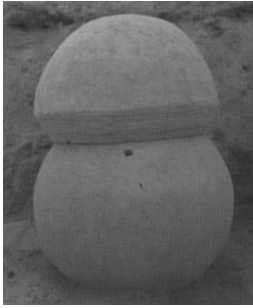


JOHN MACGINNIS, DIRK WICKE & TINA GREENFIELD (ed.). *The provincial archaeology of the Assyrian empire*. 2016. xviii+390 pages, numerous colour and b&w illustrations, tables. Cambridge: McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research; 978-1-902937-74-8 hardback £80.



One of the earliest empires to ravage the Middle East, the first-millennium BC Assyrian Empire, continues to draw interest from archaeologists, historians and philologists after a century and a half of research. With its

imperial core in northern Iraq off-limits to foreign archaeological teams in the latter decades of the twentieth century, a generation of scholars turned their attention to Assyria's peripheries in countries where field research was permissible. Consequently, evidence for how the empire conquered, managed or neglected its provinces is now abundant from different corners of the Middle East. Scholars long ago dismissed their first impression that the empire employed similar strategies of dominance throughout its conquered lands. The challenge, therefore, shifted to the identification and analysis of these strategies in the fragmentary written and archaeological records.

This volume of studies celebrates Cambridge University's contributions to the investigation of Assyria, specifically how the empire's expansion influenced societies living in its various provinces. The book is divided into seven parts, the first of which contains two orienting chapters describing the intellectual history of Assyria's exploration (MacGinnis; Stone). Part 2 contains seven chapters that explore questions that cut across peripheries, examining evidence for shared architectural elements (pebble mosaics) and material culture (e.g. Assyrian palace ware) that demonstrate Assyria's material influence on its peripheries. Among the more successful chapters is Rosenzweig's wide-ranging discussion of Assyria's impact on the environment in key areas where the empire sought to intensify agricultural production.

The volume's remaining five parts are organised by geography and present short, data-rich studies based on the projects of different research teams. Part

3 features research from the 'core' provinces, areas surrounding the Assyrian capital cities in northern Iraq, while Part 4 explores evidence from settlements in eastern Syria. Case studies from the Levant make up Part 5, and studies from Assyria's northern periphery (southern Anatolia) are reported in Part 6. Three short chapters in the final section, Part 7, describe research from western Iran. Overall, the volume is well illustrated with the sharp line-art and crisp colour images that readers have come to expect from the McDonald Institute Monographs series.

Readers will not find deep meditations in this book exploring how one should conceive of the ways empires managed their peripheries. There are no lengthy critiques of Wallerstein-esque core-periphery models or thoughtful reflections on post-colonial theory; nor are there any deep engagements with the global archaeological literature. The absence of such moments that would connect the volume to a broader audience is certainly a shortcoming. The editors, however, can almost be excused if one acknowledges the specificity of their mission to present current and rigorous evidence-based research. This volume is therefore a book by Near Eastern archaeologists for Near Eastern archaeologists.

For the non-specialist, this volume is most helpful for demonstrating the analytical techniques one can use to investigate imperial peripheries, wherever they may be found and however they may be defined. Authors in this volume draw on landscape survey data, architectural blueprints, material culture, remotely sensed satellite imagery, written sources, geomagnetic survey data, hydrological modelling and more to support their arguments. Yet despite the appropriateness of these techniques, most projects focus their analysis on monumental and public forms of evidence. The design elements of palaces, temples, fortifications and irrigation canals show signals of Assyria's ability to influence the periphery's political class and to promote their economic needs. Assyrian and Assyrianising forms of material culture (e.g. Assyrian palace ware, ivories, glazed pottery) are singled out to demonstrate the exchange of luxury goods or the influence of Assyrian styles on local crafts.

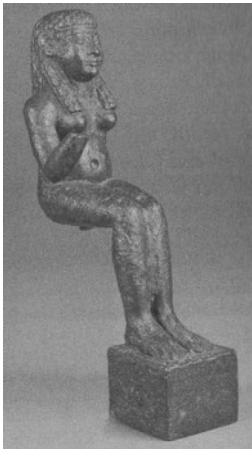
For readers who desire to understand how Assyrian imperialism did or did not transform, for instance, household organisation and production routines in its peripheries, they will find the subject only lightly addressed in a handful of chapters (e.g. Greenfield), even though projects have documented domestic contexts in their research, as mentioned in passing

or revealed in their site maps. If one wishes to evaluate the extent to which Assyrian imperialism penetrated everyday life in the empire's peripheries, then this resolution of analysis is essential. While this book demonstrates many successes, and is required reading for all scholars of ancient Assyria, a careful appraisal reveals exciting opportunities for future research developments.

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SEBASTIÁN CELESTINO & CAROLINA LÓPEZ-RUIZ.  
*Tartessos and the Phoenicians in Iberia*. 2016. xx+368  
pages, 41 b&w figures and 10 maps. Oxford: Oxford  
University Press; 978-0-19-967274-5 hardback £80.



What was Tartessos? When was Tartessos? These are not familiar questions in Anglophone scholarship, let alone ones to which answers have been proposed by classicists or archaeologists writing in English. The name, or better, the toponym, of Tartessos nevertheless makes a regular

appearance in classical studies, as a frequently cited passage of Herodotus (1.163.3) reports that King Arganthonios of Tartessos was fabulously wealthy and generous, offering to allow Phocaeen Greeks to settle in his realm. This information is usually taken at face value, and appreciated as a rare piece of information about the otherwise literally 'prehistoric' inhabitants of the Western Mediterranean in the early first millennium BC (e.g. Garland 2014: 42). On the Iberian Peninsula, by contrast, gallons of ink have been spilled and fierce debates have been waged, almost exclusively in Spanish, about precisely these questions—where and when was Tartessos?

It is this disconnect that has motivated Carolina López-Ruiz and Sebastián Celestino to team up and write the present book—whose title *Tartessos and the Phoenicians in Iberia* immediately flags up

where they are taking their discussion. This book is, however, rather more than a mere translation of Spanish debates into English, as the authors have set themselves an additional task, which is to bridge what Renfrew (1980) famously called the 'Great Divide' between the long tradition of classical scholarship and modern 'anthropological' archaeology.

The book accordingly opens with a chapter on the history of research on Tartessos, and this readily shows how 'Tartessian studies' developed well within the broad parameters of the trajectories of European and Mediterranean historical and archaeological studies. The authors show how the pioneering exploits of Edward Bonsor and Adolf Schulten from the late nineteenth into the twentieth century combined fieldwork with a close reading of classical sources, such as Heinrich Schliemann had done half a century earlier in the Eastern Mediterranean. At the end of the day, however, they came up empty-handed, and it was not until the chance discovery in 1958 of the hoard (or 'treasure') of El Carambolo, and the subsequent excavation of the associated ritual complex in modern Seville, that archaeological research of Tartessos came into its own. Spanish scholars took over, led by Maluquer de Motes, who was instrumental in situating Tartessos within the contemporaneous archaeological—basically Childean—terms of culture and settlement. In 1968, he convened the ground-breaking 'Jerez Conference' that brought together archaeologists, philologists, linguists and historians. Even if they failed to come to a consensus, the meeting galvanised research and gave rise to new conceptual and field-based approaches. As archaeologists have continued to dominate Tartessian studies, the main recent development has been the geographic expansion of research into the wider region of south-west Iberia, notably southern Portugal and Extremadura, adding landscape as a prominent avenue of research—again, more or less in line with developing academic interests elsewhere in Europe. In light of the present-day interest in connectivity and Mediterranean-wide colonial and indigenous interactions, and the resurgence of Phoenician archaeology over the past two decades, Anglophone scholarship and contemporary Tartessian studies resonate once more. This time Tartessos has also begun to make timid appearances on the international academic scene, as is perhaps best illustrated by the inclusion of a handful of objects from the El Carambolo hoard in the 'Assyria to Iberia' exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum (2014–2015), even if the mythical connections

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