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118.0 DID THE PHOENICIANS CROSS THE ATLANTIC? A STUDY OF TRANSOCEANIC DIFFUSION.

1968-69. By Ross T. Christensen. At the Nineteenth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures, held at Brigham Young University on October 18, 1969, 80 color transparencies illustrating archaeological research carried out by Dr. Christensen earlier in the year were shown as the featured evening presentation under the title, "Tracing the Phoenicians Across the Mediterranean" (see Newsletter, 115.2, 116.1). The following is based on his outline for the extemporaneous preface to this presentation.

MEMBERS OF THE SEHA are no doubt familiar with recent attempts to establish the reality of transatlantic contacts between the Old World and the New prior to that of Columbus in 1492 (see Newsletter, 77.5, 91.0, 97.2, 103.6, 111.0, 115.0, 115.1, 116.4; Boland, 1963). The past two years have seen some remarkable developments bearing on this question. In this article I should like first to summarize four of these developments of 1968 and 1969, then to tell of my own recent field research on the Phoenician civilization in the Mediterranean area and its relationship to the problem of such transatlantic contacts. These observations, as delivered at the Symposium, may be considered a preface to the projection onto the screen of the color transparencies selected from the photographic record of this field research.

SYMPOSIUM ON TRANSOCEANIC CONTACTS

On May 9, 10, and 11, 1968, the Society for American Archaeology held its thirty-third annual meeting at Santa Fe, New Mexico (Newsletter, 111.01). Four of the 30 sessions of this three-day meeting, by previous arrangement and invitation, were organized as a "Symposium on Problems of Pre-Columbian New World Contacts." Most of the 28 papers read at the symposium, as listed on the printed program, bore directly on the question of contact between the Old World and the New, across either the

Atlantic Ocean or the Pacific. Such subjects as the following were discussed: boats and rafts; transoceanic travels of maize (corn), beans, squash, coconuts, sweet potatoes, cotton, and gourds, and of chickens, pottery, and funerary customs; Vinland; Quetzalcoatl; and the controversy between Diffusionism and Independent Inventionism. It is my understanding that the collected papers of the entire symposium will be included in a volume to be published in 1970 by the University of Texas.

Possibly the most significant of all the 28 papers was that of Dr. John L. Sorenson, a student and faculty member in the old BYU Department of Archaeology and presently an employee of the General Research Corporation of Santa Barbara, California. This paper should have a profound effect on Americanist scholarship in the years to come.

In the meantime Dr. Sorenson has summarized the full, technical evidence and interpreted some of the salient points for LDS readers in the pages of *Dialogue* (Sorenson, 1969; this article is reviewed in the Newsletter, 116.4). In this popularized version of his paper he has brought together 140 specific trait correspondences and listed them under 21 major categories. Many of these, he demonstrates, are not merely unimportant details in the ancient Near East and Mesoamerica "embroidery" as one expert put it but are actually core elements of the civilizations involved. "... It is difficult," he adds (p. 93), "to see

how the fundamental conclusion can be challenged that to a significant degree Mesoamerican civilization had roots in the Near East."

However, despite the title of Dr. Sorenson's *Dialogue* article, "Ancient America and the Book of Mormon Revisited," he does not really come to grips with the problem of testing the historical claims of the Nephite record. Perhaps every one of his clear-cut parallels could quite as easily be explained as the result of contact from *some other* Near Eastern people or peoples than those told about it in the Book for example the Phoenicians (cf. Newsletter, 111.0). On p. 85 Dr. Sorenson notes that "the greatest concentration of Near Eastern data refers to Palestine and Syria, between around 1500 and 300 BC," but otherwise makes little attempt to localize his correspondences in space and time. To which specific places in the Near East and Mesoamerica does a particular trait belong? To what specific period does it date? From which people does it derive? Actually, some of his correspondences seem to date to the last few centuries before the coming of the Spaniards, hence seem to have little bearing on Book of Mormon claims.

But, although the former BYU archaeologist may not have gone far enough in his study, it is nevertheless a very valuable one. He has marshalled strong evidence that Near Eastern Mesoamerican contacts actually did take place in pre-Columbian times. Its full publication as well as that of the accompanying papers of the SAA symposium will have a permanent effect on Mesoamerican archaeology and all that is involved in "revisiting" the Book of Mormon.

"MEGALITHIC" EVIDENCE FROM NEW ENGLAND

Early in 1966 the *Newsletter and Proceedings* brought to the attention of SEHA members the existence of some 75 constructions of rough-hewn stonework located in New England and New York State, and the then-recent incorporation of the New England Antiquities Research Association formed for the purpose of their investigation (Newsletter, 97.20).

A prominent architectural feature of these buildings is the corbelled vault or "beehive" roof. Since the chambers so vaulted are partially covered with earth these artificial structures are sometimes called "caves." Another noteworthy feature in their construction is the occasional use of stones of tremendous size.

Mystery Hill is the name of the principal site of the New England complex. It is located on a thickly-wooded hillside near North Salem in southern New Hampshire. While the corbelled vault is not a prominent feature at Mystery Hill itself, it is the only

site where more than three or four of these rough stone chambers have been found together. Indeed, its location, size, and complexity, together with certain ceremonial characteristics, suggest the thought that it may have been some sort of capital or religious center in relation to the rest of the sites.

A number of theories have been proposed to explain the origin of this strange complex of "maverick" archaeology. The constructions were plainly not built by New England Indians or their ancestors of any known variety. They clearly do not fit into the pattern of prehistoric cultural development usually assigned to the Eastern Woodlands area by professional archaeologists. The latter as a rule consider the "caves" to be stables or root cellars of early New England farmers of British extraction hence not to belong to the prehistoric era at all. And indeed they probably were used as such at a later time, for modern excavations of some of the sites have produced an abundance of artifacts of Colonial manufacture. But many features of the architecture are as un-English as they can be, as any examination of the field evidence shows.

William B. Goodwin was persuaded that the constructions at Mystery Hill were built by a band of Irish monks fleeing from the Vikings (Goodwin, 1946).

Charles M. Boland believes that Irish monks were later occupants of the site but that it was the Phoenicians who built it in the first place (Boland, 1963, pp. 23-53).

Frank Glynn, a prominent amateur archaeologist of Clinton, Connecticut, developed a theory that the New England complex is related to the Bronze Age "Megalithic" culture of Malta and western Mediterranean lands of c.1500 BC, and lists more than 12 architectural resemblances.

For some years the leaders of the New England Antiquities Research Association had favored the views of Mr. Glynn, but their painstaking excavations had failed to produce any convincing artifactual evidence. Then last May, radiocarbon dating made an exciting contribution. Bits of charcoal mingled with simple stone tools were found in a carefully controlled excavation, at an occupation level three to eight inches above bedrock. The charcoal yielded the date 2995 ± 180 years BP, that is, 1045 BC! (Anonymous, 1969; Whittall, 1969.)

It is not safe of course to reach any final conclusion on the basis of a single radiocarbon date, but as far as the evidence goes it supports the Glynn hypothesis, since it seems to date the occupation of the site to a time well within the Bronze Age of western Europe, when megalithic tombs similar to the New England structures were being built.

Adding to the excitement of the C-14 date, just last September James P. Whittall, Jr., staff archaeologist of the NEARA, who had obtained the radiocarbon sample in May, traveled to Portugal to examine at close range the prehistoric megalithic constructions of that country. In western Iberia the Atlantic Bronze Age lasted to as late as 700 BC (Savory, 1968, pp. 221-227). Reports of his findings are momentarily expected.

It looks as if the strange, rough-hewn structures of Mystery Hill and elsewhere in New England and New York State are about to be identified in terms of time period and point of origin. And the evidence so far argues in favor of a transatlantic crossing. But apparently those who came were not Indian hunters, Yankee farmers, Irish monks, nor Phoenician mariners; they were a nameless people of the late Bronze Age of the western Mediterranean area, perhaps from Portugal.

PHOENICIAN EVIDENCE FROM BRAZIL

In May, 1968, Dr. Cyrus H. Gordon, chairman of the Department of Mediterranean Studies at Brandeis University, announced the results of his restudy of an apparent Phoenician text found in Brazil long ago but since its discovery generally regarded by scholars as an error-filled forgery. Almost simultaneously both *Time* and *Newsweek* carried the story (Anonymous, 1968a and 1968b). In Dr. Gordon's opinion the rejected text is not only genuine but is also clear evidence of an actual maritime contact from the ancient Near East which took place in about the sixth century BC. (Cf. Newsletter, 111.01.)

The stone bearing the Phoenician message was found in 1872 near Paraiba, Brazil. The inscription was first published, with a translation, by Dr. Ladislau Netto, director of the National Museum at Rio de Janeiro, in 1874. But for a number of reasons scholars never accepted it as genuine. For one thing, versions of the text were published which differed substantially from one another in paleographic details. For another, the text contained a number of unaccustomed peculiarities of grammar and diction that made it appear like the work of a clumsy forger. Still another reason was that Dr. Netto was never able to locate the stone itself but possessed only a copy of the inscription.

The eminent Americanist, Zelia Nuttall, published a major work on New World origins at the turn of the century (Nuttall, 1901), while Constance Irwin, although not a professional Americanist, has published another important volume on this subject within the past decade (Irwin, 1963). Both these authors advocated a Phoenician explanation for the Near Eastern Mesoamerican parallels they noted. Yet

so thoroughly had the Paraiba text been discredited that neither of them even mentioned it in support of her views.

Then in 1966 Dr. Jules Piccus, professor of Romance Languages at the University of Massachusetts, attended a rummage sale in Providence, Rhode Island. For a few cents he bought an old scrap book. In it was a letter signed by Dr. Netto and postmarked at Rio de Janeiro, 1874, to which was appended a copy of the Paraiba inscription.

Dr. Piccus sent a Xerox copy of the letter to his old friend Dr. Gordon. The transcription was clear and appeared to contain none of the garbling of the previous copies. But it still contained the peculiarities of grammar and diction that had helped make scholars suspicious in the first place. This time, however, the peculiarities took on a new light.

"It soon became evident to me," writes Dr. Gordon, "that the text was full of data that were unknown to scholars in the 1870's but which have come to light since then in Northwest Semitic inscriptions. This holds not only for vocabulary and grammatical forms, but for the very literary structure of the inscription as a whole" (Gordon, 1969a, p. 66).

In other words whoever "forged" the original document in 1874 if indeed it was a forgery had advance knowledge of what was *going to be* discovered in subsequent years in the field of Semitic paleography. In Dr. Gordon's opinion, "...it is obvious that the text is genuine.... To deny the authenticity of the Parahyba text is to attribute prophetic inspiration to the forger" (Gordon, 1968a, pp. 75, 76).

The Paraiba inscription is called a "non-funerary commemorative text." First, it identifies the authors as Canaanites (i.e. Phoenicians; see Newsletter, 93.0) from the city of Sidon; then narrates their departure from Ezion-Geber near Elath, at the head of the Red Sea, their circumnavigation of Africa, the separation of their ship from its companions, and their landing on the Brazilian coast; and finally invokes the blessing of their gods. The reigning monarch at their departure was Hiram III, and the date of their landing was 531 BC. (Gordon, 1969a, pp. 66-67.)

Dr. Gordon's preliminary report on his philological discovery was published in the Rome journal, *Orientalia* (Gordon, 1968a). It was not long before the opposition made itself known. Dr. Frank M. Cross, Jr., answered with a strong criticism in the same journal later in the same year (Cross, 1968). Dr. Gordon's reply and his still further contribution were grouped by the editors in the same issue with Dr. Cross' rebuttal (Gordon, 1968b, 1968c).

This past summer Dr. Gordon summarized the Paraíba evidence as part of a more general statement on transoceanic crossings prepared especially for Latter-day Saint readers (Gordon, 1969a; see especially pp. 65-68). In a brief review of his article it is declared that it "should have a profound influence for good on Americanist scholarship . . . The world of Americanist studies will never again be the same" (Newsletter, 116.40).

Last April, Dr. Gordon was in the western Mediterranean area making additional visits to Phoenician sites. Even while the Nineteenth Annual Symposium was in session, he was engaged in a still further study tour abroad. In September he was in Brazil tracing down some of the Paraíba evidence, and at the time of the Symposium he was once again in the Mediterranean area.

Dr. Gordon has become a sort of clearing house of evidence coming in from unexpected sources bearing on theories of ancient transatlantic crossings from the Mediterranean world to Mesoamerica. He appears to be in contact with scholars all over the world who have contributions to make out of their own varied backgrounds.

One example is a startling comparison made by Svein-Magnus Grodys of Oslo, Norway, between the characters of the Phaistos Disc of seventeenth-century-BC Crete and those of the much more recent Aztec hieroglyphic books (Gordon, 1969b, p. 165).

Another example is the ethnographic and related research of Joseph B. Mahan, Jr., of the Columbus (Georgia) Museum of Arts and Crafts. His investigations of the Yuchi Indians of Georgia suggested an eastern Mediterranean origin for this tribe. Following Dr. Gordon's restudy of the Paraíba text from Brazil (see above), Mr. Mahan brought to the Brandeis scholar's attention his own ethnographic research, together with the newly-discovered Metcalf Stone of Georgia. The latter contains an inscription which Dr. Gordon takes to have Aegean affinities and believes to indicate an eastern Mediterranean contact of perhaps the late Bronze Age. (Gordon, 1969b; Gordon's paper reviewed below, 118.2.)

THE VOYAGE OF THE RA'

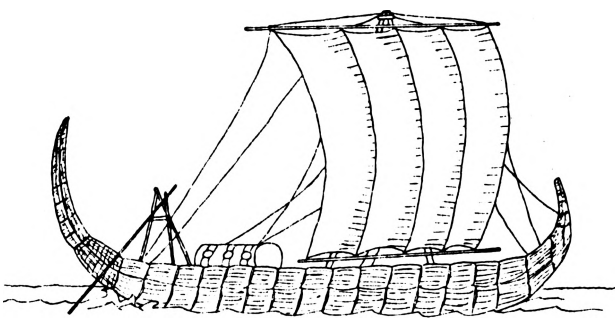
On May 25, 1969, the intrepid Norwegian mariner, Thor Heyerdahl, set sail from the port of Safi on the Atlantic coast of Morocco in a hugh papyrus basket fashioned after the reed boats of ancient Egypt. The destination was Yucatan, and the intention was to show the possibility of ancient civilized peoples of the Mediterranean area crossing the Atlantic to give rise to

the early high civilizations of Mesoamerica.

Most readers will remember Mr. Heyerdahl's famed voyage of the Kon Tiki in 1947, in which he demonstrated the feasibility of direct contact between Peru and Polynesia, using a raft of balsa logs such as plied the western coast of South America prior to the coming of the Spaniards (cf. Newsletter, 12.1; Christensen, 1963, pp. 214-216).

With the 1969 voyage, however, the locale of the experiment shifted from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic, while the purpose changed from shedding light upon the possible origin of Polynesian culture out of the New World to that of shedding light upon the possible origin of New World civilization out of the Mediterranean area. But both experiments followed the same procedure: a transoceanic crossing in a craft similar to those of the ancient people involved. And from both experiments the same kind of result could be expected: a demonstration that the proposed pre-Columbian contact *could* have taken place, not that it necessarily *did*.

The 1969 vessel was named the Ra' in honor of the ancient Egyptian sun god, and almost in the shadow of the pyramids it was constructed of tons of papyrus reeds by master builders of reed boats imported from the Republic of Chad, where such boats are still in use. After setting sail from the coast of Morocco it was propelled both by the wind and by the equatorial current of the Atlantic (the "Columbus Route" mentioned in Newsletter, 111.01). The crew which accompanied Captain Heyerdahl consisted of six men from six nations, while the passengers were a monkey and a duck.



The ship Ra'. After Doug Anderson in Lear 1969a, p. 49. Redrawn by Susan P. Stiles.

Contrary to the predictions of some critics, the papyrus craft did not simply disintegrate or become water-soaked and sink to the bottom, but instead after a month at sea, had swelled into a nearly watertight mass that held well together. There was one technical error, however: whereas the ancient Egyptian paintings of such reed vessels consistently showed the tip of the

raised stern tied to the deck by a tight rope, the archaeologists and boatbuilders alike regarded this as a mere esthetic detail, without any useful function, and omitted it. Had they taken their ancient sources more seriously the tail would have been held high above the water without the waves breaking over it.

As it was, rough seas severely damaged the boat, which listed to the starboard, while the stern drooped badly and eventually became waterlogged. On July 19 Captain Heyerdahl, for the safety of the crew, ordered abandonment of the Ra', and aboard the yacht Shenandoah they headed on to Barbados, an island off the Venezuela coast.

The Ra' by this time, although short of Yucatan, had covered some 3,000 miles and had far exceeded the distance between the nearest points of Africa and South America. "The main purpose of the expedition was scientific," Heyerdahl is quoted as saying. "... It was not an attempt to prove personal heroism or bravery. We have demonstrated what we set out to demonstrate: ... it was indeed possible for the ancient Egyptians to sail to the New World. It was lack of seamanship rather than the craft's fault for the failure, ... a contemporary crew trying to work with a 5,000-year-old raft." (Quotations are from a UPI news release. The present account is based primarily on Lear, 1969a and 1969b.)

Although Heyerdahl thought in terms of *Egyptian* contact with the New World, actually the Phoenicians would have been a better choice. More skillful seamen than the Egyptians, the Phoenicians were nevertheless in close association with the latter during much of their history. In any case, as Dr. Cyrus H. Gordon put it during a telephone conversation I had with him on June 12, whether the transoceanic contact was made by Egyptians or Phoenicians, Thor Heyerdahl's voyage proved one thing: if he could cross the Atlantic "in a laundry basket," *anybody* could cross it!

MEDITERRANEAN RESEARCH PROJECT

Against this background of accumulating evidence in favor of transoceanic contacts as an explanation for the origin of advanced civilization in pre-Columbian America, I undertook a year-long research project of my own — on the Phoenicians, who were the finest mariners of ancient times, hence the most likely people to have made such contacts.

My interest having been captivated by the Phoenician civilization when I was a child, it was only natural that my thoughts should turn to it once again as the prospect of a sabbatical leave of absence from campus duties presented itself. At the Society's Seventeenth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of

the Scriptures, held in 1967, I delivered a paper entitled, "The Phoenician Theory of New World Origins Re-examined" (Newsletter, 111.00). When it came time to apply for the sabbatical leave that was due me for the academic year 1968-69, I submitted a proposal to undertake a year-long research project on the Phoenician civilization. The application was granted, and the project got underway on September 1, 1968.

The first major activity of this sabbatical project was the reading on October 12 of a second paper this time before the Eighteenth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures entitled "The Phoenician Theory of New World Origins in 1968". This second contribution was an attempt to bring the subject of the 1967 paper up to date after another year of investigation. (Newsletter, 111.01.)

These two papers, of 1967 and 1968, came to a focus on the question of possible Phoenician contacts with the Atlantic coasts of North and South America, and also took into account possible Phoenician influence in the Nephite-Mulekite civilization of the Book of Mormon which apparently had nothing to do with the Atlantic seaboard. The hypothesis was put forth that the Mulekite colony, although its titular leader was Mulek, a son of the Judaeen king Zedekiah (Helaman 6:10; 8:21), was largely of Phoenician stock. Attention was called to the "river Sidon" (Alma 2:15 etc.) the principal watercourse of the Book of Mormon, which bore the same name as the principal city of ancient Phoenicia: Sidon.

With the interest engendered by these papers and even more by the work of Dr. Gordon (see above), questions about ancient Phoenician contacts with the Americas were being asked and would continue to be, I knew, with increasing frequency. The part of wisdom, therefore, was to prepare in advance to answer them intelligently.

The main purpose of the 1968-69 sabbatical project, however, was not to investigate any theory of New World origins. It was rather to study the Phoenician civilization itself as it existed in the Old World. The special problem of proposed transatlantic contact with the New World could come later; for the present it would be sufficient and indeed preferable to concentrate solely on the Mediterranean homeland of the Phoenicians.

The plan developed, then, to study the Phoenician civilization, first in libraries and museums in the United States and afterwards in its Mediterranean setting. In the latter area I would begin in Lebanon and Israel in the east where the Phoenicians themselves began and work my way westward from there to Cyprus, Malta, Tunisia,

Sardinia, and Spain in turn, as the Phoenicians worked their way westward, finally ending up with the colonies they planted beyond the Strait of Gibraltar on the Atlantic coast.

The idea was not to excavate—once again, this could come later—but to try to grasp an impression of the whole grand sweep of Phoenician exploration and colonization by visiting as many ruins, studying at as many museums and libraries, and conferring with as many scholars as possible, first in America, then in the Mediterranean area.

As the plan materialized, the principal field trips came into being as follows: California, October 24 to November 4; the eastern United States, November 27 to December 21; and Europe and lands of the Mediterranean, January 31 to June 13. The itinerary of the last-mentioned and major journey of the year included in turn France, Greece, Egypt, Lebanon, Cyprus, Turkey, Israel, mainland Italy, Malta, Sicily, Sardinia, Tunisia, Spain, and Great Britain (cf. Newsletter, 115.2).

Careful daily records kept during these absences from the BYU campus show totals of 77 archaeological sites visited during the year, 66 museums, 23 libraries, and 98 scholars. Six hundred and one 35 mm. photographs, mostly in the form of color transparencies, were taken during these travels, which, along with 146 commercial slides purchased along the way, make a total of 747. The 80 slides shown at the Symposium were selected from these and arranged to illustrate the advance of Phoenician civilization across the Mediterranean from east to west.

During these travels 74 "field notes" were dictated onto 12 tapes with the aid of a portable recorder. From these tapes 355 typewritten pages of notes have been transcribed, which constitute an abundant source from which to draw to complete my writing plans.

PERHAPS A FEW INFORMAL observations about the status of Phoenician research now underway in various Mediterranean countries are in order. In evaluating them please keep in mind that in no case was it possible for me to spend more than a few days in any one country. These remarks will therefore have only a tentative validity.

The Lebanese, who are probably the purest descendants of the ancient Phoenicians, are now in the process of awakening to the greatness of their past. Although Arabic in speech because of the Moslem conquest of the seventh century AD, they are nevertheless becoming aware that they *are Phoenicians*. Great excavations have been carried out at Byblos and Tyre, those at the former site throwing light on Phoenicia in the Bronze Age prior to c.1200 BC and

those at the latter, on Phoenicia in Hellenistic and Roman times following c.300 BC. The great unknown in Lebanese archaeology is the in-between Iron Age, the period from c.1200 to c.300 BC. The excavation of Sarepta that was to have been undertaken last summer by Dr. James B. Pritchard of the University of Pennsylvania will doubtless do much to close this information gap.

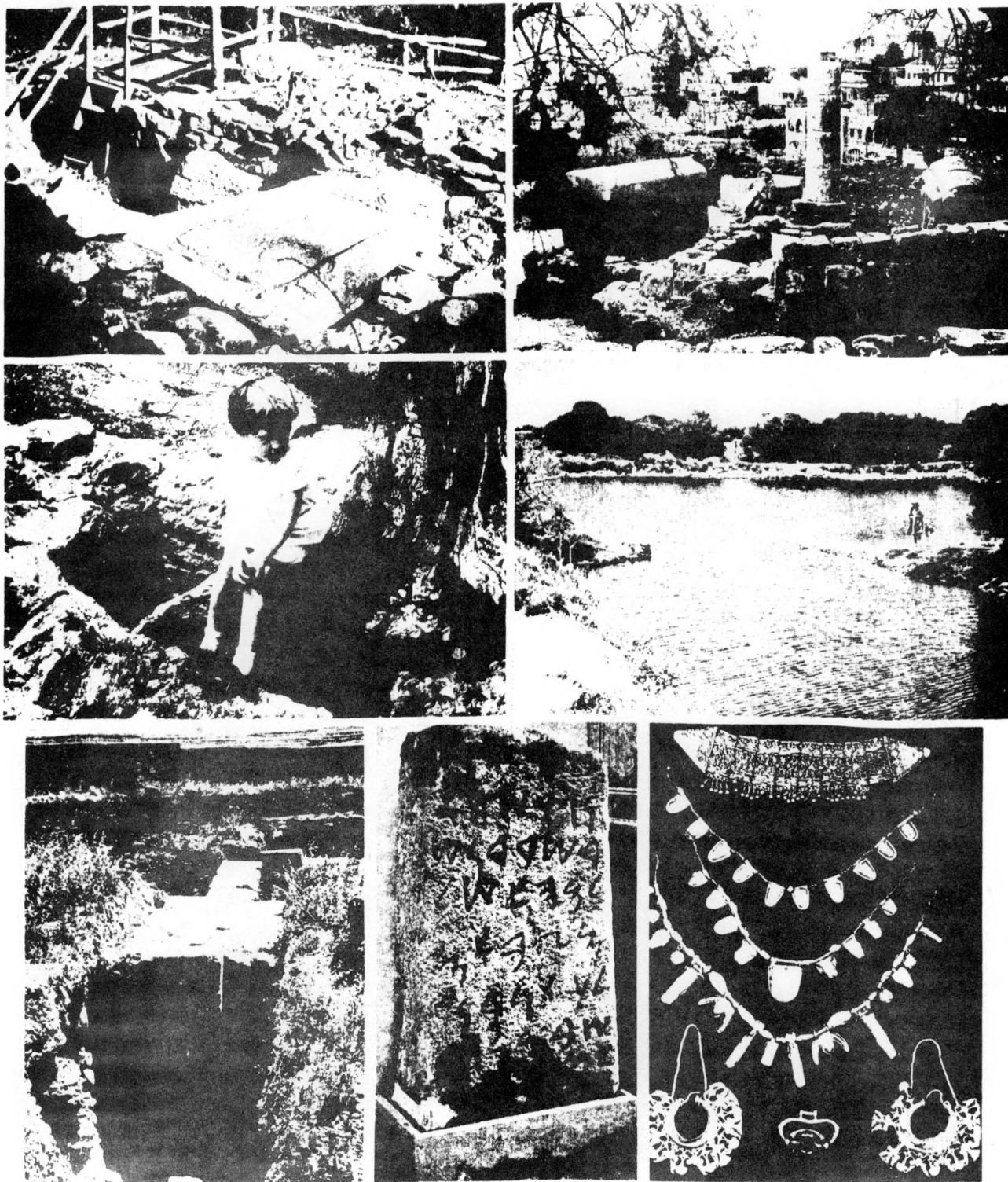
Illustrative of the newly-awakened Phoenician awareness among the Lebanese was an invitational scholarly conference held in 1967 on the campus of the American University of Beirut. Entitled "The Role of the Phoenicians in the Interaction of Mediterranean Civilizations," the meeting commemorated the one-hundredth anniversary of the founding of the AUB. The volume containing papers delivered at the symposium came off the press only last spring (Ward, 1968).

Israel is an archaeologically-active nation. Many sites have been excavated which represent the Canaanite Bronze Age: Megiddo, Beth Shan, Lachish, Jericho, Ashdod (Newsletter, 86.0), and Hazor, for example. But only a few along the north coast, such as Dor and Atlit, have been looked into that could be said to represent the Phoenician maritime age of the first half of the first millennium BC. Achziv and Akko (Acre) to the north of Mount Carmel are excellent possibilities. Limited excavations at Achziv have lately been undertaken by M. W. Prausnitz of the Israel Museum.

Cyprus held what may have been the first overseas colonies of the Phoenician civilization. One such was the kingdom of Kithion situated on the southeast coast facing Sidon and Tyre. Important excavations of a large palace or temple at Larnaca are now in progress under the direction of Dr. Vassos Karageorghis of the Nicosia Museum. This place seems to have been the capital of ancient Kithion.

Professor Sabatino Moscati is the director of the Near Eastern Institute of the University of Rome. A major current field program of the Institute consists of a long-range investigation of the Phoenician civilization in the central Mediterranean area. Excavations are now going on at such sites as Monte Sirai, Sulchis, and Antas in Sardinia; Motya in Sicily; those of Cap Bon in Tunisia; those on the island of Pantelleria; and Tas Silg on the island of Malta. These are adding important new dimensions to our understanding of the Semitic cultural background in lands where archaeologists have heretofore given most of their attention to the classical civilizations.

The last five years have witnessed a heightened interest in Phoenician archaeology in Spain. Hermanfrid Schubart of the German Archaeological



UPPER LEFT: A supposed sacrificial altar at Mystery Hill, New Hampshire. Such features represent a culture that may be related to the "Megalithic" culture of the western Mediterranean area, c.1500 BC. UPPER RIGHT: At the area of the royal tombs, ancient Byblos. Four Phoenician sarcophagi (stone coffins) and a later Roman column may be seen. MIDDLE LEFT: A sepulcher of the Punic necropolis at Puig des Molins on the island of Ibiza, east of Spain. Note the ancient olive tree growing out of the entrance. MIDDLE RIGHT: *Cothon* (artificial interior harbor) at the ruins of the Phoenician island-fortress of Motya, off the west coast of Sicily. LOWER LEFT: A length of Phoenician wall unearthed during Italian excavations at Tas Silg on the island of Malta. LOWER CENTER: The Nora Stone, a Phoenician inscription dating to c.850 BC found on the island of Sardinia. The top line reads (r. to l.) t-r-sh-sh, "Tarshish" (cf. Jonah 1:3). LOWER RIGHT: Phoenician gold jewelry found at Aliseda, Spain. Photograph by National Archaeological Museum, Madrid.

Institute in Madrid has carried out significant excavations at Toscanos on the south coast near Torre del Mar. Juan Pablo Garrido Roiz of the National Archaeological Museum, Madrid, is actively investigating the Huelva district, a productive mining area of Phoenician as well as modern times. Immanuel Ben-Dor of Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, has recently excavated on the Rio Tinto. J. M. Luzon of the University of Seville and Antonio Garcia y Bellido of Madrid are also active in Phoenician research. Professor Juan Maluquer of the University of Barcelona lately organized a conference on the ancient Kingdom of Tartessos which drew together European experts from as far away as Sweden to discuss a pre-Roman indigenous Spanish civilization that had close commercial ties with the Phoenicians. The full publication of this symposium is momentarily expected.

Possibly the most exciting of all the current Phoenician studies in Spain are the American excavations of last summer at Cadiz, in an attempt to locate the temple of the god Melqart (Hercules). According to legendary sources Cádiz was founded by the Phoenicians in the twelfth century BC, three centuries before Carthage. In any case this city on the Atlantic coast in southwest Spain would very likely have been the last port of call for any planned Phoenician crossing of the Atlantic.

Italy and Spain thus appear to be the most active of the Mediterranean countries investigating Phoenician antiquity. But there is a significant difference between the two: whereas in Italy the whole effort seems to be the undertaking of a single research organization, namely the Near Eastern Institute of the University of Rome, in Spain the interest seems to be diffused throughout a variety of scholarly groups that have no direct connection with each other. The Spanish effort may therefore soon develop into the most productive research movement of any in the world concerned with the ancient Phoenicians.

SUMMARY

To summarize what has happened in recent years, especially in 1968 and 1969, we may say that scholars—especially those of Mediterranean countries—have awakened to an intense interest in the Phoenician civilization in its Old World setting on the one hand, while on the other hand there has developed—largely among American scholars—a heightened curiosity about evidence favoring ancient transatlantic crossings, particularly Phoenician ones. It may not be long until the whole subject of the origins of advanced civilization in ancient America by means of transoceanic diffusion from centers of Old World

civilization can receive a fair and open-minded hearing on the part of the Americanist profession.

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118.1 HISTORY OF SHIPPING IN THE MEDITERRANEAN. By John C. Dey, a graduate archaeology student at BYU. A review of *Peoples, Seas, and Ships*, by Zvi Herman (G. P. Putnam's Sons: New York City, 1967; 222 pp.; \$7.95; translated from the French by Len Ortzen).

This is an unusual book. The author is neither an historian, an archaeologist, nor a writer of popular subjects. He is the managing director of the Israeli shipping line, Zim, and a governor of the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra. These are unusual qualifications for writing on ancient Mediterranean shipping. Unfortunately, there is little biographical information available about him, except that he has always had a youthful love of the sea.

His purpose in writing this book is to introduce the reader to the ancient lore and history of the sea and to bring out its importance in the rise and fall of

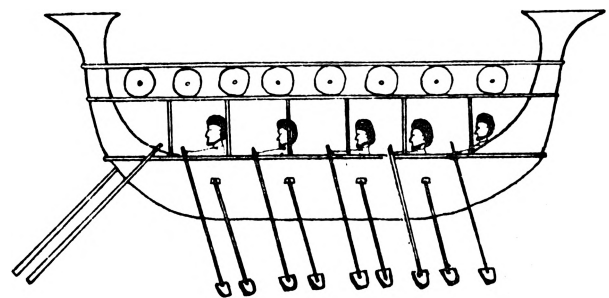
peoples and kingdoms. He has restricted himself in area to the Mediterranean and in time to the period from c.2500 to c.330 BC, when Alexander conquered Tyre. He does not give a horizontal picture of developments, because of the vastness of the subject. Instead he takes a vertical approach, using what he feels are significant maritime events in the growth of ancient civilization. His information is based on the discoveries of archaeology, the implications of mythology, and the evidence of history. And of course the Phoenicians come in for a good share of the reader's attention.

In the course of preparing this review I have made an extensive study of Egyptian shipping during the same period as that covered by Mr. Herman's book. In fact this book was a source for my own research. I have found, like the author, that there is not very much original information available on this subject. This is unfortunate. So much of early Near Eastern activity depended on maritime contacts, yet we know so little about it.

However, despite this lack, scholars have been interested in the subject for many years, and the book contains an excellent bibliography of over 100 references — mostly interpretative studies — spanning the time from G. Smith's *The Cassiterides*, published in 1863, to that of the most recent reference, A. De. Selincourt's *The World of Herodotus*, published in 1962. Not a decade has passed in these 100 years in which something has not been written about ancient maritime shipping.

The text is well-written. It is not directed toward the expert, neither is it so popular that the expert cannot benefit from it. There are no footnotes, a feature which may not be to the liking of some. Yet, remembering Mr. Herman's background and his purpose in writing the book, the reader will see that footnotes would have given an air of authority and finality that the author did not desire.

Mr. Herman has one special feature in his book that may not have been matched by any author before him: full color photographs of model ships, fashioned after ancient bas-reliefs and temple paintings.



A Phoenician merchant vessel without masts. Redrawn by Susan P. Stiles from Herman, *Peoples, Seas, and Ships*.

Three-dimensional plans were prepared by M. Pliner and M. Milch and the models made by M. I. Krupnik of the Haifa Maritime Museum. The models were not made to any single scale, however, for very few instances are known of the actual dimensions of ancient ships. But these models appear to be accurate transformations from the two dimensions of the ancient depictions to three dimensions. The color plates (there are 10 of them) bring out clearly the excellent detail of the models. In addition, there are 114 black-and-white line drawings and photographs of ships as they appear on ancient reliefs, paintings, and coins.

Good books are miniature museums, bringing a variety of historical events, life's episodes, and insights to the senses of the reader. And this is a good book. I recommend it to all who are interested in archaeology and ancient history, be they novices or experts.

118.2 POSSIBLE CRETAN INSCRIPTION FOUND IN GEORGIA. By Paul R. Cheesman, SEHA general officer. A review of "The Metcalf Stone," by Cyrus H. Gordon, in *Manuscripts*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (Summer, 1969), pp. 158-168.

This ten-page illustrated article by Dr. Gordon of Brandeis University tells of a recent discovery of apparent writing on stone in Georgia. In the autumn of 1966 a civilian employee at Fort Benning, Georgia, Manfred Metcalf, accidentally discovered a stone which had inscriptions on it. He cleaned it and turned it over to the Columbus Museum of Arts and Crafts. One of the directors, Joseph B. Mahan, Jr., took an interest in the stone.

Mr. Mahan had previously studied the Yuchi Indian tribe that was driven out of Georgia and since 1836 has lived in Oklahoma. Their legends suggested a transoceanic origin from the Mediterranean region about the middle of the second millennium BC. Certain Yuchi festivals, for example, are similar to ancient feasts reported in that Old World area. He suspected that the Metcalf Stone related to an early part of Yuchi history and contacted Dr. Gordon.

Dr. Gordon suggests in his article a correlation of the characters on the Metcalf Stone with the Minoan Linear A script (Northwest Semitic) and the Mycenaean Linear B script (Greek). No attempt is made to translate the inscription but only a proposal of some connection with these Aegean scripts.

Dr. Gordon inserts a chart from Pierre Honore's book, *In Quest of the White God*, which compares the Minoan Linear A and the Maya forms of writing. (Honore's volume is reviewed in the Newsletter, 94.3, Ed.) From another source he borrows a chart comparing Cretan and Aztec glyphs. He thinks the similarity of characters is hardly accidental and hypothesizes transoceanic contacts between the

Mediterranean and the New World of about the middle of the second millennium BC.

Dr. Gordon points out that his conclusions are not based on the data in this short article alone: "The facts pouring in from every side bring us to the same general conclusion that ancient American civilization was stimulated by transoceanic contacts from the east and west; among them contacts with the Mediterranean were especially creative" (p. 166).

Dr. Gordon's article projects a pioneer view into the world of professional skepticism as to the literacy of the pre-Columbian inhabitants of the New World. He makes the reader aware that he knows well of the existence of fake artifacts, but he also states his attitude against blind skepticism. He is noted for the research he is doing on the Paraiba text of Brazil (cf. Newsletter, 111.0; see also 118.0, above). This essay on the Metcalf Stone forms an additional part of the long-range project he has undertaken to investigate the problem of cultural diffusion from the Mediterranean area to the New World. Although this paper is stimulating it is far too short and needs much more in-depth research.

Mr. Mahan also has promised a report of the research he is doing, and this should be a further important contribution.

118.3 ANOTHER JOURNAL ON BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGY. By Susan P. Stiles. A quarterly journal of a more popular nature than *The Biblical Archaeologist* has been called to our attention and should be of interest to SEHA members. It is entitled *Buried History* and is published by the Australian Institute of Archaeology in Melbourne. The editor and main writer is Clifford A. Wilson, MA, BD, director of the Institute, a man with broad experience in biblical studies.

The table of contents of the September, 1969, issue lists: New Light from Old Letters; The Probable Education of Jesus; Amnesty for Prisoners; Book Review: "Archaeology and the Ancient Testament"; Points of Archaeological Interest; When Was the Book of Daniel Written?; Alexandrian Theatre - A Surprise; and Publications (available from the address below).

The journal is of similar size and format to *The Biblical Archaeologist*. An annual subscription costs \$1.40 in US currency (\$1.00 Australian), due each January. It should be requested from: The Secretary, Australian Institute of Archaeology, 174 Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria, 3000, Australia.

Inexpensive publications available from the Institute office include: \$1.00 for "Creation's Amazing Architect" - the Genesis story of creation set against modern findings of geology; and 3¢ for "An Egyptian Mummy" - review of Egyptian customs (Australian currency).