW4; ANDERSON, *Sarepta I*, 164, type F2; BIKAI, *Phoenician Pottery*, pl. 19:488.

69. ANDERSON, *Sarepta I*, 144, type X2; BIKAI, *Phoenician Pottery*, pl. 20: 522.

for this type of neck-ridged jug was found among ensemble G. The mushroomlip jug is one of the most characteristic items of Phoenician pottery, which occurs as well in red-slip- as in bichrome style; at Tyre strata III-I, at Sarepta Y, E-D1 and at Kition⁷⁰. The red-slip evidence from Bassit, especially, from ensembles C-F of the first part of the seventh century BC, now confirms the possibility of the late dating of some red-slip pottery, as that from Phoenician necropoles, like Akhziv tombs 20 and 36⁷¹.

Only the repertoire of ensemble G of level 8 provides, for the first time a distinct change in pottery types at Bassit. The so called fish-plates (Fig. 10.8) appear and a new technique had been introduced by then, the stroke polished technique, effecting alternating stripes of shiny and dull finish⁷². But before, the distinctive red-slip technique, as well as the classical pottery types must have been results of strong Phoenician impacts on Bassit, thus making Bassit a prominent centre of Phoenician material culture during the late eighth and the early seventh centuries BC.

Also Al Mina provides close connections with Phoenicia during this period. Red-slip ware occurs there from levels VIII-VI and few survivals in level V. The already mentioned Phoenician red-slip pottery types were best presented in level VIII⁷³, and other types could be added. A very common Phoenician import is the trefoil-rimmed jug (Fig. 11.1), which was found at Al Mina from levels VII-VI; close parallels were found at

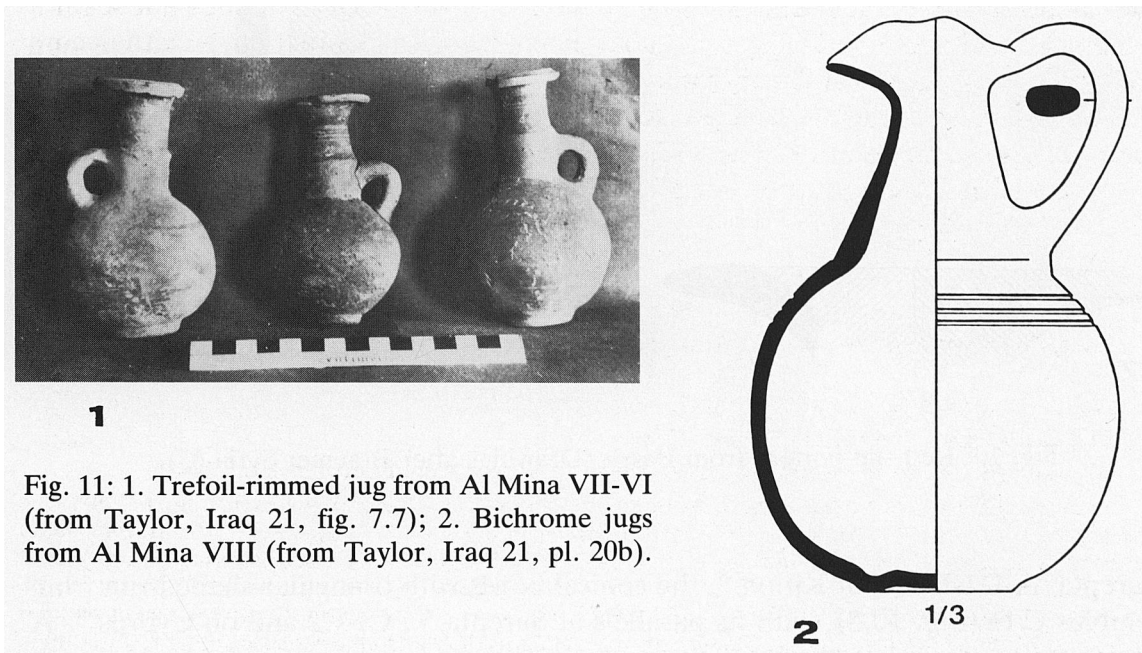


Fig. 11: 1. Trefoil-rimmed jug from Al Mina VII-VI (from Taylor, Iraq 21, fig. 7.7); 2. Bichrome jugs from Al Mina VIII (from Taylor, Iraq 21, pl. 20b).

70. BIKAI *Pottery of Tyre*, 33-35, types J3-J5; ANDERSON, *Sarepta I*, 202, type DJ2; BIKAI, *Phoenician Pottery*, pl. 13.

71. CULICAN W. «The Repertoire of Phoenician Pottery», in *Phönizier im Western*, 73-75.

72. BRAEMER, *Syria* 63 (1986), 237, cf. no. 35.

73. The carenated plates, the conical bowls and the hemispherical bowls (DU PLAT TAYLOR, *Iraq* 21 (1959), fig. 6.1-3, fig. 6.10,13,15 fig. 6.4-5) are exact parallels of the cited items from Bassit, Tyre and Sarepta.

Tyre str.IV, at Sarepta Y, D1-C1 and on Cyprus⁷⁴. The mushroom-lipped jug occurs not only with red slip levels VII-VI, but also a certain number of globular jugs with mushroom lip or square rim in bichrome style were found in level VIII (Fig. 11.2)⁷⁵.

Remarkable is the increasing amount of red-slip ware already in level VIII. This level evidently predates the ensembles C and D of the early seventh century BC, which have provided the greatest number of red-slip ware at Bassit. But nevertheless, a quite long space between the culmination of red-slip pottery at Al Mina and that at Bassit does not seem probable. Thus further evidence is given to date level VIII of Al Mina rather at the end of the eighth century BC (see also note 18).

The classical Phoenician pottery repertoire disappears in level V in the second part of the seventh century BC, at the same time as at Bassit. Preserving the red-slip technique, new types, like the fish-plates⁷⁶ have been introduced in level V, confirming, that Al Mina and Bassit shared the same seventh century development.

The extraordinary position of Al Mina and Bassit becomes even more evident by comparison with the material on the southern coast and further north on the Cilician coast. Tarsus has provided red-slip ware mainly from the levels of Middle Iron and Assyrian Period⁷⁷. There are some distinct parallels with red-slip wares of Al Mina and Bassit, especially among the carenated bowls⁷⁸. But concerning the Phoenician types and the fine red-slip technique, both are missing at Tarsus. It has been often maintained that Tarsus documents Phoenician pottery well⁷⁹. Nevertheless this does not seem as evident as usually accepted. The ambiguous examples are a globular juglet with decoration of concentric circles and a miniature juglet with a squared-off rim on ridged neck⁸⁰. Both vessels must rather be assigned to the Cypro-Phoenician Black-on-Red II class, which has always been more typical for the northern Levant⁸¹. Evidence for a distinct Phoenician homeland pottery is not given at Tarsus. The Phoenician connections with

74. BIKAI, *Pottery of Tyre*, 36, type J7; ANDERSON, *Sarepta I*, 211, type DJ 14; BIKAI, *Phoenician Pottery*, pl. 15.

75. DU PLAT TAYLOR, *Iraq* 21 (1959), fig. 7: 4-6 and fig. 2: 9-11.

76. DU PLAT TAYLOR, *Iraq* 21 (1959), fig. 6: 30.

77. GOLDMAN H., *Excavations at Gözlükule, Tarsus, The Iron Age*, Princeton 1963, 60-61.

78. A carenated bowl with retracted rim from Tarsus Middle Iron (GOLDMAN, *Tarsus*, fig. 123.504) can be compared with one from Al Mina VII-VI (DU PLAT TAYLOR, *Iraq* 21 (1959), fig. 6: 16) and from Bassit ensemble C (BRAEMER, *Syria* 63 (1986), fig. 3: 8). with triangular rim from Tarsus Assyrian Period (GOLDMAN, *Tarsus*, fig. 136.1098) with items from Al Mina VIII (DU PLAT TAYLOR, *Iraq* 21 (1959), fig. 6: 10, 13, 15) and Bassit ensemble D (BRAEMER, *Syria* 63 (1986), fig. 4: 19); with simple rim and adjacent handles from Tarsus Middle Iron (GOLDMAN, *Tarsus*, fig. 126: 702), with one from Bassit ensemble E (BRAEMER, *Syria* 63 (1986), fig. 5: 24).

79. Cf. LEBRUN R., «L'Anatolie et le monde phénicien du Xe au IVe siècle av. J.C.», *Studia Phoenicia V*, Leuven 1987, 23; LIPINSKI E., «Phoenicians in Anatolia and Assyria (9th-6th Centuries B.C.)», *OLP* 16 (1985), 81.

80. GOLDMAN, *Tarsus*, no. 1069 (Assyrian Period); no. 670 (Middle Iron).

81. The difficulty to appoint the origin of the cited Black-on-Red II vessels has been stressed by H. Goldman (GOLDMAN, *Tarsus*, 110-111, 130). In the same sense, W. Culican, who points out the difficulty to distinguish the Phoenician "Local Black-on-Red" from the Cypro-Phoenician Black-on-Red (CULICAN in *Phönizier im Westen*, 55ff.).

Tarsus were rather mediated by Cyprus, while the contacts with Al Mina and Bassit have to be seen within the North Syrian connections⁸².

South of Bassit at Ibn Hani, a more ambivalent picture is provided. Red slip occurs there on local pottery types, found in trenches⁸³. But only a very limited number of sherds are of the fine plate type with homogeneous red slip of probably Phoenician origin⁸⁴. Singular is the neck and mushroom lip of a Phoenician bichrome jug⁸⁵.

Further south on the Syrian coast and its hinterland the negative evidence of Phoenician red-slip ware has already been described. It might be worth noting, that Tell 'Arqa on the Libanese river side of the Nahr al-Kabir provides a limited amount of red-slip ware from level 9⁸⁶. Thus 'Arqa, as well as Ibn Hani are examples for settlements situated on the periphery of red-slip centres. In other words, both could be regarded as boundaries of distinct Phoenician influence.

The trans-Mediterranean diffusion of Phoenician pottery has been comprehensively explained by W. Culican. He considers it characteristic of the «second Phoenician period» from about 850-650 BC. P. Bikai has elucidated its distribution on Cyprus⁸⁷. A very interesting northern diffusion of Phoenician red-slip and bichrome ware in the second part of the eighth century BC could now be added to this. Since the terrestrial way must probably be excluded⁸⁸, this pottery almost certainly reached Syria by sea, preferring the expanated ports on the northern coastline.

The Greek pottery concludes this chapter. Its appearance on the Syrian coast was almost connected with Greeks settling there, at which the eighth century BC was generally accepted as the initial date of their establishment⁸⁹. But this «greco-centric» view has since become the subject of controversial discussion. Therefore, some remarks on the material evidence should be contributed.

First Greek pottery in the Levant has been recognized by the striking sub-protogeometric «pendent semi-circle» skyphoi (Fig. 12). Only sporadic examples have been found, but with an astonishingly widespread distribution. The «pendent semi-circle» skyphos is documented on the Syrian coast at Al Mina, levels IX-VIII, at Bassit, levels 2-3 at Ibn Hani, from trenches at Sukas, period H1, at Tabbat al-Hammam⁹⁰, in

82. Cilician Pottery occurs in limited amounts at Abu Danne (LEBEAU, *Abou Danné*, 127) and at Tell Afis (MAZZONI, *EVO X*, 2 (1987), fig. 7: 3). The contacts must have been established via the 'Amq and also have evidently affected the northern Syrian coast.

83. BOUNNI, *Syria* 53 (1976), 243, fig. 27: 11-17.

84. BOUNNI, *Syria* 53 (1976), fig. 26: 28, 29, 33.

85. LAGARCE, in *Congresso Studi Fenici I*, pl. 61: 2.

86. THALMAN J.-P., «Tell'Arqa (Liban Nord), campagnes I-III (1972-1974)», *Syria* 55 (1978), 82-84.

87. CULICAN, in *Phönizier im Westen*; BIKAI, *Phoenician Pottery*.

88. Red-slip ware diffused also in the 'Amq, but that has been recognized as to be quite different from that of Al Mina and Bassit (CULICAN, in *Phönizier im Westen*, 79). The same could be gathered from the description of the red-slip ware at Abu Danne (LEBEAU, *Abou Danné*, 130-132).

89. cf. BOARDMAN, *Greek Overseas*, 39-45; RIIS, in *Phönizier im Westen*; and still RIIS P. J., «Les problèmes actuels de l'établissement pré-helléniques de Grecs sur la cote phénicienne (Lieux, Dates, Modalités)», in *Atti del II Congresso int. di Studi Fenici e Punici, Vol. I*, Rome, 1991.

90. ROBERTSON, *JHS* 58 (1938), 2-3 fig. 1 a-k; COURBIN, *Syria* 63 (1986), 190, fig. 16; BOUNNI, *Syria* 55

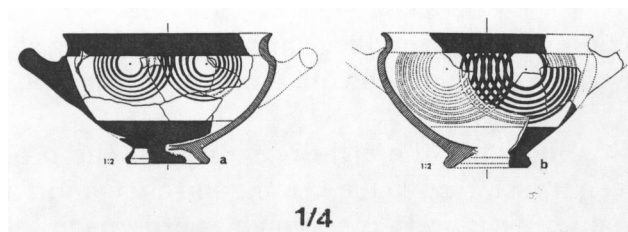


Fig. 12: «Pendent semi-circle» skyphos, examples from Hama (from Riis *Sūkās I*, fig. 51).

North Syria at Tell Ta'yinat, at Hama E and cemetery IV and the Tell Afis area D, lev. 4⁹¹, on the Habur at Tell Halaf⁹², on the Cilician coast at Tarsus⁹³, in Palestine at Tell Abu Hawam III⁹⁴, in Phoenicia at Tyre, strata X-VIII, at Sarepta and Kaldeh⁹⁵ and lastly on Cyprus⁹⁶.

Only Tyre provides examples certainly dating from before the eighth century BC. These could have been imports from Euboea, which were carried by Phoenician merchants to Tyre. But the great part of the «pendent semi-circle» skyphoi dates from the second part of the eighth century BC, as recently pointed out by P. Kearsley's very informative study. Kearsley concludes, that the main part of the 25 (!) skyphoi at Al Mina belong to a type 6, which appear as the last type within the development of the «psc» skyphos, dating from the second half of the eighth century BC⁹⁷. Thus it gives the best evidence to date of the Al Mina levels IX-VIII during this period. The preceding types 4 and 5 have been found, apart from 5 items at Al Mina, at Sukas, Hama, in the 'Amq and mainly on Cyprus. Kearsley proposes a date from about 825/800 – 750/720 for these types, thus they could have appeared in the Levant a little earlier than type 6⁹⁸. The two earlier types belong to the group, which marks the expansive phase of the «psc» skyphos, still starting from Euboea or North Cyclades. But when type 6 came into

(1978), 284, fig. 29: 1,6; RIIS, *Sūkās I*, 142ff., fig. 53 b-c, fig. 54 a-b and PLOUG, *Sūkās II*, fig. 9: 37, pl. 2A; BRAIDWOOD, *Syria* 21 (1940), 191, 193, fig. 4: 9.

91. DESBOROUGH V.R.D A., *Protogeometric Pottery*, Oxford 1952, pl. 26: 6; RIIS, *Hama II*, 3, 113-114, fig. 134 A-B and RIIS, *Sūkās I*, 153, fig. 51. a-d; The fragment from Tell Afis TA.86.D.280/1 will be published in 1993, in *Tell Afis, The 1988-1992 Excavations on the Acropolis*.

92. RIIS, *Sukas I*, fig. 48 e.

93. GOLDMAN, *Tarsus*, fig. 102: 1502-1504, 1507, 1509, 1511, 1513.

94. DESBOROUGH, *Protogeometric Pottery*, pl. 26.4.

95. BIKAI, *Pottery of Tyre*, 53, pl. 22A: 5-6, pl. 24: 4,6; PRITCHARD J. B., *Sarepta: A Preliminary Report on the Iron Age*, Philadelphia 1975, 96, fig. 26.14; SAIDAH R., «Objets grecs d'Epoque Géométrique découvertes récemment sur le littoral libanais (à Khaldé près de Beyrouth)», *AAAS* 21 (1971), 193-198.

96. See examples cited in: KEARSLEY, *Pendent Semi-Circle Skyphos*, 19-21.

97. KEARSLEY, *Pendent Semi-Circle Skyphos*, 128-132.

98. The shape of types 4-6 has been described as follows: Type 4, small and shallow, rather squat appearance. Offset lip, short and straight; type 5, like type 4 but different lip, which does not flare outwards with straight profile, it is set back from the shoulder and is concave in the centre; type 6, small and shallow, offset curved lip, which slightly overhangs the shoulder, see KEARSLEY, *Pendent Semi - Circle Skyphos*, 95-104, figs. 38, 39, 40-41.

existence, the Euboean market in the Aegean and North Greece had already ceased. Shape and quality of type 6 were already quite different from the Euboean prototypes 1-3⁹⁹.

In conclusion, in the middle of the eighth century BC the production of the «psc» skyphos must have been transferred to the Levant and circulation on an oriental market was then quite probable. The finds of skyphoi sherds near kilns at Sarepta at Tarsus¹⁰⁰ make a local production probable. Concluding from the important amount of «psc» skyphoi, Al Mina and Cyprus could have been production centres, and from Al Mina the skyphos could have been distributed further inland. But who were the potters, Greeks or local residents?

Again, Al Mina provides striking evidence. There were found 24 items of two handled skyphoi with flat base and simple rim (Fig. 13). They belonged to levels IX-VIII, thus they are almost contemporary with the «psc» skyphos. J. Boardman has already described them as local imitations or Euboean-Cycladic skyphoi¹⁰¹. The local clay ware and a distinctive bichrome effect, achieved by the use of pale colours, are doubtless signs of a local production. But also some motifs, like birds (Fig. 10.1), hatched triangles (Fig. 13.17-18), the «Union Jack» (Fig. 13.12) and semicircles around a central point (Fig. 13.3) could be compared with the Cyprogeometric style or have even North Syrian traditions like the guilloche (Fig. 13.3). The preference for the handle zone for decorations, ordered in metops, and the use of the multiple brush as a hallmark of Greek

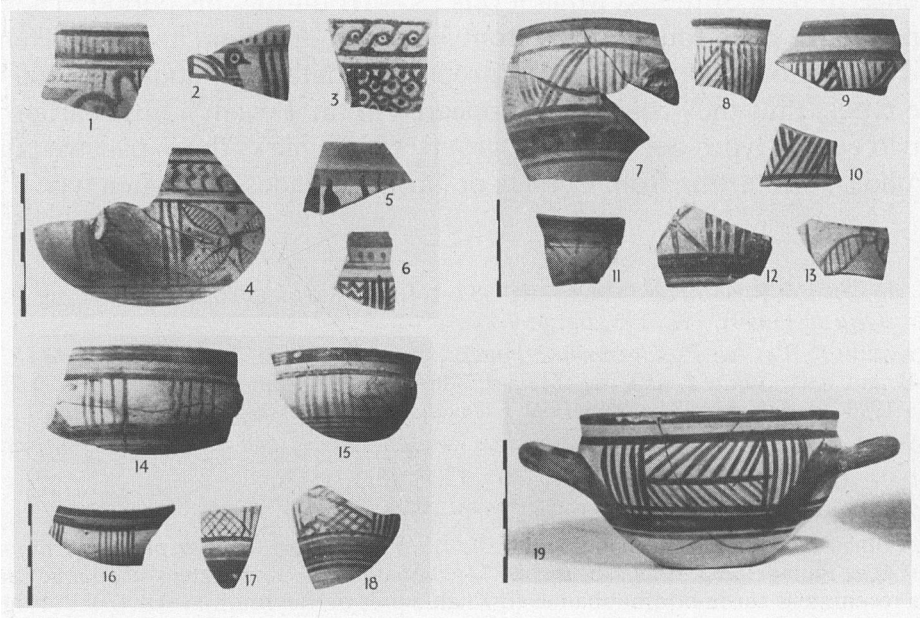


Fig. 13: «Al Mina» cups from Al Mina IX-VIII (from Boardman, *An St* 9, pl. 24).

99. KEARSLEY, *Pendent Semi-Circle Skyphos*, 143-144.

100. PRITCHARD, *Sarepta*, 199; GOLDMAN, *Tarsus*, 172ff.

101. BOARDMAN, *AnSt*9 (1959), 163-169.

Geometric pottery¹⁰² must be considered typically Greek. Apart from Cyprus, which has already been suggested as the place of their production¹⁰³, Al Mina was certainly the centre of production. Therefore, other items on the Cilician and Syrian coast are close parallels to that of Al Mina, in as far as «Al Mina» cups have been found at Tarsus, at Bassit, at Ibn Hani and at Sukas¹⁰⁴.

Among the early Greek pottery of the second part of the eighth century BC, the «pendent semi-circle» skyphos and the «Al Mina» cup hold a striking position. They are the only Greek related classes, which occur in certain amounts and provide a homogeneous appearance; apart from them only few sporadically Greek imports from Euboea, the North Cyclades, Samos and Milet have been found in an almost oriental context¹⁰⁵. For example Sukas period H1 has provided only nine sherds of Greek Middle Geometric pottery, thus hardly supporting the hypothesis of a Greek settlement at that time¹⁰⁶. While the «psc» skyphos and the «Al Mina» cup have been circulated in an oriental market, the limited Greek imports never appeared in such market. Therefore it seems more probable, that the production of Greek imitations and their distribution were a speciality of local Cypriot and coastal Syrian potters. And it may be no coincidence, that this became obvious at the same time, when red-slip pottery arrived in the northern part of the Syrian coast.

From the ninth century BC Phoenicians were engaged in the trans-Mediterranean commerce and their craftsmen were already employed in overseas environments¹⁰⁷. When Phoenicians extended commercial activity in the Aegean and the Tyrrhenian sea, they had to share the routes with the only Greek commercial power, the Euboeans. Exchanges between both could have taken place not only in Euboea, but rather everywhere, where Phoenicians and Euboeans shared trading outposts, for example at Pithekoussai on Ischia or at Sulcis on Sardinia¹⁰⁸. Therefore it is not surprising, that Phoenicians obtained above all Euboean pottery, which was the hallmark of Euboean commerce. Already in the mid-ninth century BC they brought Greek pottery to their homeland metropolises, like Tyre¹⁰⁹; and recently P. Courbin has presented fragments of pro-

102. BOARDMAN, *AnSt* 9 (1959), 164, pl. 25.

103. COLDSTREAM (Diskussion), in RIIS, in *Phönizier im Wester*, 256.

104. GOLDMAN, *Tarsus*, nos. 1372-1382; COURBIN, *Syria* 63 (1986), fig. 28; LAGARCE, in *Congr. Studi Fenici I*, pl. 61: 2,1; PLOUG, *Sūkās II*, pl. 2, fig.s 44-45.

105. PERREAULT J., «Les débuts de la présence effective de Grecs sur la côte syro-palestinienne à l'Age du Fer», in «O Ellenismos Sten Anatole», Int. Meeting of History and Archaeology, Athens 1991, 394-396.

106. COLDSTREAM, (review of RIIS, *Sūkās I*, PLOUG *Sūkās II*), *AJA* 79 (19...), 156.

107. See COLDSTREAM, in *Phönizier im Westen*, 265-268.

108. At Pithekoussai an important amount of Phoenician imports have been found, like seals, Phoenician trade amphorae, bichrome jugs and red-slip ware; all dating in the second half of the eighth and the early seventh centuries BC. It is most probable, that Phoenicians then maintained there beside Euboeans a trade outpost with workshop, what is called an *enoikismos* (see also BUCHNER, *Die Beziehungen*). The Phoenician preponderance at Sulcis has recently been pointed out, see BOTTO M., «Considerazioni sul commercio Fenicio nel Tirreno nell'VIII e nel VII Secolo A.C.», *AION XI* (1989), 239. New excavations have clearly proved, that Euboean pottery occurs there in Phoenician environments, see BERARDINI P., «L'insediamento fenicio», in AA.VV., «S'Antioco. Area del Cronuario, Campagne 1983-1986», *RSF* 16 (1988), 75ff.

109. BIKAI, *Pottery of Tyre*, 53, import 3.

togeometric amphorae found at Bassit and dating in the mid-tenth century BC¹¹⁰. These are certainly the earliest proofs of first millennium contacts with Greece, re-established by Levantine traders when they already travelled to Euboea to obtain such amphorae for their content. Two centuries later, Phoenicians could have carried Greek pottery for their own, to Al Mina and Bassit, where it inspired local imitations. At this time, when Phoenicians dominated the northern coast and when they were well-engaged in North Syria and Cilicia, it was evidently impossible for Euboeans to carry out commercial activities on the northern coastline of Syria or to settle there. Thus a Greek presence, mainly of Euboeans, on the Syrian coast before 700 BC should be regarded more cautiously. The eighth century BC might be called a pre-Greek phase on the Syrian coast, when the occurring Greek pottery is a reflection of Phoenician western trade activities and probably co-operation with Euboeans, rather than of Greek implantations. This direction changes distinctly after 700 BC, also reflecting the transition from Iron II to Iron III.

For the further development of Greek pottery on the Syrian coast, a comprehensive summary and periodisation down to the fifth century BC is provided by A.M. Collombier. However, it should be noted that the appearance of Greek pottery on coastal Syria is not as homogeneous, as stated there¹¹¹. There were rather different tendencies, indicating different spheres of interest of several Greek communities¹¹².

After 700 BC Greek pottery faced a crisis, reflecting both, the destabilization of Phoenician commerce by the Assyrians and the decline of the Euboean monopoly of pottery, the latter connected with the Lelantine wars on Euboea. The evidence is well readable from Al Mina level VI and the Sukas period G3, which provide scarcely any Greek material for this time. But from the mid-seventh century BC on Greek pottery increases considerably and continuously on the Syrian coast. In the second half of the seventh century BC, Al Mina level V, Bassit and Ibn Hani, as well as Tarsus¹¹³ provide some distinct Eastern Greek imports, like «Ionian» cups, «Rhodian» bird bowls and wildegoat style pottery. Only Al Mina holds an exceptional position, by providing some early Corinthian imports¹¹⁴. It can be no coincidence that a stronger Greek element firstly appeared on the northern part of the Syrian coast and this suggests that Greeks had reoccupied the eighth century routes, still preferring a most northern access into North Syria. Only when around 600 BC Al Mina was curiously abandoned for about eighty years, Sukas and the southern coast became the preferred region for Greek imports¹¹⁵. A considerable amount of Eastern Greek sherds and first Corinthian

110. COURBIN P., «Fragments d'amphores protogéométriques grecques à Bassit», in MATTHIAE P., VAN LOON M.N., WEISS H. (Edd.) «*Resurrecting the Past*», *A Joint Tribute to Adnan Bounni*, Istanbul 1990, 57.

111. COLLOMBIER A. M., «Céramique Grecque et échanges en Méditerranée Orientale: Chypre et la cote syro-phénicienne (fin VIIIe – fin IVe siècles av. J.C.)», *Studia Phoenicia III*, Leuven 1985, 239-248.

112. BOARDMAN, *Greek Overseas*, 46-54.

113. ROBERTSON, *JHS* 58 (1938), 6-20; COURBIN, *Syria* 63 (1986), 198; BOUNNI, *Syria* 55 (1978), 282-284; HANFMANN M. A., «On some Eastern Greek Wares Found at Tarsus», in *The Aegean and the Near East, Studies Presented to Hetty Goldman*, New York 1956, 165-184.

114. BOARDMAN J., «Tarsus, Al Mina and Greek Chronology», *JHS* 85 (1965), 15.

115. PLOUG, *Sūkās II*, 97.

wares¹¹⁶ occurred during period G2 at Sukas, but from the mid sixth century BC on Attic imports increased¹¹⁷. From that time on, the activity of mainland Greeks became reinforced and they could well have assisted in the rebuilding and reoccupation of Al Mina level IV. This event marks for the second time a change in directions; while the new Al Mina provides the flowering time of Attic imports, the period G1 of Sukas shows a distinct decline of Greek pottery, already indicating the decadence of the Sukas settlement.

After 700 BC Greeks must have actively influenced the cultural development on the Syrian coast. They must have entered local environments, where a short time before Phoenicians had been active. How to define the Greeek implantations, as *apoikia*, *emporion* or *enoikismos*, still remains controversial. However, their presence on coastal Syria must always be seen in relation to the local element in the population which was never displaced by foreign elements.

Concerning the material culture of coastal Syria, a striking new direction took place after 700 BC. Considering both, red-slip and Greek pottery as outside impacts upon the local culture, the substitution of the former by the latter elucidates a new western orientation of the Syrian coast, as criterion of the Iron III.

Ivory and Seals

The material culture of coastal Syria has been enriched by finds of seals and ivory. Although their occurring number is very limited, they give nevertheless good evidence for a handicraft combined with commercial activity, which mainly took place in the second part of the eighth century BC; including the Syrian coast within the striking scope of exchange between Greece, the Phoenicians and the Luwian-Aramean area.

On the Syrian coast carved ivory scarcely occurs, but more important are the finds of marked ivory tusks of horns of large bovines at Al Mina¹¹⁸. These tusks, once destined for forward carriage, must have been obtained from elephants of Syrian stocked herds. Elephants already existed there probably in the mid-second millenium BC and in the ninth and eighth centuries they were kept in stocked herds to safeguard the Syrian market¹¹⁹.

Ivory was one of the most delicate luxury articles of Phoenician commerce, with a doubtless effect on Greeces Oriental Period. The Phoenician-traded ivories had different styles and different origins, as has been comprehensively pointed out in a series of contributions by I. Winter¹²⁰. Therefore it is possible to distinguish between Phoeni-

116. RIIS, in *Phönizier im Westen*, 241.

117. RIIS, *Sūkās I*, 80-82.

118. BARNETT R.D., *The Nimrud Ivories*, in the British Museum, London 1957, 165, note 1; GUBEL E., *Phoenician Furniture*, in *Studia Phoenicia VII*, Leuven 1987, 24.

119. WINTER I., *North Syria in the Early First Millenium B.C., with special reference to Ivory Carving*, (Diss.) New York 1973, 267.

120. WINTER, *Iraq* 38 (1976); WINTER I., «Is there a South Syrian Style of Ivory Carving in the Early First Millenium B.C.?», *Iraq* 43 (1981), 101-130.

cian, Phoenician-egyptianising, North Syrian and even South Syrian styles. Concerning the distribution of ivories, it is obvious, that apart from a few finds of Phoenician-style ivories in the Eastern Greek area, the great part of oversea ivories belong to the North Syrian style, like those from Rhodos and Samos, from Sparta and even from Etruria; and the North Syrian style is well reflected in the local carved ivories from the Dipylon cemetery at Athens, from Delphi and Perachora¹²¹. Probable centres of ivory production were Tell Halaf, Zincirli, Tell Ta'yinat, Tell Rifa'at and Hama, which had dealt with ivory mainly in the eighth century BC. The suspension of the ivory production, probably connected with the eradication of the Syrian stocked herds, was a result of the Assyrian submission of the Luwian-Aramean kingdoms around 700 BC; approximately a terminus ante quem for the Al Mina tusks.

Al Mina and other coastal sites must be excluded as centres of ivory carving, since they did not provide the representative setting for the application of luxury ivory. But drawing conclusions from the tusks which were stored at Al Mina and from geographical position of the Syrian ports, they must have played an important role as ports for ivory transshipment, for both tusks and carved ivory. In any case, an expert traders' co-operative must have organized this market. It must have controlled not only the trans-Mediterranean routes, but also been well connected with the Luwian-Aramean kingdoms. For the time in question, only Phoenician merchants, rather than Greeks, fulfilled both requirements.

An impression of the Iron Age glyptic of coastal Syria can be gained from the published seals of Sukas and from Al Mina¹²². Real Phoenician seals are very rare and the coastal Syrian repertoire appears almost different from that of the Phoenician homeland, for example at Tyre¹²³.

Two distinct groups of seals from the late eighth century BC should be considered here. The first are glass-scaraboids which depict a reclining antlered deer, found at Al Mina (Fig. 14.1-2). The head and antlers, the body and the buckled legs of the deer were cut by view short V-shaped incisions, without indicating the inner lines of the body. This seal is a classical example of a moulded glass seal, which could have been produced more cheaply and more quickly than the hard stone seals. It provides good evidence of the skill of glass production and moulding, which seems to have been a speciality of this North Syrian area¹²⁴. The North Syrian and Cilician area has been

121. See bibliography in WINTER, *Iraq* 38 (1976), 11, note 58 and 13.

122. BUHL, *Sūkās VII*, 85-88, pl. 26; BUCHANAN B. and MOOREY P.R.S., *Catalogue of Ancient Near Eastern Seals in the Ashmolean Museum, Vol. III, The Iron Age Stamp Seals*, Oxford (1988), 1-4, pl. 1.

123. BIKAI, *Pottery of Tyre*, pl. 85.

124. Especially the 'Amq, the valley of the Orontes down to its mouth at al Mina could have been a centre of glass production. In the eighth cent. B.C. an important amount of glass bird-beads occur there, the same which were imported in quantity to Italy. A distribution map of these glass bird-beads is presented by FREY O.-H. in *Kolloquien zur Allgemeinen und Vergleichenden Archäologie* 31, 1984: 25 ff. Later in the sixth and fifth cent. B.C. certain face-beads occur at al Mina levels IV-III, the most of them assigned by HAEVERNICK TH.E. to the group "Bocksgesicht", «Gesichtperlen», *Madri der Mitteilungen* 18 (1977), 152-231, nos. 291-298, 501-503, 535, 555, 568, 580, 618. So far the interest has been only focused on the delicate face-beads from Carthage, the Levantine traditions and probably origins of glass production should not be disregarded.

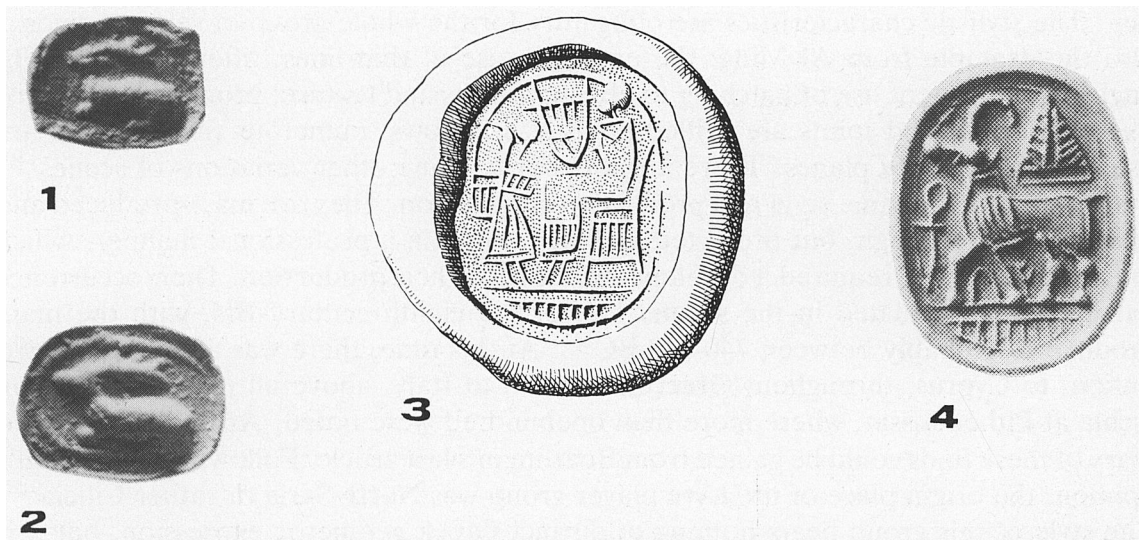


Fig. 14: 1-2. Glass moulded seals from Al Mina (from Buchanan and Moorey, *Stamp Seals*, pl 1.18-19); fig. 14.1: 13×10×6,5, fig. 14.2: 15×12×6; 3. Seal impression of the Lyre player group from Tarsus (from Porada *Lyre Player*, fig. 1); 20×15×9; 4. Seal of the Lyre player group from Al Mina (from Buchanan and Moorey, *Stamp Seals*, pl. 1.13); 19×14×9.

already suggested as the probable source of these seals of almost linear style¹²⁵. Even more remarkable is their eastern Greek distribution and inspiration for the local sphragistic there¹²⁶. Thus they could be considered as more or less industrial products, also assigned to an overseas market. Therefore the northern part of the Syrian coast participated again in the commercial relations between Greece and North Syria.

The second group of almost international occurrence is the so called Lyre player group, which has recently restudied by J. Boardman¹²⁷. Examples of this group have also been found at Al Mina and one at Sukas¹²⁸. At Al Mina a scaraboid of green serpentine (Fig. 14.4) shows the representation of a passing goat on ground-line. The space between this line and the lower curved border of the scaraboid was filled with a hatching. A hatched triangular-shaped tree was placed above and an ankh-sign in front of the goat.

The identification of the Lyre player group of seals bears no difficulties since the study by E. Porada¹²⁹, who proceeded from a scaraboid found at Tarsus (Fig. 14.3). It shows the classical representation of the seating Lyre player and the ballerina in front of

125. BUCHANAN and MOOREY, *Stamp Seals*, 39.

126. BOARDMAN J., *Archaic Greek Gems*, London 1968, 20ff.

127. BOARDMAN, *AA* (1990), 1-17.

128. BUCHANAN and MOOREY, *Stamp Seals*, pl. 1: 13 and BOARDMAN, *AA* (1990), 15, nos. 121-121bis; BUHL, *Sūkās VII*, no. 540, pl. 26.

129. PORADA E., «A Lyre Player from Tarsus and his Relations», in *The Aegean and the Near East*, 185-211.

him. The stylistic characteristics are obligatory for the whole group of seals, including also the example from Al Mina: the extensive use of thin lines, often forming right angles; the frequent use of hatching to effect patterns and texture; prominent features, like head, nose and joints are drilled point size hollows; numerous filling motifs are used to avoid empty planes. There are, of course, some other variations of scenes¹³⁰, but all bearing the same style and production supposition. They are mass-produced and of rather crude design, but projected and elaborated in a professional manner, which must certainly have required a developed work-shop their production. Their occurrence has already been dated in the second half of the eighth century BC, with the main production probably between 740-720 BC¹³¹. At this time, there was a plentiful distribution, to Cyprus, throughout Greece and even to Italy, above all in Etruria and on Ischia at Pithekoussai, where more than onehundred were noted. An up-to-date summary of these finds could be gained from Boardman's last article. Following Boardman's opinion, the origin place of the Lyre player group was North Syria or rather Cilicia¹³². The style of this group bears nothing of distinct Greek geometric expression, but it is strongly related to the North Syrian glyptic, like the Neo-imperial common style of the late eighth and seventh centuries BC¹³³. The scaraboid was the favoured shape for both groups. The crude style and the choice of naturalistic and animal motifs or the predilection for filling motifs are common features of both groups and point to common traditions in the North Syrian or even to Hittite-Anatolian traditions¹³⁴. The concentration of Lyre player seals in the area of Zincirli and Gaziantep and at Carchemish suggests that these were probably centres of production¹³⁵. Trading these seals into the Mediterranean, the next stage must have been the Cilician or northern Syrian coast, proved by the finds of seals from Tarsus, from Al Mina and Sukas and some acquired seals from the region of Lattakia and Tartus¹³⁶.

The Lyre player group of seals presents another aspect of North Syrian minor art, although art must rather be understood within the meaning of professional production process. These seals were obviously not only those provided for an oriental market, but even more for Mediterranean commerce, where they were imported to supply the Greek and Italian market or even to arouse a need there. This is well readable by the different use of the seals, which in Italy were worn as precious amulets with metal

130. PORADA, in «The Aegean and the Near East», 199, 201, 203, 205, 207; BUCHANAN and MOOREY, *Stamp Seals*, 46-48.

131. BOARDMAN, *AA* (1990), 1.

132. BOARDMAN, *AA* (1990), 10.

133. BUCHANAN and MOOREY, *Stamp Seals*, 48-52.

134. The predilection for elaborated horns and antlers is a striking feature of Anatolian and Hittite art, already known from the famous deer standarts of Alaca Höyük of the Early Bronze Age and frequently represented on Hittite glyptic. For example, a stamp seal from Boğazköy shows the representation of a deer with pronounced antlers and fillings motifs. BOEHMER R. M. – GÜTTERBOCK H. G., *Glyptik aus dem Stadtgebiet von Boğazköy*, Berlin, 1987, pl. 15, 148.b. 1; motif and composition are very similar to that of al Mina (Fig. 14: 4).

135. BOARDMAN, *AA* (1990), 11, fig. 20 (distribution map).

136. PORADA, in «The Aegean and the Near East», figs. 1-2, 24 and idem, figs. 7, 15, 22, 38; BUCHANAN and MOOREY, *Stamp Seals*, nos. 304, 308, 312, 314.

setting¹³⁷. It is evident, that the Luwian-Aramean work-shops never organized the Mediterranean market themselves, but were rather dependent on expert trade companies and ports of transshipment. Therefore the masters of the trade with Lyre player seals, as well as glass seals must have been the Phoenicians. Then it is also most probable that Aramean craftsmen had already emigrated to Phoenician environments and that they had accompanied them on their Mediterranean commercial routes¹³⁸. Thus Phoenicians could have reacted immediately to the needs of overseas marketing areas.

Now it has become obvious, that during the second part of the eighth century BC ports like Al Mina, Bassit and also Ibn Hani must have played an important role within the commerce between North Syrian and Greece-Italy. Assuming that at this time Phoenicians were the masters of this trade, a striking new direction is given by the fact that this commerce never started from the Phoenician homeland coast, but required the availability of ports on the northern Syrian coast.

Dealing in this paper firstly with the archeological evidence it must nevertheless be emphasized that the discussed products must once have played a minor role, beside the main commerce with raw-materials like copper, iron, wood from the Tauros and Amanus and with natural produces like cereals, wine and olive-oil from inland Syria and the coast plains around Gābla or the plain of 'Akkar. The Syrian coast could therefore probably be divided into a northern part with more commercial interests orientated towards raw-materials and a southern part orientated towards cultivated products. When in the ninth and eighth centuries BC with raw-material and handicrafts both flourished, the trading companies must have upheld good relations with the North Syrian and Cilician state communities. It is for that reason, that Phoenicians must again be assigned the active role, documented by the amount of Phoenician, epigraphical and iconographical elements in these areas and at this time¹³⁹. The epigraphical documents among the inscription of Kilamuwa at Zincirli, the Hassan Beyli inscription, the Bilingues of Astiwata at Karatepe and the Luwian inscription of Yariri at Carchemish, which cites a scribe of Tyre, are well known. Even a Phoenician religious influence could be assumed from the dedication of the Aramean Bar-Hadad to the deity Melqart of Tyre, inscribed on the stele from Tell Bredj¹⁴⁰. Phoenician-egyptianising style and iconography bear some reliefs from the citadel gates at Karatepe¹⁴¹ or the statue of Sfire¹⁴². As do five seals from Cilicia with the names of Luwian officials written in Phoenician and one inscribed as «seal from Tyre»¹⁴³. These are linguistic, artistic and cultural impacts,

137. BOARDMAN, AA (1990), 9.

138. For example an Aramean element in the Tirrenian Sea and in Calabria is confirmed by epigraphical finds, as such on seals of the Lyre player group, AMADASI GUZZO M. G., «Fenici o Aramei in Occidente nell'VIII sec. a.C.?», *Studia Phoenicia V*, Leuven 1987, 35-47.

139. LIPINSKI, OLP 16 (1985), 81-84; KESTEMONT G., «Les Phéniciens en Syrie du Nord», *Studia Phoenicia III*, Leuven 1985, 135-153.

140. BONNET C., *Melqart*, *Studia Phoenicia VIII*, Leuven 1988, 132-136.

141. WINTER I., «On the Problems of Karatepe: The Reliefs and their Context», *AnSt* 29 (1981) 120-124.

142. WARMENBOL E., «La statuette égyptisante de Sfire en Syrie du Nord», *Studia Phoenicia III*, Leuven 1985, 163-180.

143. LIPINSKI, OLP 16 (1985), 81-84.

not accompanied by Phoenician material culture. Thus they are documents of political-commercial and cultural relations with Phoenicia, or the presence of Phoenician officials and merchants in these areas, where evidence of Greek activity is still missing.

Before 700 BC Phoenicians must have dealt especially with the northern part of the Syrian coast; after 700 BC Greeks became active along the whole Syrian coast. Both affected the material culture of coastal Syria, raising it above the local horizon. But these were just isolated moments within the cultural development of coastal Syria, which remained, during the most phases of the Iron Age, a local culture, still supported by the local population. Therefore, a pro-Phoenician, as well as a pro-Greek point of view should always be considered cautiously.

Conclusions

In conclusion an attempt can be made to outline the development of the material culture on the Syrian coast in the Iron Age. Archeological evidence should then be set against the historical background, strictly remarking, however, that in most cases historical dates and events do not immediately affect material culture, but rather appear by degrees. As for the Phoenician example, M. Botto has in detail explained, that the Assyrian interventions from Tiglathpileser III to Assarhaddon have only gradually affected the Phoenician trade activities¹⁴⁴. The Phoenician trade classes had developed a kind of private commerce, which was characteristic for the Phoenician expansive phase in the eighth and early seventh centuries BC, and which enabled the Phoenician merchants to extend their trade activities largely independent of the events in their homeland. Consequently, material evidence of Phoenician commerce can be found beyond historical cuts and supposed crisis'.

To continue I would like to propose a division of four phases.

The first phase includes almost the Iron I. The transition from the Late Bronze Age to the Iron I does not mark a distinct break in the material culture of coastal Syria, which develops continually on a local base. Evidence of this continuation is provided at Sukas and at Ibn Hani; the architecture offers Syrian or even Syro-Hittite traditions and the pottery reflects a gradual transition of late Bronze Age styles, transforming both Syro-palestinian as well as Aegeo-Cypriot traditions. A single element beyond local scope is the exclusive contact with Cyprus revealed by the Myc. III C:1b pottery and some Cypriot imports; but no real innovations confirm the arrival of new ethnic elements.

From the beginning of the Iron I the coastal settlements have lost their importance as religious, palatine or administrative centres. Now the basis of life was centred on modest activities, essentially agriculture, rather than trade, which only later regained more importance. The absence of an institutional power on the Syrian coast, such as Late Bronze Age Ugarit or Persian Arwad, is an important feature of this phase. This also explains the almost local character of the settlements, and their strong affinities to the

144. Botto, *AION XI* (1989), 233-251; idem, *Studi Storici*.

material development of the Syro-Palestinian area with generally same situation. Furthermore some distinct coastal wares, like wavy-line craters or «céramique à la stéatite», found at Hama and Tell Afis, confirm the continuation of interrelations between coastal Syria and North Syria.

The second phase comprises the Iron II down to the early eighth century BC. It is determined by a closer relation with inland Syria, beginning with first material exchanges and then even influences on the material culture of coastal Syria.

When Shalmanasser III started several campaigns towards the Syro-Palestinian area in about 850 BC, he came into conflict with the Luwian-Aramean kingdoms, which only recently had extended their predominance on the Syrian coast. Unqi, with the mainland found in the 'Amq, in fact might have been the barrier on the route to the Mediterranean for Shalmanasser III, who proclaimed his climbing up the Mt. Casius in 848/7 BC. Already at that time this territory might have been part of Unqi, which extended up the northern part of the Syrian coast, the mouth of the Orontes and the bay of Bassit. Furthermore, in the south, in the battle of Qarqar in 853/2 troops from Arwad/Siyanu, i.e. from the coast south of Lattakia, also fought alongside Damascus and Hamath. Judging by the events during the reign of Shalmanasser III Hamath turned out to be the true political winner. Subsequently the predominance was retained over the Syrian coastal settlements like Simirra (T. Kazel), 'Arqa, Usnu (T. Daruk), Siyanu (T. Sianu, east of Ġabla). It is the material culture of this part of the Syrian coast which reflects this influence, as some distinctive Hama pottery occurs there. At the same time more intensive economical activities took place, as proved by the widespread installations of storage areas. Exchanges become more intensive, mainly with Cyprus and with the Syrian hinterland. Finally it should be noted that archeological evidence of this phase is documented more completely on the southern Syrian coast, while little material from Ibn Hani and Bassit is available in the north.

The third phase extends from the mid eighth century BC to the end of the Iron II. The inventions in the material culture of this phase probably mark an almost more important transformation in the cultural development of coastal Syria than that from the Late Bronze Age to the Iron I. As hallmark of this development must be considered the red-slip pottery, which, however, appears quite late on the Syrian coast. Therefore it is most probably that red-slip ware was directly introduced by Phoenicians when they extended commercial activities on the northern part of the Syrian coast. Certainly might it no coincidence that red-slip pottery firstly arrived at Al Mina, which just at the beginning of this phase had been founded.

In spite of rather short duration, this phase for the Syrian coast is well characterized by an extreme activity, standing out distinctly against other periods of the Iron Age.

A dual partition of the Syrian coast during this phase was the result of political constellations, when the northern coast was part of the state of Unqi, and the coast south of Latakia was under the control of Hamath. These two states were assumably political opponents, as easily gathered from military constellations, when one state opposed the other participating in hostile leagues¹⁴⁵. Unqi maintained good relations with the North

145. The stele from Tell Afis reports that king Zakur of Hamath was opposed to a coalition leaded by the king of Damascus, among which also appears Unqi (*KAI*, no. 202, 4-9).

Syrian and Cilician states, liked Arphad, Que, Gurgum, Sham'al, and Melid. These states, as already mentioned, had intensive connections with Phoenicia. Evidently there is no reason to believe in a hostile attitude of Unqi and the Northern states towards the trade activities of the Phoenicians. Only Hamath, the opponent of Phoenicians trade partners, may have had an anti-Phoenician attitude. All this illustrates the excellent setting of Phoenician activities on the northern part of the Syrian coast. The terrestrial expansion of trade to the northern territory was probably blocked off by Hamath, which also held control of the southern coast¹⁴⁶. Nevertheless, sources for raw material were reached by Phoenician traders when they set up new outposts on isolated northern harbours like Al Mina and Bassit, which must have provided excellent access to the routes leading to North Syria and Cilicia.

The dual partition of the Syrian coast is well recognized in the material culture. As for the political outlook, a possible line in the area around Latakia could be drawn for the material culture, which provides evidence of the ambivalence of Ibn Hani. It is definitely the northern coast which shows evidence of Phoenician red-slip and bichrome ware, strongly related to Phoenician activities in the second half of the eighth century BC. In this «pre-Greek» phase especially Euboean pottery reflects the Phoenician importance and consequently a Phoenician foundation of Al Mina seems to be quite possible. During this phase the Syrian coast played an important part in the distribution of oriental-North Syrian goods to Greece. This fact is evident in the material culture where both Phoenician and Greek pottery as well as proofs of handicraft stand out against the local culture.

The fourth phase takes place after 700 BC and mainly comprises the entire Iron III. There is a distinct contrast to the Luwian-Aramean kingdoms and the severe obstruction of Phoenician commercial activities, a gradual transformation began resulting in the separation of the Syrian coast from the Syrian hinterland. The interventions by Tiglatpileser III down to Assurbanipal indirectly influenced this development. But after all, Assyrians never seemed to show profound interest in the Syrian coast. Material evidence of both Assyrians or, later on, Babylonians have not been found either in the local environment or in the trade with the Mediterranean. Resulting from the lack of influence, the local character of the coastal settlements again increased. Local pottery appears homogeneous with certain differences to the pottery of inland Syria; architecture carries on local traditions for both private domestic architecture as well as for the temple of Sukas. The separation from the hinterland was followed by closer relations to Greece, proved by certain distinct items of Greek pottery.

There is no doubt, however, that the material culture of the Syrian coast based on mainly Syro-Levantine traditions. Foreign cultures existed among local environment,

146. G. Kestemont describes a Phoenician terrestrial commercial expansion to North Syria, taking place during the first Phoenician phase in the tenth and ninth centuries B.C. In particular the obstruction of this terrestrial commerce, probably by Hamath, of which the territory extended to Aleppo, could have forced Phoenicians to a new orientation and to deal with new points of access on the Northern Syrian coast, KESTEMONT, *Studia Phoenicia III*, 146-147.

but with changing success and durability throughout the entire Iron Age. For a more detailed assessment of this part of the Levantine better and more detailed information is required about the local culture, traditions and especially relations to the Iron Age material culture of Syria. This, in fact, depends on careful investigations and their publication.

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Additional note:

Please note that since this paper was given in print the important report on the Bassit excavations «P. Courbin, Fouilles de Bassit. Tombes du Fer, Pisa 1993» was published.