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perception factors should have been taken into account, in order to give readers a more complex explanation of the adoption and composition of certain iconographical motifs in the socio-political context examined.

In the very brief "Conclusion" (pp. 241-242), the A. recalls the purposes of the study, and the principles behind the classification system adopted. Then, the conclusions reached through the analysis are highlighted: first of all, any Egyptian influence is negligible or absent, as «Canaanite pottery painting tradition unequivocally fits into ancient Near Eastern culture»; second, the tree (interpreted as "tree of life") is the most popular feature of Canaanite pottery paintings; third, the date-palm is the only tree species that can be safely identified; fourth, the tree iconography has a religious significance; and, fifth, this religious character of the pottery painting enables the A. to offer a socio-political interpretation, namely that the inhabitants of Southern Levant, «deprived of political power», may have «sought hope in their religion», asking for divine blessing through the images depicted on their pottery (p. 241). The volume is completed by a "Bibliography" and by an "Index of Classification Codes"; regrettably, the bibliography fails to include recent studies and field reports, given that the last publications considered date back to 2007 (as the thesis was written in 2008). This lack of a more up-to-date bibliography fatally affects the socio-political interpretation of the significance of pottery decoration in the broader context of Canaanite society in the LB-Iron I period.

In conclusion, this book certainly offers a very clear, well-organised and well-structured classification of decorative motifs and design patterns; therefore, it can help scholars to understand single decorative motifs or complex decorative structures that appear on Canaanite pottery. Moreover, it provides a considerable number of images, organised in classes and types and derived from a huge number of publications. The main limitations of the volume lie in its lack of bibliographic updates, and in the somewhat "simplistic" interpretation of the socio-political value of the preferred iconographies. Nonetheless, scholars interested in Canaanite pottery, and focusing on the LB and Iron I periods, will undoubtedly benefit from consulting this volume and using the attached database in the CD-Rom.

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A.D. Navarro Ortega, E. Ferrer Albelda (edd.), *Trabajo Sagrado. Producción y Representación en el Mediterráneo Occidental durante el I Milenio a.C.*, Sevilla 2018 («Spal Monografías Arqueología», 25), Editorial Universidad de Sevilla, 328 pp.

Published within the monograph series of the journal *Spal*, the volume *Trabajo Sagrado* is the editorial result of the eponymous conference held on 28-29 April 2015, organized by the MAS – the Archaeological Museum of Seville – in collaboration with the University of the same city. As indicated by A. Navarro in her introduction to the book, and as summarized in the title, the purpose of holding the conference was to open up a scientific debate concerning the «distintas formas de producción, procesos, espacios de trabajo y objetos que, vinculados al ámbito simbólico, formaban parte de los lugares cultuales o estaban integrados en el funcionamiento de los mismos durante el I milenio a.C.» (p. 9). The work brings together eleven contributions, which, with a few exceptions (see below), pay specific attention to the archaeological contexts of south-western Spain – *i.e.* to those places described by Navarro as of «confluencia fenicio-púnica en la Tartéside» (p. 9). As we shall see, the texts seem to be organized according to criteria that, at least in some cases, may help the reader to integrate the various data collected and relate them to each other.

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The first two articles represent two of the above-mentioned exceptions (there are three in all) to the volume's more general discussion pertaining to the Iberian landscape. They are dedicated respectively to the Levant and to the Phoenician world of East and West (I. Oggiano, *Produrre nel santuario e produrre per il santuario. Il Levante tra fine II millennio ed età ellenistica*; S. Ribichini, *Vita laboriosa nei santuari fenici*). By virtue of their approach and methodology, they almost represent a sort of theoretical introduction applicable, beyond their specific topics, to the overall theme of the book. The first – which deals especially with case studies from the Philistine environment – introduces many of the perspectives (which then individually characterize the structure of the other articles) from which the *trabajo sagrado* can be examined, ranging from space management and architecture, as a reflection of social organization and related cultural practices, to productive activities linked to worship, inside and outside the sacred places, and to the cooking and consumption of ritual meals. Briefly focusing also on *ktr* (Kothar), the artisan god, the contribution closes with an overview of the methodological but also concrete distinction between the production organized *in* sacred areas and that carried out *for* sacred areas. Such a distinction also informs, generally speaking, the second article, *Vita Laboriosa*, which thus in a sense exhibits a theoretical continuity with the previous work, despite the differences in approach and subject matter. Through a rich collection of data – particularly epigraphic – which cuts transversally across various Phoenician settlements, the text concentrates on the several jobs and categories of workers that, according to the inscriptions, operated in connection with cult contexts and worship practices (*e.g.* barbers, administrators, cooks and builders, all understood as members, even occasionally, of the staff *of*/*in* or *for* the sanctuaries). The inescapable theoretical premise of the treatise is the unavoidable lack, in the ancient world, of work activities that can be defined as "sacred" in absolute terms (though they may potentially be sacralized on the basis of the place *in* or *for* which they were carried out), given the absence of a "religion" category distinguishable from other human experiences.

From the third contribution onwards, the studies mostly gravitate, as mentioned, towards topics that appear circumscribed, from a geographical viewpoint, to south-western Spain. The article by J.L. Escacena Carrasco, first of all (*I+D+i en los templos fenicios de Tartessos*), offers some highly complex reflections on the conception of temples as the sites of very particular works, such as those related to the accumulation, conservation and development of knowledge (the formula cited in the title, "I+D+i", refers to the relationship between *investigación*, *desarrollo* and *innovación*). In the study, special attention is paid to the question of astronomical knowledge which, according to the author, came to the Tartessian area from the East and on the basis of which, as an expression of the configuration of the divine world (*astros/dioses*, just to cite a sort of identification proposed by the author [p. 76]), the construction of some cult places was planned.

Quite different topics are covered in the three subsequent works, respectively by M.L. de la Bandera (*Orfebrería tartésica: originalidad y tradición fenicia*), A. Navarro Ortega together with C. San Martín Montilla (*Oro para los dioses. Nuevas perspectivas para la caracterización técnica e iconográfica del Carambolo*) and J.I. Vallejo Sánchez (*¿Objetos para el rite u objetos domésticos? Los ralladores del santuario protohistórico de El Carambolo [Camas, Sevilla]*). While each develops its own theme, a common denominator of these studies is one of the most famous and informative sanctuaries of the Tartessian territories: El Carambolo, situated few kilometres west of Seville. De la Bandera's article focuses first and foremost on the production of jewels from Tartessos, attempting not only to identify in the productions the Eastern contribution and the local originality, but also to highlight, in some cases, the possible religious value of the objects, as suggested by the widespread presence of iconographies referable to the sphere of worship. Following this overall examination of the Tartessian jewels, the second work in this group moves on to the more specific study of the famous "treasure" (discovered in 1958) from El Carambolo sanctuary. New acquisitions related to the jewels – thanks above all to the application of modern investigation techniques (*e.g.* electron microscope analysis, X-ray fluorescence and CT scans of the various elements) – are presented in the text, together with a number of problematics. The most interesting questions posed include that of identifying the production place of the

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jewels, and its possible direct connection with the sanctuary, and the problem of the probable involvement of the treasure, as *ajuar litúrgico*, in ritual practices. The third work is again dedicated to El Carambolo and examines a series of very special objects: the graters, no fewer than 13 specimens of which were found in the sacred area. The author rightly raises the question of the use of such artefacts and suggests a number of possibilities, including their utilization for food processing, in the context of domestic and/or ritual food consumption, or their "participation" in the preparation of non-food compounds, such as aromatic substances, useful for religious purposes.

The relation between sacred places and territory, manifested in different ways, is at the centre of the two contributions respectively titled *Tierra y religión. Cultos en el ámbito rural fenicio occidental* (C.A. Pardo Barrionuevo and J.L. López Castro) and *La arquitectura como actividad productiva: tres casos de estudio de época tartésica en el valle medio del Guadiana* (S. Celestino, E. Rodríguez González, C. Bashore, A. Dorado, C. Lapuente). In *Tierra y religión*, which represents the third exception to the analysis of the Iberian documentation on which the book is mainly concentrated, the authors offer some observations on the interactions between sacred areas and urban and extra-urban spaces, considering the sanctuaries as load-bearing elements of the city policy and territorial administration. Adopting this perspective, the work describes various regional contexts, passing from southern Sardinia to North Africa, from the area of the Strait of Gibraltar to the Balearics, through which the sanctuaries appear, according to the authors, as inevitable tools for the constitution of new settlements – especially in rural regions – and for the protection of the main communication routes, also favouring the encounter between Phoenician groups and indigenous peoples. The link with the territory, as mentioned, is analysed differently in the work of Celestino *et alii*. The study is dedicated to three contexts located in the middle valley of the Guadiana (Cerro Borreguero, Cancho Roano and Casas del Turuñuelo): characterized by original architectures bound to the buildings' functions and the natural conditions, these places must have been centres of economic activities, connected to the religious dimension and placed in relation to the control of the areas in which they arose. Architecture is still the protagonist, in large part, of the next contribution, by A. Ruiz Rodríguez, M. Molinos Molinos, C. Rueda Galán, A. Sánchez Vizcaíno and R. Fernández Casado, devoted, as the title makes clear, to a particular sanctuary (*En el santuario de la Puerta del Sol del* oppidum *de Puente Tablas [Jaén]: trabajos para una diosa sin nombre*). Here, a topic that stands out among those addressed by the authors is the interpretation of some structures of the building – *e.g.* the area outside it, near the doorway – and of some components of the cultic material (including an anthropomorphic feminine image) as functional to the manifestation of the divine through a path delineated by the solar cycle; in some ways, then, the topic seems to connect to the subject debated in the Escacena's contribution.

The volume closes with two very different works. The first has the intriguing title *Dioses de barro. Sellos con simbología religiosa de la producción anfórica de* Gadir *(siglos IV-II a.C.)* (by A.M. Sáez Romero and E. Ferrer Albelda). The investigation is focused on the amphora stamps documented in the famous city on the Atlantic, the use of which began to spread from the end of the 4th century BCE. Marked by different iconographies, perhaps used in their variety in order to distinguish «determinadas partidas para clientes particulares» (p. 298), the stamps may also have had some connection with places of worship. The authors do not exclude the possibility, for example, that certain symbols might have referred to clients such as religious institutions, or that they were somehow linked to the craft activities that were perhaps carried out in structures and lands belonging to the temples, rented or managed by agents and private corporations. Another specific sanctuary context – similarly to some of the previous contributions – is the main focus of the final work: *El santuario de la Luz (Santo* Ángel*, Murcia): hombre, fauna y ritual*, by T. Tortosa Rocamora, M. Haber Uriarte, A. Comino Comino and A. Avilés Fernández. At the centre of the study lies the examination of the role, practical and ideological, played in the building by animal sacrifice (of bovids in this case), a role perhaps connected to rituals intended to guarantee the continuation of the community; the latter is associated, in

this respect, with the presence of sculptural fragments relating to male anthropomorphic figures, interpreted by the authors as part of a narrative aimed at the «autorepresentación de un determinado linaje» (p. 323).

From the above observations, which have provided only the briefest outline of the book, it will perhaps be clear that the volume is a very rich resource. Respecting in good part the premises and the intentions of the editors, the theme – *trabajo sagrado* – is analysed in many of its aspects and from perspectives that highlight its great complexity, starting with the question of what could and should in fact be understood as "sacred work" or, perhaps more correctly, as "consecrated work". From the studies included in the volume there certainly emerges a multifaceted picture, in which the various components of sanctuary life – from the space chosen for the sacred places to their architecture, from the employees to the visitors, from the rituals to the divine characters – are understood in their connection with the economic and work activities carried out both inside the sanctuaries and outside them, both *in* and *for* the cult places. Beyond the boundaries of the individual contributions, some of which seem to adhere more closely than others to the themes and aims of the volume (as usual for miscellaneous works such as this), the wider merit of the book is that it portrays the sanctuary dimension and all its protagonists as dynamic and vivid, undoubtedly fundamental to individuals and the community alike and fully embedded in the organization of settlements and territories as a primary component of everyday social life; consequently, the volume could be conceived as, among other things, a useful tool for scholars and students who are being introduced to this subject area. For these reasons, it might be worthwhile also to consider preparing a sort of "Part 2" volume: it would perhaps widen the range of comparison to include other peoples and a far more extensive Mediterranean context, and focus also on cultural interrelations, so as to further enrich the documentary framework and offer an even broader basis for constructive scientific debate.

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B. D'Andrea, *Bambini nel "limbo". Dati e proposte interpretative sui tofet fenici e punici*, Roma 2018 («Collection de l'École Française de Rome», 552), École Française de Rome, 170 pp., BW plates 31 pp., with introduction by M. Gras.

The *tophet* precinct is one of the most studied and fiercely debated components of Phoenician-Punic civilization, yet it remains poorly understood. The literary sources are often tendentious, the archaeological remains poorly recorded, and the epigraphic texts terse and formulaic. D'Andrea's work seeks to make the most of this limited evidence, arguing that infants in the precinct lie in interpretive "limbo," a term chosen to describe that place of uncertainty between competing explanations of sacrificial infanticide, ritual killing and natural mortality (pp. 1-3, 127-130).

The volume under review is the second derived from the author's doctoral research at the Sapienza Università di Roma (p. xiii). The first volume[1] described excavations at so-called *tophet* sanctuaries in North Africa, both those dedicated to Baʿal and Tinnit and those later dedicated to Saturn and *Juno Caelestis*. This second volume summarizes the ancient evidence and modern interpretations of such precincts. Although we

1 D'Andrea 2014.