

Preceramic (c. 4000–2000 BC) and Initial Periods (c. 2000–1000 BC), the first communities and stone monuments were constructed. Later, the religious phenomenon of Chavín (c. 1000–200 BC) was expressed in art, monumentality and sculpture, while during the Huarás (c. 200 BC–AD 200) and the Recuay periods (AD 200–700), deified ancestors were commemorated through *lithification*. A final discussion deals with the Wari (c. AD 700–1000) and Inka (c. AD 1400–1532), and their expression of empire through the stone construction of state infrastructure.

The Late Intermediate Period (c. AD 1000–1400), squeezed between the Wari and Inka Empires, gets short shrift and this is a pity. Nevertheless, the range is impressive, and especially in the Chavín and Recuay chapters, the author delves into what stone meant for these ancient people of Ancash. Under the Chavín, this supposedly non-militaristic culture articulated their religious worldview through the artistic representation of gods in stone and lithic architecture, leading to the creation of a broad religious community that expanded across the Andes. In contrast, the Recuay heralded a more localised, community-based veneration of stone not only as divinities, but as honoured, *lithified* ancestors. Ancestor worship, a key component of late Andean prehistory, comes to the fore during this period and continues in varied forms all the way through; it is identified with standing stones known as *huacas*, communal subterranean tombs and above-ground mausoleums. Rituals associated with ancestor worship emphasised economic and social renewal through the veneration of exalted ancestors who provided the wherewithal and authority to propagate their descendant communities.

Two further chapters (6 and 8) provide an interesting digression, and a reflection of modern Ancashino association with stone, respectively. Lau offers convincing evidence to suggest that the stone *tableros* (stone or wooden slabs or boards with, usually, symmetrically aligned rectangular or circular subdivisions) found in the Andes were not counting devices (*yupana*) or models (*maqueta*) of structures or fields, but rather board games in their own right. Similar to the African *mancala* or *bao* game, these games seem to have been metaphors reflecting the inherent dualism of the Andean social world. Chapter 8 on the modern importance of ancient stonework explains the more recent appropriation and exhibition of ancient monuments and imagery as perpetuating a particular local and regional identity, almost an Ancash

ethnogenesis through stone. This modern fixation with the past comes partly because of outside interest and tourism geared towards the richness of Ancash's stonework and iconography, and, as in the past, we observe, "the uncanny agency of stone, especially ancient stoneworks, in promoting community" (p. 209). Indeed, throughout the book, stone is seen as the central agent, linking cultures and periods while generating and maintaining diverse communities.

Extremely well written, up to date and saturated with information, this book is a delicate balancing act between theory and data. Is it well done? It is. I particularly liked the 'focus sections' on select sites or objects, as well as the abundant colour plates. In conclusion, we have here the definitive book on the archaeology of Ancash. Yet it also should have wider appeal beyond the regional focus through its in-depth assessment of people's enduring engagement with the (meta)physicality of stone.

References

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JOSEPHINE QUINN. *In search of the Phoenicians*. 2018. Princeton (NJ): Princeton University Press, 978-0-691-17527-0 \$35.



This timely book is a fascinating exploration of the development of 'Phoenician' as an identifier for the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age inhabitants of coastal Levantine cities and their associated

colonies in the Western Mediterranean, most famously Carthage. Its title is cleverly reminiscent of other archaeological works for a wider audience that present a quest-style narrative, a 'bringing to light' of an ancient people, a map leading to buried treasure. It is, however, made very clear from the outset that the titular 'search' for the Phoenicians is not going to provide the usual result.

Quinn's central thesis is that there was no overarching 'Phoenician' identity that brought together the citizens of Tyre, Sidon, Byblos and other cities, and that their collective identification as 'Phoenician' is an entirely *etic* phenomenon. This treasure hunt is more complex than a straightforward review of the archaeological and textual evidence, or an update of Sabatino Moscati's seminal *The world of the Phoenicians* (1968). Instead, Quinn interrogates the notion of shared identity in the ancient past, the political manipulation of archaeology in recent history and the continued importance of these charged interpretations in the present day.

The book is arranged in three parts, forming a journey backwards in time and then forwards again. After a blazing Introduction drawing on the playwright Brian Friel's explorations of colonisation, violence and belonging, the first part opens with a discussion of the role of perceived Phoenician heritage in the modern nation state of Lebanon. Quinn focuses on the exceptionalist rhetoric used to carve out Lebanese nationhood, into which both classical sources and archaeology were conscripted. She then moves to assess definitions of ethnicity and shared identity, before demonstrating that no communal self-designation exists beyond the level of the city in texts produced by individuals from the region. The argument then widens from these inhabitants of Carthage and kings of Sidon and Byblos, to the views of outsiders: Greek and Roman sources weighing in on Phoenicia and Phoenicians.

In the second part, Quinn focuses on material culture, initially using coins, carving styles and burial practices to illustrate her argument that "there is very little in their cultural artefacts or behaviour to suggest self-conscious community-building at the level of 'Phoenician'" (p. 66) until the late fifth century BC, and then only in Carthage. Two chapters follow, exploring the role of religion in the construction of homeland and diasporic communities. The first is centred on Tophet sites—"open air enclosures containing the urn burials of cremated infants and animals" (p. 92); the second on the cult of Melqart,

and his representation as and relationship with Herakles and other 'Master of Animals' deities. Quinn convincingly argues that while Tophet sites may be seen as a declaration of difference, worship of Melqart invoked wider connections and became an important political tool, superseding the more inward-looking Tophet cult.

The only slight criticism possible of this carefully orchestrated and meticulous volume is that there are occasional mismatches between the text and the audience it is aimed at in these middle chapters. The general reader, whether classicist or archaeologist, if not *au fait* with the evidence and arguments that Quinn references, may feel confused by the decision not to engage with these to a deeper degree. For example, in her discussion of the highly emotive practice of child sacrifice, Quinn judiciously decides to focus on the role of the cult in "the construction of colonial communities" (p. 92). Her argument is, however, based upon accepting that such sacrifices took place and were not invented as propaganda. More of the briefly referenced osteological evidence, "incompatible with normal patterns of infant mortality" (p. 93), would have greatly strengthened her position. It is entirely understandable that Quinn did not wish to either sensationalise or repeat arguments that are very familiar within Phoenician studies, but in a work for the non-specialist, this decision somewhat undermines the argument that follows. Similarly, the discussion and dismissal of ceramic evidence as too deeply enmeshed with cultural-historical interpretative models required more justification to the non-specialist, particularly in the light of developing archaeometric analyses.

In the third and final part of the book, Quinn begins to move forward in time once again, beginning with the third or fourth century AD and the context of the first self-declared Phoenician author. She explores "the increasing popularity of [...] the idea of being Phoenician in the Hellenistic and Roman periods" (p. 136), tracing the invention of a shared Phoenician identity from the death of Alexander, before refocusing in a chapter on the Western Mediterranean. This incorporates a particularly strong discussion using bilingual inscriptions from Lepcis Magna to illustrate the city's deliberate deployment of the Phoenician past to preserve, subtly, its own political autonomy under Rome. The final chapter explores the reception of and reaction to ideas of Phoenician identity in medieval, Early Modern and eighteenth- and nineteenth-century

Britain and Ireland, including a fascinating assessment of the highly politicised idea of Phoenician colonists in both Cornwall and Ireland. The powerful ending returns to the Irish context with which the book began: from a Brian Friel play to a piece by Frank McGuinness. *Carthaginians and Baglady* (1988) is set against the background of the Troubles, and Quinn closes her work with the emotive words of its character Dido, Queen of Derry, who declares that she is “Surviving. Carthage has not been destroyed” (p. 208).

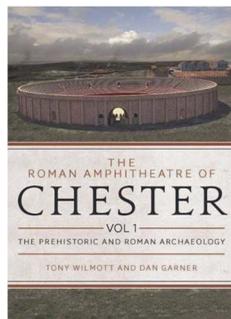
As demonstrated in this excellent book, Phoenician identity has not only not been destroyed, but has thrived, taking on power and meaning time and again. This search for the Phoenicians finds more than buried treasure, seeking out both the bonds that built communities in the ancient world and the phantasms that were reinvented to shape nations and spur resistance in the modern one. It deserves a wide audience, and will challenge, intrigue and capture the attention of archaeologists, classicists and non-specialists alike.

References

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TONY WILMOTT & DAN GARNER. *The Roman amphitheatre of Chester volume 1: the prehistoric and Roman archaeology*. 2018. Oxford: Oxbow 978-1-78570-744-5 £30.



This first volume detailing the results of the 2004–2006 excavations within the Roman amphitheatre in Chester provides an opportunity to reflect on how approaches to studying major monuments have shifted over the last half century or so. Earlier work in the 1960s prioritised seeking

knowledge about the Roman amphitheatre to the exclusion of all other periods. That goal resulted in deposits exceeding 3.5m deep, which overlie the Roman levels being machined away without record, an approach that the excavator later regretted for being “a little ruthless and ham-fisted” (p. 19). Readers of the present publication will also have to content themselves with only a few paragraphs detailing post-Roman activity on the site, but for very different reasons. It is not because the evidence was entirely eradicated in the 1960s, or because it is still judged of limited value; it is because an entire second volume will be dedicated to this topic. Adopting a holistic approach and using the most prominent structure to occupy the site as a vehicle to explore the entirety of human activity on it also results in an account that stretches as far back as the Mesolithic. The resulting excavation report is all the richer for it.

While Roman activity on the amphitheatre site receives the lion’s share of attention in this volume, the prehistoric layers sealed underneath more than reward the attention that they received. Key finds include a roundhouse and adjacent four-post structure, which returned radiocarbon dates of 400–200 cal BC, making this the earliest evidence for settled occupation in Chester. Archaeobotanical material from three of the four postholes suggests that the structure housed surprising contents. Rather than conventional crops, these stores took the form of by-products from cereal processing, specifically weed- and chaff-rich material. Both commodities offered a source of fodder, while the latter could temper daub or act as fuel. Even more important was the discovery of cord rig, a distinctive late prehistoric cultivation technique employing close-set ranks of narrow raised beds. This is believed to be the first identification of cord rig south of the concentration in Northumberland, where numerous examples of agricultural features have been found sealed beneath Roman military works associated with the northern frontier. The survival of upstanding cord rig at Chester suggests that there, too, actively worked arable land was appropriated by the army, dispossessing local farmers.

A key conclusion of the 1960s campaign was that the first amphitheatre at Chester was a turf and timber affair, with the masonry elements belonging to a later rebuild. The 2004–2006 work revealed that the monument boasted a stone outer wall from the start, adding it to a select group of structures associated with