

THE EARLIEST PHOENICIAN PRESENCE IN SOUTHERN ITALY

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Abstract: This paper analyses the first Levantine contacts with the populations of southern Italy, which take place in an atmosphere characterized by a powerful collaboration carried out by the Phoenicians with the Cypriots. At the dawn of the 1st millennium BCE in the central Mediterranean there existed a situation very similar to that which developed in the Aegean, where modern research has brought to light intense Cypro-Phoenician commercial intercourses starting from the end of the 10th century BCE. In Italy the same trend is demonstrated by the study of the materials brought to light in the necropolis at Torre Galli, on the Tyrrhenian coast of Calabria, and by the number of connections intertwined between Sardinia and the coasts of Campania, southern Etruria and *Latium Vetus*. Only later on, at the end of the 9th-beginning of the 8th centuries BCE, the Phoenician trade takes advantage of the Greeks from Euboea who were particularly dynamic in the Strait of Messina and the Gulf of Naples, from where they started intense contacts with the Etruscans and Latins. This phenomenon acquired consistency especially at the beginning of the Orientalizing Period (about 725 BCE) when the wide-ranging routes mingle with the local routes run by the “entrepreneurial” class of the rising colonies. The *climax* of such a process ensued in the first half of the 7th century BCE, when western Mediterranean became more and more colonized by the Phoenicians. Right after this period there was a violent crisis caused by Assyrian expansionism policy in the Levantine area and by the systematic control of the coastline; this crisis was to produce shortly an abrupt interruption of the contacts between the western and the eastern Phoenician worlds.

Keywords: South Italy; Phoenicians; Cypriots; Euboea; Cypriot and Phoenician Trade.

As recently reported, the earliest Phoenician trans-marine enterprises in the Mediterranean had a strong Cypriot element.¹ This phenomenon is archaeologically most clearly visible in the Aegean, particularly in Crete,² which from the end of the 10th century became a strategic port of call on the route to the West. Excavations at Kommos,³ in the central-south part of the island, have highlighted the key role played by this coastal site in provisioning ships before the long crossing to the south Sicilian coast. From here vessels could turn eastwards and enter the lower Tyrrhenian Sea through the Straits of Messina or head westwards towards the Sicilian channel and Sardinia following a route used by Cypriot ships as early as the end of the Mycenaean period.⁴

It is the first of these routes that interests us most here, since it allows us to place the oldest attestations of *orientalia* in Calabria within a coherent historical framework. Marco Pacciarelli has re-examined⁵ the material from Paolo Orsi's early 20th century excavations at Torre Galli, a protohistorical site near Tropea. His

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1 For a summary of the question see Botto 2008, pp. 124-127, with further bibliography.

2 Among the extensive bibliography collected in the study in the previous note mention should be made of the syntheses by Kourou 2000; Stampolidis 2003; Kourou 2007.

3 Shaw 1989; Shaw 1998; Shaw J.W. 2000

4 Albanese Procelli 2008, pp. 412-413, with further bibliography.

5 Pacciarelli 1999.

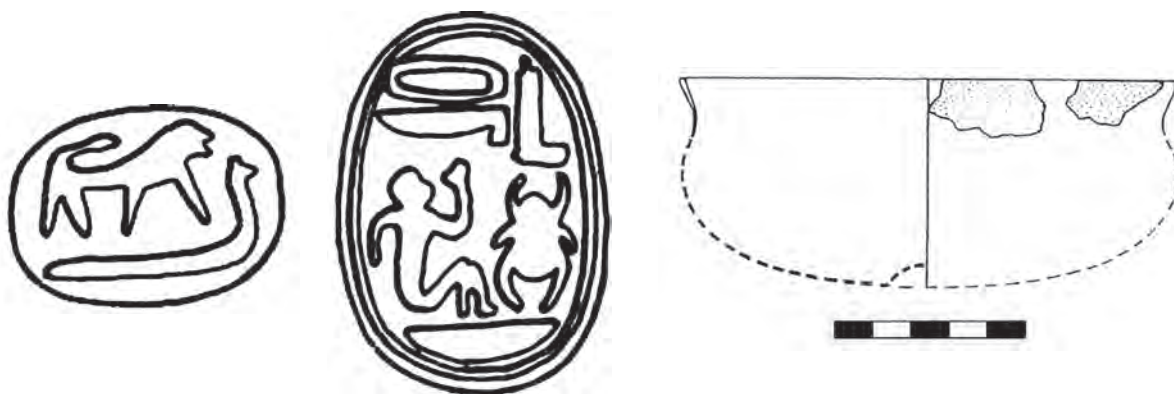


FIG. 1. Torre Galli: Scarab of Near Eastern production from tomb 54 (from Pacciarelli 1999). FIG. 2. Torre Galli: an Egyptian scarab from tomb 67 (from Pacciarelli 1999). FIG. 3. Torre Galli: bronze “tulip” bowl from tomb 56 (from Pacciarelli 1999).

analysis has revealed a Cypriot-Phoenician presence in the area, which he dates to the end of the 10th and the beginning of the 9th century BCE, raising the traditional dates by about 50 years.⁶

Specifically, some scarabs, considered by specialists to be imports, can be linked to Cypriot and Tyrian merchant activity.⁷ There are four examples, two of which are of Levantine manufacture (tombs 54 and 56) and two of Nilotic origin (tombs 55 and 67). They were found in female tombs very close to each other and belong to the same high status family group. The oldest is tomb 54 dated to the local Iron Age Phase 1A, which yielded a scarab of Near Eastern production, judging by comparisons from the Palestinian area which are dated to the 10th century BCE (FIG. 1). The remaining examples are from contexts from the later Phase 1B. As mentioned, two scarabs are Egyptian imports. Among these the one from tomb 67 should be noted, which was produced in the New Kingdom workshops (1550-1070 BCE) (FIG. 2), and significant comparisons have been found at Pontecagnano,⁸ and Cyprus, in an example unearthed from a votive deposit excavated at Pyrga, near Larnaca. This latter, certainly older than the *bothros* where it was found, dating to the 6th century BCE, «could attest to the role Cyprus played as an intermediate step along which Egyptian-type products reached the West».⁹ It is important to note that in tomb 67 of Torre Galli, besides a fusiform bead in *faïence* of probable Aegean manufacture, De Salvia recorded the presence of an object whose shape «recalls that of the “crescent moon” pendant, used to insert the scarab between the two extremities».¹⁰ If confirmed this would be of great interest since this type of jewellery calls to mind astral themes of eastern origin such as the solar disk surmounted by the crescent moon, a theme widely diffused in the Phoenician world and

6 Pacciarelli 1999, p. 59; Pacciarelli 2000, pp. 218-236; Pacciarelli 2005, p. 85. For southern Italy the traditional chronological framework based on the chronology of imported Greek pottery and synchronism with the colonial foundations (mainly Cumae and Syracuse) is reaffirmed by d’Agostino 2005a and 2005b. For the correlations between the chronological series of Pontecagnano and Torre Galli see d’Agostino – Gastaldi 1988, pp. 110-115.

7 Hölbl 1979, II, pp. 254-255; De Salvia 1999, pp. 213-214; De Salvia 2006b, pp. 14-16; Hölbl 2006, pp. 32-34; Capriotti Vittozzi 2011, pp. 124-125.

8 d’Agostino – Gastaldi 1988, p. 68, fig. 210 (T 4870, n. 7). The burial, which can be dated to the local Phase II (780-730 BCE: d’Agostino – Gastaldi 1988, pp. 222-223), has produced another light blue *faïence* scarab clearly made in the Near East: De Salvia 1999, p. 217, note 20 and two *Vogelperlen* in violet glass paste of Aegean-Eastern origin (d’Agostino – Gastaldi 1988, p. 69, 42E4), whose spread across the Mediterranean is most likely due «to the action of Levantine agents» (Martelli 1991, p. 1052).

9 De Salvia 1999, p. 217.

10 De Salvia 1999, pp. 215-216, n. 17.

exported from an early date to the western Mediterranean.¹¹ Fusiform beads and *faïence* discs from Torre Galli also refer to eastern imports from the Levant and the Aegean, whilst the large amount of ivory found *in situ* and worked by local craftsmen into handles and decorations for sword sheaths originally came from Egypt.¹²

Finally, from this Calabrian settlement comes some very interesting bronze artefacts: a “tulip” bowl and seven other bowls generically defined as “a calotta”.¹³ Regarding the first (FIG. 3), the relationship with productions from Syro-Palestinian coastal centres seem to be established.¹⁴ The association within the same tomb of a probable Levantine produced scarab also leads us in the same direction.¹⁵ For the “tulip” bowl from Torre Galli an interesting comparison has been found in Spain and concerns an example with a rosette motif on the *omphalos* found at Villanueva de la Vera, in the Cáceres province (FIG. 4), very likely produced in a colonial Phoenicians workshop during the Orientalizing period.¹⁶

Turning to the “a calotta” bowls the identification of the production area is complicated since this type is documented both in Cyprus and the Near East. These difficulties are reiterated in the studies by Laurence Mercuri and Ferdinando Sciacca,¹⁷ which have the merit of proposing for the metal examples found at Torre Galli detailed typological subdivisions to establish comparisons with the wide range of evidence from the East and Mediterranean area. In this regard it has been observed that a common element of the “a calotta” bowls from Cyprus is an important thickening of the rim, a characteristic that has been scarcely documented among the Near Eastern and Calabrian examples. The only find from Torre Galli with this characteristic is the bowl from tomb 150 (FIG. 5),¹⁸ which has a triangular lip and flattened rim. Comparisons have been suggested for this vessel from tomb 259 at Kourion-*Kaloriziki*, dated to CG I, and tomb 7 from Amathus, dated to between CG II and CG III.¹⁹ Furthermore the presence of this variant in Sicily in the San Cataldo hoard near Caltagirone, helps define the existence of a network of contacts between Cyprus, the east coast of Sicily and southern Tyrrhenian Italy in the early centuries of the 1st millennium BCE.²⁰



FIG. 4. Villanueva de la Vera (Cáceres): bronze “tulip” bowl (from Jiménez Ávila 2002).

11 Botto 1995b; 2000.

12 Pacciarelli 1999, p. 59.

13 Pacciarelli 1999, tt. 41, 92, 117, 150, 161, 202, 269. See the observations by Sciacca 2010a who is inclined to include in this category of artefacts the fragments of bronze foil from tomb 187 and 213, as well as the “copper jar” from tomb 38.

14 Matthäus 1985, nn. 409-420.

15 This is burial n. 56 for which see Pacciarelli 1999, p. 157, n. 18, pl. 49; De Salvia 1999, p. 217; Mercuri 2004, pp. 171-172, fig. 50, 1; Sciacca 2010a.

16 Jiménez Ávila 2002, pp. 158, 398, cat. n. 56, pl. XXVI.

17 See respectively Mercuri 2004, pp. 146-167 and Sciacca 2010a.

18 Apart from typological considerations, the terminological definition of vascular forms cannot be separated from the size of the vases, which indicate their function. For this reason, considering the diameter of the example from tomb 150, which is around 20 cm and thus much larger than that of other Torre Galli vessels examined here, the definition of a cup, as drinking vessel *par excellence* must be critically evaluated. On this point see also the observations by Sciacca 2010a and 2010b.

19 Pacciarelli 1999, pp. 59-60, see also Mercuri 2004, p. 158, with further bibliography.

20 Albanese Procelli 1993, pp. 68, 100-101, fig. 25, SC1 and most recently Albanese Procelli 2008, p. 404, where the imported Cypriot bronze materials found on the island are examined.



FIG. 5. Torre Galli: bronze "a calotta" bowl from tomb 150 (from Pacciarelli 1999).

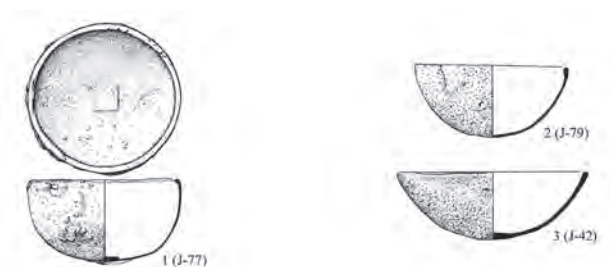


FIG. 6. Tel Jatt (Megiddo): 1. globular bowl (J-77); 2. hemispherical bowl (J-79); 3. compressed bowl (J-42) in bronze (from Artzy 2006).

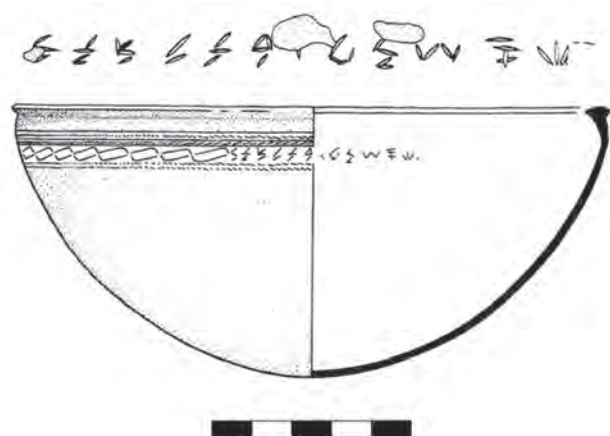


FIG. 7. Knossos: hemispherical bronze bowl with Phoenician inscription from tomb J (from Sciacca 2010a).

Laurence Mercuri's study clearly shows.²⁵ He examined 8th and 7th century examples from the Canale-Janchina, Torre Mordillo, Amendolara and Francavilla Marittima necropoleis.²⁶ The information from

A provenance from the Levant rather than Cyprus must be considered for the other "a calotta" examples from Torre Galli, especially in the light of the recent discoveries made at the Tel Jatt hoard, near Megiddo, which was created between the end of the 11th and the beginning of the 10th centuries BCE. In fact, among the many bronze bowls found, there were three "a calotta" bowls (FIG. 6), which, according to Ferdinando Sciacca's typology can be divided into three different types: globular (J-77), hemispherical (J-79) and compressed bowl (J-42).²¹ In our opinion the most relevant data of this exceptional discovery concerns the archeometric analyses that attest to a consistent use of copper from the important metal-working district of Feinan in Transjordan and the final evaluations made by the editor, who attributes the workmanship of most of these finds to the intense activity of the Phoenicians in the region.²² The metal artefacts from Tel Jatt, made between the 12th and 11th centuries BCE are therefore among the oldest productions attributable to Phoenician bronzesmiths and represent a basic point of comparison for later attestations. In this specific case the J-79 hemispherical bowl has precise correspondences with the decorated bowl from the northern necropolis of Knossos, Crete, which has a graffito inscription of ownership in Phoenician²³ (FIG. 7) and the example from the Er-Ras necropolis at Akhziv.²⁴ At Torre Galli the most relevant comparison concerns the example from tomb 202, which differs from the eastern prototypes due to a lesser thickening of the rim.

The "a calotta" bowl spread early among the indigenous communities of Calabria as

21 Artzy 2006, pp. 27, 55 (J-42, 77, 79), fig. 2.1, 1-3.

22 Artzy 2006, pp. 95-97.

23 Catling 1996, pp. 563-564, fig. 157, J f1; Mandalaki 2000; for the inscription see Amadasi Guzzo 1987a, pp. 13-16; Amadasi 1991, pp. 414 (date proposed ca. 900 BCE). A similar recipient both for the shape and the type of inscription has been noted on the antiquarian market: *Sotheby's Sale Catalogue*, 21 April 1975, n. 244.

24 Dayagi-Mendels 2002, p. 103, n. 18, fig. 4.28 (t. ZR XXXIX, ca. X-IX BCE).

25 Mercuri 2004, pp. 147-172.

26 For this last centre see also the observations by Pace 2011.

this study is extremely interesting as it attests to a steady presence of this artefact among the emerging groups of indigenous communities that in the phase under investigation controlled the relationships and commercial activities with merchants coming from the eastern Mediterranean. It is not possible to go into the problem here, widely discussed by the French scholar, but it is worth stressing that this line of study has been particularly useful in highlighting not only the contacts and the cultural influences by foreigners on southern Italy, but also the diplomatic and other relationships between the indigenous elites themselves. For example, for the latter case, it would be worthwhile looking more deeply into the comparisons made by Mercuri between the ‘Cypriot bowl’ of tomb 150 at Torre Galli and the bowl found in tomb 1 at Torre Mordillo, that likely contained a double grave of a warrior and an aristocratic lady, or with the examples from tomb 1 of the Ferrandina necropolis, in Basilicata and tomb 4 Osta from the indigenous necropolis at Cumae.²⁷ Concerning direct imports, Mercuri deserves the distinction of having identified another example of a silver “a calotta” bowl from Capua²⁸ to add to the list of the discoveries made on the Italian Peninsula compiled a few years ago by Annette Rathje.²⁹

In the Torre Galli necropolis the “a calotta” bowl has only been found in female tombs, sometimes associated with a particular type of knife with a curved blade and wide tang, both in iron and bronze.³⁰ This fact has led to the suggestion of a connection with the sacrificial sphere “assuming that the bowl had the function of an offering/libation of liquid linked to a sacrificial rite (blood of the victim? Ritual libation of drugs or drinks?)”.³¹ This data differs significantly from information from the Greek world where the “a calotta” bowl is only present in high-ranking male tombs in association with weapons and a service for serving and drinking wine, which would attest to the consumption of alcoholic drinks for heroic purposes in this cultural context.³²

In southern Italy the situation at Torre Galli does not seem to be isolated, as Rossella Pace has highlighted in her study of material from Francavilla Marittima, where imported metal vases, both of eastern origin (Strada tomb from Macchiabate and tomb 8 from Temparella) and central-Italy, seem linked to female ritual activity. A similar situation is found in the already mentioned San Cataldo hoard, in Sicily, which is characterised by the absence of arms and artefacts specifically related to the male sphere, but which, in association with the – probably Cypriot – “a calotta” bowl, had pieces of female bronze *parures*.³³ Finally, although outside the themes dealt with here, it is useful to underline that the female sphere is linked to numerous eastern or of eastern influence discoveries found in mid-Tyrrhenian Italy, starting with the well-known decorated bowl from the Poggio alla Guardia necropolis at Vetulonia³⁴ to the series of bowls with handles with globular appendages, which have been studied in depth.³⁵

The motivations that attracted people from the eastern Mediterranean along the Tyrrhenian coast of Calabria at the start of the 1st millennium BCE, might have depended on the trade in metals. In effect the early introduction of iron technology in the region,³⁶ has now found a more plausible explanation in the contact with Cypro-Phoenician merchants, based on the mechanisms of exchange that are also clearly seen in other

27 Mercuri 2004, p. 158.

28 Mercuri 2004, p. 166, with bibliography (Le Fornaci necropolis, tomb 722, ca. 750-725 BCE).

29 Rathje 1997, pp. 203-205.

30 Peroni 1989, p. 483; Pacciarelli 1999, pp. 59-60.

31 Pacciarelli 1999, p. 60.

32 See Mercuri 2004, pp. 187-188. The whole problem was taken up by Botto 2008, p. 130.

33 Albanese Procelli 1993, pp. 100, 232-233.

34 Maggiani 1973.

35 Nijboer 2006; Botto 2008, pp. 138-141; Drago 2009, pp. 347-350.

36 Delpino 1988.



FIG. 8. Francavilla Marittima: decorated bronze bowl from the S(trada) tomb of the Macchiabate necropolis (from Zancani Montuoro 1970-1971).

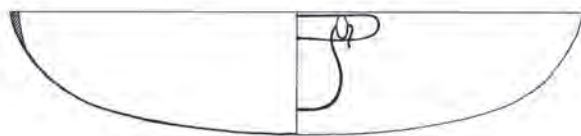


FIG. 9. Francavilla Marittima: basin with mobile "omega" handle from tomb 8 at Temparella (from Zancani Montuoro 1980-1982).

have taken place in perfect harmony between the Greek and Eastern traders.

The evidence from Francavilla Marittima confirms this. In fact, the evident influences of the Greek world are flanked by significant evidence of contacts with the Near East. The rich series of *orientalia* found in the settlement have been examined in detail by Rossella Pace and we refer to her contribution for an overview of the documentation.⁴² The writer here too, on more than one occasion, has drawn attention to the well-

areas of the Mediterranean, involving the export of new technology for the acquisition of raw materials.³⁷

From a chronological point of view the documentation from Torre Galli shows that the Calabrian shoreline was frequented by Cypro-Phoenician sailors in a period preceding the Euboic-Levantine mercantile activities on the Italian Peninsula. In fact, as seen in detail elsewhere, the Cypriot component of the Phoenician trans-marine enterprises in the west is progressively flanked by a Euboean one.³⁸ During the 9th century the routes are supplemented by new itineraries, as clearly shown by the reopening of Rhodes and the Dodecanese islands to international traffic.³⁹ Following the "northern route" privileged ports of call are found in the central-north of Crete, containing a flourishing and even permanent Phoenician presence,⁴⁰ at Kythera and on the island of Corfu from where it was possible to cross the Otranto channel to reach Apulia and from there the Ionian coast of Calabria.⁴¹ The final stretch of this itinerary was used by both Phoenician and Euboean ships and trade with the local people must

37 Peroni 1989, pp. 476-477; Pacciarelli 1999, pp. 61-62. A huge area used for processing iron was found on the outskirts of the Torre Galli settlement as indicated by Pacciarelli 2000, p. 119 and fig. 64. See also Mercuri 2004, pp. 192-197.

38 Botto 2008, pp. 127-129, 146-149.

39 Kourou 2003.

40 For an overview of the evidence see Botto 2008, pp. 126-127.

41 Prontera 1996, pp. 204-205.

42 Pace 2011. In addition to this study see Nijboer 2006, pp. 293-295; Hölbl 2006, pp. 36-37; Botto 2008, p. 147.

known decorated bowl (FIG. 8) from the S(trada) tomb in the Macchiabate necropolis,⁴³ which represents one of the oldest signs of contact between the local populations and foreigners. In fact, considering both how refined and precious it is as well as the restoration it underwent in antiquity, the bowl could be dated to the end of the 9th century BCE. In our opinion it is an authentic product of Phoenician craftsmanship from the homeland, which finds a counterpart in the Italian peninsula in the abovementioned bowl from Vetulonia.⁴⁴

Another very interesting bronze is the basin with a mobile “omega” handle found in tomb 8 at Temparella (FIG. 9), attributable to a female burial from around the mid-8th century BCE.⁴⁵ Comparisons have been made for this bronze with basins from the Orthi Petra necropolis at Eleutherna and it has been suggested that this was made in the eastern Mediterranean, perhaps in a north Syrian workshop.⁴⁶ There are certainly valid relationships with Crete which have been confirmed by another significant comparison from a batch of material unearthed in the excavations at Antro Ideo.⁴⁷ This only serves to underline the strategic importance of the island on the route to the west and the strong influence of the Levantine groups on local craftsmanship. In our opinion, it is more difficult to identify the precise area of production of these basins since the comparison proposed to support the thesis of a North Syrian origin comes from al-Mina, the trading post at the mouth of the Orontes where goods from various Mediterranean and Near Eastern regions converged. For this class of material, a leading role must be attributed to Phoenician craftsmen, as can be seen from the wide range of finds, from the abovementioned example found in the Tel Jatt hoard⁴⁸ to the innovative solutions linked to the working of the handle attachments with various types of both ornamental and figurative decorations,⁴⁹ that find their maximum expressions in the increasing originality of Iberian examples due to a gradual separation from Eastern models and the increasingly intense involvement of local craftsmanship.⁵⁰

Tomb 8 of the Temparella necropolis provides further evidence of the close contacts with the Syro-Pal-estinian area and Egypt. The ivory used to adorn the clothes of an aristocratic lady buried there must have come from the Nilotic region, whilst the attribution of the amulets deposited on the body of the deceased is more complex, since both Levantine and Greek sources must be taken into consideration.⁵¹

Lastly, we would like to draw attention to the famous macro-seal in red serpentine (FIG. 10) belonging to the Lyre-Player Group found in tomb 69, which can be dated to around the mid-8th century BCE.⁵² As known, the seal has four or five Phoenician letters engraved on its base which are difficult to decipher. According to Giovanni Garbini’s hypothesis the inscription refers to an Aramaic-speaking craftsman,⁵³ whilst for Maria Giulia Amadasi there are still many uncertainties in the reading of the symbols, and it is not possible to reach a definite interpretation.⁵⁴ Despite these difficulties the seal is an exceptionally interesting one since it belongs to a glyptic class that has attracted the attention of many specialists. The first to deal in depth with the Lyre-Player group was Edith Porada who suggested that this class was probably manufactured in

43 The cup was published by Zancani Montuoro 1970-1971. See also Botto 1995a, pp. 195-197 and Botto 2008, *passim*.

44 The whole issue is taken up by Massimo Botto, in Bernardini – Botto 2015.

45 Zancani Montuoro 1980-1982, pp. 29-40.

46 Pace 2011.

47 Matthäus 2001, p. 173, fig. 13.

48 Artzy 2006, p. 29, fig. 2.2, 4 (J-65).

49 Culican 1968, pp. 287-288; Matthäus 2001, p. 172; Jiménez Ávila 2002, pp. 111-112.

50 Jiménez Ávila 2002, pp. 105-138.

51 Hölbl 2000, pp. 138-139; Hölbl 2006, p. 37.

52 Zancani Montuoro 1974-1976, pp. 10, 51-66.

53 Garbini 1978, pp. 424-426.

54 Amadasi Guzzo 1987a, pp. 21-22; Amadasi Guzzo 1987b, p. 36. See also the observations by Boardman 1990, pp. 6-7.



FIG. 10. Francavilla Marittima: scarab in red serpentine from tomb 69 of the Macchiabate necropolis (from Amadasi Guzzo 1987a).



FIG. 11. Monte Vetrano: sporadic grey stone scarab (from Cerchiai – Nava 2008-2009).

Rhodes.⁵⁵ After the important study dedicated to this class by Giorgio Buchner and John Boardman this hypothesis was replaced by a north-Syrian or Cilician production.⁵⁶ However, the analysis carried out on the material recovered from the votive deposit of Athena Jalysia on Rhodes⁵⁷ has led to the identification of some 25 examples that, added to those of Kamiros e Lindos (respectively 3 and 15),⁵⁸ suggest the island, if not a production centre, was at least an area where they were sorted.

The distribution map of the Lyre-Player group seals, with limited occurrences on the Greek continent and in Euboea⁵⁹ compared to a wider diffusion in the Aegean and the Near East⁶⁰ suggests that the trade of these artefacts was carried out by Levantine agents rather than Euboeans, who could count on secure bases in Cyprus and Rhodes.⁶¹ The recent discovery at Monte Vetrano (Salerno) of a scarab of exceptional workmanship (FIG. 11) belonging to the group in question and considered by its publisher as the «product of an eastern craftsman carried out in an environment open to interaction with the Greeks»⁶² allows us to shift our attention to another strategic region of southern Italy for Phoenician trade: Campania.

The importance of this region for Phoenician seafaring from the end of the 9th to the beginning of the 8th century BCE clearly emerges from the comprehensive analysis conducted by Felice De Salvia on the pre-Roman⁶³ *aegyptiaca*. The oldest attestations examined in this study concern the indigenous sites of Capua and Cumae. At Capua an extremely interesting context is represented by tomb 200 dated to the third quarter of the 8th century BCE⁶⁴ where two *aegyptiaca* were found together with a bronze “a calotta” bowl:

55 Porada 1956, pp. 192-194.

56 Buchner – Boardman 1966. In a later contribution Boardman (1990, p. 10) tends to privilege the first of these two areas.

57 Cristofani Martelli 1988, pp. 111-112; Martelli 1991, p. 1050.

58 Buchner – Boardman 1966, nn. 88-105.

59 Buchner – Boardman 1966, nn. 44-62; Boardman 1990, pp. 12-13; Huber 2003, pp. 91-92, with further bibliography

60 Cristofani Martelli 1988; Boardman 1990, pp. 13-15.

61 Boardman 1990, pp. 10-11; Martelli 1991, p. 1050.

62 Cerchiai – Nava 2008-2009.

63 De Salvia 2006a.

64 The traditional dating of Albore Livadie 1983, pp. 45-46 to the second quarter of the century has recently been lowered based on a new and thorough revision of the artefacts: see Borriello 2007 and d’Agostino 2011.



FIG. 12. Capua: blue *faïence* scarab of Near Eastern production from tomb 200 (from De Salvia 2006a).



FIG. 13. Capua: discoidal silver pendant from tomb 200 (from De Salvia 2006a).

a blue *faïence* scarab, probably of Levantine manufacture (FIG. 12)⁶⁵ and an amulet statuette of a Horus-Falcon attributed to an Egyptian workshop of the Libyan period (9th to 8th centuries BCE).⁶⁶ The burial also contained a fourth imported object. This is a circular silver pendant (FIG. 13), with a solar disc surmounted by a crescent moon,⁶⁷ related to a class of jewellery whose presence on the Italian peninsula can be attributed to Levantine agents.⁶⁸ At the beginning, decorative motifs organised in concentric bands are exclusively geometric, but with the Orientalizing period the repertoire expanded to include zoomorphic and anthropomorphic figures as well as astral and floral motifs.⁶⁹ The Capua exemplar, therefore, due to the presence of the solar disc in association with a crescent moon, represents one of the oldest occurrences in Italy of this astral motif, whose fortune in the Phoenician world has often been emphasised.⁷⁰

The early diffusion of discoidal pendants in Campania by Phoenician agents is confirmed by the silver example found in tomb 17 in Capua dated to around the middle of the 8th century BCE,⁷¹ and by the discovery in tomb XXXVI during the 19th century excavations carried out in Cumae by Emilio Stevens⁷² of a gold example with the sun disc surrounded by a cruciform motif.⁷³ In the latter case the context is older than those in Capua, since the burial dates from the first quarter of the 8th century BCE, and, if possible even more interesting, because the unusual iconography on the necklace has led to the hypothesis that it is a local

65 De Salvia 2006a, pp. 27, 46 (cat. n. I.57, Napoli, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Medagliere, s.n. inv.).

66 De Salvia 2006a, pp. 28, 45 (cat. n. I.53, Napoli, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Medagliere, s.n. inv.).

67 De Salvia 2006a, pp. 26, 46 (cat. n. I.58, Napoli, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Medagliere, s.n. inv.).

68 Martelli 1991, pp. 1058-1059; Botto 1995, pp. 560-568.

69 Cristofani – Martelli 1983, pp. 36-37.

70 On this category of jewellery and on the significance of the astral motif of the solar disk in association with the crescent moon see Botto 1996; 2000, pp. 52-53.

71 Chiaromonte Treré 1999, pp. 108, 117, fig. 27 (Capua, Quattordici Ponti).

72 On the Cumae excavations of Emilio Stevens see De Filippis 1996, with further bibliography. On the reconstruction of Stevens's work and the publication of his excavation documentation see Rescigno – Valenza Mele 2011.

73 De Salvia 2006a, pp. 26, 42 (cat. n. I.41, Napoli, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Medagliere, s.n. inv.).



FIG. 14. Cumae: necklace of 16 spherical, triangular and cylindrical beads from the precolonial necropolis, Stevens excavations (from De Salvia 2006a).



FIG. 15. Cumae: necklace of 16 “a occhio” beads from the precolonial necropolis, Stevens excavations (from De Salvia 2006a).

imitation inspired by Near Eastern models.⁷⁴ The latter must have been widespread in Campania during the 8th century BCE, as evidenced by the finds examined by Kilian from Sala Consilina.⁷⁵

For a slightly later period, however, between the end of the 8th century and the first half of the 7th century BCE, we should also mention the exceptional recovery of 30 electrum pendants decorated with the granulation technique⁷⁶ at Cumae in the pit tomb of the Fondo Maiorano, which appeared in Italy as well as in the Greek world and on the Iberian Peninsula thanks to Phoenician itinerant craftsmen.⁷⁷

Like the jewellery mentioned above, necklaces in polychrome glass paste with triangular or spherical “a occhio” beads, originally from Egypt, but soon produced in the Levantine area, must have had an apotropaic function.⁷⁸ Among the oldest examples are two splendid specimens⁷⁹ from contexts dating from the first quarter of the 8th century BCE from the pre-colonial necropolis of Cumae⁸⁰ (FIGS. 14-15). The numerous Egyptian and Asian scarabs should be inserted within these exchanges, which were often wrapped in bezels and inserted into metal pendants, from Stevens excavations at Capua, generally dated to the 8th century BCE⁸¹ and the equally conspicuous imports from the nearby Calatia, where the scarab with bezel

74 See the study in the previous note.

75 Kilian 1966, p. 94, pl. I, 13-14.

76 Gabrici 1913, coll. 294-295, 431-432, figs. 114-115a.

77 Canciani – von Hase 1979, p. 34; Cristofani – Martelli 1983, pp. 31-32, 35-36; Botto 1996, pp. 561-562.

78 Necklaces in glass paste with spheroidal grain “eye” motifs are widely documented within the Phoenician colonial world, as clearly highlighted in the synthesis by Ruano Ruiz 1995.

79 De Salvia 2006a, pp. 29, 39 (cat. I.31-32).

80 Albore Livadie 1983, p. 45.

81 De Salvia 2006a, pp. 28, 33-34 (cat. I.12-15, Egyptian productions), 35-36 (cat. I.16-21, Near Eastern productions).

and elliptical pendant is also documented.⁸² As previously mentioned in relation to the Torre Galli documentation⁸³ this type of metal support, whether “crescent moon” shaped or elliptical, is characteristic of Phoenician productions⁸⁴ and served to carry the scarab on the chest «hanging from the neck by means of perishable material, either rope or leather».⁸⁵

Regarding the crescent moon type, it is interesting to note how the two elements that make up the pendant, namely the metal support and the scarab, represent, respectively, the moon and the sun.⁸⁶ The crescent-shaped support, in fact, as well as having the same shape as the crescent moon was made predominantly of silver, a metal that in the Semitic world symbolized this very body. Moreover, there is no reason to doubt that the scarab retained its solar value in the Phoenician world that characterised it in its country of origin, Egypt. If these considerations hit the mark it is clear that there must have been a close correspondence between this type of pendant and the circular pendants with the sun disc and crescent moon, which women wore on their chests but also on their bellies, since they had recognized beneficial properties concerning fertility.

With the development of the Pithekoussai settlement around the middle of the 8th century BCE, the exports of *aegyptiaca* to Campania by Phoenician merchants accelerated. In fact, the Egyptian productions and those already mentioned in the Levantine area,⁸⁷ are flanked by products from the Aegean, as in the case of the “Perachora-Lindo” group, which might be the work of Phoenician metics active in Rhodes,⁸⁸ or by Greek craftsmen.⁸⁹ At the same time, the images of the Holy Family of Memphis arrived in Campania, composed of Ptah, his wife Sekhmet and their son Nefertum.⁹⁰ As is known, the Phoenicians had already frequented this important commercial centre of Lower Egypt, mentioned by Herodotus (II 112), who informs us of the existence of a district within the city specially reserved for Tyrian merchants. The arrival in the West of the Memphite triad through the intermediary of Phoenician agents is confirmed by the discovery at Kommos of a of a small sanctuary (Temple B), which in the second building phase, from around 800 BCE, is characterised by an altar with a betyle triad, typical of the Phoenician world and between the pillars of which were recovered two *faïence* figurines representing Sekhmet and Nefertum.⁹¹

The emergence of Pithekoussai was a decisive contribution to stimulating the Phoenician presence in the Lower Tyrrhenian Sea. Apart from the fact that “eastern” communities could have resided in Ischia, a theory that has been the subject of a serious criticism by Paolo Carafa,⁹² there is no doubt that the Euboic settlement, due to its strategic position on the routes that led from the Strait of Messina to the mid-Tyrrhenian coasts of the Italian Peninsula and to Sardinia, ended up catalysing the interest of the main Phoenician colonial settlements in the central Mediterranean. Although the intensity of trade relations between Ischia and

82 De Salvia 2006a, pp. 47-49 (cat. I.59-79). The jewels come mainly from the women’s tomb 201, dated to the last quarter of the 8th century BCE, which is characterized by being a high-ranking burial in which a bronze patera, recently recognized as a Middle Eastern import, stands out for its importance: see Sciacca 2005, p. 375.

83 See note 8 above.

84 De Salvia 2008, p. 97.

85 De Salvia 1983, p. 90.

86 De Salvia 1983, pp. 91, 95, note 19 and 59; Botto 2000, pp. 53-54; De Salvia 2006a, pp. 26, 28; De Salvia 2008, pp. 95-97.

87 On these productions see Hölbl 1979, I, pp. 204-206; De Salvia 2008, pp. 92-93.

88 De Salvia 2006a, pp. 26, 28, 32 (cat. I.9, from Pithekoussai), 37-38 (cat. I.22-25, from Cumae); 49 (cat. I.77, from Calatia).

89 Hölbl 1979, I, pp. 212-215; Hölbl 2006, p. 37.

90 Hölbl 1979, I, pp. 106-109; De Salvia 2006a, pp. 28-29, 31 (cat. I.1, from Pithekoussai), 45-46 (cat. I.54-56, from Capua); De Salvia 2008, pp. 97-99 (from Suessula).

91 Shaw J.W. 2000; Shaw M.C. 2000, pp. 168-170, AB 85 and AB 86, pls. 3, 30 e 3, 31.

92 Carafa 2011.

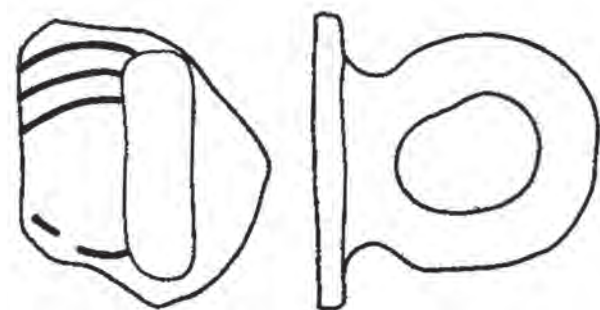


FIG. 16. Pontecagnano: bronze cauldron attachment from tomb 683 of the Pagliarone necropolis (from Gastaldi 1998).

indigenous settlement of Pontecagnano. In fact, a recent re-examination of “eastern” imports from Iron Age burials⁹⁶ clearly shows that these are extremely limited and decidedly inferior to the Greek ones.⁹⁷ The only artefact with an eastern imprint in the graves of the local Phase IB (850-780/770 BCE) is the cauldron attachment with engraved concentric circles and ring-shaped socket (FIG. 16) from the female burial 683 in the Pagliarone necropolis.⁹⁸ This type, which originated in the Levantine area and Cyprus, was exported early on to Sardinia and the Italian peninsula,⁹⁹ giving rise to local productions in workshops where, it is probable that eastern craftsmen operated alongside indigenous workers.¹⁰⁰ The Pontecagnano example, for the rendering of the triple spiral with incised lines¹⁰¹ should, in our opinion, be included among the western works. Its presence in the Campanian settlement is due to the line of contacts between Sardinia, Etruria and the Lower Tyrrhenian by the indigenous seafarers and soon also used by Tyrian ships.¹⁰² In this regard, it has been repeatedly remarked that the series of nuragic bronzes found at Pontecagnano in Phase I contexts¹⁰³ must be related to these routes and can be attributed to the dynamism of the Phoenicians.¹⁰⁴ A new and very interesting find should be included here: a bronze model of a ship found in the Monte Vetrano tomb of an aristocratic lady. This was a settlement which controlled the course of the Picentino river, dated to the third quarter of the 8th century BCE.¹⁰⁵

Also in Phase II (780/770-730 BCE), eastern imports are quite marginal and are limited to four scarabs, two of which come from the aforementioned tomb 4870¹⁰⁶ and one each from the child burials 211 and

Carthage sustained by various specialists⁹³ must now be re-dimensioned in the light of recent re-examinations of the archaeological documentation that tend to limit considerably the flow of exports from Pithekoussai to the North African metropolis,⁹⁴ the Euboic settlement in the Gulf of Naples was at the centre of a dense network of exchanges which involved Motya and the Phoenician colonies of southern Sardinia.⁹⁵

With the beginnings of the Orientalizing period, Campania also saw a qualitative leap in imports from the Syro-Palestinian area. The privileged observatory to evaluate this change is the

93 Docter – Niemeyer 1994; Ridgway 1998.

94 Briese 1998; Kourou 2002; d’Agostino 2005a.

95 On this argument see Botto 2012.

96 Sciacca 2010a.

97 For the latter see Bailo Modesti – Gastaldi 1999; Kourou 2005, pp. 500-507.

98 Gastaldi 1998, pp. 88-89, n. 13, pl. 100.

99 Lo Schiavo – Macnamara – Vagnetti 1985, pp. 32-35; Strøm 1991, pp. 326-328, figs. 3-4; Botto 2007, pp. 77-78; Botto 2008, p. 132, fig. 5.

100 The problem has recently been taken up by Bernardini – Botto 2015.

101 The same technical characteristics are present on an example from the San Francesco hoard in Bologna, as observed by Lo Schiavo 1981, pp. 302-304.

102 Botto 2004-2005; 2012, with new documentation.

103 Gastaldi 1994; Lo Schiavo 1994; Gastaldi 1998, p. 143, n. 6, fig. 81, pl. 123.

104 d’Agostino 2006, p. 202; Gastaldi 2006, p. 117; Sciacca 2010a.

105 Cerchiai – Nava 2008-2009. For an overview of the site see, in addition, Cinquantaquattro 2001, pp. 95-97.

106 Cfr. above note 8.

227.¹⁰⁷ Recently however, Bruno d'Agostino has called attention to the unpublished documentation by making explicit reference to a series of bronze "a calotta" bowls such as «those found in the so-called tumulus of the warriors, datable to the third quarter of the 8th century BC»,¹⁰⁸ which are added to the example of the same type previously mentioned, from tomb 200 of the necropolis of Cumae.¹⁰⁹

These productions probably inspired the ceramists who made the two brown impasto hemispherical bowls with smoothed

surfaces found in tomb 3289 Sant'Antonio (Phase IIA: 780/770-750 BCE).¹¹⁰ In fact, as pointed out by Ferdinando Sciacca,¹¹¹ these vases must be considered among the oldest ceramic imitations of eastern metal bowls on the Italian peninsula. The aforementioned discoidal pendants in thin gold or silver foil present in Pontecagnano in some burials must also refer to eastern, possibly mediated, influences.¹¹²

A radical change occurred with the beginning of Orientalizing period, as artefacts of high ceremonial value arrive at Pontecagnano, such as the famous horse frontal (FIG. 17) found in tomb 4461 from the last quarter of the eighth century BCE.¹¹³ According to a detailed analysis by Luca Cerchiai, this could have been the work of an eastern craftsmen active in Italy, probably in a southern Etrurian workshop.¹¹⁴ The tomb, which is characterised by the complexity of the funerary ritual evocative of the ritual of the "heroic" Greek model but with markedly exceptional elements,¹¹⁵ presents a rich and articulated set of objects which documents the wide network of relationships maintained by its owner, certainly a very important figure of the Pontecagnano community.

Among the various artefacts brought to light, we intend to underline the presence of a Phoenician Red Slip plate¹¹⁶ and a bossed impasto *phiale* used in funeral libations,¹¹⁷ which was a local imitation of the metal "Middle-Eastern" manufactured *patere* that are well represented in the settlement.¹¹⁸ The oldest exam-



FIG. 17. Pontecagnano: bronze horse frontal from tomb 4461 (from Cerchiai 1987).

107 d'Agostino – Gastaldi 1988, pp. 68, 148, 159-160.

108 d'Agostino 2011.

109 Borriello 2007.

110 De Natale 1992, p. 118, nn. 13-14, figs. 67.3.2-3, 93.

111 Sciacca 2010a.

112 d'Agostino – Gastaldi 1988, p. 68 (40 F); De Natale 1992, p. 64, n. 40, fig. 106 (t. 3211); p. 66, n. 20, fig. 107 (t. 3212); p. 101, n. 60B (t. 3266).

113 Cerchiai 1984; 1987; Cuozzo 2004-2005.

114 Cerchiai 1987, pp. 41-42.

115 Cuozzo 2004-2005.

116 See Cerchiai 1984, p. 411, where reference is made to only one other example found at Pontecagnano, and Cerchiai 1987, p. 31, where the plate is compared with examples from Pithekoussai dated by Giorgio Buchner to the last quarter of the 8th century BCE. Two Phoenician ointment jars also come from Pontecagnano: the first unpublished, from tomb 3091 dated to the mid-8th century BCE and the second from tomb 1520, from the last quarter of the 8th century BCE published by d'Agostino 1977, p. 50, fig. 31 E, pl. XXX, c.

117 Cuozzo 2004-2005, p. 150.

118 Sciacca 2005, pp. 372-374.

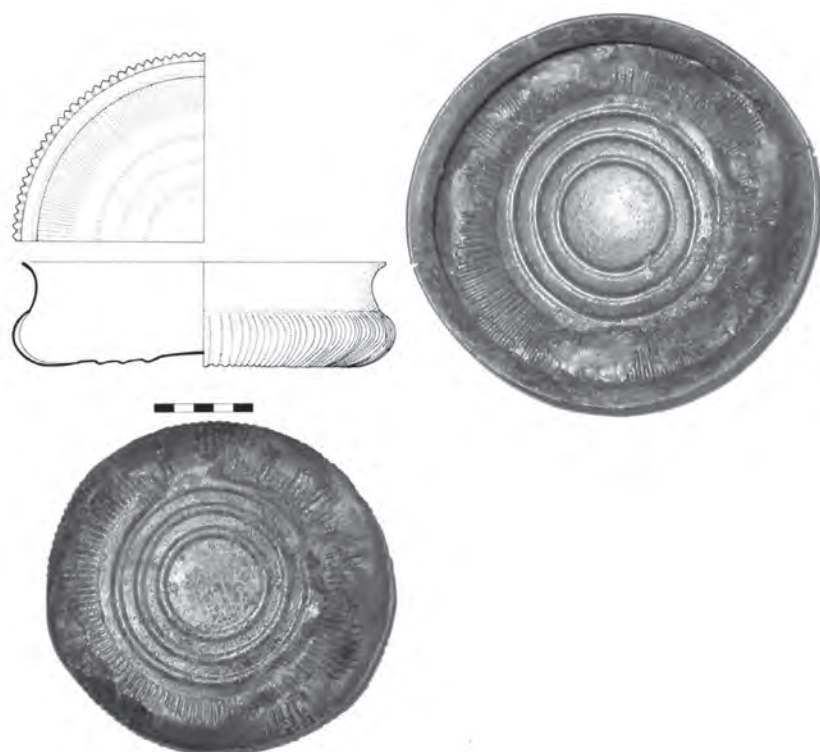


FIG. 18. Pontecagnano: bronze bossed patera from tomb 3088 (from Sciacca 2010a).

The largest number of eastern Mediterranean imports was found in the “princely” tombs 926 and 928 from the second quarter of the 7th century BCE, masterfully published by Bruno d’Agostino.¹²¹ From Cyprus very probably come two bronze *oinochoai* with high tapering bellies and palmette motifs at the base of the handles (Figs. 19-20: 926 L 38 and 928 L 67), which find a fairly precise comparison at Pontecagnano in the example from tomb 2465, considered as the oldest of the series since it was found in a context of the last quarter of the 8th century BCE.¹²² The silver *kotyle*, false hieroglyphic inscription 928 L 79 (FIG. 21) and the pyriform *oinochoe* with Phoenician palmette, also in silver, 928 L 78 (FIG. 22) refer to Levantine productions. Furthermore it has recently been proposed to consider the silver *phiale* 928 L 80, as a product of a «Phoenician artist who emigrated to Tyrrhenian Italy».¹²³ The two bronze boss rimmed *patere* 926 L 40 e 928 R 65 are also considered to be imports into the mid-Tyrrhenian area, possibly from Cerveteri, this confirms the close network of relationships that emerges from the comparison of these materials from these two burials with the complexes of the Etrusco-Lazial “princely” tombs.¹²⁴

The silver bowl from Pontecagnano, formerly in the Tyskiewicz collection and now on display at the Petit Palais, is part of the same cultural climate and is engraved with an inscription in Phoenician. As is well known, the reading proposed by Giovanni Garbini is *blš’ bn nsk* interpreted as «*blš’*’, belonging to the

ple is currently the one from the probable infant burial 575, datable between 730 and 710 BCE.¹¹⁹ Among the other finds, the unpublished bronze patera from tomb 3088 (FIG. 18), is of particular interest, both for presence of very dense bosses and three grooves on the bottom. It «belongs to a very elaborate and quite rare typology, which is shared by a group of vases found in Olympia, Samos and the Italic Peninsula. Although their location remains uncertain, in their production it is possible to recognise the contribution of Phoenician craftsmen who reinterpreted original Assyrian models».¹²⁰

119 For the burial see d’Agostino 1968, pp. 131-133; for the patera see Sciacca 2005, p. 198, fig. 301, Pc2.

120 Sciacca 2010a, see also Sciacca 2005, p. 200, fig. 304, Pc5 and Sciacca 2010b.

121 d’Agostino 1977.

122 d’Agostino 1977, pp. 23, 44.

123 Sciacca 2005, p. 409.

124 Sciacca 2005, p. 374.

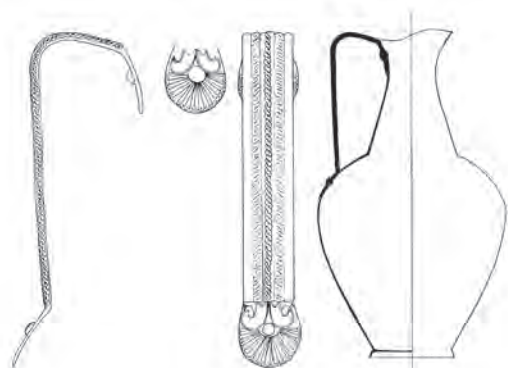


FIG. 19. Pontecagnano: bronze *oinochoe* L 38 from tomb 926 (from d'Agostino 1977).

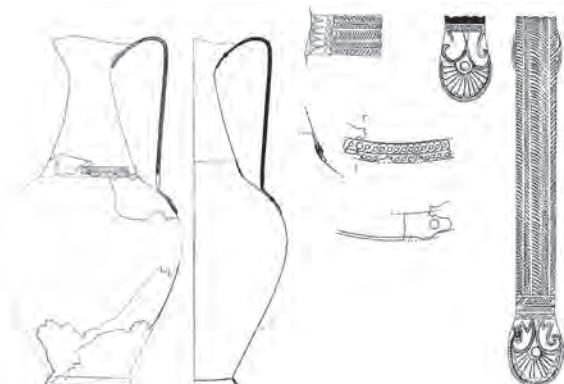


FIG. 20. Pontecagnano: bronze *oinochoe* L 67 from tomb 928 (from d'Agostino 1977).

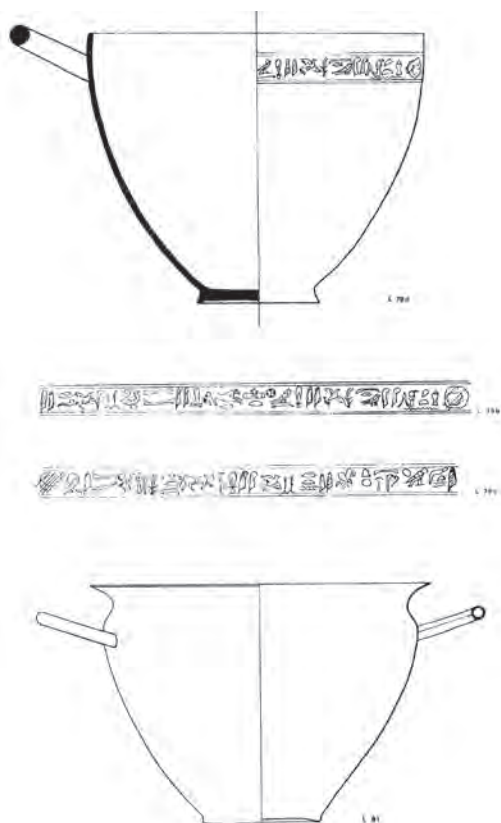


FIG. 21. Pontecagnano: silver *kotyle* L 79 from tomb 928 (from d'Agostino 1977).

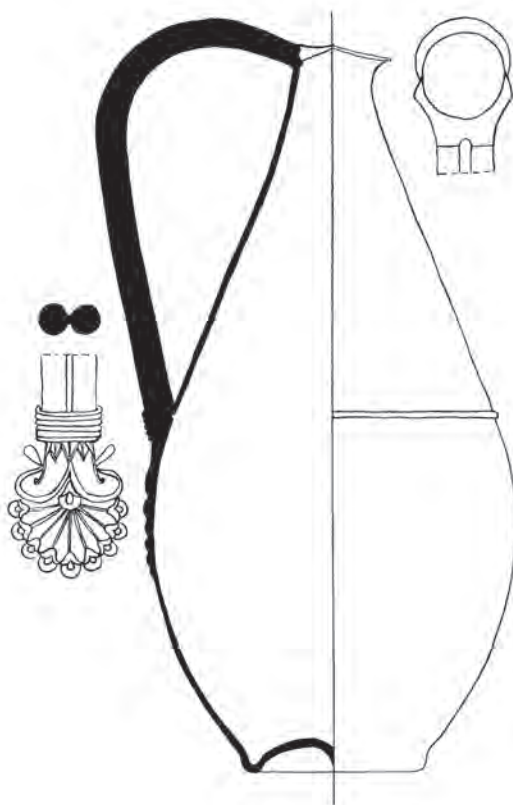


FIG. 22. Pontecagnano: silver *oinochoe* L 78 from tomb 928 (from d'Agostino 1977).

founder's guild». ¹²⁵ Subsequently, however, a different reading was put forward, based on a new photograph, according to which it would be more likely to read the indication of paternity (*bn ḥmlk*) after the name. ¹²⁶

From the middle decades of the 7th century BCE there was a sudden collapse of Levantine imports into Campania, which concerns not only luxury goods, but, as has been observed, even *aegyptiaca*. ¹²⁷ This situation, which can be extended to the whole central-western Mediterranean, has precise historical reasons due to the strong fiscal pressure policy inaugurated by the Assyrian Asarhaddon (681-669 BCE) towards the Phoenician city-states. ¹²⁸ This situation led to an armed insurrection at first by Abdi-milkutti, king of Sidon (677 BCE), and subsequently by Baal, king of Tyre, whose rebellion is dated to 662 BCE, when Assyria's throne was already occupied by Assurbanipal (669-627 BCE). Both revolts were, however, bloodily put down and the kingdoms transformed into Assyrian provinces. This led to a profound crisis in the region and Phoenicia from this moment until the Persian era, was no longer able to nourish contacts with the West.

As far as the Italian peninsula is concerned, Phoenician trade continued thanks to the initiatives of the central Mediterranean settlements, which enjoyed continuous political and economic growth throughout the 7th century BCE. However, while relations deepened between the mid-Tyrrhenian coastal centres on one hand and Carthage and the Phoenician colonies of Sardinia on the other, ¹²⁹ the flow of contacts with the Lower Tyrrhenian weakened due to the crisis of Pithekoussai, no longer able to catalyse international traffic, and the progressive strengthening of the Greek colonial settlements that from Cumae to the Straits of Messina controlled trade with the local populations.

In conclusion, in the light of the most recent discoveries, the Phoenician presence in southern Italy proves to be early and widespread. The first records of Torre Galli – which can be firmly placed in the 9th century BCE and closely linked to the Cypriot element in relation to the iron trade and the export of related technologies, a sector in which the eastern Mediterranean island excelled – were followed between the 8th and the first half of the 7th century BCE by far-reaching contacts involving both the Calabrian and especially the Campanian coasts. In this period, Tyrian ships flanked the Euboean ones in the discovery of new markets, ranging from the Sibaritide to the Gulf of Naples and from there to the rich mining areas of northern Etruria. A central role in these activities was played by the settlement of Pithekoussai, which from the middle of the 8th century BCE acted as a catalyst for international trade, stimulating relations between the Lower and Middle Tyrrhenian Sea.

With the onset of the Orientalizing period there is a qualitative leap in imports, well documented at Pontecagnano by some luxury products found in “princely” tombs, testifying to the high standard of living achieved by local *élites*, thanks also to their relations with eastern Mediterranean populations. This happy season of contacts was short-lived, however, both because of the expansionist policy of the Assyrian empire, which under the reigns of Asarhaddon and Assurbanipal conducted a repressive action against the still independent Phoenician centres, and the progressive growth of Greek interests in the Lower Tyrrhenian Sea, which considerably limited the activity of the Phoenician colonies in the area. ¹³⁰

125 d'Agostino – Garbini 1977, pp. 58-62.

126 Amadasi 1991, p. 415.

127 De Salvia 2006a, p. 29.

128 The whole issue is dealt with by Botto 1990, pp. 75-90. On the repercussions of Assyrian foreign policy on Phoenician trade see Bellelli – Botto 2002, pp. 303-304; Sciacca 2005, pp. 410-422.

129 Botto 2007, pp. 91-107; Botto 2012.

130 The scarcity of both eastern and colonial Phoenician imports into southern Italy starting from the second half of the 7th century BCE is underlined in the contribution presented by Castiglione – Oggiano 2011.

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