

THE TWO PHASES OF WESTERN PHOENICIAN EXPANSION BEYOND THE HUELVA FINDS: AN INTERPRETATION*

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Abstract

The authors suggest that the Phoenicians' westward expansion came about in two phases differentiated by the objectives and nature of their settlements. During the first or 'pre-colonial-emporitan' phase, the Huelva *emporion* was founded and a series of landfalls was established in the Mediterranean, the main objective being the pursuit of high-value resources. The second phase or 'colonial-emporitan', irrespective of any pressure from an increased population on food resources in the Levant, might have been caused, at least in part, by Assyrian aggression. Colonies could accommodate new populations with a subsequent intensification of agricultural activity.

Introduction

One of the most significant events following the eclipse of the great Graeco-Near Eastern power centres in the Bronze Age was Phoenician commercial and colonial expansion towards the central-western Mediterranean and through the Straits of Gibraltar to the Atlantic coasts of Andalusia, Portugal and Morocco. The first stage would affect Cyprus, given its proximity and richness in copper. Some tombs dated to Cypro-Geometric I at Kouklia (Palaepaphos)-Skales, Episkopi-Kaloriziki and Salamis, and, in some cases, to Recent Cypriot III B, contain Phoenician pottery from the mid-11th century BC.¹ The Phoenician presence in Cyprus brought about the foundation of the colony of Kition towards the end of the 9th century BC. In the 10th century BC, several sites of Greek environment record the arrival of pottery and other Phoenician objects. Later on, towards the beginning of the second half of the 8th century BC, the first western Phoenician factories and colonies would spring forth, with Carthage the first, if its historic foundation date of 814/3 BC is accepted.

Although Phoenician expansion would have advanced progressively from the Near East, a series of finds suggests a phase of pre-colonial contacts, in which Phoenician vessels reach the western coastal areas in order to carry out commercial

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¹ Bikai 1987, 58–60.

exchange. Among these finds, may we remark the emergence in Italy and its islands of Subprotogeometric (SPG) Euboean-Cycladic skyphoi with pendent semicircles, assuming their transport can be attributed to the Phoenicians, as well as certain Egypt-style scarabs and bronze objects from the end of the 9th century BC to the beginning of the 8th century BC in the Tyrrhenian area of Torre Galli, Capua, Veio and Tarquinia.² The high dating, 9th–8th centuries BC, that some readings assign to the Phoenician Nora Stone and Nora Fragment ought to be considered, as well. Other material in the Iberian Peninsula that could also be related to the Phoenicians includes: representations, predating the first colonies, of objects (fibulae, combs, mirrors) of evident Near Eastern lineage in some of the so-called decorated stelae of the south-west; sporadic finds of some of these objects in local settings assigned to the Final Bronze Age; a remarkable Phoenician wall in a Final Bronze IB context at San Pedro Hill in Huelva, a site of indigenous occupation,³ with a clear parallel to stratum X at Tyre X;⁴ and, in the same city, a fragment of an Attic Middle Geometric (MG) II krater⁵ or pyxis⁶ ordinarily attributed to Phoenician; not to forget the elbow fibulae from the important deposit of the Huelva estuary,⁷ dated to 10th century BC by radiocarbon analysis and bronze typologies.⁸

Indirectly, the same thing was revealed by the Castillo de Doña Blanca, a Phoenician habitat off Cádiz, about 6 ha in extent and protected, since its foundation in the mid-8th century BC or a little later, by an impressive casemate wall⁹ that does not seem to have been the work of people newly arrived from afar. Further evidence can be added: the find at Kommos (southern Crete) of a three-pillar altar related to a pottery assemblage in which Phoenician amphorae of Type 9 from Tyre (*ca.* 800 BC), characterised by ridges on the shoulder, were present.¹⁰ Since the colonies were of later date than these amphorae, and in the absence of any other more precise destination, the site was interpreted as a landfall for westbound Phoenician ships. Finally, there is a verse in the Bible, 1 *Kings* 10:22, always at the back of the mind of those investigating these matters, mentions ships from Tarshish and, implicitly, a place called Tarshish which would give name to those ships during the reigns of Hiram I of Tyre and Solomon of Israel (though the latter is today questioned). The chronological context can be inferred from the succession of events described

² Martelli 1991, 1055–56.

³ Pellicer 1996, 122.

⁴ Ruiz Mata *et al.* 1981, 179–95, fig. 6 and pls. III–XII; Bikai 1978a, 11 and pl. LXXXIX.5–6.

⁵ Shefton 1982, 342–43, n. 11 and pl. 30a.

⁶ Coldstream 1982, 369.

⁷ Ruiz-Gálvez 1995a, 222–23, 227.

⁸ Ruiz-Gálvez 1995b, 79.

⁹ Ruiz Mata and Pérez 1995, 99–100.

¹⁰ Shaw 1989; 2000, fig. 8.2, 6, 8; Bikai 2000, 302, 309–10 and pls. 4.63.2, 6, 8; 4.64.2, 6, 8.

in the preceding chapter. When the voyage from Ezion-Geber on the Red Sea to Ophir is described (1 *Kings* 9:26–28 with a further allusion in 1 *Kings* 10:11),¹¹ there is no mention of any Tarshish ships, perhaps because the Phoenicians had not yet sailed to such a place, nor their ships adopted such a famous name. Later on, Jehosaphat (*ca.* 870–846 BC) tried unsuccessfully to repeat the Ophir voyages and built vessels that were called ‘Tarshish ships’ at the same place, Ezion-Geber (1 *Kings* 22:48). On the other hand, dating the Ophir journey before 20 years had elapsed since the time when Hiram I supplied Solomon with timber and gold for the Temple and the royal palace, and the satisfaction by Solomon of the ensuing debt (1 *Kings* 9:10–11, 14) does not make any sense, because if gold from Ophir could have reached Israel via the Red Sea (1 *Kings* 9:28), Solomon would have been unlikely to pay his debt by delivering 20 cities of Galilee (1 *Kings* 9:11). Consequently, the succession of events narrated in 1 *Kings* dates the first Tarshish voyages after the Ophir voyage and late in the reigns of both Hiram I (*ca.* 969–936 BC) and Solomon (*ca.* 967–928), i.e. towards the beginning of the second half of the 10th century BC: *ca.* 940 BC seems appropriate.¹²

From this approach, the Huelva finds on which our attention is focused actually verify that beyond some occasional voyages or contacts, the Phoenicians had established, perhaps already by the second half of the 10th century BC, a commercial and

¹¹ The Ophir toponym is recognised in an ostrakon of Tell Qasile (Maisler/Mazar 1950–51, 207, 209, fig. 13f and pl. 38A). Based on ceramic type and palaeographical examination, the inscription mentioning the gold of Ophir was ascribed to stratum VII of Tell-Qasile, dated between the end of the 9th century BC and the arrival of Tiglath-Pileser III in 732 BC. But this does not imply that the sea route to Ophir continued to be open, since gold of that provenance could continue to reach the area of Syria-Palestine via caravan. Furthermore, it is plausible that just a single trip to Ophir was made, since ‘...there came no such almuq trees, nor were seen unto this day’ (1 *Kings* 10:12). This verse is in accordance with the scarcity of Ophir gold, which can be deduced from some Biblical verses referring to later times (*Isaiah* 13:12), sometimes giving to it a symbolic character to signify something of great value (*Job* 22:24; 28:16; *Psalms* 45:10, although this verse seems to evoke Solomon’s court), and the fact that the gold of Ufaz/Uphaz is talked about (*Jeremiah* 10:9; with symbolic value in *Daniel* 10:5), coming from an unknown place or auriferous region, perhaps in the Iberian Peninsula or Africa and related to Tarshish, since it is mentioned together with silver of such origin (*Jeremiah* 10:9) and ‘Tarshish stone’ (*Daniel* 10:5–6). On the other hand, the maintenance of a Phoenician fleet in the Red Sea with Hebrew participation is unthinkable given power shifts in the harbour/port of Ezion-Geber and access to this sea, almost always in the hands of the Edomites, the collision between the Hebrews and the Philistines and between Judah and Israel, the breaking by Jehu (841–814 BC) of the Hebrew-Phoenician alliance, and the successive Assyrian, Syrian, Egyptian and Caldean campaigns. Only in the time of David, Solomon and Jehosaphat did appropriate conditions exist to permit the planning of any enterprise through the Red Sea. Thus, whereas Biblical allusions to further trips to Tarshish continue, no voyage to Ophir is ever mentioned again.

¹² This date suggested for the presence of Phoenicians at Tarshish can be revised if, instead of using Katzenstein’s (1973, 349) dating for Hiram I (969–936 BC), we were to accept the later dates, *ca.* 950–917 BC, recently proposed by Lipiński (2006, 174).

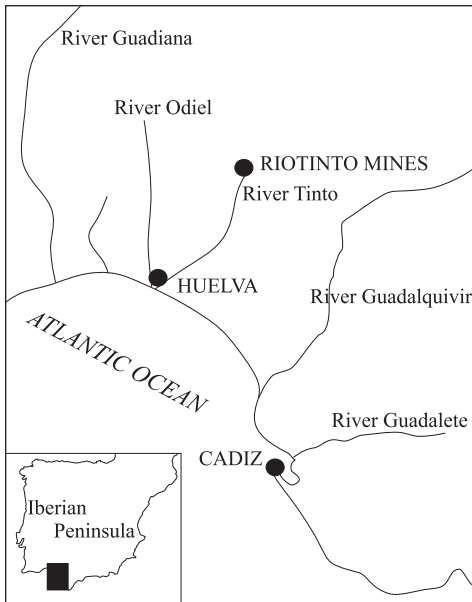


Fig. 1: The Huelva area (F. González de Canales).

industrial *emporion* in the Far West with indigenous participation (Fig. 1). That is to say that over some 400 years and until the beginning of Carthaginian influence, westward Phoenician expansion developed in two phases – what might be called ‘pre-colonial-emporitan’ (ca. 940?–740 BC), and colonial proper or ‘colonial-emporitan’ (ca. 740–540 BC). The most outstanding event during the second phase is the arrival and settlement (around 630 BC) of Ionians at the *emporion* of Tarshish, which, at practically the end of this phase, ca. 540 BC, became known as Tartessos in Greek sources.

The Pre-colonial-Emporitan Phase

To date, the oldest Phoenician pottery assemblage documented in the Iberian Peninsula (Fig. 2) comes from an excavation at 7–13 Méndez Núñez Street/12 Las Monjas Square in the old city centre of Huelva;¹³ together with the development of numberless industrial, craft and agricultural activities, it defines this pre-colonial phase. On account of the powerful water-table common to the lower parts of the city, the excavation had only reached the level of the 7th century to, perhaps, the end of the 8th century BC level. However, further pumping and the activities of a construction company brought forth, at a depth of 5 m, 2.5 m below the water-table,

¹³ González de Canales *et al.* 2004; 2006.

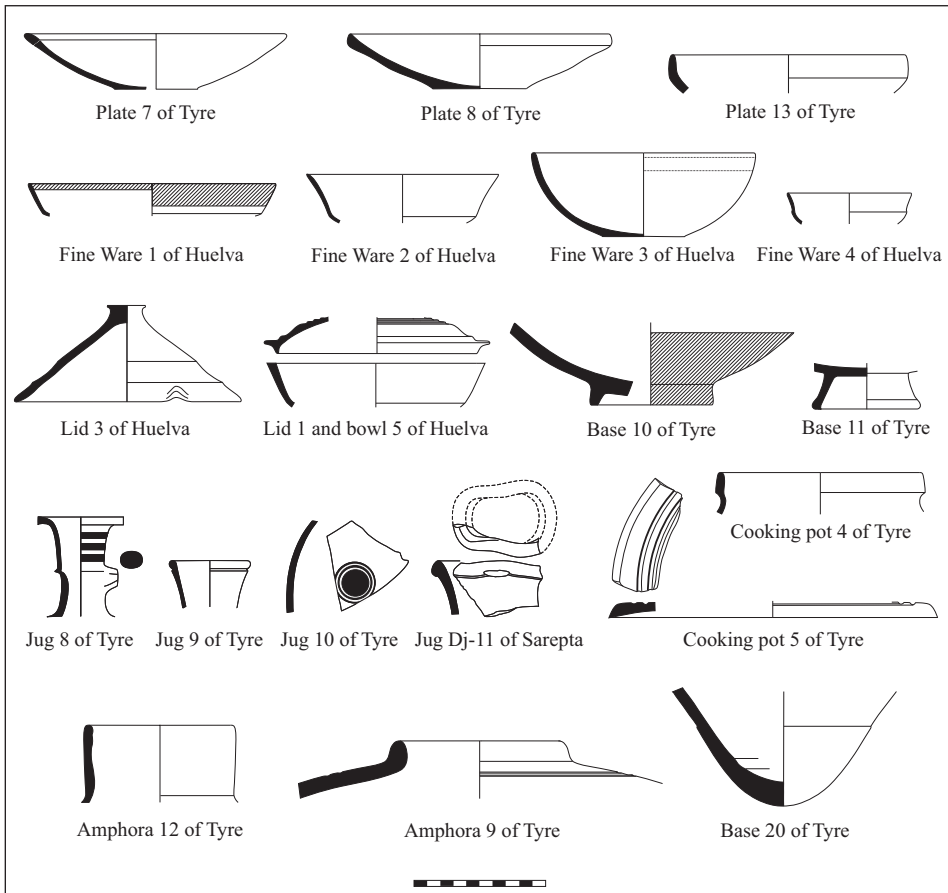


Fig. 2: Some Phoenician ceramics (F. González de Canales).

a dark greyish level, approximately 1 m thick, containing the first anthropogenic remains here. In spite of the fact that these were recovered in a secondary position, we should note that:

1. The strong viscosity of the marshy estuarine sediments which constitute the level, identified through binocular examination, favour the presence of embedded materials.
2. The selective rescue of materials, limited to the well-differentiated earths from the level, was done very carefully almost entirely by the authors of the original publication.
3. Any possible intrusions from the upper levels during soil removal were minimised. Intrusion from lower levels was discounted since only virgin soil was found.

Eight thousand and nine fragments catalogued as being diagnostic of vessel types or for their decoration (the rest, totalling some 90,000, were considered as atypical) were found within a date range of *ca.* 900–770 BC according to the conventional dating of pottery. The catalogued fragments were assigned to the following vessels: 4703 of local handmade, 3233 Phoenician, 33 Greek, 8 Cypriot, 30 Sardinian (to which some Nuraghic amphorae of Phoenician tradition must be added) and 2 Italic.¹⁴ Limiting the count to rims and base fragments, local and Phoenician traditions were similarly represented: 3000 and 3112 respectively.

The main reference point for cataloguing and dating Phoenician pottery is the study carried out by P.M. Bikai in Tyre,¹⁵ complemented by the Phoenician horizons in Cyprus¹⁶ and, in some cases, by the Sarepta typology¹⁷ and other Eastern sites. Likewise, the chronology established by J.N. Coldstream for Greek Geometric pottery was examined,¹⁸ as well as that by A. Nitsche¹⁹ for SPG Euboeo-Cycladic plates. Although the stratigraphy of Tyre remains seminal due to the role of this city in Phoenician expansion and to the great experience of Bikai, the position of certain fragments suggests some degree of misplacement, thus it may be sounder in these circumstances to attend to whole sets of pottery rather than to isolated cases. It should also be remarked that, in place of *ca.* 740 BC,²⁰ a later date has been suggested for the end of stratum IV at Tyre: *ca.* 760 BC,²¹ which accords with the pottery associations and the presence and absence of Phoenician and Greek ceramics within the context of Huelva and some Eastern sites, such as Tell Abu Hawan, whose recent revision suggests a new dating towards the end of stratum III of *ca.* 759 BC.²² This stratum comprises Greek pottery of the transition between Middle and Late Geometric, so that it ends a bit later than the Huelva context. Should we accept that stratum IV

¹⁴ A ‘Villanovan’ origin has been suggested for these two Italic fragments, attributed to one cup and one kantharos (González de Canales *et al.* 2004, 98–99 and pls. XX.6–7 and LIX.10–11). Recently, M. Botto and J. Vives-Ferrándiz (2006, 118–19), following some scrutiny of F. Delpino, concur in considering the cup with an ‘S’ profile and chevrons on the body (*coppe baccellate*) as imitating metallic models and note that the oldest metallic *patere baccellate* in the Mediterranean was found in tomb 21 at Castel Decima, dated to the third quarter of the 8th century BC, i.e. immediately after the Huelva context. For the present they consider the establishing of comparisons and determining the area of provenance of the Huelva piece to be extremely problematic. As for the kantharos, they consider it to be closer to the *taza attingioio*, with parallels in southern Etruria and Pontecagnano, although with some differences, and suggest a Tyrrhenian origin.

¹⁵ Bikai 1978a.

¹⁶ Bikai 1987.

¹⁷ Anderson 1988.

¹⁸ Coldstream 1968.

¹⁹ Nitsche 1986–87, 32.

²⁰ Bikai 1978a, 67–68.

²¹ Bikai 1981, 33.

²² Aznar *et al.* 2005.

at Tyre finished in *ca.* 760 BC, then the transition from the Salamis to the Kition horizons would have to be established earlier, perhaps *ca.* 770 BC. Lastly, it is relevant that Huelva's Phoenician pottery is formally much closer to Tyre's than to that from other Eastern sites, with some exceptions. For this reason it will be discussed using the type-series established by Bikai as a major point of reference, and also making use of his table for the stratigraphic distribution of the various Tyre types.

Amongst the most significant Phoenician ceramics at Huelva (Fig. 2) are 380 plate rims of Tyre Type 7, 475 rims of Types 8 and 9 (grouped for Huelva because of the intense colour alteration to ware and slip brought about by the alkaline environment), 93 of Type 10, 18 of Type 11, 11 of Type 13, and 2 of Type 14 (although these last rims are similar to those of lamps and they have not been properly considered in some earlier publication; the selected ones show some differences of treatment compared with several hundred other lamp fragments examined). A plate of great quality,²³ in form close to Tyre Type 7, contributes little for want of parallels.

Eight types of bowls distinguished in Huelva²⁴ from 132 rim fragments are not represented in the type-series at Tyre. But the find of a Tyre Type 10 base and 13 bases of Type 11, which may belong to deep bowls of Type 6, suggests that some rims assigned to Tyre Type 10 plates might correspond to this type of bowl with its similar rim. Regarding the fine ware plates/bowls, the changes in classification of specimens from Tyre,²⁵ Kition²⁶ and Cyprus,²⁷ and the colour changes of the Huelva pottery, made comparison extremely difficult. For this reason, a purely formal typology was established. Huelva's Type 1, represented by 103 rims and, probably, by nearly all of another 162 incomplete rims, corresponds generally speaking to Type 6 of the first Tyre classification. Given the great quality, the convexity and the existence of a tiny support structure, the entirety of 55 base fragments preserving part of the centre may be ascribed, in principle, to Tyre Type 6 fine ware. However, some bases with this support were decorated with ridges and stripes in reserve and there were also rims with similar decoration to these bases; these could be ascribed to Tyre fine ware Type 2. There is no chronological distortion, as Tyre fine ware Types 6 and 2 are found in the same strata, V–II, although not in the same proportion: Type 6 is most common in stratum IV and Type 2 in stratum II. Huelva fine ware Type 2 (6 rims) was not classified separately, but it was at Kition as fine ware Type I.D;²⁸ Type 4 (6 rims) does not appear in the Tyre series either, whereas

²³ González de Canales *et al.* 2004, 36.

²⁴ González de Canales *et al.* 2004, 44–50 and pls. VII–IX, XLVII–XLVIII.

²⁵ Bikai 1978a, 26–29; 1978b, 52–54.

²⁶ Bikai 1981, 23–24.

²⁷ Bikai 1987, 37–41 and pls. XVIII–XIX.

²⁸ Bikai 1981, 24.

Type 3 (209 rims) is formally similar to Tyre Type 4 and some specimens of Type 8. Of the jugs, 34 rims were ascribed to Tyre Type 7 (trefoil). There were no fragments of the late biconical body shape proper to the Amathus horizon of Cyprus.²⁹

The other 32 rims belonged to jugs of Tyre Type 8 and varieties Dj-4 to Dj-10 of Sarepta;³⁰ a fragment of a rim and neck, assigned to Tyre Type 9, showed a ridge below the rim similar to one of the Cyprus specimens;³¹ three body fragments decorated with vertical circles were assigned to Tyre Type 10, and another three fragments to spouts of Tyre Type 11 jugs (spouted-jugs), although some colleagues preferred to assign these last to trefoil rim jugs. Finally, seven jug rims belonged to Sarepta variety Dj-11.³²

Eleven amphora rims of Tyre Type 12 and 24 of Type 9 were recovered, of which four showed ridges on the shoulder similar to 'Kommos type' amphorae (another five fragments with such ridges were not included in the absence of their rims). Four bulbous vessels of Tyre Type 20, nine rims and a flat base of Nuraghic amphorae of Phoenician inspiration, some with reserves, and five rims of B1/B2 amphorae (Bartoloni)³³ = T-3.1.1.1./T-3.1.1.2 (Ramon Torres)³⁴ were also identified. A couple of kraters were found next to a specimen from Tyre stratum XIV,³⁵ although a more recent date must be estimated for those from Huelva. The Tyre type-series does not deal with lids but, out of the four types differentiated at Huelva,³⁶ Types 3 (10 rims) and 4 (six rims) show certain affinities to some specimens from Tyre strata IV–II.³⁷ Due to their dainty finish, perfect polish and absence of burn marks, Types 1 and 2 of Huelva must surely belong to bowls (pyxides); even a Type 1 lid would fit a Type 5 bowl (Fig. 2).³⁸ Three Cyprus lids similar to Huelva Type 2 (two rims) were assigned to the Kition horizon,³⁹ but an earlier date cannot be ruled out with such a small sample. Amongst the cooking pots, ten of Tyre Type 4 and three of Type 5 (tray for baking bread) may be noted. No chronological approximations can be attempted for the remaining vessels beyond their compatibility with the rest of the context.

Based on the pottery discussed above, the pre-colonial phase at Huelva equated to strata X–(part of) IV at Tyre and encompasses the end of the Kouklia horizon

²⁹ Bikai 1987, 58.

³⁰ Anderson 1988, 204–08.

³¹ Bikai 1987, no. 36 on p. 7 and pls. IV, XXIV.

³² Anderson 1988, 208–10.

³³ Bartoloni 1988, 32–33 and fig. 4.

³⁴ Ramon Torres 1995, 180–82 and figs. 30–31.

³⁵ Bikai 1978a, pls. XLI.7 and XCIII-Krater.

³⁶ González de Canales *et al.* 2004, 54–56 and pls. X.4–23, XLIX.6–14.

³⁷ Bikai 1978a, pl. X.1, 2, 5.

³⁸ González de Canales *et al.* 2004: lid, pls. X.9, XLIX.8; bowl, pls. VIII.23, XLVIII.6.

³⁹ Bikai 1987, 62 and pl. XVII.427–429.

and the whole of the Cypriot Salamis horizon. Its end date is estimated at *ca.* 770 BC, based on the absence of Late Geometric Greek pottery and of certain Phoenician vessels, such as Tyre Type 2 and 3 plates, low quality fine ware, mushroom-mouthed jugs, and Western plates of folded rim; whilst the *terminus ante quem* of some Phoenician pottery – Tyre Type 10 bases, Type 14 plates and Type 12 amphorae – together with three SPG I–II Euboeo-Cycladic plates, establish its start date at *ca.* 900 BC, though not excluding the second half of the 10th century BC.⁴⁰ Any earlier dates lack foundation given the absence of older Phoenician vessels of the Kouklia horizon, the Cypriot Geometric or the Greek Protogeometric which could sustain them. A set of Sardinian ceramics could have a more ambiguous dating – the 8th century BC, according to a detailed report of Dr S. Sebis.⁴¹

Why are we not inclined toward the highest dating?: because of our intention to identify the proto-historical habitat of Huelva not just with the city-emporion of Tartessos of Greek sources, which may date back to the end of the 7th–6th century BC (Herodotus 4. 152. 2–3; Scymnus 163–164; Avienus *Ora Maritima* 290), but also with the Biblical Tarshish from the time of Hiram I. This would be a foundation for the traditional philological hypothesis, in which the Greek toponym ‘Tartessos’ derives from the older Phoenician/Hebrew ‘Tarshish’.⁴² The change would consist in the adoption of the suffix ‘*essos*’, very common in Asia Minor. More precisely, according to a well-known story by Herodotus (4. 152. 2–3; 1. 163), nowadays confirmed by thousands of Archaic Greek pottery fragments at Huelva, mostly uncatalogued, and by some inscriptions of the same affiliation,⁴³ the Greeks who

⁴⁰ González de Canales *et al.* 2004, 199.

⁴¹ Kindly supplied by Dr A. Stiglitz.

⁴² The bibliography on Tarshish/Ophir is extensive. It should be emphasised that the current Huelva finds were not at the disposal of previous writers: Bunnens 1979, 57–91; Koch 1984, with a wider territorial focus than the one exposed here; Lipiński 2004, 189–265, who gives a more recent dating to Tarshish in 1 *Kings* 10:22; or others.

⁴³ See Shefton 1982; Fernández Jurado 1984; Olmos Romera 1986; Cabrera Bonet 1990; González de Canales 2004, 279–332. Archaic Greek luxury ceramics are not absent from Huelva. Among Attic examples are a vase from the circle of the Gorgon Painter (Cabrera Bonet 1990, 55 and fig. 10.172–173), cups and Komast skyphoi, some of them suggestive of the KY and KX painters (Fernández Jurado 1984, 26–28 and fig. 8; González de Canales and Serrano 1991), an olpe decorated by Kleitias with a depiction reading ‘Atenea’ (Olmos Romera and Cabrera 1980), two Gordion cups, one of them also perhaps decorated by Kleitias (Fernández Jurado 1984, 20–23 and fig. 6), one ‘horse-head amphora’ (Fernández Jurado 1984, 36 and fig. 13), and Little Master cups (Fernández Jurado 1984, 16–17 and fig. 4). Among the Corinthian examples are one early lipless cup, with geometric decoration and *dipinto* (González de Canales and Serrano 1995, 10–11), and another from the Middle Corinthian period with a representation of a mythical winged beast (González de Canales 2004, 323). Some Laconian cups also can be considered as luxury items (Fernández Jurado 1984, 18–20 and fig. 5; González de Canales 2004, 321), as can two Siana cups from Samos with plastic decoration (González de Canales 2004, 323). The very restricted dispersion of some of these vessels points to the attractiveness of the Huelva *emporion* to the Greeks.

arrived in Tartessos came from Samos and Phocaea. Now, the acceptance that Tarshish existed from the time of Hiram I implies the defence of a Phoenician historical background in 1 *Kings* 10:22. The products documented at Huelva, notably silver obtained by cupellation and ivory (with related workshops),⁴⁴ could have been brought to market at an early stage; a Phoenician presence cannot be explained otherwise. These coincide with the commodities mentioned in 1 *Kings* 10:22; and there are clear chances of discovering gold and apes⁴⁵ to confer truthfulness on the verse, irrespective of its authorship, mode of transmission and the later postulated inclusion of Solomon – an initial late origin should be discounted because the invention of a relationship between Hiram I of Tyre, Tarshish and a series of products found at Huelva, some of them very unusual, whose location in the Far West coincides with all biblical references to Tarshish (*Jonah* 1:3; implicit in *Psalms* 72:10 and *Ezekiel* 38:13), is inconceivable. Adjusting the chronology for Huelva ceramics to match the time of Hiram I of Tyre, although admissible, would have been deemed an exercise in making the findings fit the text, i.e. of essaying Biblical Archaeology. Other products from Tarshish mentioned by *Ezekiel* 27:12 – iron, tin and lead – are also documented in the Huelva context.

Amongst the remaining finds, 11 Phoenician inscriptions⁴⁶ turn out to be chronologically compatible with the context, such as an ivory comb with a geometric decoration.⁴⁷ Also found have been carpentry shops, bone instruments and worked astragal bones, agate cores (suggesting a glyptic workshop), Phoenician lead weights, ostrich eggs, collar beads of vitreous paste, quartz and amber, possible baetyls, an alabaster vessel and a basalt bowl. There are remains of domestic cabins, bovine and ovine-caprine bones bearing witness to animal husbandry and breeding activities,

⁴⁴ The piece depicted on pls. XLII.49 and LXVII.56 in González de Canales *et al.* 2004 (39.3 in González de Canales *et al.* 2006) does not belong to an elephant tusk but to a *Bos (primigenius?)*, an enormous horn as it first looked macroscopically (González de Canales *et al.* 2004, 166, line 11). The confusion arose from the fact that all of the 40 or so pieces analysed corresponded to ivory, but in this case the sample turned out to be insufficient. Thus it was incorrectly understood that it had been analysed.

⁴⁵ At the 6th International Congress of Phoenician and Punic Studies (Lisbon, 2005) we aired the possibility that the Tarshish products mentioned in 1 *Kings* 10:22 and *Ezekiel* 27:12 might have been shipped from Huelva to Tyre (González de Canales *et al.* forthcoming). As to the apes in 1 *Kings* 10:22 (not mentioned in all versions of the Bible), Huelva Museum contains a curious Orientalising stone statuette of a primate, found some years ago in the vicinity of the proto-historic habitat (see pl. XLIX in Garrido Roiz 1970). A hypothetical identification of 'Tarshish stone' (*Ezekiel* 1:16, 10:9; *Song of Solomon* 5:14; *Daniel* 10:6; and an interpretation of the 'carved and hewn stones' in 1 *Kings* 10:22 in the Septuagint) with the pyritohedral crystals (a dodecahedron with pentagonal faces – so-called fool's gold) – FeS₂ – of the Iberian pyrites belt was also discussed at the same Congress (González de Canales forthcoming).

⁴⁶ Heltzer 2004.

⁴⁷ González de Canales *et al.* 2004, 165 and pls. XLI.3, LXVII.3.

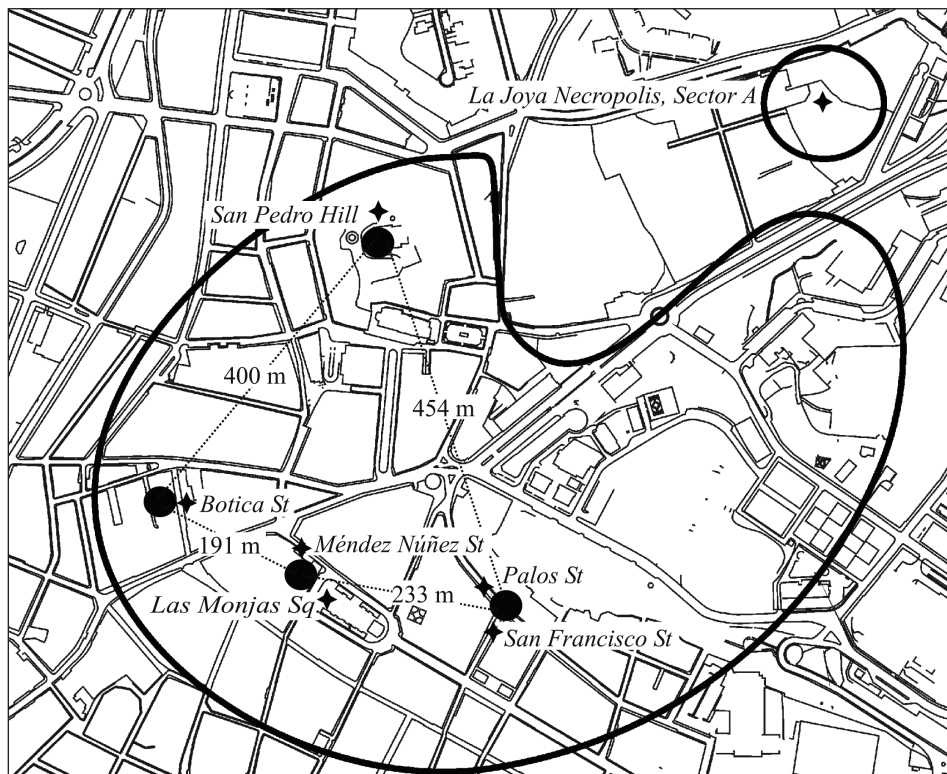


Fig. 3: Pre-colonial finds in the colonial-emporitana occupation area (about 20 ha with dense urbanisation of 'oriental' type, and areas with many ceramics and other finds but without a dense urbanisation on the right-hand side of the marked boundary)

(F. González de Canales).

diverse specimens of seafood, *Murex brandaris* and *Murex trunculus* (for purple?), and agricultural crops, among which are *Vitis vinifera*, *Ficus carica* and *Hordeum genus* seeds. As to information yielded by the contents of amphorae, the inner surface of an atypical body fragment still contained some fish remnants. Another four fragments, including a 'Kommos type' amphora and a Tyre Type 20 base, bore an internal coating of a dark substance soluble in organic solvents; according to analysis carried out on other specimens,⁴⁸ it might be pine resin. As with the Huelva amphorae containing a similar coating but no fish remnants, these vessels could have been used to transport wine (notwithstanding the aforementioned presence of *Vitis vinifera* in the context).

⁴⁸ Information from Prof. M. Botto.

An unavoidable question is the extent of Huelva in the pre-colonial period. It has been estimated to cover some 20 ha in the subsequent phase.⁴⁹ Although excavations are still required to garner archaeological evidence in the lower parts of the city, where the rising water-table is a hindrance, there is enough information to suggest that it reached a considerable size.

Such are their complexity and multiplicity that it is unthinkable that the activities documented at Méndez Núñez Street/Las Monjas Square were confined just to this site; rather, they seem to be the tip of the iceberg. There is, however, further evidence (Fig. 3). The Phoenician wall at San Pedro Hill, some 428 m to the north, has already been mentioned; likewise, the out of context find of a fragment of an Attic MG II krater or pyxis, at the intersection of Palos and San Francisco Streets, some 233 m from the site and 454 m from San Pedro. A squared-off rim jug⁵⁰ unearthed at 5–9 Botica Street, some 400 m from San Pedro, can also be mentioned. From the same area comes a set of Phoenician inscriptions, one of which, dated to the 8th or no later than the beginning of the 7th century BC,⁵¹ was executed on a large handmade native vessel which showed deep traces of burning inside (from ritual use?).⁵² The distances between their find-spots are considerable, suggesting that Huelva occupied an area in the pre-colonial phase, at least towards the end of it, little less than in the later period, although its urban density is still to be determined.

Phoenician navigators would have counted upon several landfalls and supply sites on their routes through the Mediterranean, not excluding the exploitation of natural resources at some of these sites. In Cyprus the Phoenicians would have acquired the Geometric pottery found in the Huelva context, including the three Black-on-Red juglets (Fig. 4); in Greece two kantharoi, two skyphoi, three kantharoi or skyphoi and a trefoil rim jug of Attic MG II (a handle of a probable kantharos was also found), as well as 15 plates and two SPG Euboeo-Cycladic pendent-semicircle skyphoi, the most significant pieces among the Greek vessels (Fig. 4). The conclusion that these ceramics were transported by the Phoenicians is shared by Coldstream,⁵³ whose attention to the Huelva finds we deeply appreciate. Kommos, in southern Crete, represents an intermediate transit point which can be linked to Huelva by the 'Kommos type' amphorae with ridges on their shoulders. The two Italic pottery fragments mentioned above seem to witness that peninsular Italy lay along the

⁴⁹ González de Canales and Serrano 1995, 12 and fig. on p. 14.

⁵⁰ Gómez Toscano 2001–02, 113 and fig. 3.8.

⁵¹ Heltzer 1995.

⁵² González de Canales and Serrano 1995, 11.

⁵³ Coldstream forthcoming.

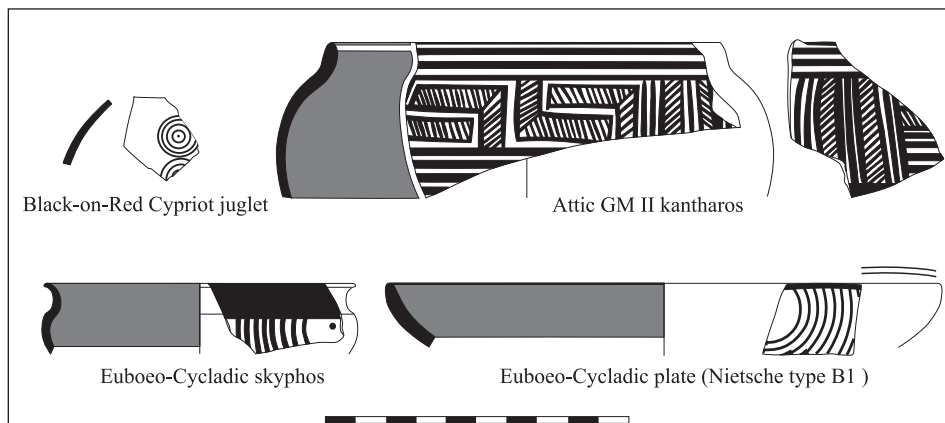


Fig. 4: Some Cyprriot and Greek Geometric ceramics (F. González de Canales).

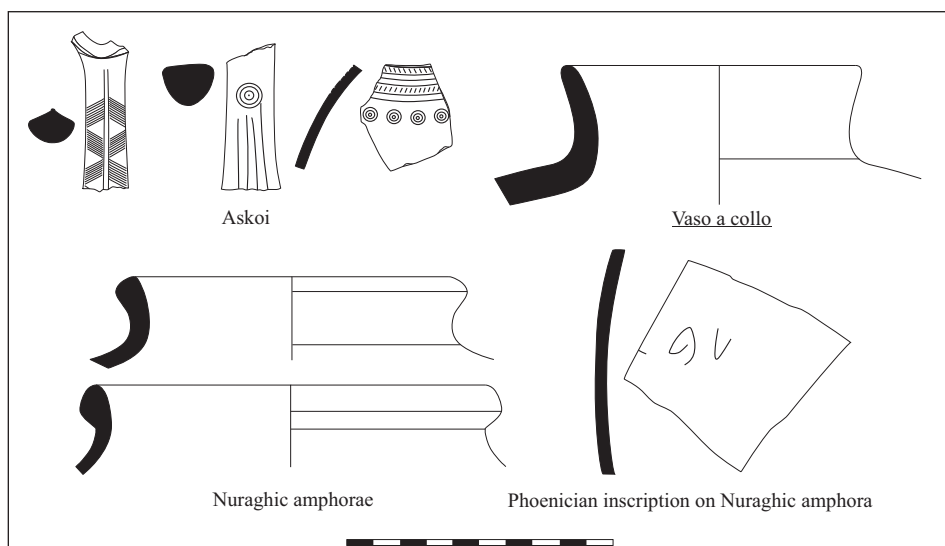


Fig. 5: Some Sardinian ceramics and a Phoenician inscription (F. González de Canales).

course of some of the voyages to Huelva. Sardinia and, perhaps most notably, Sant'Imbenia (Alghero, south-western Sardinia), considered as an *emporion*,⁵⁴ where a skyphos with pendent semicircles assigned to Kearsley's Type 5 has been attributed to Phoenician commerce,⁵⁵ can be linked to Huelva through the recovery at the Méndez Núñez site of Sardinian vessels: 13 askoi, a bowl, 15 *vasi a collo*, and 9 rims and a base of Nuraghic amphorae (Fig. 5). Furthermore, a Phoenician inscription on a Nuraghic amphora fragment (Fig. 5)⁵⁶ endorses the Phoenicians as the bearers of Sardinian pottery to Huelva. Without leaving Sardinia, the probable mention of Tarshish in the Nora Stone⁵⁷ and 'Tarsisi' in an Assyrian inscription of Esarhaddon (681–669 BC)⁵⁸ confirm the existence of the toponym in contemporary sources.

In North Africa, some Egyptian Mediterranean harbours can be integrated into this intricate circuit (further inland, the emergence of Phoenician objects probably prior to 9th century BC has been attested in Heracleopolis Magna),⁵⁹ and perhaps Carthage in its initial phase: five Ramon Torres T-3.1.1.1-2/Bartoloni B1–B2 amphorae have appeared in the Huelva context. If we look at the texts, the reasons for the foundation of Carthage may have differed in part from those for the other colonies. Its foundation date, 814/3 BC, seems consistent since it was in a period of living historical memory; moreover it was a city of transcendental importance, wide open to the Mediterranean. Furthermore, Carthage has yielded a single handle Euboean cup of SPG I–III⁶⁰ and Nuraghic amphorae.⁶¹ In the Iberian Peninsula, an early Phoenician presence was already detected at the bottom of the Final Bronze stratigraphy at Peña Negra de Crevillente (Alicante) in the form of ivory bracelets, necklace beads, and two elbow fibulae and one double-spring fibula in perfect stratification.⁶² The Huelva context itself confirms the existence of connections with Estremadura-Portugal during the pre-colonial-emporitan phase for the supply of tin (a sheet of it was found) and perhaps gold, and with Africa for ivory, ostrich eggs, and maybe also gold and apes. These connections, in which the local population must have played an important role, explain the appearance of glass paste, iron, bronze and ivory in several sites of the Iberian Peninsula.⁶³

⁵⁴ Ridgway 1998, 319.

⁵⁵ Ridgway 1995, 80–81.

⁵⁶ Heltzer 2004, 133, no. 2 and figs. XXXV.2, LXI.2.

⁵⁷ Bunnens 1979, 30–41; Amadasi Guzzo and Guzzo 1986; Tsirkin 1986, 180–81; Lipiński 2004, 234–47.

⁵⁸ Schulten, 1922, 156–57; Lipiński 2004, 227.

⁵⁹ Padró 1991.

⁶⁰ Vegas 1993, 360, no. 8 and fig. 1.8.

⁶¹ Docter *et al.* 1997; Docter 1998; Oggiano 2000, 241–42.

⁶² González Prats 1990, 106.

⁶³ Like the comb from Cabeço de Vaia, in Monforte, Portugal (Gomes 1990, 78 and fig. 10.H.).

The Colonial or Colonial-Emporitan Phase

Only a brief comment on the chronological aspects is called for, since Phoenician colonies are already abundantly documented not just in the Mediterranean but also along the Atlantic coastline of Spain, Portugal and Morocco.

Amongst the oldest pottery found in the colonies of the Iberian Peninsula, several items from Castillo de Doña Blanca and Morro de la Mezquitilla can be singled out, notably a piece of fine ware of Tyre Type 6,⁶⁴ several plates of Tyre Type 9,⁶⁵ and some Sagona 2 amphorae.⁶⁶ Although, according to Tyre's stratigraphy, the production of these vessels starts in certain cases in the first half of the 8th century BC, they continue to be documented well into the second half of that century (strata III–I), thus hindering attempts to establish precisely when the colonies were founded. As far as Greek pottery is concerned, a chronology around the second half of the 8th century BC is preferred: the oldest examples found to date correspond to Protocorinthian kotylai, whose production starts around 720 BC, and a Late Corinthian cup of Thapsos type, of *ca.* 750–720 BC, from la Fonteta, Alicante.⁶⁷ Therefore, the dating of the middle or second half of the 8th century BC, sometime proposed for Morro de la Mezquitilla,⁶⁸ seems satisfactory. A beginning to colonisation in the decade of the 730s BC would coincide with the period in which Tiglath-Pileser III (745–727 BC) restarted the Assyrian campaigns against Syria-Palestine with terrific strength. Henceforth the foundation of colonies would come to be justified not by the procurement of high-value raw materials, as they had been in the past, but preferably by the search for a place of shelter and settlement for the refugees fleeing Assyrian oppression. Isaiah (23:6), having prophesied in Jerusalem since 733 BC, recommended the Tarshish ships run away to Tarshish. From another standpoint this would allow the colonies to solve the possible demand from the Levant for foodstuffs.⁶⁹ In any case, the arrival of new populations would increase agricultural activity,⁷⁰ which had already begun during the emporitan phase, in order to provide for basic needs without eating into the marketing of food surpluses (olive oil, wine, salt and salt preserves) or hindering the participation of the colonies, varying according to their strategic position, in the exploitation of metals and other high-value goods which had justified the previous phase.

⁶⁴ Maaß-Lindemann 1990, 170–71, pl. 1.1 and photographs b–c; 1994, 284–85 and fig. 1.1.

⁶⁵ Ruiz Mata and Pérez 1995, fig. 18.1.

⁶⁶ For example in Morro de Mezquitilla (Maaß-Lindemann 1995, fig. 1.4) and Doña Blanca (Ruiz Mata and Pérez 1995, 58 and fig. 19.4; Córdoba Alonso and Ruiz Mata 2005, 1.297).

⁶⁷ García Martín 2001, 210 and figs. 2.2 and 7.

⁶⁸ Maaß-Lindemann 1994, 291.

⁶⁹ González Wagner 2000.

⁷⁰ Wagner and Alvar 1989.

The Cádiz site deserves distinct comment, given that its foundation in a remote time (according to Roman-era sources) has turned the research of Phoenician remains into a very particular issue. Recent excavation in the urban nucleus of the city has yielded some pottery chronologically close to that of Castillo de Doña Blanca. So, 38 Cánovas del Castillo Street yielded, among other vessels, some plates morphologically close to Tyre Type 7,⁷¹ others similar to Tyre Type 9,⁷² bowls classified at Tyre as Type 4 fine ware (Huelva Type 3), and two fragments of Sagona 2 amphorae.⁷³ There is also a pyxis of dilated chronology, out of position.⁷⁴ It is better to leave Cádiz out of our twofold scheme until the outcome of future research is known.

Radiocarbon Dating

Radiocarbon determinations frequently tend to antedate the beginning of the Western colonies to the 9th century BC, even to its beginning. This fact, together with the date for the foundation of Cádiz in Roman-period sources, explains the inclination of some scholars towards dates older than those derived from the ceramics themselves. In the Huelva context, the calibration of three radiocarbon determinations (GrN-29511, GrN-29512 and GrN-29513), for which we are much obliged to Groningen University, dates the cattle bones between 1000 and 820 cal BC. The weighted average of the three datings is 2755±15 BP, 930–830 cal BC with 94% probability.⁷⁵ Such results suggest an older age for the end of the context than the one established from the ceramics of around *ca.* 770 BC, for the following reasons.

The high representation of plates in the Huelva context turns this category into the most reliable indicator for certain statistical determinations. The percentage of plates of Tyre Type 7 relative to the total number of plates (39.21%) is much closer to Tyre stratum IV (24.34%) than to stratum V (4.36%), and the same is the case for plates of Types 8 and 9 considered jointly (47.99%, 57.66% and 15.59% respectively), as it is for Types 10 (9.60%, 5.72% and 33.63% respectively) and 11 (1.86%, 2.36% and 12.24% respectively), presuming a discreet exception for Type 13 (1.13%, 0.62% and 1.31% respectively). Furthermore, the percentage of Type 10 plates might be even closer to Tyre stratum IV had bowl-rims of Tyre Type 6 been assigned to it. Differences with older Tyre strata are even greater. This means that maximum activity from the standpoint of Phoenician ceramic occurs at the end of the context, equivalent to the first part of Tyre's stratum IV. The most significant

⁷¹ Córdoba Alonso and Ruiz Mata 2005, fig. 5.3.

⁷² Córdoba Alonso and Ruiz Mata 2005, fig. 6.2.

⁷³ Córdoba Alonso and Ruiz Mata 2005, fig. 13.1–2.

⁷⁴ García Alfonso 2005.

⁷⁵ Nijboer and van der Plicht 2006.

assemblage of Greek ceramics, a dozen fragments of Attic MG II vases,⁷⁶ two fragments of skyphoi⁷⁷ and five fragments of plates⁷⁸ belonging to Euboeo-Cycladic SPG III, can also be subsumed at the end of the context. This is so, given the lack of more recent Greek Late Geometric pottery in the context and the presence of squared-off rim jugs and fine ware amongst the more recent Phoenician vases, which co-exist with Attic MG II and Euboeo-Cycladic SPG III vases in tomb 1 of the Salamis necropolis,⁷⁹ as a paradigm of the horizon extending up to Tyre's stratum IV.⁸⁰ Three other fragments of Euboeo-Cycladic plates belong to SPG I–II,⁸¹ and seven fragments can not be ascribed to any particular period for lack of rims. The chance that some of the bones dated might also come from the moment in which a greater concentration of Phoenician ceramics was produced is reasonably high, therefore the later dates of the radiocarbon tests are provisionally extendable to Attic MG II, whose conventional initial dating should probably have to be revised backward if the radiocarbon determinations were to be accepted.

Without opting for any particular chronology, be it ceramic- or radiocarbon based, it may be noted that in the case of the colonies, a dating to the 9th century BC, whilst breaking the basic scheme proposed, would decouple it from the supposed Syrian-Palestinian diaspora caused by the campaigns of Tiglath-Pileser III. Currently there are some differences for the 10th–8th centuries BC between the radiocarbon results from different laboratories and samples. These are not excessive, but they are relevant when it comes to adjusting the dating to calendar years with the precision demanded, so that prudence calls for discretion. The debate will only be concluded once all the factors capable of introducing modifications at a regional and world level have been identified, the assumptions we must make today have been clarified in full, and the methods, techniques and results have been checked and accepted by mathematicians, physicists, environmentalists and archaeologists. As a last recourse, there is always the chance of new finds such as an inscription mentioning some historical event or character.

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⁷⁶ González de Canales *et al.* 2004, pls. XVIII, LV–LVI.

⁷⁷ González de Canales *et al.* 2004, pls. XIX.1–2, LVII.1–2.

⁷⁸ González de Canales *et al.* 2004, pls. XIX.4 and LVII.10, XIX.6 and LVII.5, XIX.8 and LVIII.1, XIX.9 and LVIII.4, XIX.10 and LVII.4.

⁷⁹ Coldstream 1963; Desborough 1963; Bikai 1987, 50.

⁸⁰ Bikai 1987, 67–68.

⁸¹ González de Canales *et al.* 2004, pls. XIX.3 and 11–12/LVII.3 and 6–7.

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