

ANDREAS DEMETRIOU

PHOENICIANS IN CYPRUS AND THEIR HELLENISATION THE CASE OF KITION

Introduction

Cyprus, an island of 9,237 sq. kms, lies a short distance off the coast of Asia. A mere 75 kms separate it from Cilicia, 100 from Syria, 350 from Egypt and 385 kms from Rhodes and the Aegean. Due to its location in the centre of the then known world, which was ideal for people to come and go, she observed waves of immigrants or passers by disembarking at her shores, either for commerce, emigration or robbery. Some of them, especially those aspiring to power came as masters and conquerors, while some others invaded the island for the sake of getting away her riches, leaving behind ashes and ruins.

The event that stamped permanently the life of Cyprus was the arrival of the Mycenaean Greeks. This arrival can clearly be followed in the archaeological horizon of the island. It started in late 13th century, if not slightly earlier, an idea favoured by us (Demetriou, 1997, 207), and continued down to mid-11th century. By that time the island was almost completely hellenised, if we can judge by the creation of a new pottery type based on the latest Mycenaean ware and used all over the island (Proto-White Painted or Proto-Bichrome), the introduction to Cyprus of the chamber tomb with long dromos and converging walls, the emergence of the D-shaped fibula and the goddess with up-lifted arms, only to mention but a few novelties depending on prototypes of the Mycenaean world that speak in favour of Mycenaean Greeks establishing themselves permanently in Cyprus.

Echoes of this all important period and the then taking place radical events are the relevant references in authors of the earlier and later antiquity that speak of cities in Cyprus found in the "remote" past by Greek heroes of the Trojan war, when that expedition was over. However, these authors did not hesitate to mention that the pre-Greek population gathered itself at Amathus turning it into their stronghold (Χατζηϊωάννου K., 1985, 72-81. Seibert J., 1976, 2) and that the Phoenicians did have their own stronghold, Kition, which occupied the site of modern Larnaka.

Historical outline

Kition will be the focus of our attention, because it is *par excellence* the meeting place of two distinct groups of people, Phoenicians and Greeks, and no doubt the autochthonous Cypriots were not excluded from this encounter and the same holds good for the foreigners flocking into the harbour of the town. It was a truly cosmopolitan city with all the advantages of such a multi-cultured population.

The first inhabitants of Kition take us back to the late Early Bronze Age, that is 2000 -1900 B.C., although traces of human presence in the area are discernible even earlier (E. Gjerstad, 1979, 249. Karageorghis, 1976, 25). In the Late Bronze Age it had developed into an important city. In the late 13th century we come across numerous new finds and features that speak in favour of newcomers from the Aegean, although commercial intercourse with Egypt, Syria and Palestine continued unhampered. The new cultural outlook of the town furnishes us with a fresh town plan with streets, houses, temples, installations for smelting copper and a fortification wall which reminds us strongly of the Cyclopean ones seen at this time elsewhere in Cyprus (Enkomi, Maa, Sinda etc.). One observes also a new way of construction resem-

bling that of Enkomi, the local manufacture of Mycenaean types of pottery and jewellery, the introduction of the horns of consecration to name only but a few changes that speak in favour of the appearance of the Mycenaean Greeks in the area of Kition towards the very end of the 13th century B.C. (Karageorghis, 1976, 58, 59, 71f).

This Mycenaean settlement thrived for two centuries. Around the turning point of the millennium, a natural calamity (floods?) seems to have befallen the town. As a result of that, the sacred quarters were deserted and many of the inhabitants left. This picture remained unaltered up to mid 9th century B.C. when we have the arrival of the Phoenicians as permanent settlers in the long ago semi-deserted Mycenaean town (Baurain, Bonnet, 1992, 110). New edifices were constructed and the Mycenaean temple I was rebuilt and slightly modified to suit their needs. According to a Phoenician inscription — for which there is no unanimity as to its translation — on a Red Slip bowl found in the courtyard of the temple and associated with its earliest period (850-800 B.C.), the divinity worshipped there was Astarte. This temple, one of the biggest ever discovered in the Phoenician world, measuring 35x22m, the courtyard excluded, was the centre of the religious life of the city in its early phase, only to be superseded in importance in the early 7th century B.C. by the worship of Herakles-Melqart in another temple.

Kition, whose name is unknown in its early days of the Mycenaean period, was at the beginning a dependency of Tyre, ruled by a representative sent from it. Due to a Phoenician custom it was named Qartihadast, that is new city, and under this name is mentioned by the Assyrians who conquered Cyprus in 707 B.C. In the stele of Sargon II erected at Kition at that time (pl. XXa,b,c), we learn that he subdued seven kings of Ya (= Cyprus), a district of Yadnana (= the land of Danaoi, that is Greece). Unfortunately not even a name of the seven kings or their cities is given. The only important clue we reach is that the Assyrians regarded Cyprus as part of the broader Hellenic world.

Of great importance for the history of Cyprus is the prism-inscription of Esarchaddon written in 673/2 B.C. With it we are very fortunate as there is reference of 22 localities along with the names of their kings. Ten localities out of the whole are grouped together and are Cypriot. Thus, we learn of the existence of ten kingdoms and the names of their kings. One of them is Qartihadast, a name very probably used for Kition (Gjerstad, 1979, 233) down to mid 7th century B.C. when we last encounter it (Luckenbill, 341, § 876). Soon after 500 B.C. the Phoenician kings of the place designate themselves as kings of Kition and this is the name used for the town ever after. Whether the same name was in use for the Mycenaean pre-existing habitation we shall never be sure, although such a hypothesis is not excluded (Nicolaou 1976, 309f). In fact it is strengthened by A. Dupont-Sommer (*RDAC* 1974, 83f.), who refers to a Phoenician inscription from Nora-Sardinia that calls Tyre mother of Kition (Gjerstad, 1979, 237 n.3). This inscription is in archaic form and dated in the 9th or early 8th century B.C. It is also strengthened by Flavius Josephus who mentions that Menandros of Ephesos, a scholar who studied the Tyrian archives, calls the people of the Tyrian colony Kitieis, that is "citizens of Kition" (Gjerstad 1979, 238; Josephus *Antiq.* IX, 283f.). Another reason that speaks in favour of this hypothesis is the fact that the name Kittim appears in the Old Testament, though it is used for the whole of Cyprus and even for the islands beyond (Hill 1948, 96) and not for Kition alone. This of course reminds us of Alasia, a name for which we are not sure whether it was used for a specific town or for the whole of Cyprus in the Bronze Age.

What probably happened with the Phoenicians of Qartihadast is that they established themselves peacefully in an area which was sparsely populated, the name pre-existed their arrival and when they severed relations with their mother-city, they adopted the name used by the local population prior to their estab-

lishment. Therefore, from the very beginning Kition must have been a town with a mixed population but with the Phoenicians having commercial and economic supremacy, the strong basis that gave them social and power supremacy as well. The first name of a king of Kition that came down to us on the prism inscription of Esarchaddon is Damusi, which is equated with Tammuz (Gjerstad 1979, 239). This being so, it denoted that the political power of the town was in Phoenician hands as early as the beginning of the 7th century B.C. if not earlier, as we here believe, an idea that finds support by the Nora inscription.

The Ionian revolt against Persia in 499 B.C. found, according to Herodotus (V 104), the Cypriot kings with the exception of Amathus siding with the Ionians. If Kition was not participating in the cause, Herodotus might have mentioned that. So it is taken as a fact that Kition sided with the Greek kingdoms against the Persians. We all know the fatal outcome of that struggle, after which the Persian yoke must have been harsher and it is only natural to see the Persians favouring on the throne of the various cities men with persophile feelings whom they could trust. How far they exploited the Phoenician element in Cyprus, especially after the expedition of Xerxes against Greece and his defeat at Salamis and Plataia, we cannot be sure but we regard this a natural course of events. Things for the Cypriot cities got worse, especially after Cimon's expedition against Cyprus and the peace of Callias that ensued. Otherwise there is no explanation for the rapid expansion of the Phoenicians in the whole of Cyprus.

By mid-5th century they are in control of Idalion after besieging it twice — the first siege being laid with the collaboration of the Persians — they usurped the throne of Salamis and we have Phoenician kings at Lapithos and Marion. The conquest of Idalion must have taken place immediately after Cimon's death outside Kition and the departure of the Greek army. This left them with a free hand to deal with Idalion which they have tried already once to incorporate unsuccessfully. This time, however, they were successful and we can place their victory between 450 - 445 B.C.

No doubt there must have been smaller or bigger pockets of Phoenicians all over Cyprus at all times, after all they were merchants chasing material wealth, but their remarkable expansion after mid 5th century B.C. can only be explained by the absence of Greek mainland forces and not by mere commercial endeavours. But even then, an extra bit was needed and that was the favour of the Persians after the lukewarm stance of the Cypriot kings against their fellow Greeks in the battles they participated in when they followed Xerxes. This Phoenician expansion was checked for several years by king Evagoras of Salamis (411 - 373) who collaborated with Athens to bring the whole of Cyprus under his own control. Such a turn of events would have benefited Evagoras considerably, but surely he was not striving only for his own material interest as some scholars recently support (Maier 1985, 38) but also for hellenism for whom he was the most renowned champion in Cypriot history (Demetriou 1992, 66ff.).

The main power opposing Evagoras in his effort to control the whole of Cyprus was Kition although other cities like Soloi and Amathus turned to Persia for military assistance as well (Hill 1949, 132). The conflict of the two cities is mirrored, albeit not in detail, in ancient authors. However, the written sources do not mention the whole story, as they omit events that should have been recorded. Such an event is a naval battle off Kition between Kition and Salamis, very early in the reign of king Melikiathon of Kition. On a marble basis on which a war trophy was added — now missing — a Phoenician inscription in three lines commemorates the victory of Melikiathon against his enemy (the name is not mentioned but obviously Evagoras is meant) who had the Paphians as auxiliaries (pl. XXIa). The word "tropaion" used in the epigraphy does not exist in Phoenician and it is adopted from the Greek on this particular occasion. The inscription was dated by M. Szynger to 392 B.C. (RDAC 1992, 164).

A little more than a decade had elapsed and Kition witnessed another naval battle of Evagoras but this time against Persian forces who no doubt had fought having the king of Kition as their ally. This battle took place in 381 B.C., one year after the Persians invaded the island in order to suppress the power of Evagoras. The latter made a sudden attack on the superior fleet of the enemy and despite initial success he was finally defeated. He retreated to Salamis where he was besieged by the Persian generals Orontes and Tirivazos but succeeded in signing a peace treaty with the Persians that let him be on the throne of Salamis.

About the middle of the 4th century Pumiathon, the last king of Kition, bought for fifty talents the Kingdom of Tamassos, sold to him by its prodigal king Pasikypros who retired to Amathus as a layman (Athenaeus IV 167 c-d). This Phoenician expansion was solely due to a transaction that enabled Kition to check the land from the coast of Larnaka to central Cyprus and the northern foothills of Troodos. In this way they could exploit the copper deposits of the region of Tamassos, take them through Idalion to Kition where most of the metal workshops were located.

This addition to the Kingdom of Kition did not last long. In 332 Alexander the Great, who meanwhile conquered Tyre, took it away from Kition and handed it over to king Pnytagoras of Salamis for his services towards him. Very probably Pumiathon of Kition kept a neutral position during the siege of Tyre by Alexander and the deprivation of Tamassos can be regarded as a sort of punishment.

The Kingdom of Kition did live for twenty more years after the fall of Tyre and it came to an end in 312 B.C. when Ptolemy Soter of Egypt decided to abolish kingship in Cyprus and put the island under the command of a governor appointed by him. The last king of Kition, who reigned for half a century was put to death because he was in touch with Antigonos of Asia Minor. The temple of Herakles-Melqart, the city god, was razed to the ground, an act of political meaning denoting the end of the life of Kition as an independent Kingdom.

Religion in Kition

The gods whose cults were introduced at Kition were primarily Phoenician. We had the chance to refer to the majestic temple of Astarte erected in the 2nd half of the 9th century B.C. on the foundations of an older derelict Mycenaean temple. Astarte was the major deity in the Phoenician pantheon at this early stage and it is very natural to encounter her at Kition, after being brought in by the first settlers. Four major changes have been observed during the five centuries of its life, and the floor was raised several times. In the end it seems that it was demolished on purpose and abandoned towards the end of the 4th century B.C., very probably by the army of Ptolemy I Soter.

The city-god of Kition was by late 5th century B.C. Herakles-Melqart. Its temple was built next to the harbour. Architectural remains are scanty and date to Cypro Geometric III late. It seems that at the beginning there was an open temenos. A sanctuary replaced it in the early Archaic and it stood there throughout the Classical period, only to be deliberately destroyed in 312 by Ptolemy Soter in order to show that the days of the ancient kingdom of Kition were over, and the political power rested solely in his hands.

The identification of the temple as that of Herakles-Melqart is based on the evidence of sculptures (Nikolaou 1976, 104). The earlier ones bear Egyptian influence as Cyprus was occupied by Egypt between 569-545 B.C., but the later ones are under strong Greek influence of the late Archaic period of c. 500 B.C. Zeus Keravnios is a perfect example of this influence (pl. XXIb) along with Herakles dressed in lion's skin

raising his club above his head (pl. XXIC) (Gjerstad in *SCE* III, 75, pl. XIV, 3). Generally, the development of this important artistic branch follows the trend prevalent in the rest of the island with very few purely Phoenician features, however strange this may sound.

The idea that the Phoenicians took over a pre-existing cult of Herakles (Nicolau 1976, 104) and built a temple dedicated to Melqart as he had approximately the same qualities of the Greek hero does not seem probable. In fact it is nearer the truth if we surmise that the Phoenicians built the temple for their Melqart and the Greek sect of the population equated him with Herakles and started taking their offerings to his temple worshipping him as Herakles. Thus, he acquired its dual name through this practice and towards the end of the 6th century B.C. it was very much influenced by Greek culture, as regards the plastic arts.

In other areas where they expanded, exactly the opposite must have happened and we see the Phoenicians adapting their deities to Greek ones as the latter were preexisting. At Idalion next to goddess Athena they put the name of their Anat, next to Apollo the name of Reshef Mikal etc.

As there were no monotheistic beliefs, religion was not playing any important role in the division of the people and gradually we have an amalgamation of ideas, a sort of syncretistic religion where Greek gods assume qualities of Phoenician or Egyptian ones and vice versa. This trend must have begun in Cyprus as early as the sixth century B.C. accelerating in time and reaching its apogee in Hellenistic and Roman times.

At Kition, in addition to the above two temples we have another one dedicated to Aphrodite-Astarte standing next to the temple of Herakles-Melqart. Corroborative evidence for the worship of Aphrodite at Kition, thus for the existence of the aforementioned dual temple, is the petition of the Kitians living in Piraeus to the Athenian Demos to grant them permission to build a temple to Aphrodite, a petition that was met favourably in 333/2 B.C. (Hill 1948, 152).

More sanctuaries were discovered at Kition or in the vicinity but for most of them we can only guess about the god worshipped in each one. The sanctuaries at sites Kamilarka and Chrysopolitissa date to the Archaic-Classical period and the finds speak in favour of strong Greek influence c. 500 B.C. Many limestone and terracotta figurines, mostly female, were discovered in the latter denoting the worship of a female goddess.

The sanctuary of Eshmun-Melqart was situated outside Kition on the south-east bank of the Salt Lake. Pieces of marble bowls were discovered along with Black-glazed Attic sherds bearing Phoenician graffiti.

On the north-eastern bank of the Salt Lake and closer to Kition was the sanctuary of Artemis Paralia dating to the Roman period with a strong probability of it existing in Ptolemaic times. Finds from late Archaic and Classical times (Nicolau 1976, 109, 111) may indicate continuous veneration of Artemis in this sanctuary as early as the late 6th century B.C., although the exact name of the deity at this early stage is not known to us. Very probably the temple was dedicated to a Phoenician goddess who had approximately the qualities of Artemis though not as a huntress but as a protector of the guild of the salt-gatherers. This ingenious proposition was put forth by M. Yon (M. Yon 1992, 303) who regards the term "παράλια" as a synthesis of prefix παρά (=near) and the noun ἅλς (=salt), that is Artemis beside the salt, and not Artemis by the seaside.

In fact Yon argues that the patroness of the temple was the Great Goddess and that Artemis took over in Graeco-Roman times, I would say Hellenistic times, when religious syncretisms provided some kind of unification of the representation of deities that gave to the Great Goddess more specific and differentiat-

ed faces. In this case she was regarded as a goddess of wild nature and out of the Greek pantheon the equivalent goddess was Artemis and this is how she took over the protection of the place.

More temples were discovered at Kition, all of them in very poor condition and dating mostly to the time of prosperity that is the Archaic and Classical times, but we have not recovered any names of deities worshipped in them.

What one can deduce from this short survey is that the Phoenicians got their gods with them when they settled at Kition. Gradually, they were adapted to their Greek counterparts accepting offerings from both Phoenicians and Greeks. The images used for their gods as from the end of the 6th century B.C. were almost entirely influenced by Greek art, thus they were in the general artistic trend prevailing all over the island at the time.

As regards terracotta figures they follow closely what happens in stone sculpture. In the first half of the 6th century they show Egyptian influence but later on, it seems that we have a new school, purely Greek. Whether we have an artistic influence or the arrival of Greek caroplasts at Kition in the 5th century, one cannot say (Nicolaou 1976, 223).

The great number of the terracottas and their stylistic consistency speak of local manufacture and not imports. The clay quality is very good and the products of the workshop renewed the types of local religion but infusing in them oriental splendour and the sublime purity of Greek forms (Nicolaou 1976, *ibid.*). It seems that at Kition there existed no Phoenician terracotta workshop of importance and the same may hold true for sculpture in stone as well. To this end speaks the rarity of finds of pure Phoenician character (SCE IV:2, 337). Exception to the rule are miniature terracotta stelae 10 cm. high, bearing a Hathoric head and dating to the sixth century B.C. (pl. XXIIa, portrayed here by kind permission of Prof. M. Yon). Hathoric heads in stone were probably added on top of free-standing capitals and their size is impressive. Such a head is in display in the Louvre Museum. Small terracotta figurines representing probably the Great Goddess with hands holding her breasts and pregnant is also in the Phoenician spirit.

The Phoenicians themselves were concentrating on commerce and industry and less on art, save the branch of miniature scale on expensive raw material like gold, silver and ivory as we perceive from finds elsewhere in Cyprus.

It should have been an omission not to refer in a more detailed way on Zeus Keravnios whose statue dating to c. 500 B.C. was discovered along with many others by the Swedish Cyprus Expedition in the sanctuary of Herakles-Melqart in 1929-30. Its height is only 56 cm, but the forcefulness of expression makes it one of the best exhibits in the Cyprus Museum (pl. XXIb). Written records about the worship of the god go back to the Hellenistic period only! However, there is a Phoenician inscription carved on a small altar dating to c. 340 B.C. (Nicolaou 1976, 119) which mentions the word "Reshepkhetz" translated as "he who hurls the thunderbolt". Having this in mind, we believe that the small statue of Zeus had been made on order and it was a perfect match to its Phoenician equivalent. In this way we can speak of another pair of a Greek-Phoenician god where both communities could pay their homage as early as 500 B.C., although we lack epigraphic material substantiating this idea at such an early stage.

Connected with religious architecture, we have two Ionic capitals that are worth mentioning for their importance in the history of architecture. One of them was discovered in 1879 and there is a reference speaking for more coming from the area of Bamboula. It was of local gypsum, a material used extensively at Kition (Karageorghis 1984, 209).

The second capital was donated to the Larnaka Museum by a citizen who kept it in his yard for many years but its exact provenance is unknown. This capital is of calcarenite.

Both of them are relatively small measuring 49x115x49 and 62x102x49 cm respectively. The first one of gypsum is regarded by J. Coulton as dating after 525 B.C. and showing cross influences from the Aegean or even Palestine. The second capital may well be ascribed to early 5th, but can be as late as 4th century (Karageorghis 1984, 213).

To our view the basic idea of the Ionic capital was adopted from the Aegean, but as always the Cypriot craftsman adds details of his own or details that he might have borrowed from elsewhere.

Coinage of Kition

The Kingdom of Kition was among the first to issue coins, and we are very fortunate to have a complete series from about 500 B.C. to 312 B.C. The numismatic evidence shows us that the first issue of c. 500 B.C. was an epigraphic having a couching lion with reverted head on the obverse while the reverse was smooth, a practice we observe on the earliest coinage of Salamis, which was the first Cypriot city to issue coins, about a quarter of a century earlier. Around 479 B.C. we have a new coin type issued by king Baalmelek who reigned from 479 to 450 B.C. On the obverse we see Herakles-Melqart wearing lion's skin, carrying club and bow and advancing to the right (pl. XXIIb). On the reverse we have a seated lion and Phoenician inscription. This new coin type was adopted by his successors who however proceeded with a major change on the reverse. As from the time of Azbaal (450-425 B.C.), the seated lion was replaced by a lion attacking a stag (pl. XXIIc). The successors of Azbaal, Baalmelek II (425-400 B.C.), Baalrom (400-394), Melikiathon (394-361 B.C.) and Pumiathon (361-312 B.C.) carried on faithfully this tradition until the abolition of the Kingdom in 312 B.C. (Nicolaou I., 1987, 334).

The die-engraver of the Kition coinage could have been a resident of Kition working very much under Greek influence, from an artistic point of view. Herakles with all his attributes on one and the same scene — club, lion skin, and bow are all carried by the hero simultaneously — excludes the probability of a mainland Greek artist and supports the view of a Kitian working in the Greek tradition. It is almost certain that the idea of placing Herakles-Melqart on the obverse of the coins derives from Tyrian coins bearing Melqart on a sea-horse (Georgiades-Destrooper A. 1987, 347).

Burial Grounds

Our survey will be incomplete if we do not examine the burial grounds of Kition. Due to the expansion of modern Larnaka, especially after the influx of thousands of refugees from the northern part of Cyprus in 1974 when heavily armed Turkish troops occupied the area, many tombs came to light contributing invaluable information in the understanding of life at Kition. Cemeteries dating to the Cypro-Archaic II, Cypro-Classical and Hellenistic periods were excavated at the localities Ayios Georgios or Mnemata, Ayios Prodromos, Pervolia and Tourabi.

The tombs were excavated into a hard "havara" layer which is more of a crust over hard clay lying underneath. Into this clay the chambers for the dead were actually dug. Although differing in size they shared common characteristics especially in the 5th and 4th centuries B.C. These characteristics were the

rectangular entrance placed in the centre of the long axis of the tomb, with a big slab of the same shape blocking it, and the barrel-shaped roof which sprung from the floor. The corpses were placed quite often in plain sarcophagi of gypsum but the offerings were invariably placed outside. In the corners of the chamber next to the entrance, big Canaanite type amphorae were placed probably for some sort of liquid, like wine or oil. Such types of tombs are unrecorded in Phoenicia proper but there is no doubt to the excavator that they were Phoenician as they were dug after the Phoenician penetration (Hadjisavvas 1984, 363f.) Despite the origin of their occupants, one is surprised by the complete absence of characteristic Phoenician religious symbols like goddess Tanit, well known in the colonies of the west, and the topshets. It is also true that no burial stelae topped by a miniature temple with a goddess or baityl have been recovered. The peculiarities observed at Kition are, according to Hadjisavvas (Hadjisavvas 1992, 234), due to the presence of the Greek element which was not assimilated, and the tendency of the Phoenicians to adopt foreign cultural traits. To our view it is more natural to see a common type of tomb for both Greek and Phoenicians being created after two to three centuries of co-existence with small variations creeping in every now and then, denoting the taste of the family of the deceased.

The tomb gifts varied considerably ranging from Attic vases (pl. XXIIIa), terracotta horse riders and other figurine types richly decorated and probably in the local Cypriot spirit, pendants and amulets of bluish faience in the form of Egyptian deities, to a characteristic female figurine with features of pregnancy, widespread in the Phoenician world. Needless to say that great quantities of pottery, local or Phoenician, was accompanying the deceased. Very few sarcophagi with anthropomorphic lids follow Phoenician prototypes of ultimately Egyptian origin.

Of immense importance for the history of Kition, although few in number, are the burial stelae, the semata, erected above the tombs. Five of them bear inscriptions. They usually show a mixture of Greek and Phoenician features, but the craftsman's ambition was to create, artistically speaking, something Greek. Therefore, it is legitimate for one to surmise that if the craftsmen were not Greeks, they were working in the Greek spirit (Hadjisavvas 1992, 234).

Two of the stelae, rectangular in section narrowing towards the top and resembling obelisks, Levantine in outlook, bear below the pyramidal tops the Greek motif of relief ogees. Another one is covered with an anthemium having below it two schematic rosettes (pl. XXIIIb). Between the anthemium and the rosettes there is a Phoenician inscription neatly carved, mentioning that it was erected by Baal-ram for this father Esmoun-Adon, the genealogy of whom follows.

Among the personal names carved on these five stelae one encounters Phoenician, Hebrew (Azar-Yahou, Lewi), Greek (Didyme) and Hittite (Mula). For the last one, however, we have a new interpretation of the term *ml htyt* of the inscription. J. Teixidor argues convincingly that we do not have the name of a woman followed by an ethnic term (=Moula the Hittite) but the function of a person (=the salt man) (Teixidor 1986, 489). In this way this brief inscription would run: To Eshmoun-Adon, son of Baal-amas the salt man. Thus, at present we have to satisfy ourselves with the existence of names coming from three and not four different nationalities.

The sociological inferences from the mixed marriages of these inscriptions, if the inscriptions were interpreted correctly, are far reaching since they stress the fact of peaceful co-existence among all three of them. This is not unnatural if one thinks that Kition was a thriving harbour-town with people of many nationalities doing business. The burial gifts are very explicit about these contacts which were maintained with lands near and far. Egypt, Athens, the Aegean, Phoenicia, Cilicia, Carthage, Sardinia and as far away

as the Pillars of Hercules, in one word the whole of the Mediterranean, did trade with Cyprus and Kition in particular.

The uniformity of the cultural picture of Kition resulted from the existence of a large number of Greek Cypriots who contributed greatly to this effect. By mid 6th century B.C. we have the Greek culture penetrating deep into Kition. The Phoenicians who were the masters of the place were influenced by the superior Greek culture and they adopted even for their gods Greek artistic forms. Their burial grounds are indistinguishable from the Greek ones and specific Phoenician burial cultural traits seen elsewhere are absent from Kition.

In conclusion we would say that the Phoenicians established themselves at Kition in mid-9th century B.C. They have been living side by side with the Greeks who were residing in a semi-deserted Mycenaean town. The Phoenicians did have the political power in the town at least from around 700 to 312 B.C., when they established a royal house. Culturally speaking, the Phoenicians were almost hellenised but they kept their own script (it would have been very surprising if they would adopt the cumbersome Cypro-syllabic) and their fervent for commerce, an inner force that drove them to almost every part of Cyprus, albeit in small numbers.

At all events, despite the hellenised outlook of their culture, they have always been aware of their ethnic identity, however blunt such a feeling became through centuries of co-habitation with the Greeks of Cyprus. It seems that it was strong enough not to allow them assimilation by the Greeks and something more than cultural influence was needed. This extra something was the destruction of the temple of Herakles Melqart by Ptolemy I, which was their religious centre for at least four centuries, along with the abolition of kingship. In this way the Phoenicians lost in one and the same blow not only the political supremacy they enjoyed in the city, but also their religious centre with which their identity was so much connected.

After this event which occurred in 312 B.C. the Phoenicians lose fairly quickly their ethnic identity in the universality of the Hellenistic world. Only rarely we have a few references mostly from funerary inscriptions which speak of the Phoenicians of Kition. When the Romans conquer the island, the Phoenicians have already been absorbed by the Greeks and only some personal names remind us of their long presence in Cyprus, exactly as it happened centuries later with the Lusignian and Venetian rulers of Cyprus, whose presence is reminded by a few monuments and some surnames existing to the present day.

ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Η πόλη του Κιτίου είχε ήδη κατοικηθεί από Φοίνικες τον 9ο π.Χ. αιώνα. Φαίνεται πάντως πως στον οικισμό αυτό θα υπήρχαν Έλληνες, οι οποίοι είχαν κτίσει στο μέρος εκείνο την προ της άφιξης των Φοινίκων πόλη. Τα δυο εθνικά στοιχεία θα συνυπήρχαν καθ' όλη τη ζωή της πόλης, αν και δεν μπορούμε να γνωρίζουμε την πληθυσμιακή αναλογία τους.

Αν κρίνουμε από την επίδραση της ελληνικής τέχνης στην τέχνη του Κιτίου καθώς και την ελληνική επίδραση σε θέματα θρησκείας, ταφικών εθίμων κτλ., τότε ο αριθμός των Ελλήνων δε θα ήταν ευκαταφρόνητος.

Παρά τον πλήρη σχεδόν εξελληνισμό των Φοινίκων του Κιτίου, λόγω του ότι πάντοτε αυτοί είχαν τον πολιτικό έλεγχο της πόλης και λάτρευαν απρόσκοπτα τον Ηρακλή-Μέλκαρτ, ποτέ δεν απομειώθηκαν από το ελληνικό στοιχείο. Αυτό έγινε κατορθωτό μόνο, όταν έχασαν τον πολιτικό έλεγχο με την κατάργηση της βασιλείας και καταστράφηκαν ο ναός της Αστάρτης αλλά κυρίως ο ναός του Ηρακλή-Μέλκαρτ από τον Πτολεμαίο Α' το 312 π.Χ.

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