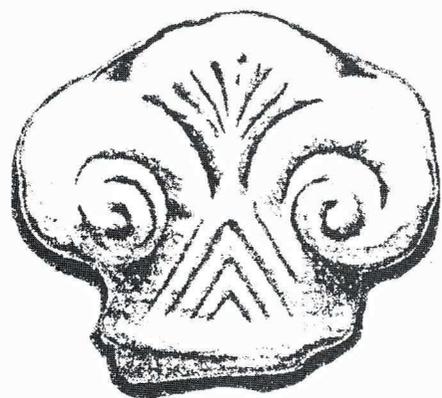




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Phoenician presence in Early Iron Age Crete reconsidered

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During the last decade Phoenician and Punic studies have suddenly made a great step forward. As a result of intensive research and meticulous work by scholars mostly present in this Congress there is now a sufficiently good knowledge of the Early Iron Age Phoenicians of the Mainland, as well as of the Punic West. Recent publications include catalogues of major exhibitions for the Phoenician expansion in the Mediterranean (Moscati 1988 and 1991, Gehrig-Niemeyer 1990) and several important works of synthesis (Baurain- Bonnet 1992, Aubet 1993, Krings 1995).

In this framework any review study, particularly one by a non-specialist, would be ineffectual, unless covering a lacuna or presenting some kind of new evidence. Thus this paper, motivated by the discovery of an intriguing cippus (Figs. 1-2) in one of the Early Iron Age cemeteries of Knossos, aims at assessing the *Phoenician presence* in Crete by focusing upon the recent material record in the light of modern scholarship.

Phoenician presence in Crete during the Early Iron Age is a difficult issue further complicated by the sporadic nature of archaeological evidence and by the paucity of ancient testimonia on the subject. Yet, archaeological evidence for early Cretan contacts with Eastern Mediterranean in general is abundant, easily available and well discussed (Kunze 1931 and 1935-36; Boardman 1970 and 1980; Coldstream 1982; Puech 1983; Shaw 1989; Stampolidis 1990; Morris 1992; Negbi 1992). What remains confusing though is the use of the term Phoenician by many scholars dealing with Crete. Originally almost every oriental object found in the Aegean area was called Phoenician (cf Coldstream 1982, 261). Later, as the study of oriental art progressed and distinctions between North Syrian and Phoenician styles had been well assessed (Barnett 1982; Winter 1976), exact attributions of oriental imports into the Aegean areas were regularly attempted. Nevertheless, the use of the term *Phoenician* in a generic sense, i.e. to define the presence of Orientals presumably responsible for the imported objects, still remained in use (Coldstream 1982; Negbi 1992). Scholars postulating the Phoenicians as the main, if not the only traders in Early Iron Age Aegean often authorize as Phoenician artifacts of a mixed Syro-Phoenician style more probably originating in North Syria. A good example of this on-going debate is the continuing discussion of the origin of an otherwise well assessed bronze bowl from the 9th century tomb 42 at Kerameikos (Guralwick 1992a and 1992b, 156 fig. 12a) almost half a century after its discovery.

With so many uncertainties and perplexities still current in the field of Phoenician studies there is little doubt that the role of Phoenicians in the Aegean during the Early Iron Age remains a multifold issue contemplating many difficult problems (Boardman 1990; Kopcke 1992; Jones 1993; Winter 1995). A major aspect of the question is that of the Phoenicians as trader and navigators (cf Negbi 1992), another as immigrants and resident craftsmen (Boardman 1970). The origin of the Greek alphabet has never been put in doubt, but where and when the *Phoenikeia Grammata* were adopted by the Greeks is still at issue (Johnston 1983; Kourou 1990-91; Baurain-Bonnet- Krings 1991). Patterns of communication and mechanisms of trade are currently discussed (Jones 1993) and the extent of Phoenician contribution in the formation of the Greek Orientalizing style is still an open question (Bisi 1987 and 1991; Falsone 1987 and 1988).

History of the research

It has been rightly observed that "the question of the relationship between Greece and the Near East, especially during the so-called Dark Ages of Greece in the early first millennium BC, has a long and rather chequered

history of scholarship" (Muhly 1990, 83). Systematic research on the presence and the role of Orientals in Crete is a relatively new development because of the rarity of well identified imports until very recently. After all for a very long time, with the exception of the large assemblage of bronzes in oriental styles found at the Idaean Cave sanctuary (Kunze 1931) and some ivories from the same site (Kunze 1935-36), only a small number of oriental objects were known from Early Iron Age contexts in Crete. Nevertheless oriental imports, however singularly found, when taken into consideration with the Orientalizing style which dominated Greek art of the seventh century, were undoubtedly and acutely posing the question of oriental traders or resident craftsmen in Crete (Kourou 1989). But as self-evident archaeological proof for such resident Orientals in Crete, like architecture or grave monuments and burial customs, was missing at the time inferences were very limited (Dunbabin 1957,41; Harden 1962,56).

Ground was gained for the first time by a pioneering article publishing the gold jewellery from a ninth century tomb at the Tekke cemetery of Knossos (Boardman 1967). In that grave a strange custom, i.e. burrying a small gold treasure not in a funerary urn but in two cavities below the floor of the tomb, was attested for the first time in Crete. As the styles of the Tekke gold jewellery and the burial custom used in that grave were found to have close parallels in North Syria, the presence of immigrant craftsmen coming from that area of the Levant and living at Knossos was consequently assumed (Boardman 1967 and 1970). It was the first time that the hypothesis of immigrant craftsmen in Crete was offered substantial support from the material record. Thus in spite of some useful scepticism that followed (Lembessi 1975), the explanation for the Tekke jewellery and tomb signalled a new awareness for the presence and the role of resident foreigners in Crete. At the same time it became obvious that any claims for the presence of Phoenicians settlers in Crete needed further evidence. The primary impediment was the lack of a sufficient corpus of excavated material, which all of a sudden started appearing in the last decade.

The excavated site that proved critical for the Phoenician question in Crete are the port site of Kommos in Southern Crete (Shaw 1989), the Idaean Cave sanctuary (Sakellarakis 1984, 1987, 1988a and b) and the cemeteries of Knossos (Coldstream 1982; Kouron-Karetson 1988) and Eleftherna (Stampolidis 1994).

Kommos

One of the key places for reassessing Phoenician Presence in Crete during the Early Iron Age is the sheltering site of Kommos on the south coast of the Messara plain. Lying directly on the shipping route to the West it became an important harbor town during the Late Bronze Age and "obviously a port of call in metal trade from East to West during the Early Iron Age" (Morris 1992, 154-155). It is not surprising, therefore, that the site yielded a number of imports among which a substantial quantity of Phoenician pottery (more than two hundred sherds, Shaw 1989, 181-183). But the extraordinary feature of the site is an enigmatic tripillared structure inside an Early Cretan temple (temple B) explained as a Phoenician shrine so far unique in the Aegean world (Shaw 1989).

Neither the pillars that are standing on a reused triangular block set up inside the temple, nor their combination in a row have exact parallels in Crete, although during the Bronze Age pillar cult was well known in the Aegean world, particularly in Minoan Crete (Gesell 1985, 94). The excavator of Kommos has drawn attention to the fact that the tripillar shrine deviates completely from the Minoan tradition (Shaw 1989,182) and that it has no close parallels anywhere in the Aegean or the Levant. A similar construction is known from contemporary Sarepta (Shaw 1989, 175) recalling similar Late Bronze Age Canaanite forerunners, but cult activities at Sarepta were probably concentrated to one pillar. Tripillar shrines are known mostly from the Punic West (Shaw 1989, 176 ff), although exact parallels to the Kommos construction have not been identified so far.

The excavator has assumed for the tripillar shrine of Kommos the same Phoenician tradition of pillar cult that is also present in Cyprus at Kition (Shaw 1989, 181). It is true that religious cults moved westwards along with the colonization movement and many of the oldest Phoenician settlements in the West are linked to a temple (cf Aubert 1993, 130). But the personal and rather improvising elements present in the Kommos construction have led some scholars to scepticism as regards its Phoenician character (Baurrain-Bonnet 1992, 119-121). However the amount of Phoenician pottery found there is unparalleled in any other single site in Crete strongly suggesting the presence of at least a small number of some foreign residents at Kommos.

The time span of the Phoenician activity at Kommos as defined by the imported pottery covers mainly the 9th and 8th centuries coinciding with the time of Phoenician expansion to the West. However, the earliest pieces of Phoenician pottery at Kommos, which date to the late 10th century, can be linked with pre-colonization Phoenician activities. Because of its position directly on the route to the West Kommos soon became a good port of call in central Mediterranean presumably frequented throughout the colonization period. But immediately after-

wards the shrine was obviously hellenized as no permanent oriental presence has been documented there after the end of the 8th century.

Idaean Cave

Another place in Crete that has yielded oriental objects among which some well defined Phoenician artifacts is the Idaeian Cave, "the most important cave sanctuary in Iron Age Crete" (Boardman 1961, 79). The rich discoveries at the Idaeian Cave have been crucial for the issue of resident orientals in Crete from the very first moment of research there as they included not only the significant and extraordinary group of bronze protome shields and other bronze vessels (Kunze 1931; Canciani 1970), but also some gold jewellery in oriental and orientalizing styles (cf Levi 1945, figs 23-24) and a number of oriental ivories (Kunze 1935-36, 227). At that time there was only a limited repertory of singularly found oriental artifacts known from the Aegean; thus the significance of the the Idaeian Cave finds for the issue of oriental craftsmen working in Crete was soon recognised (Dunbabin 1957, 41; Harden 1962, 56).

Recent excavations (1982-1986) at the Idaeian Cave sanctuary and the following systematic study of the objects found there have been more illuminating (Sakellarakis 1984; 1985; 1987; 1988a; 1988b). Superb glass and faience beads and oriental or orientalizing ornaments in gold figure prominently among the new finds (Sakellarakis 1988b), but the most numerous classes of objects are again those of the bronzes and the ivories (Sakellarakis, 1992 and 1993).

Ivory carving has a long tradition in Minoan Crete going back to EM II times (Sakellarakis 1990, 345), but with the exception of a Sub-Minoan iron pin with ivory head from Knossos and an oriental amulet from Fortetsa, ivory objects are almost wholly absent from Dark Age contexts in Crete (Sakellarakis 1990, 113). The ivories found at the Idaeian Cave sanctuary constitute the largest and most important group of ivories of the Early Iron Age in Crete. They now count 1034 pieces (from the 34 of the earlier excavations cf Sakellarakis 1992) and the excavator has been able to distinguish 18 groups in a variety of oriental and orientalizing styles. The imported artifacts are mostly in North Syrian styles of the 9th and 8th centuries. The Phoenician ivories are only 16 pieces, mostly cut out plaques that parallel the Layard group from Nimrud (Sakellarakis 1990, 335). They belong mainly to furniture, while those in North Syrian styles are simply luxury objects.

It has been noticed that imported artifacts could reach the place as votive objects through any kind of gift exchange or trade; but fitting together ivory plaques for furniture is not a simple operation and it might have required the presence of craftsmen *in situ*. "Thus it is not impossible that the north Syrian ivories were imported by Greeks, unlike the Phoenician ivories, for which we can perceive a clear role for the Phoenician traders in conjunction with the ivory craftsmen themselves" (Sakellarakis 1990, 360).

For the the issue of resident oriental craftsmen in Crete the bronzes from the Idaeian Cave sanctuary are of equal interest. Since their discovery the Idaeian bronzes have been related to the Eastern Mediterranean kingdoms (Kunze 1931; cf Markoe 1985, 110), including Cyprus at least for some of them (cf Canciani 1970). Few of these bronzes, however, were explained as of a purely Phoenician style (Markoe 1985, 113-114); a notable number among them were recognised as of North Syrian origin or inspiration, while a sizeable category included local Cretan products strongly orientalizing. It is in fact this strange mixture of styles on one and the same object in this Cretan orientalizing style, which can be revealing for the assimilation process of direct foreign influence and the role of oriental residents in the creation of the local Orientalizing style (cf the omphalos shield, Sakellarakis 1984, 538 fig. 2 pl. 242). Thus the existence of at least one bronzeworkshop operated by Orientals in the nearby area of the Idaeian Cave sanctuary has again been suggested (Bonnet 1995, 655).

Eleftherna.

A more or less similar picture is offered by the recent discoveries at Eleftherna (Stampolidis 1994). Hidden in an inland gorge the Early Iron Age cemetery of this Cretan town impresses with its wealth and variety of imports, which come or derive from areas of the Eastern Mediterranean. Finds include ivories, pottery vases, bronzes, glass, faience and ornaments in gold that find very close parallels in the Levant and Cyprus (Stampolidis 1994). There is an overlapping in the range of imported oriental objects with those from the Idaeian Cave finds including even some very particular groups of votives like the protome shields.

An important feature of the Eleftherna imports is the significant presence of cypriot and cyprianizing objects like metal bowls (Stampolidis 1994, 30 fig. E pl. XIX, b), or pikes (Stampolidis 1994, pl. XXIII), gold jewellery (Stampolidis 1994, 119 pl. XXV) and pottery vases. A most important class of objects in the 8th and 7th century

tombs of Eleftherna is a series of strongly orientalizing bronzes, explained by Prof. Stambolidis as having been made *in situ*. Imports of a purely Phoenician character or origin are few among the oriental finds, but prominently among them features a bronze bowl identical to another one known from the Idaean Cave (cf Markoe 1985, 234 Cr2. Kind information by Prof. Stampolidis).

In this milieu it is not surprising, therefore, that a Phoenician cippus has been found at the cemetery of Eleftherna (Stampolidis 1990). Unfortunately it was not found in the excavation field, but it was collected from a place near the cemetery, where it had been thrown detached from its original position. Thus, the contents and the character of the grave to which it belonged remain unknown, but it is beyond doubt that the cippus should belong to the tomb of someone coming from or related to the Phoenician world. Stylistically and typologically the cippus, which is dated to the 7th century (Stampolidis 1990), has more punic than eastern elements. Whether the grave it crowned belonged to a resident craftsman or simply a trader. However, it is destined to remain a matter of interpretation. But the location of Eleftherna, on the northern route to the Idaean Cave together with the number of objects in oriental style found in the cemetery, offer a good argument for the presence of resident craftsmen.

Knossos

The cemeteries of Knossos have yielded a number of imported objects in different fabrics and styles which suggest that during the Iron Age Knossos was a major centre with an important port of trade (Coldstream 1991). Contacts with Eastern Mediterranean are evidenced by a variety of imports, including cypriot and oriental pottery (Coldstream 1982 and 1984; Jones 1993). Imported bronzes and local imitations, faience beads and jewellery in oriental and orientalizing styles found in Geometric tombs suggest that Knossos had an unusual share of trade if nothing else (Coldstream 1982; Falsone 1987; Catling 1984). Who were the carriers of this trade and to what extent this or immigrant craftsmen settled at Knossos were responsible for the strong and early oriental impact in Cretan art is still a matter of debate.

The theory of immigrant craftsmen working in Iron Age Knossos was first suggested on the evidence of the Idaean Cave bronzes (Dunbabin 1957), was better and more adequately formulated with the publication of the gold jewellery buried in an alien way in the reused Minoan tholos tomb at Tekke (Boardman 1967). But according to the objects' style and the burial custom used the presumed immigrant goldsmith was thought to have arrived in Crete from North Syria (Boardman 1970). Thus the oriental character of 9th and 8th century cretan metalwork was directly related to North Syrian art leaving *Phoenicians* in Crete for other roles.

Phoenician presence in Knossos is usually explained in terms of the "Phoenician enterprise, involving both trader and craftsmen" (Coldstream 1982, 268). Among the imported objects found at Knossos of primary importance for the presumed Phoenician enterprise in Crete are two bronze bowls: one from tomb P at the Fortetsa cemetery (Brock 1957, 133 Nr 1559 pl. 114; Markoe 1985, 162 Cr1), the other from tomb J of the Tekke cemetery (Coldstream 1982, 271 pl. 27d). It is interesting to note that although the context in which each of the bowls was found is well defined, their dating and origin still remain unsettled.

The Fortetsa bowl was found in a mid-seventh century context and it was originally explained as of Phoenician manufacture; a recent discussion of its style, however, has shown many North Syrian elements that date it to the second half of the 9th century (Falsone 1987). Similar uncertainties accompany the other most significant bronze bowl from Tekke tomb J that was found in a late 10th century context. The bowl is inscribed in a Phoenician alphabet, but it is thought that "in itself (it) is certainly of cypriot origin or inspiration" (Muhly 1985, 184). As the letters on the Tekke bowl are partially eroded the inscription is variously read and dated. Readings range from the owner's name (Snycer 1979) to the name of the Phoenician bronzesmith and that of the god Amon for whom it was originally made (Lipinski 1983) and even to *Minos the Strong* (Puech 1983). Similarly the dating of the bowl moves from the 10th century (Snycer 1979) to the 11th or 12th century (Puech 1983). What is of importance, however, is not the time of manufacture but the context of the burial, which in the case of the Tekke bowl is the late 10th century BC.

On the other hand the cemeteries of Knossos have a number of earlier imports from Eastern Mediterranean to display. On the basis of imported cypriot bronzes relations with Cyprus seem to have been almost uninterrupted during the Dark Ages. At Knossos and elsewhere in Crete a number of cypriot bronze tripods and stands have been discovered including a bronze stand from an 11th century tomb at Knossos (Catling 1984, pl. XV. 1). Other classes of bronze objects of cypriot type or manufacture found at Dark Age contexts in Crete include bronze armour, pikes and obeloi (Karageorghis 1974, 168 pl. XXVIII, 2; Brock 1957, 22 and 202). The earliest obeloi found in Crete, identical with specimens found in Cyprus, where they were known since the CG I period (1050-950), come from the cemetery of Fortetsa and date to the 10th century B.C.

Cypriot bronze imports in Crete occur in contexts much earlier than those which have yielded imported pottery. So far cypriot and oriental pottery has not been attested at Knossos earlier than the 9th century (Coldstream 1984, 136). The imported vases are usually in a cypriot or "cypro-phoenician" style (red-slip, black-on-red, bichrome red) of the 9th and 8th centuries (Coldstream 1979 and 1984). Those published or reported from the cemeteries of Knossos so far count 69 pieces in all: 11 from Fortetsa (Brock 1957), 2 from Atsalenio (Davaras 1968), 53 from Tekke and the North Cemetery (Coldstream 1984) and 1 from Sanatorio (Hood-Boardman 1961). They are almost exclusively unguent and slow pouring vases (Coldstream 1984, 136); they form a small percentage of the total pottery in comparison with local wares, but they have a number of local imitations (Coldstream 1979). The strong impact of cypriot and levantine wares on local cretan pottery is explained in terms of an "unguent factory staffed by resident Phoenicians, but the containers for the unguents were made by local potters" (Coldstream 1982, 268; cf also Jones 1993, 295). Thus, by contrast to the oriental and orientalizing styles of metalwork at Knossos that point to North Syria, the styles and fabrics of the so far known imported vases and their local imitations reveal interconnections and patterns of contacts shifting the evidence to Cyprus and Phoenicia.

A most important recent discovery is a cippus (Figs. 1-2) recovered by Mme A. Karetsou from the entrance to an Early Iron Age chamber tomb with multiple burials at the site of Atsalenio, which forms part of the large and rich North cemetery of Early Iron Age Knossos (Kourou-Karetsou 1998). The contents of that burial ground were only partially salvaged by a rescue operation following building activities that had destroyed several of the tombs. The rescued material consists mainly of pottery, but it also includes some pieces of bronze weaponry, obeloi and pikes. There is nothing particularly oriental among the finds, except for spits and pikes well known from many other warrior's tombs in Early Iron Age Crete are thought to reflect a cypriot funerary tradition (Karageorghis 1974; Coldstream 1977, 59).

The cippus, made of local limestone, is dominated on its front upper side by a shallow round cavity above which a kind of cavetto capital is formed by two shallow grooves. No exact parallel or this cippus has been identified in a well dated context of the Phoenician and Punic world (for the cippi cf Bartolini 1976; Stampolidis 1990; Tore 1992; Moscati 1995); thus its date is broadly defined by the pottery found with it to the eighth century (cf Kourou-Karetsou 1998).

Early funerary cippi present a wide range of forms and no well established typology; thus the tradition defining the Knossian cippus is difficult to be assessed. Yet, the round cavity on its front side can be compared to the rectangular depression on the central pillar of the Kommos shrine (Shaw 1989, 171 fig. 10). A more close parallel, however, is offered by a cippus from Mainland Phoenia (Sader, 1991, 102 fig. 3); recovered at the Tyre tophet by illegal excavations it is dated to the 8th century on grounds of style rather than context. But its striking resemblance to the Knossos cippus, found in 8th century context, leaves little doubt as to their common artistic and religious milieu. Prof. Aquaro has kindly indicated the existence of a type of cippus from the Punic West that has a round boss on its upper front side (Moscati 1995, 103 Nr 217 and 258 pl. I) that looks like a free version of the cavity found on the Knossos and Tyre cippi.

Another variation of this presumably symbolic hollow occurring on Phoenician cippi may be the rectangular perforation of a stele-cippus (Figs. 3-4) from the sanctuary of Apollo Hylates at Kourion in Cyprus (Soren 1987, 29 fig. 19), kindly pointed out by Prof. Karageorghis. Found next to the altar the stele was originally thought to be a stone fence post, but later its sacred character was recognised and it was explained as "a sacred stone or baetyl" (Buitron-Soren 1979, 22). The Kourion cippus made of local stone may reflect a Cypro-Phoenician tradition, known from a group of much debated perforated stelae (cf Soren 1987, 303 n. 11). The study of this class of cypriot monuments is still pending, but monolithic free-standing stelae, thought to incarnate the god, are not unknown at sanctuaries in the Phoenician Mainland, although they are mostly found in cemeteries and tophets of the Punic world. Yet, the recently published votive stelae from Zitha in Tunis (Drine-Ferjaoui 1995) that have a similar perforation offer an extremely good parallel at least for the Kourion cippus suggesting that Phoenician cippi and their local variations in Mediterranean sites are still very little known.

Another important recent discovery made by E. Grammatikaki is an anthroporphic cippus recovered from the area of the North Cemetery of Knossos (Kourou-Grammatikaki 1998). Anthroporphic cippi are unknown in the Aegean, but they present a variety of types in the Punic West (Tore 1992). If the dating of the Knossian example to the beginning of the 7th century is correct, then it elaborates further the evidence offered by the Eleftherna cippus for Cretan contacts with the Punic world.

The emerging picture

What results from the above brief survey of recent developments in the study of the Phoenicians issue is a new pattern of contacts between Crete, Cyprus and the strictly defined Phoenician world. According to this pattern two distinct phases can be discerned in the communications and contacts attested during the Dark Ages between the two areas.

The evidence at hand suggests that during the first phase covering the 11th and 10th centuries voyages were restricted but never stopped. During this phase Eastern Mediterranean imports in Crete are mainly cypriot or of cypriot inspiration. An impressive *unicum* giving evidence of cypro-phoenician presence in Crete during this period of early contacts is the inscribed bronze bowl from Tekke tomb J. But whatever its manufacturing date the Tekke bowl was found in a late 10th century context and thus it practically belongs to the end of the first stage of contacts during the Dark Ages. At the same time the first Phoenician pottery appears at Kommos. Thus the end of the 10th century seems to form a short intermediate phase preparatory of the following period of intensive contacts.

On the above evidence there is little doubt that those responsible for these early communications between Crete and Eastern Mediterranean are not the Phoenicians or other people from the Syro-palestinian coast, but the Cypriots. During the 11th and even 10th century Phoenicians were recovering from the invasion of Sea Peoples gradually rebuilding their towns anew, while Cyprus still enjoyed a thriving economy (Karageorghis-Muhly 1984). Cypriot bronzeworkshops were active and still exporting their products in the West (Vagnetti-Lo Schiavo 1989, 227-229). At that time long distance trade was in the hands of Cypriots who also frequented the ports in the Levant as attested by the overwhelming quantity of cypriot pottery found there.

Phoenician pottery found in 11th century contexts at Paphos gives evidence for early pre-colonization movements of the Phoenicians in the West (Bikai 1992, 242), but similar evidence is not available further than Cyprus for the moment (Aubert 1993, 25-27). Phoenician presence in the West is not attested archaeologically before the colonization movement in the 9th century (Boardman 1990, 177), although some pre-colonization travelling in the 10th century is thought reasonable (Aubert 1993, 167). Near Eastern presence in Crete before the 9th century, however, is mainly attested by cypriot imports which suggests that even in the 10th century trade mechanisms were still in the hands of Cypriots (cf Bonnet 1995, 646; Baurain-Bonnet 1992, 118; Negbi 1992).

The second period of contacts between Crete and Eastern Mediterranean, which coincides with the time of colonization, has a completely different character. Cypriot imports in Crete are still in respectable numbers, but at the same time Near Eastern products are brought in. The role played by the Phoenicians in the transport of goods during this period must have been important according to the archaeological record as well as ancient literature (cf Muhly 1970; Kopcke 1992; Winter 1995). But their impact on Early Cretan art and their assumed function as "immigrant craftsmen" are not as yet absolutely clear. On the contrary, Near Eastern influences discerned on local Cretan products are usually either North Syrian or Cypriot and "Cypro-phoenician". Well-defined Phoenician imports are not missing (cf pottery from Kommos or the ivories from the Idaean Cave sanctuary), but with the existing strong interactions between Levantine workshops distinctions are not always possible. "The question of origins and sources of manufacture is complicated by the range and diversity of styles within the Phoenician artistic repertoire", as well (Markoe 1985, 2).

The issue of immigrant settlers in Crete during the second phase of contacts, whether traders or craftsmen, is supported by the discovery of the Phoenician shrine at Kommos and the cippi at Eleftherna and Knossos. Literary tradition for the presence of Phoenicians in Crete is rather limited (cf Muhly 1970, 42; Stampolidis 1990, 105). The town of Itanos at the north-eastern promontory of Crete is indirectly claimed as a Phoenician colony (cf Bunnens 1979, 92 ff; Niemeyer 1984, 5 ff), but there is no relevant archaeological evidence for it, so far. The harbor towns of Leven in the south coast and that of Phalasarna in the north-west have been assumed as possible Phoenician trading posts (Stampolidis 1990, 105), similar to those known from western Mediterranean (Niemeyer 1990), but again the archaeological record seems rather vague. However, the round, closed harbor connected to the sea by an artificial channel, recently revealed in Phalasarna has a Phoenician, and more particularly Punic, character (Hatzidaki 1988, 479).

Evidence for the presence or influence of Orientals from the Syro-Phoenician world is also offered from the cemetery of Arkades in inland central Crete (Levi 1928; Boardman 1970; Bonnet 1995, 656), while evidence for cypriot contacts or influence is found at several other places mostly in Eastern Crete like Praisos, Vrokastro, Mouliana, Palaikastro, Karphi. Thus, the current actual geography for Phoenician presence in Crete (cf Fig. 5) concentrates in the eastern and mainly the central part of the island from Knossos in the north, where obviously one

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route from Eastern Mediterranean to Italy and the West was having a port of call, to Kommos in the south, where the other route to the colonial West needed a harbour.

Punic associations recognised at the shrine of Kommos and the cippi of Eleftherna and Knossos suggest a mixed character of oriental enclaves in Crete. At Knossos, however, the overwhelming cypriot presence among the Early Dark Age finds suggests that the assumed mixed community of Orientals in the 9th century had been preceded by a small *enoikismos* of Cypriot traders at least in 10th century BC.

Post Scriptum:

Since 1995 that this Congress took place a number of new discoveries and publications have greatly enriched the material available for the issue of Phoenician Presence in Crete. We have tried to include the main publications in the bibliography although we could not take full advantage of them in the text. The publication of a Phoenician funerary cippus from Cyprus (Karageorghis 1998) includes a new discussion of the Eleftherna cippus pointing out some traits it shares with cippi found in Cyprus. The Conference entitled "Eastern Mediterranean, Cyprus, Dodecanese and Crete" that was organised at Rethymnon in 1997 (Karageorghis- Stampolidis 1998) and the exhibition that followed it at the Kerakleion Museum (Stampolidis- Karetsou 1998) advanced our knowledge tremendously. We regret that a book dealing with more or less the same issue (Hoffman 1997) reached us too late to be taken into consideration properly.

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Fig. 1.
Font view of a cippus from Knossos. Atsalenio. Herakleion Museum



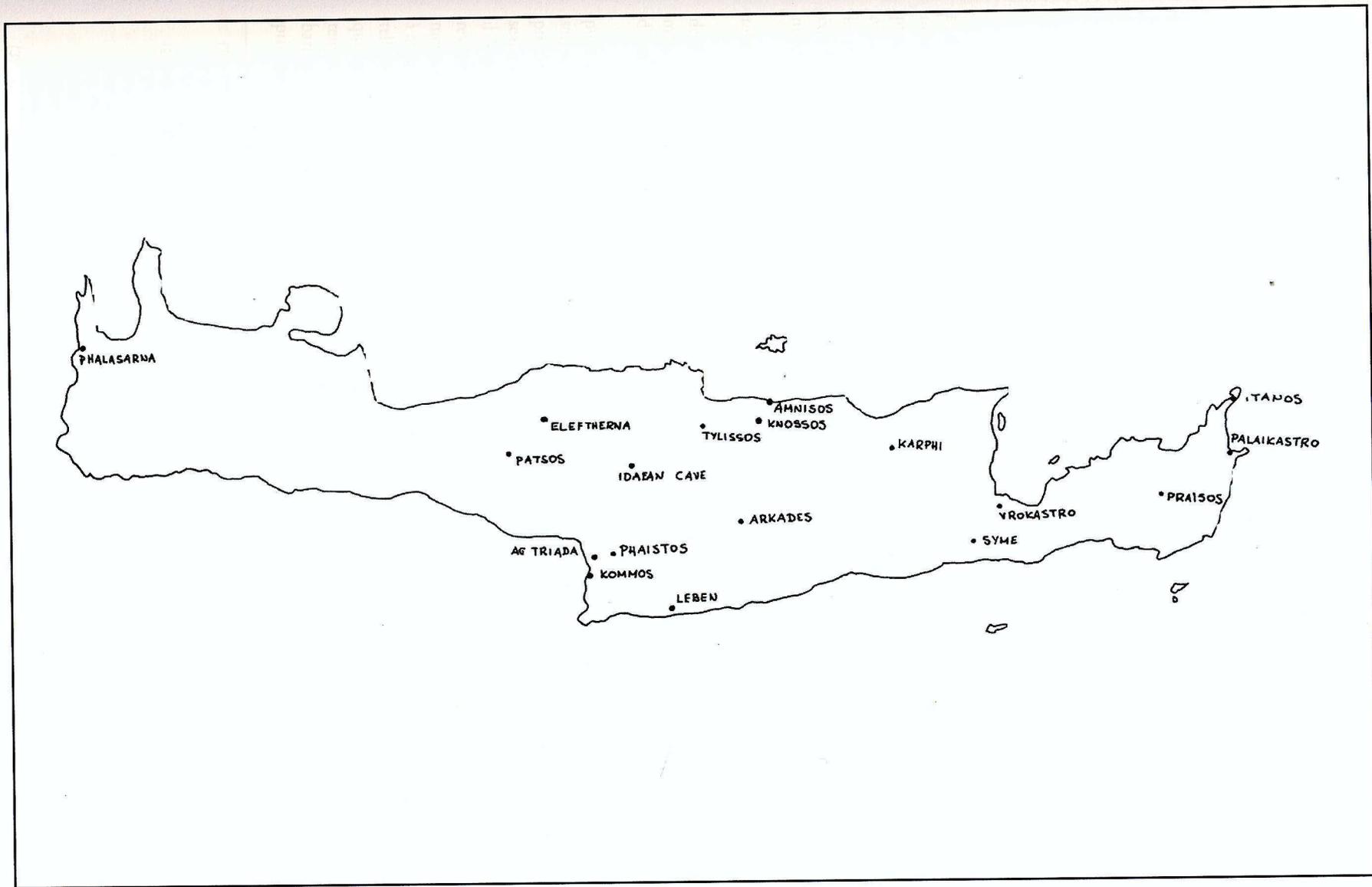
Fig. 2.
Back view of the cippus.



Fig. 3.
Front view of a eippus from kourion, the Apollo Hylates Sanctuary



Fig. 4.
Back view of the cippus.



Nora Kourou

Fig. 5. Crete: Main sites of the Early Iron Age with Near Eastern Evidence