This book, like the phenomenon of incubation itself, is rich and dense, capturing great variation across time and geographic space. A small criticism might be levelled at the rather large footnotes, some of which are several paragraphs in length and stretch across two or three pages (e.g. n. 177, pp. 189–90; n. 280, pp. 226–8). In spite of this, R. joins an exciting group of experts to address various aspects of incubation in Graeco-Roman antiquity.[1] He does it well, and the field is most grateful for his new book. None will deny the value and magnitude of this study.

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DECONSTRUCTING THE PHOENICIANS

QUINN (J.C.) *In Search of the Phoenicians*. Pp. xxviii + 335, ills, maps. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2018. Cased, £27.95, US$35. ISBN: 978-0-691-17527-0.
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In this book Q. proposes that the modern idea of 'Phoenicians' is not a self-evident entity rooted primarily in historical fact, but rather the end result of a complex diachronic accumulation of perceptions and re-inventions made by (among others) Greek, Roman, British, Irish, Lebanese and Tunisian intermediaries. Q. also makes the more polarising claim that the Phoenicians 'did not in fact exist as a self-conscious collective or "people"' in antiquity (p. xviii). While Q.'s conclusions on this particular point will not be the last word on the topic (see below), her book makes an important contribution by synthesising and expanding on previous research concerning Phoenician identity and by examining the significant influence that modern nationalism has had on the field of Phoenician studies.

The volume is an expanded version of three Balmuth Lectures given by Q. at Tufts University in 2012. As such, the book addresses a broad audience (Q. herself notes that it is not 'primarily a book for specialists'; pp. xxvii) and leans most on the sources and methods traditionally associated with the field of Classics: Q.'s treatment of Greek, Roman and Phoenician/Punic epigraphic sources is very thorough, as is her interpretation of symbolic archaeological remains. The focus on Classics and the popularising tone, however, come at some expense. As Q. points out in her introduction, the book deals with only part of the available archaeological evidence, excluding important regions like Cyprus and the far western Mediterranean from the discussion (p. xxvii). Moreover, the role of Ancient Near Eastern textual sources in Q.'s argument is minimal considering the book's topic (e.g.

[1]In roughly the past decade, see too J.W. Riethmüller, *Asklepios: Heiligtümer und Kulte*, 2 vols (2005), which R. reviewed, not without scepticism; M. Melfi, *I Santuari di Asclepio in Grecia* 1 (2007); P. Sineux, *Amphiaraos: Guerrier, Devin et Guérisseur* (2007); B. Wicckiser, *Asklepios, Medicine, and the Politics of Healing in Fifth-Century Greece: Between Craft and Cult* (2008); C. Terranova, *Tra Cielo e Terra: Amphiaraos nel Mediterraneo Antico* (2013); H. Ehrenheim, *Greek Incubation Rituals in Classical and Hellenistic Times* (2015).

pp. 66–8), and Q. is too quick to dismiss the relevance of non-symbolic artefacts (e.g. ceramics, craft technologies and their products, architecture) for the study of Phoenician identity (pp. 68–73). Last, while Q. does devote an occasional page or two to theoretical questions, I was left wishing for a more substantial discussion of both anthropological and political theory in a book that tackles such complex and relevant themes as the construction of identity and the politicisation of history.

Despite these gaps, which are to some extent justifiable in a book that seeks to strike a more popularising tone, Q. expertly navigates a wide range of historical and material evidence to present a thought-provoking and enjoyable account of ways in which 'the Phoenicians' have been constructed, reconstructed and manipulated in literature and politics over the past 3,000 years.

The book is organised into three parts, according to a scheme that is helpfully described in the introduction (pp. xxi–xxiii). Readers who skip the introduction, however, might find themselves slightly confused by chronological and thematic leaps between chapters. Part 1 (Chapters 1–3) systematically raises and strikes down the most widely touted evidence for an ancient Phoenician ethnicity in anything resembling the modern sense of the term. In the empty space thus created, Part 2 (Chapters 4–6) takes a fresh look at the archaeological and textual evidence in order to examine identity and identity-making among the Iron Age 'Phoenician' communities inhabiting the eastern Mediterranean seaboard and the central Mediterranean region consisting of North Africa, Sardinia and Sicily. Finally, Part 3 (Chapters 7–9) examines how identification with the originally Greek concept of 'Phoenicians' served a political purpose in Roman times as well as in Britain and Ireland between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries AD.

Chapter 1 explores the ways in which the concept of an ancient Phoenician nation or ethnos is entangled with modern intellectual and political nationalism. The chapter begins with the role of Phoenicianism in twentieth-century Lebanese and North African politics and goes on to trace the way in which the idea that the Phoenicians constituted an ethnos or nation was widely adopted (against available evidence) in modern scholarship of the eighteenth to twentieth centuries.

In Chapter 2 Q. shifts to a more academic tone and dispels through linguistic and contextual analyses a wide range of ancient textual and epigraphic evidence for the use of a common Phoenician ethnonym. The occurrences of the terms 'Phoenician' and 'Canaanite' are closely examined, after which Q. provides a sort of narrative gazetteer of epigraphic evidence for Phoenician self-reference, in which it is demonstrated that, in cases when they did self-identify, 'Phoenicians' primarily did so in local terms referring to kin and city, not in broader abstract concepts of ethnos or nation.

Chapter 3 is a survey of the evidence for an overarching Phoenician ethnicity in Greek and Roman texts. Q. concludes that the term Phoenician 'was not deployed in Greek and Roman literary sources to designate an ethnic group in and from Phoenicia' (p. 59). Rather, in earlier (Greek) sources the term Phoenician tends to designate a class of Levantine sailors and merchants, with 'Phoenician' first acquiring consistent political implications (related to Carthage) in the fifth century BC, before becoming a stereotype in Roman times.

Chapter 4 opens with a brief discussion of the Phoenicians' lack of political unity (pp. 66–8), before turning to archaeological evidence for other forms of self-conscious community-building among Phoenicians at home and abroad. Here again Q. finds no convincing signs of an over-arching 'Phoenician identity' – although I would object that she excludes much of the relevant material evidence on tenuous grounds – and instead focuses on the way in which archaeological evidence reveals status-marking among 'Phoenician' elites; cultural mixing throughout the Phoenician Mediterranean; and political negotiations in Carthage's minted coinage.

In Chapters 5 and 6 Q. reconstructs two self-identifying Phoenician communities that she does believe are warranted, based on material evidence. Chapter 5 is a compelling discussion of the 'Circle of the Tophet', reprising Q.'s previous argument that the distribution of tophets in the Central Mediterranean reflects the migration of a religious minority from the Levant, possibly fleeing disapproval of their practice of child sacrifice (J.C. Quinn, 'Tophets in the Punic World', in P. Xella [ed.], *The "Tophet" in the Phoenician Mediterranean* [2013], pp. 23–48). Chapter 6 argues a little less convincingly that the unifying cult of Melqart emerged in the fourth century BC, and not earlier, and that its rise is best understood as a strategy related to Carthage's expanding influence at that time.

Chapters 7–9 explore several case studies in which 'Phoenicianism' served political purposes, in both ancient and modern times. Chapter 7 looks at the popularity of the Phoenicians in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, ascribing it to political calculation, especially under the Severans who used Phoenicianism to rationalise their ties to both Syria and North Africa. Chapter 8 examines a broad range of evidence for the adoption of Punic cultural traits (including language, tophets and political functions like *sufetes*) by North African communities following the fall of Carthage. Q. argues convincingly that these adoptions do not reflect a spread of Punic identity as much as they constitute political strategies for interacting with, and to some extent resisting against, Rome. In Chapter 9 Q. brings the reader back to the modern era, completing the book with an intriguing journey through the ebb and flow of cultural and political Phoenicianism in the British Isles between the sixteenth century and the present day.

This book is well edited and produced, with helpful illustrations and minimal typographical errors (I counted only five). The endnotes and bibliography are useful and provide thorough documentation of Q.'s argument. One omission from the bibliography is worth mentioning, which, like *In Search of the Phoenicians*, exposes and problematises a curious case of entanglement between the ancient Mediterranean and modern thought: M. Dietler's 'The Archaeology of Colonization and the Colonization of Archaeology' (in G. Stein [ed.], *The Archaeology of Colonial Encounters: Comparative Perspectives* [2005], pp. 33–68).

The clarity and scope of Q.'s exposition, combined with the reasonable pricing of the book, make this a useful text for anyone wishing for an introduction to Phoenician identities and their historical reception. It would also make a fine teaching text for courses on Mediterranean history or archaeology. The scholarly contributions of Q.'s book are limited by the absence of a comprehensive theoretical discussion, the exclusion of much archaeological evidence and the partial treatment of Near Eastern textual sources. Nevertheless, Q.'s synthesis of previous research, her erudite case studies and her description of the nationalist contexts from which Phoenician studies emerged all make this a worthwhile addition to the specialist's library.

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