

PROTOHISTORIC MAJORCA AND MINORCA ON THE PUNIC OUTSKIRTS: APPROACHING BALEARIC COLONIAL DIALECTIC THROUGH DOMESTIC SPACES

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Abstract: The phenomena of colonial contact have been central to the history of research in protohistoric archaeology. The forms and results of these processes have been analysed through the material culture from tombs and large settlements, their defences, and iconographies, all of which are linked by snippets of written sources. This article deals with the problematic of the Balearic archipelago in the protohistoric period, when Punic Ibiza deployed an entire commercial policy as a spearhead for Carthage which absorbed a large part of the western Mediterranean. Meanwhile, in Majorca and Minorca, the autochthonous groups, foreseeably isolated from external influences, began to manifest a series of changes and transformations that are not understood within the traditional framework of the colonial debate. Therefore, these interactions are explored through the dialectics of everyday life, an approach that places the emphasis on individuals and domestic groups and their dwellings.

Keywords: Protohistory; Balearic Islands; Household Archaeology; Punic Archaeology; Cultural Interactions.

1. BACK TO THE SEA? THE BALEARIC PROTOHISTORIC PROBLEMATIC

Addressing the protohistory of the Balearic Islands is a declaration of intent.¹ This period refers to the second half of the 1st millennium BCE on the archipelago that is made up of the islands of Majorca, Minorca, Ibiza, Formentera, and Cabrera (FIG. 1). However, two very different but interconnected historical realities coexisted in this group of islands. On the one hand, there were the Pityusic islands,² the western islands of Ibiza and Formentera, which were the setting of an important Punic city-state, *Ybshm*, a descendant of the first Phoenician trade routes from centuries before and which established itself as the hub of a fundamental market in the western Mediterranean, well known historically and archaeologically.³ On the other hand, the Gymnesians⁴ – Majorca, and Minorca – were living out the last phase of their own insular evolution marked by the social and economic disintegration of their previous structure, with incipient socio-economic hierarchies but also a distinctive communal and redistributive character.⁵ This structure had its materialisation in the imposing monumental architecture characteristic of the Balearic Iron Age, the *talayots*: watchtowers built with large blocks of stone designed to articulate a built and visibly interconnected landscape.⁶

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2 Name by which the islands were known in ancient times (Str. III 5,1).

3 The bibliography on Punic Ibiza is very extensive and diverse. State of the question can be consulted in Ramon 1991; 2010; Costa – Fernández 1997; Gómez Bellard 2003; most recently Ramon 2021.

4 See note 2.

5 Lull *et al.* 2001, pp. 51-55.

6 Calvo 2009, p. 62.

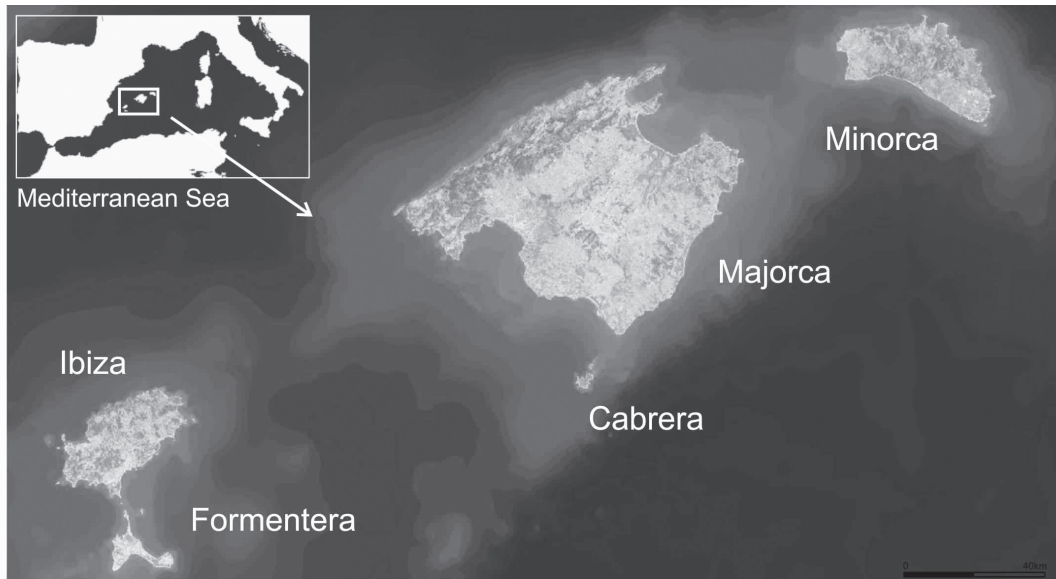


FIG. 1. Map of the Balearic archipelago with an indication of its constituent islands (author's elaboration based on the orthophoto from the Spatial Data Infrastructure of the Balearic Islands).

During the Second Iron Age, the period we are concerned with in this work, the Gymnesians faced their own process of internal change, shaken by the external conflicts of the colonial powers, especially in neighbouring Carthage. It was during this period that the famous Balearic slingers⁷ were part of the Punic armies alongside the Iberians, Sardinians, and Numidians. Like all of them, the Balearic populations on both sides of the archipelago suffered the Roman conquest at the end of the 2nd century BCE. The prehistory and protohistory of Majorca and Minorca have been characterised as a continuous pendulum swing between opening up to the surrounding sea and conversely, their complete closure. The argument on which these divergences are based is the scarce productive potential the islands had, a consequence of their small size, which rendered them “out of the stream”.⁸ The islands are also the furthest from the mainland in the entire Mediterranean. Recent studies characterise them as peripheral but well-connected, as evidenced by the arrival of Atlantic and Mediterranean artifacts and raw materials, especially during the Bronze Age and the Second Iron Age.⁹

In this narrative, the relationship between the two apparently different societies, the Punic Pitiusas and the Balearic Gymnesians, has been the subject of long and tense debate. V. Guerrero Ayuso was one of the precursors of this line of research, to which he dedicated a large part of his life and professional career in the Phoenician-Punic sphere, excavating important Majorcan enclaves such as Na Guardis and Na Galera and studying the material culture that illustrates the colonial contact between the two populations.¹⁰ As with interpretations of the connected or isolated nature of the archipelago, readings of this colonial process

7 Domínguez 2005; de Miguel Ayala 2002.

8 Expression borrowed from Gómez Bellard 1995, p. 442. For an in-depth analysis of this caseload, see: Guerrero 2006, pp. 89-90; Cherry – Leppard 2018, pp. 66-67.

9 Perelló – Llull 2019; Sureda 2020.

10 The bibliography of V. Guerrero Ayuso exceeds the scope of this work, and his initial works (Guerrero 1984; 1999), which he signs with his team at the University of the Balearic Islands, are classics (Guerrero – Calvo – Salvà 2002). A current review of its postulates in Calvo – García Rosselló 2019.

have oscillated between diffusionist and nativist positions.¹¹ Although the debate continues today, there is a certain consensus in speaking of an archaeological materiality, framed by written sources, which composes a scenario of interaction in the archipelago, although with significant nuances between the coast and the interior and different frequencies and rhythms between the settlements involved – in short, a complexity that is difficult to approach. This casuistry can even be seen in the terminology for the periodisation that Balearic archaeology uses for the second half of the 1st millennium BCE. While one part of the research considers the beginning of the millennium to the arrival of Rome a single prehistoric phase, calling it “Late Talayotic”;¹² for the other, it is a period with its own entity, known as “Post-Talayotic” or “Balearic”.¹³

It is in this dilemma that this work is framed, originating in the heart of a doctoral thesis¹⁴ that aims to study these human communities that inhabited the Balearic archipelago between the 6th and 2nd centuries BCE in order to try to shed some light on this historical problem. Although up to now we have tried to gauge this contact through material culture, particularly through imports,¹⁵ other areas have been relegated to the background. Architecture is currently a vector of analysis, where the role played by *poliorceticon* has been highlighted.¹⁶ In this case, domestic spaces and dwellings will be the main object of analysis since they are one of the most telling elements of everyday life, as household archaeology has been demonstrating for years. It is in this sphere of daily life that this contact took place, expressing itself through domestic groups, the main units that make up any society, with links between the individual and the general, which join each one of the social and economic mechanisms of past and present communities.

2. EVERYDAY LIFE AS A THEORETICAL-METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Archaeology has many methods and tools to understand and analyse these historical processes of colonial contact, one only needs to review the long and prolific literature on the subject.¹⁷ However, everyday life has not been a very recurrent category for this, and in fact, has not even been included in so much of the history of research until very recently, with a few exceptions that come largely from the gender and feminist perspective.¹⁸ H. Lefebvre used to say that the history of an entire society was contained in a single day.¹⁹ This assertion is rooted in the materialist conception of history, understood as a totality traversed by continuous contradictions that deny, change, and drive it, affecting and transforming the societies that comprise it. The space and time in which this takes place is none other than everyday life, the chained and repetitive succes-

11 Gornés – Gual – López 1999; Hernández-Gasch – Quintana 2013; Prados *et al.* 2015; Prados – Jiménez – Martínez 2017; Sintes – Ramon 2019.

12 Rosselló-Bordoy 1972; Plantalamor 1991.

13 Rosselló-Bordoy 1963; Guerrero 1997; Lull *et al.* 2001; Hernández-Gasch 2009.

14 *La sociedad postalayótica bajo órbita púnica: viviendas y grupos domésticos en el archipiélago balear (VI-II a.C.)*, defended in February 2021.

15 Juan – de Nicolás – Pons 2004; Hernández-Gasch – Quintana 2013; Gelabert 2014; de Nicolás 2015; Ramon 2017; Sintes – Ramon 2019.

16 Calvo – García Rosselló 2020; Prados – Jiménez – Torres 2021.

17 It is practically impossible to cover all the work in this field in a single note, but some of the essential references for the Mediterranean in the context of Phoenician-Punic archaeology include: Moscati 1974; González Wagner 1993; Frankenstein 1997; Rowlands 1998; van Dommelen 1998; Gosden 2001; Vives-Ferrándiz 2005; Delgado – Ferrer 2007; Garbati – Pedrazzi 2016; Delgado 2016; Marín-Aguilera 2018.

18 Again, there are many references that should be included in this note, which is why only pioneering works such as Tringham 1991; Brumfiel 1991; Picazo 1997; Colomer – González – Montón 1998; González Marcén – Picazo 2005; Hendon 2010; Foxhall 2016; Delgado – Picazo Gurina 2016 are mentioned. A recent synthesis in Robin 2020.

19 Lefebvre 1972, p. 11.

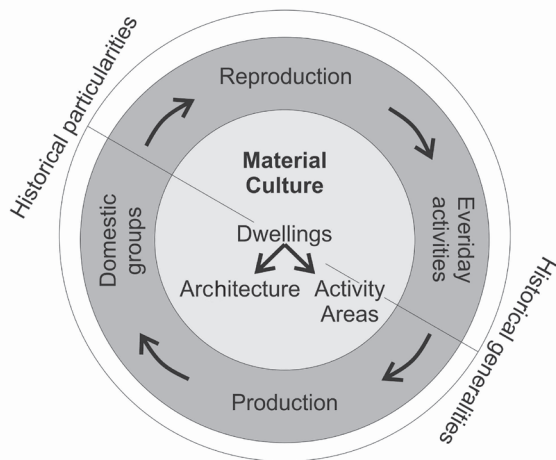


Fig. 2. Diagram of the theoretical categories and concepts that make up the proposed study of everyday life (author's elaboration).

or socio-economic idiosyncrasy of these groups²² (Fig. 2). Both indoor and outdoor dwellings produce and reproduce the structure of a group, a community and, in turn, an entire society.²³ Its formal elements generate the specific cultural codes that represent and define a society, as its own image is projected (as through many other architectural manifestations), proving it to be an essential tool for the creation of identities. These architectural languages are, however, profoundly ambivalent, as they often act as social binders, tools for cohesion, and the creation of bonds of identity, which may also underlie other structural conceptions that express transformations or inequalities within society itself.²⁴

The architecture of the house serves as a physical and cultural framework for a whole set of recurrent and simultaneous activities and actions that make up daily life and the routines of these domestic groups. These activities and the people who carry them out make up the social, economic, and political fabric of a community. This is what household archaeology has been claiming since its birth in the 1980s, the role of domestic groups as units of production, distribution, consumption, and reproduction of their members and of the societies themselves.²⁵ It was this research that laid the foundation for the processual analysis based on archaeological identification through mid-range categories such as the areas of these functional activities grouped around domestic units.²⁶ These studies made it possible to transcend the material category of the house to try to approach the social and economic structure of the household and its activities. Years later, with the incorporation of feminism and the gender perspective into the discipline, Spanish feminist research created the category of maintenance activities, those practices related to ensuring the integral care and sur-

sion of daily acts that make up a global rhythm, a routine that synthesises the social totality and that has great power: to maintain and reproduce the existing reality, but also the capacity to subvert it.²⁰

This process takes place fundamentally (although not only) in dwellings and domestic spaces. The house is the space where the smallest human group lives, the cell of the social network, people who share the same roof under which they eat and sleep; where they grow and learn what is necessary to produce and reproduce, including leaving their own groups to create or form part of others and maintain the wheel of social reproduction.²¹ All this takes place in the house, which is the product of a specific time and space, a container of all the social and economic factors that determine their physical configuration and influence their character, reflecting the composition, functioning, and/

20 Heller 1977.

21 Bender 1967; Laslett 1972; Hammel – Laslett 1974; Yanagisako 1979.

22 Giedion 1941; Wilk – Rathje 1982.

23 Waisman 1972; Bourdieu 1972.

24 Zevi 1978.

25 Wilk – Rathje 1982, p. 618; Manzanilla 1986, pp. 15-16.

26 In addition to the classic works already cited such as Flannery – Winter 1976 or Wilk – Rathje 1982, the Latin American social archaeological school stands out in its contribution to the conceptualisation of domestic groups and units: Veloz Maggiolo 1984; Manzanilla 1986; Vargas 1990; Sarmiento 1992; Bate 1998; Flores 2007.

vival of each of the members of the same group. These include the preparation of food, its distribution and consumption, the management and storage of resources, the production and use of everyday technological tools, as well as all those activities related to the care and socialisation of children or those unable to take care of themselves due to age or illness.²⁷ Many of these practices have been carried out by women in different spaces across various historical periods, and their vindication stems from the desire to recover these everyday jobs that have been made invisible by a deeply patriarchal history of research.²⁸

Focusing on the characterisation and understanding of household groups is equivalent to understanding the daily routines, interpersonal relations, and productive and ideological actions of a singular set of individuals in a particular period, but also the existence of general or universal properties and links of any social group.²⁹ There is therefore a dialectical relationship in everyday life between the universal and the singular, which allows us to delve into historical processes and casuistry of all kinds, including colonial contact. This same dialectic is what makes it possible to dispense with unidirectional concepts, both from the exacerbated acculturation and the reductionism and consequent isolationism of this contact. In this work, this will be the approach to understanding the autochthonous groups of protohistoric Majorca and Minorca, in which their contact with the Punic orbit is observed in terms of their interaction; this unleashes a whole series of responses with their nuances, rhythms, and particularities, but where they all form part of a common phenomenon.

3. A BRIEF NOTE ON THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The time and space of study of the second half of the 1st millennium BCE on the Balearic archipelago are known in a particularly varied way. Punic Ibiza today is a fundamental reference in Phoenician-Punic archaeology. It has a long scientific trajectory of almost a century, marked mainly by the excavations of the necropolis of Puig des Molins and the sanctuary of Es Culleram, and from the detailed study of its urban and rural materiality.³⁰ However, the same cannot be affirmed for the neighbouring islands in these chronologies. This period was a time of upheaval on the islands, the epilogue of an autochthonous society before being diluted within the Roman Empire after its conquest led by the consul *Q. Caecilius Metellus* in 123 BCE. At the end of the 7th century BCE, the human communities of Majorca and Minorca faced a severe socio-economic crisis that broke down the foundations on which these island groups were based, leading to the fragmentation of their communities, the disintegration of their territorial network, and the articulation of a new materiality that reflected all these changes.³¹ It was in this context that the Ebusitan colony began its territorial and commercial deployment on the island, weaving a commercial network with the Iberian peninsular coast and the communities of the neighbouring islands.³² Ibiza was part of that wide orbit of Punic city-states in which Carthage played a hegemonic role.

This Mediterranean scenario had its influence to a greater or lesser extent depending on the initiative of each of these cities and the interest of the Carthaginian metropolis, therefore for each indigenous territory, we have a different history with its own dynamics, as in the cases of the Sardinian, Numidian, or Iberian territories. In the case of the Balearic Islands, the progressive arrival of imports of Punic products such as wine and oil, as well as tableware for consumption, began in the 5th century BCE and was constant in the 4th-3rd

27 Picazo 1997, pp. 59-60.

28 González Marcén 2000.

29 Vargas 1990, p. 76. A recent joint work addresses different times and spaces from this perspective: Gutiérrez – Grau 2013.

30 Ramon 1991; 2010; Costa – Fernández 1997; 2006; Gómez Bellard 2003.

31 Lull *et al.* 2001, pp. 57-87; Castro – Escoriza – Sanahuja 2003; Calvo – Guerrero 2011.

32 Costa 1994; Ramon 2008.

centuries BCE,³³ albeit with a much more peripheral intensity than in the other known scenarios. At the same time, the phenomenon of the grouping of settlements on a territorial level took place, with the visual system of the talayots being broken up and, for the first time on the islands, replaced by the construction of walled enclosures.³⁴ This atomisation of the landscape has its correlate in the symbolic sphere, which will give way to the progressive appearance of funerary rituals coupled with a growing individuality, evident at the symbolic and iconographic level; as well as a whole series of religious practices that were carried out in large, newly built sanctuaries with their own symbolism and iconography, but with a very Mediterranean flavour.³⁵

In all these processes, contact with the Punic orbit is gradually inserted, more or less clearly, but always in the background of the new materiality. This is the case of the gradual appearance of vitreous paste beads, terracotta, and other symbolic and ornamental objects in sanctuaries, dwellings, and funerary contexts.³⁶ Daily practices, as will be developed in more detail below, oscillate between the survival of deep-rooted traditions and the incorporation of interesting novelties such as the consumption of marine resources (hitherto non-existent) and the presence of new faunal species.³⁷ Likewise, the architectural techniques visible in the newly built spaces also seem to incorporate solutions and resources typical of the Punic Mediterranean, as can be seen in the dwellings and, above all, in the defensive systems.³⁸ All this, in short, makes up a heterogeneous, complex image, where the interaction between these materialities already anticipates an unequal and changing relationship. What can be seen in the dwellings of these communities?

4. MAY I COME IN? BALEARIC HOUSING DATA

A glance at the existing bibliography on domestic spaces in the Balearic archipelago in these chronologies provides a quick and clear idea: it is a profoundly heterogeneous and unevenly known panorama.³⁹ In Ibiza, there is a clear dichotomy between the city and the countryside, the latter being dominated by the well-known Punic farms.⁴⁰ The survival of the Punic city today makes it very difficult to document extensive or even complete dwellings in the Ebusitan city. Various archaeological interventions on small plots of land, at the pace of urban development, have uncovered parts of quadrangular houses that take advantage of the rocky substratum, cutting out the rooms on the geology of Dalt Vila.⁴¹ These rooms were connected by means of staircases and different levels, taking advantage of the natural terraces. A base of stone masonry, red clay mortar, and lime plaster with beaten earth paving are recurrent. In terms of infrastructure, there is sophisticated knowledge of hydraulic architecture, with recurrent drains, channelling, and *bagnarola* cisterns, covered with a characteristic Punic *signinum*.

This is the scarce evidence we have to determine some of the activities carried out by these groups. They are cisterns of variable but notable capacities that illustrate the need to accumulate and have water

33 See note 13.

34 Calvo 2009, pp. 62-64. A recent state of the art on the Balearic Walls can be found at Hernández-Gasch – Torres – Puig 2022.

35 Guerrero 1991; Gual 1993; Hernández-Gasch 1998; Alberó 2009; Ferrer *et al.* 2020; Gornés 2022.

36 De Nicolás 2015; 2017; Ferrer – Riudavets 2017.

37 Anglada *et al.* 2017; Ramis 2017.

38 Prados – Jiménez 2017; Torres 2017; Prados – Jiménez – Torres 2021.

39 A state of the question still valid for the city of *Ybshm* in Ramon 2014. For Majorca and Minorca, the works Salvà – Hernández-Gasch 2009; Hernández-Gasch 2011; Pons 2016.

40 This work does not consider these farms as an object of study due to their clearly rural character, an attribution that is not given by Balearic research to the protohistoric domestic spaces of Majorca and Minorca. We are aware, however, of their common points and hope to develop this aspect in other works.

41 Gurrea – Martín – Graziani 2009; Ramon 2010; 2014; Graziani – Marí 2011; Ramon – Esquembre 2017.

available. In addition to this, there are only a few examples of combustion structures for food preparation.⁴² Another materiality available to provide insight into everyday activities is the abundant amount of Punic-Ebusitan pottery recovered, especially table and kitchenware, as well as large containers.⁴³ The first category includes a wide variety of closed shapes, jars and jugs for liquids and semi-solids, as well as bowls and plates with different rims, or *askoi* and *lebrillos*. In terms of food preparation, mortars and moulded rim pots are recurrent, followed by baking pans, casseroles, and single-handled saucepans.⁴⁴ In short, all of this speaks of a standardised culinary technology, typical of a common and well-known gastronomy in the Punic-State cities of the central and western Mediterranean.⁴⁵ In addition to the urban layout in terraces and the use of the rocky substratum as part of the dwelling, the connection of the rooms identified by corridors around central courtyards is also presumed, with scarce but illustrative evidence.⁴⁶

All this information is a far cry from what we observe in protohistoric Majorca and Minorca, although with important nuances: while we do not have such a deep-rooted and extensive history of research, we do have a set of excavated dwellings that provide information on their architecture and the daily activities that took place inside them. As far as Majorca is concerned, the information provided by the teams at Son Fornés (Montuiri) and Puig Morter de Son Ferragut is fundamental, as is the research at Ses Païsses and other more specific sites such as Hospitalet Vell, Capocorb Vell, and S'illot.⁴⁷ The largest domestic spaces of the Gymnesians range in size from 40-75 m² and have a semi-circular or half-round floor plan with a gradual tendency towards quadrangular shapes. They are built using a construction method very particular to this period: the outer part consists of large vertical or horizontal blocks, well squared, placed on a base of ashlar as a plinth. The upper parts are less well known due to the state of preservation of the building. The inner part, however, is of much smaller and more finely worked masonry, with a heterogeneous layout in which the use of ordinary masonry, squared or faced, is implemented. Finally, between the two faces, there is a mortar made with gravel and rubble, likely from the debris resulting from the carving, mixed with earth as a binding agent.

The spatial layout of the dwellings also has important particularities (FIG. 3). Within the irregular shape of its floor plan, the interior is divided into three standardised spaces by separating the back third, which is also subdivided, leaving a large central room which is accessed from the door and two rear flats or cubicles. The role played by the central columns and pillars in the centre of the dividing walls (*Corte* 19 of S'illot, HPT2, and HPT3 of Son Fornés) or in the centre of the larger space (*Recintos* 8, 9 and *Edificio* 25 of Ses Païsses; G4 of Son Fornés) is fundamental. These elements act as structural support for the roofs and as articulators of the space, functioning as a pivot for a partial or total portico. It is in this room where there are areas of activity linked to the production of food and everyday manufactured goods, such as hearths associated with pots and other cooking elements (*Recinto* 9 at Ses Païsses), as well as tiling and workbenches (HPT1 at Son Fornés) (FIG. 3.a; 3.d), or water cisterns (HPT2, HPT3, and G4 of Son Fornés, *Edificio* Alfa at Puig Morter of Son Ferragut) (FIG. 3.b). The rear cubicles present a greater functional variability,

42 As shown by the archaeological excavation on the street Ignasi Riquer n. 2: Martín 2007.

43 It is practically impossible to condense the Punic-Ebusitan ceramic repertoires in a bibliographical note, so only a few summary works on this production are cited, especially those of common sets or those associated with domestic contexts: Tarradell – Font 1975; Rodero 1980; Gómez Bellard – Gurrea 1985; Guerrero 1995; Fernández – Costa 1998; Ramon 2011.

44 Vendrell 2015, pp. 289-296.

45 Likewise, the approaches to Phoenician-Punic food are beyond the scope of this article, so the pioneering works on the Phoenician-Punic food are a good example Uberti 1987-1988; Campanella 2008. Recently a state of art in Gómez Bellard – Pérez-Jordá – Vendrell 2020.

46 As appears to be the case in the dwelling identified under the former *Hospital Civil*: Graziani – Marí 2011, pp. 166-167.

47 A summary of all the information available at Salvà – Hernández-Gasch 2009, pp. 307-314; and specific publications such as Rosselló-Bordoy 1979; Lull *et al.* 2001; Castro – Escoriza – Sanahuja 2003.

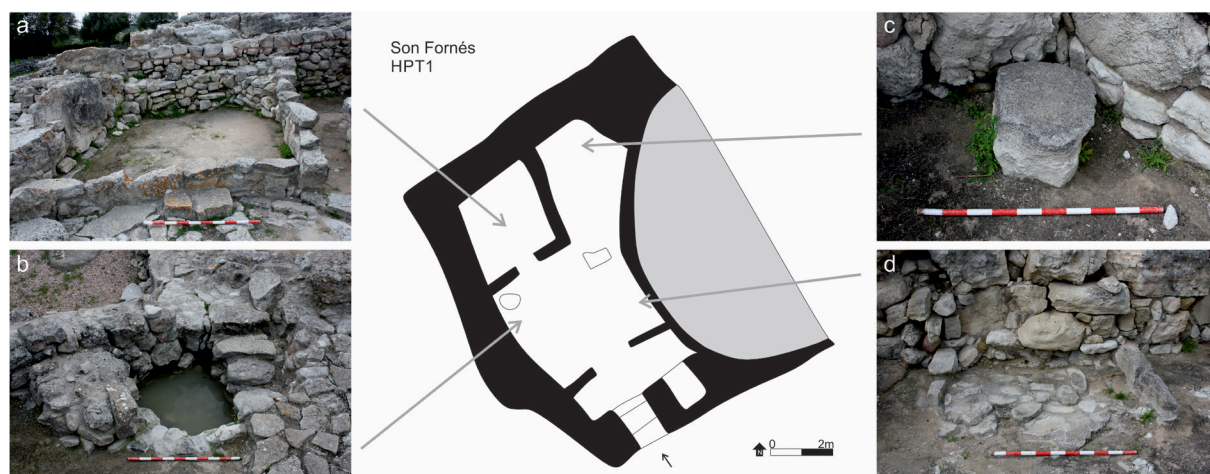


FIG. 3. Schematic plan of HPT1 of Son Fornés (centre). General view of the left room with workbench in the background (a). Cistern in the courtyard of the dwelling (b). Work platform located in the rear right cabin (c). Combustion structure (hearth) in the courtyard (d) (author's photographs).

but their storage vocation undoubtedly stands out, as shown by the benches for supporting and arranging objects or even small niches (*Recintos* 8 and 9 of Ses Païsses; G4 of Son Fornés), although some productive spaces with work surfaces can also be observed (HPT1 of Son Fornés; *Edificio Alfa* at Puig Morter of Son Ferragut) (FIG. 3.c).

The situation in Minorca is very different from that of neighbouring Majorca, starting with the long history of research into protohistoric dwellings on the smaller island.⁴⁸ These dwellings are surprisingly large, around 80-120 m², and are organised in united nuclei attached to each other, forming groups of varying morphology and number, as can be seen in Sant Vicenç d'Alcaldús (four circles in a linear sense), Sa Torreta de Tramuntana (three circles arranged in an L-shape) or Torre d'en Galmés (several cases of two circles).⁴⁹ Menorcan houses are built using the stone from the surrounding area, from the surface they are going to occupy,⁵⁰ following a technique very similar to the Majorcan one, but in this case much more regular and monumental. The perimeter walls are double-faced. The exterior is made up of a first row of square blocks that act as the foundation and levelling for the large orthostats that are placed on top of them. These large stones (approx. 1.5-2 m) have a vertical rectangular morphology, sometimes with a more horizontal tendency (FIG. 4). The upper part is finished with courses of ordinary masonry or ashlar. The interior masonry is more varied, but tends to be small, ordinary masonry with grouting and facing, including some more irregular, bone masonry as well. A very interesting peculiarity is the recurrent appearance among these masonries of inserted vertical blocks (*Recinto* Cartailhac, *Cercles* 2 and 6 of Torre d'en Galmés, *Cercles* 1 and 2 of Sant Vicenç d'Alcaldús, *Casa* 3 of Trepucó). This construction technique, well known in the Protohistoric Mediterranean as pillar-framing or *a telaio*, or later *opus africanum*, appears for the first time on the island

48 They have been studied by different scholars such as A. Vives Escudero, J. Mascaró Pasarius and Ll. Pericot García, although it was M^a. Luisa Serra Belabre who paid most attention to them, focusing a large part of her work on them. A summary of her proposals can be found in Serra 1961; 1965, pp. 161-162. For a review of the author's contributions to the problem of island habitat, see Torres 2016.

49 Detailed planimetries of these settlements can be found in the work Plantalamor 1991, pp. 430-470. A recent study on the spatial distribution at diachronic level of a Minorcan settlement in Jiménez – Torres 2021, pp. 10-14.

50 Pérez-Juez – Goldberg 2018, pp. 360-363; Goldberg – Pérez-Juez 2020, pp. 86-89.



FIG. 4. Example of the monumental rigging in Circle 2 of Sant Vicenç d'Alcaidús (Menorca) (photograph provided by J. de Nicolás).



FIG. 5. Wall of pillars or *a telaio* in the interior of Circle 2 of Sant Vicenç d'Alcaidús (Menorca) (photograph courtesy of J. de Nicolás).

in these chronologies and above all in the dwellings⁵¹ (FIG. 5). In some cases, these pillars protrude from the wall and in others they are pilasters. On the inside, between the two faces, there is a mortar composed of gravel, debris, and earth.

As for the interior, again much like the Majorcan case, an elementary characteristic is observed: the fragmentation of the space, but in this case in greater proportions and in a much more heterogeneous way (FIG. 6). By masonry partition walls, Minorcan houses have six or seven rooms articulated around a large central space that is accessed from the entrance. Here, large slabs and pilasters form an interior façade, creating a monumental and large spatial unit. Within these courtyards are small hollows or basins in the form of cisterns for collecting and concentrating water (*Recinto Cartailhac*, *Cercles* 6 and 7 of Torre d'en Galmés, *Casa de l'aeroport* de Biniparrax Petit). In some cases, they are associated with other interesting structures: small stone boxes made of four slabs with a central loculi, similar to an altar (*Cercles* 2 of Sant Vicenç d'Alcaidús, both *cercles* of Biniparrax Petit) (FIG. 6.a). The *Casa de l'Aeroport* de Biniparrax Petit stands out in this respect, where two have been found, one opposite the other. In one of them, placed over a cistern, a votive vessel for religious purposes was recovered.⁵² In addition to all this, there are also picks and mortars in the courtyards for productive purposes (*Casa* 3 in Trepucó, *Cercles* 6 and 7 in Torre d'en Galmés) and even hand mills fixed to the floor (*Casa* Serra Belabre in Biniparrax Petit). This house also has a floor made of lime mortar and sand in different layers,⁵³ something unparalleled at that time in the rest of the dwellings.

In the western part of the Minorcan houses, there are three rooms. A first small cubicle just across the doorway has been interpreted as a storage space (*Casa de l'aeroport* de Biniparrax Petit) or a place for animals, such as dogs (*Recinto Cartailhac* de Torre d'en Galmés).⁵⁴ Attached are two other rooms with unusual locking systems, carved doorjambs, and a threshold with an oblong central groove (FIG. 6.b). Undoubtedly,

51 An observation already made by M^a. Luisa Serra Belabre, who drew attention to this technique in Minorca's island domestic environments (Serra 1961, pp. 73-74; 1965, p. 157).

52 A recent approach to the materiality and occupation of this dwelling in Torres – de Nicolás 2020.

53 Hernández-Gasch 2009, p. 19 and photo 77.

54 Goldberg – Pérez-Juez 2020, pp. 82-84.

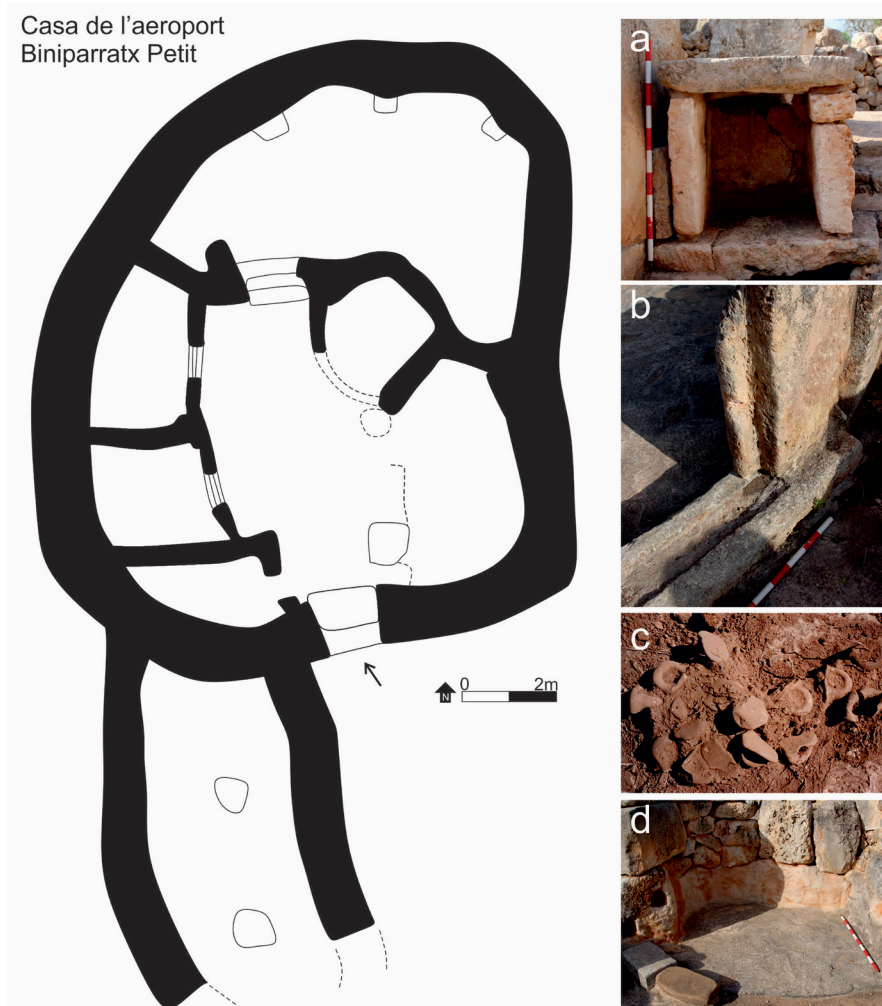


FIG. 6. Schematic plan of the *Casa de l'aeroport* de Biniparratx Petit (left). Domestic altar located in the courtyard of the house (a). Detail of the closing system of the western rooms (b). Concentration of amphora handles reused as loom weights (c). General view of the “kitchen” of the house (d) (author’s photographs).

this implies a specific desire for these rooms to have the possibility of being closed off by means of wooden boards or other perishable elements that are yet unknown. Inside, storage functions can be deduced, given the presence of niches in the walls (*Recinto Cartailhac* and *Cercle 7* of Torre d'en Galmés) or accumulations of large containers for storing foodstuffs (*Casa 3* of Trepucó). However, a specific area of activity stands out, marked by the appearance of concentrations of Punic-Ebusitan amphora handles (series T.8111-T.8133)⁵⁵ previously trimmed and smoothed. These have been interpreted as reuses of the handles as weights for vertical looms, a practice only known in Sa Caleta (Ibiza), and which is widespread in the Gymnesians.⁵⁶ Examples include the eight pieces from the Cartailhac Enclosure and the sixteen from the *Cercle 7* of Torre d'en Galmés, as well as the twenty pieces recovered from the *Casa de l'aeroport* at Biniparratx Petit (FIG. 6.c) and the eighty-four from Ses Talaies de n'Alzina.⁵⁷

55 Following the typology of Ramon 1995.

56 Ferrer – Riudavets 2015; de Nicolás 2016.

57 Sintes – Isbert 2009, p. 258; Carbonell 2012, p. 119; Torres – de Nicolás 2020, p. 465; Navarro 2004, pp. 36-38.

At the back of the houses, following a straight axis from the entrance and crossing the courtyard, is the largest room. In all Minorcan houses, the entrance to this room is monumentalised with two large jambs, sometimes decorated (*Cercle 6* of Torre d'en Galmés), and imposing lintels. Inside, in some cases, there are attached pilasters (*Casa de l'aeroport* de Biniparratx Petit) or free-standing central columns (*Cercle 7* of Torre d'en Galmés), as well as other exceptional equipment such as beds or beds and braziers (*Recinto Cartailhac* and *Cercle 6* of Torre d'en Galmés). The eastern part of the dwelling generally consists of two spaces. The first is an annex to the central courtyard, as it is an open room, delimited at the back by an apse wall and separated from the courtyard by a workbench (FIG. 6.d). Inside, working platforms have been recovered as supports (Sa Torreta de Tramuntana, *Cercles 1* and *2* of Sant Vicenç d'Alcaidús) and small combustion structures (*Recinto Cartailhac* and *Cercle 7* of Torre d'en Galmés). These sites have been interpreted as kitchens given the recurring references in the literature to the accumulation of ashes and coals in these rooms.⁵⁸ At the back of this area, occupying the eastern side of the dwelling, there is usually a concave space, also open to the courtyard, where cisterns and silos have been found (*Casa de l'aeroport* de Biniparratx Petit), as well as accumulations of mills and work utensils (*Cercle 7* of Torre d'en Galmés). In some cases, this room is subdivided, leaving a small cubicle at the back of the dwelling which is difficult to access and apparently of restricted use given its characteristics (*Recinto Cartailhac* and *Cercle 7* of Torre d'en Galmés).

Beyond these circles, there are exterior structures such as small, annexed spaces (*Casa Serra Belabre* in Biniparratx Petit, *Casa 3* in Trepucó and Torelló) or large lintelled enclosures known as hypostyle rooms (*Recinto Cartailhac* and *Cercle 6* in Torre d'en Galmés; *Casa de l'aeroport* in Biniparratx Petit). The differential existence of these elements, not present in all of the houses, is a vector of analysis that must be considered. A related casuistry is the presence of the curved spaces that extend in front of these circles, known as *patios delanteros/patis davanter*.⁵⁹ Inside them are production, and storage facilities (*Cercles 6* and *7*, *Recinto Cartailhac* of Torre d'en Galmés). The existence of these spaces continues to be a current debate in Minorcan archaeology.⁶⁰ They share the same features such as the enclosing walls built with monumental rigging, a lateral entrance to the housing complex, and their construction always following that of the circles.

These are the material elements, the indicators of the everyday life of the Balearic groups through their dwellings. It is necessary, by way of summary, to stress some questions prior to discussion. The architecture of the houses and their spatial layout are specific to the second half of the 2nd millennium BCE, with chronological margins that are difficult to define. On both islands, Majorca and Minorca, we have few well-dated building levels which point to the 6th-5th centuries BCE, although most of the well-documented occupation contexts correspond to the 4th-3rd centuries BCE.⁶¹ In the case of Ibiza, the data, although scarce and fragmentary, show a very specific way of understanding their dwellings, typical of the Punic Mediterranean environment. Meanwhile, in the Gymnesians, we see a dynamic of its own, heir to previous forms of stone construction, but now transformed, with an innovative result typical of this chronology. All these areas of activity identified by their material remains are distributed in domestic spaces, carefully divided, and articulated around central courtyards. They illustrate a whole series of daily production, storage, and consumption activities that were part of the island communities, and which must now be interpreted in order to transcend them and try to get to know the people behind them.

58 Martínez Santa-Olalla 1935, p. 33; Serra 1967, p. 26; Plantalamor 1991, p. 424; Pons 2016, pp. 193-194.

59 A current state of play on this issue can be found here: Corral *et al.* 2020.

60 See the recent publication Corral *et al.* 2020 for the latest data on this issue.

61 In Majorca see Castro – Escoriza – Sanahuja 2003, p. 174; Palomar 2005, p. 129; Salvà – Hernández-Gasch 2009, p. 314. In Minorca see Gornés *et al.* 2001, p. 234; Carbonell 2012, p. 125; Sintés – Isbert 2009.

5. DISCUSSION: DOMESTIC SPACES, EVERYDAY PRACTICES, AND SOCIAL RELATIONS IN A COLONIAL PERIPHERY

The forms and techniques of construction, the spatial layout of the interior of these dwellings, and the functionalities drawn from the areas of activity form a conception of the domestic space of these groups, a reflection of their daily life and therefore also of the society of which they are a part. In the case of Ibiza, despite the fragmentary information and the limitations of the domestic register, the knowledge established about the funerary and cultural materiality of these groups provides an overview of their composition, functioning, and ideologies, in line with the Mediterranean Punic orbit.⁶² In the case of the Gymnesian islands, these communities have been the object of study from other fields, especially from the occupation of the territory or some social and economic practices, but rarely on domestic spaces.⁶³ This contribution reinforces some of the perceptions previously expressed about this period and attempts to enrich the narrative proposed about it with the study perspective developed here. For this reason, this discussion section will focus on the indigenous groups of the eastern islands of the Balearic archipelago, delving deeper into their structure and approaching the role played by colonial contact between the two realities. This approach is linked to the potential of the study of domestic spaces and groups not only for the knowledge of the so-called micro-space but also for the characterisation of major historical processes.

Undoubtedly, the most defining feature that unites both islands is the homogenisation of a particular concept of domestic space, the same understanding of the habitat. This assertion may attract attention given the apparent differences in size and shape between Majorca and Minorca. However, beneath these particularities, there are common, transversal aspects that have to do with the socio-economic conception of the domestic group itself. This conception is based on three fundamental material pillars: the projection of monumental architecture, the compartmentalisation of the interior space, and its organisation around a central space. The first of these refers to the hegemony of a monumental-looking architectural rig that has its roots in earlier building traditions, but which is mixed with smaller, highly technical forms in the interior. This denotes specialised work that breaks with earlier, more collective operational chains, and may illustrate the emergence of specialised work that has been linked to forms of resistance to external contact.⁶⁴ However, it is necessary to consider other phenomena of Balearic architectural adaptation that are far removed from this resistance, such as the incorporation of *a telaio* walls in these same dwellings, a technique of Eastern origin and widely spread throughout the Mediterranean by the Phoenician-Punic orbit.⁶⁵

On the other hand, the fragmentation and compartmentalisation of the interior space is also a constant in Balearic dwellings. Although it is much more evident in Minorca than in Majorca, in both cases there is a specific and determined desire to segregate spaces, to create separate areas in which areas of activity are arranged: hearths, cisterns, work platforms, jars and amphorae for storage – in short, daily tasks that have a specific spatial allocation. It is also worth noting the appearance and arrangement of thresholds in some of these interior places, the emergence of a need to close off certain parts of the dwelling. However, all of them are connected by the third characteristic, the courtyards, those central spaces that act as articulators and connectors of the dwellings, and which also concentrate a large part of the daily activities. These common nuclei generate a rigid structuring of the domestic space, in which circulation

62 For a socio-economic analysis of the Punic-Ebusitan groups, see Costa 2020.

63 For a summary of this period, see Hernández-Gasch 1998, pp. 205-214; Lull *et al.* 2001, pp. 57-87; Calvo – Guerrero 2011. A current and synthesis study on Balearic domestic spaces in Salvà – Hernández-Gasch 2009.

64 For specialised work, see Coll 1997, p. 475; Hernández-Gasch 1998, p. 49. For the discussion on architecture as an expression of indigenous resistance, see Smith 2020, p. 161; García Rosselló – Calvo 2021.

65 For this technique Bikai 1978; Elayi 1980. Elements for discussion in Camporeale 2013. For the Balearic casuistry Guerrero 1997, pp. 13-59; Guerrero – Calvo – Salvà 2002, p. 240.

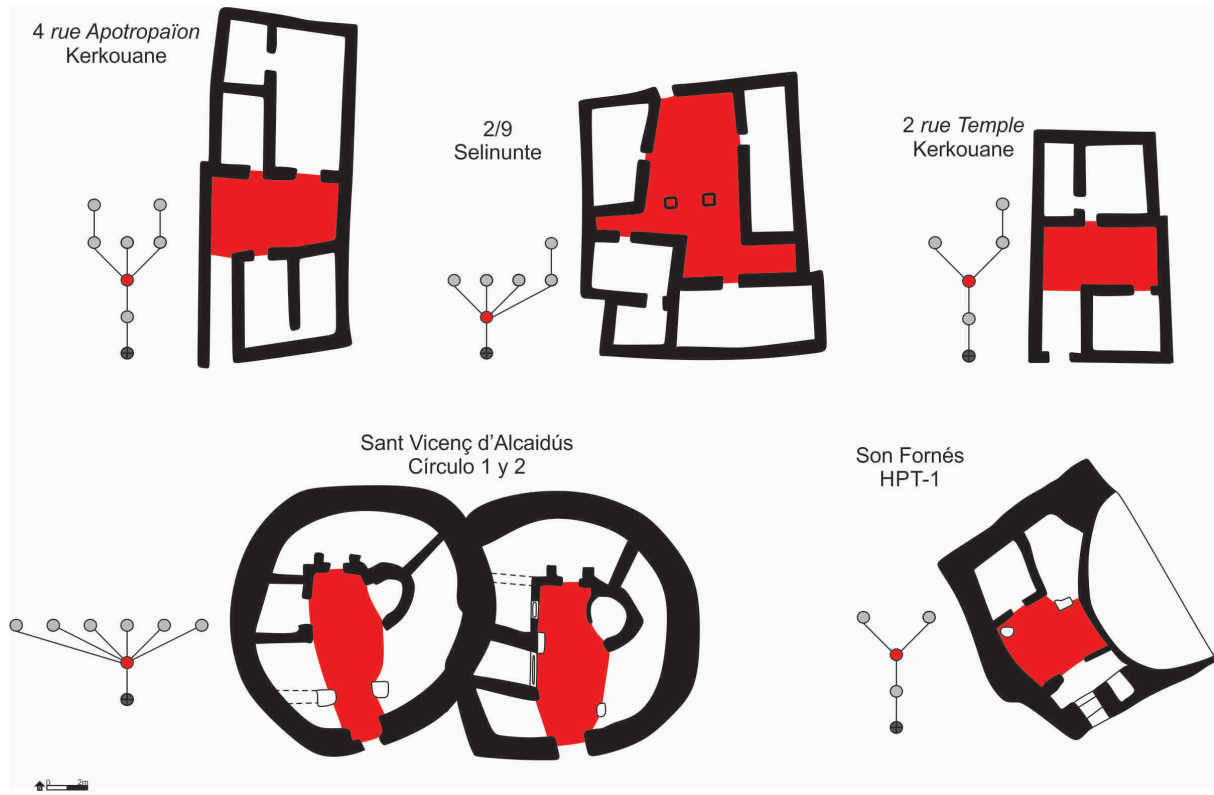


FIG. 7. Comparison of schematic floor plans of Punic houses (top) with Balearic examples (bottom). In red are the courtyards, which are identified in the same way in the accessibility diagrams (author's elaboration).

allows connection, but also the control of the individuals who pass through the house and work in these courtyards. These features reveal a well-thought-out hierarchy of space in their conception, and their homogeneity can be seen graphically in the accessibility maps (FIG. 7). Once again, this form of dwelling is not uncommon in the contemporary Mediterranean. Punic dwellings, both those of Ibiza and those of the *koiné*, show a predominance of this typology, and studies have interpreted it as a desire to control and channel circulation and the execution of activities within the houses by domestic groups, which have a clear “inward” orientation.⁶⁶

What does this translate into? The areas of activity and the hierarchical spatial articulation of their dwellings, reinforced by the segregation of their dependencies and functionalities, materialises the constitution of multifunctional houses designed to carry out daily productive activities that satisfy the inherent needs of the group; these activities generate surpluses with which to participate in the different systems of exchange established between these groups and communities. The Balearic domestic groups are constituted as independent, self-sufficient cells of production, distribution, consumption, and reproduction, but integrated into the same social fabric. The implications of this affirmation go beyond the domestic dimension itself; since in earlier times on these islands, Iron Age I groups carried out their main subsistence tasks in the same way, but these areas of activity were concentrated in public or communal spaces, such as squares or buildings

66 Picard – Picard 1958, pp. 48-49; Fantar 1985, p. 649; Mezzolani 1999; Markoe 2000, p. 73; Helas 2009; Jiménez – Prados 2013.

near the talayots, which formed a system based on community redistribution.⁶⁷ Now, each household group manages its own economy according to its own possibilities, which confirms a parallel atomisation of these communal social relations and the possible emergence of inequalities between them.

Along this line, it is particularly interesting to observe how, apparently, these domestic units outwardly project a homogeneous model of isonomy between groups, with an equitable distribution of domestic equipment, architecture, and functionalities. While this seems to be more clearly observed in Minorca, the same situation is repeated in Majorca, despite the greater heterogeneity of the floor plans of the houses. The difference, however, is not visibly built into the houses, but rather inside them in the differential accumulations of production tools such as mills and hammers, as in the case of *Cercle 7* in Torre d'en Galmés;⁶⁸ also of their purchasing power as they concentrate large quantities of ceramic vessels for storage and consumption, as in the case of HPT1 from Son Fornés;⁶⁹ or with the capacity of some houses to appropriate more communal space, as shown in some Minorcan settlements with their front courtyards and other exterior structures. All these material features and indicators essentially depict Balearic domestic groups with a very pronounced self-initiative that privatised their activities, closing in on themselves and building houses that marked the distance between the outside and the inside quite distinctively. They generate and concentrate their own resources, returning their surpluses to themselves under different formulas. Despite this, it is interesting to see how they maintain a communal conception expressed in the equality of a very standardised domestic model. Thus, the ties between groups that make up the social fabric are ritualised through domestic architecture, an ideological materialisation that is also represented in other material spheres such as the sanctuaries and walls erected at this time.

What role do the colonial contacts between the Gymnesians and Punic Ibiza play in this dialectic process? The history of research has pointed out a series of features that should be considered for a comprehensive answer. In the first place, the arrival of products from the Punic orbit to these dwellings is an unquestionable fact. Wine was the leading product, accompanied by oil and salted fish, mainly from Ibiza, but also from other Punic cities, although attention has been drawn to the scarcity of the total volume of imports when compared with another contemporary Mediterranean scenario.⁷⁰ Especially between the 4th and 3rd centuries BC, not only did these products arrive in the Gymnesians, but pottery for table service and consumption in Balearic houses began to be common, but not for cooking and food processing. An interesting dichotomy arises in this respect. The lithic industry, as well as the rest of the tools for daily subsistence practices, has not seemed to have undergone substantial changes,⁷¹ in other words, the habits of food consumption and processing maintained continuity apart from this contact. Nevertheless, the gradual incorporation of allochthonous tableware, mainly Punic-Ebusitan and from other Mediterranean origins,⁷² in homes and other spaces leads us to think about changes in consumption patterns and eating habits – not so much in the “what” but in the “how”.

This also coincided with the appearance of ceramic forms that imitated Punic pottery but were hand-made, following the Balearic technological tradition. The potter's wheel, although known directly and indirectly by the island populations, was not incorporated into the pottery production chain until the arrival of Rome on the islands. Although this absence can be interpreted as a sign of resistance to foreign and alien technical procedures, this does not seem to be the case with the products that are imitated. The forms

67 Lull *et al.* 2001, pp. 31-55; Anglada *et al.* 2012, pp. 41-42.

68 Carbonell 2012, pp. 102-103.

69 Palomar 2005, pp. 115-116.

70 See note 13.

71 Anglada *et al.* 2017.

72 De Nicolás – Conde 1993; Guerrero 1999; Castrillo 2005.

reproduced are generally tableware, such as typical Punic-Ebusitan jugs, small jugs with raised handles, bowls, as well as various *askoi* and some lamps (FIG. 8). Again, these are elements of commensality, part of a phenomenon of hybridisation and re-signification by the communities that make and use them, again in line with other parts of the contemporary Mediterranean.⁷³ This, moreover, coincides with the variations reported by faunal studies,⁷⁴ which indicate the arrival of new species on the islands such as cockerels, mice, and tortoises, albeit very occasionally; the standardisation of fish consumption, hitherto absent; and changes in the size of the livestock in line with other Punic contact scenarios. All this evidence, in short, shows a complex but very illustrative picture in addition to what has been observed in the dwellings. These are mixed practices that adapt and transform habits and technologies expressed in the material culture, both architecturally, such as the rigging of pillars or the articulation of the habitat around a central space; and in everyday practice, through the conversion of Punic-Ebusitan amphora handles into loom weights, ceramic imitations, and changes in the consumption ware, as well as the appearance of elements of domestic religiosity such as altars.⁷⁵

It is a matter of the adoption and adaptation of features and elements from Punic roots, both for the construction of the dwellings and the structuring of some of their daily practices. It is not a simple assimilation resulting from colonial contact, but a deliberate incorporation by these communities for their own benefit, in which they are an active and determining part. However, we must bear in mind that the framework of these choices, the capacity for action and decision-making, was arbitrated by Punic Ibiza and its relations with the Carthaginian capital, which restricted and controlled the possibilities of Mediterranean trade in which the Gymnesian islands were inserted. It is therefore understood as a dialectical framework that exceeds the rigid margins of the terms of the colonial debate, but also attempts to specify the possibilities and dynamics of these contacts in the face of the imprecision shown by post-colonial theories. The protohistory of Majorca and Minorca is determined by their effective inclusion in the political and economic domain of the neighbouring city-state of *Ybshm*, thus integrating the Punic hegemonic territory of the western Mediterranean. This process will accelerate the socio-economic fracture of the island communities, which had begun some time before and was becoming more and more pronounced, where the prominent groups (or individuals) of the island communities will make use of the economic and ideological instruments provided by the Punic world to perpetuate the new socio-economic structure. However, as part of their own strategy



FIG. 8. Ceramic assemblage recovered from the excavations at the church of Santa Eulàlia (Alaior, Menorca) showing two Punic-Ebusitan jars and an imitation handmade by the local communities (centre) (photograph provided by E. Sintes Olives).

73 Calvo *et al.* 2014.

74 Ramis 2017.

75 De Nicolás – Gornés – Gual 2017, pp. 167-168; Torres – de Nicolás 2020, pp. 463-464. The question of the symbolism contained in the Minorcan circles is currently being debated among more indigenous perspectives and outside the Punic influence: Ferrer *et al.* 2020; cfr. Gornés 2022.

of legitimisation and identity determination, they will maintain earlier technologies and architectural forms, such as monumental techniques and circular forms, as well as other pottery and consumer technologies. It is not a matter of resistance, then, but of self-affirmation during a process of crisis and transformation.⁷⁶ This will lessen the social impact of the forced incorporation of the islands into the Punic spectrum, which undoubtedly had far-reaching consequences. We only need to recall the continuous depletion of the island population due to the recruitment of slingers by the ranks of Carthage in its Mediterranean conflicts, the trade restrictions imposed, and even the consequences that the war could have had on them.⁷⁷

6. CONCLUSIONS

Protohistoric Balearic everyday life manifests itself as a dialectical scenario, breaking the static margins of the colonial debate and offering a historical explanation where the social and economic totality is governed by contradictions and oppositions between different factors expressed in recognisable materiality. Dwellings are an equally socio-economic product, the container and content of a succession of daily acts whose purpose is to maintain a given reality that they produce and reproduce, being the only ones with the power to subvert, adapt, and reform it to create a new succession. It is under this premise that we understand the Balearic communities, the periphery of a Punic orbit articulated from Ibiza, which in turn was harmonious with Carthage and the rest of the Mediterranean cities. The Balearic peoples, with their own agency, played an active role in the transformation of their own reality, composing a new day-to-day that reinforced their community ties while, at the same time, concealing the emergence and consolidation of inequalities. The colonial framework, apparently filtered by the Balearic groups, was a precipitant of these fractures, enhancing the process to create interlocutors that would expand their market and allow them to obtain what they sought: strategic positions and strength for their armies. Thus, the protohistoric Mediterranean was a frontier and a gateway for the Balearic archipelago, a constant and fluid dichotomy between stability and metamorphosis, which undoubtedly shaped the character of these groups. It was in these individual and collective daily lives, in the totality that they make up, that the engine force of their (proto)history lies.

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⁷⁶ In this case, I share the interesting ideas proposed by Smith 2020, pp. 169-170.

⁷⁷ Lull *et al.* 2001, pp. 75-76; Ramon 2017, p. 82; Prados – Jiménez – Torres 2021, pp. 40-41.

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