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RGZM – TAGUNGEN Band 20

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THE MEDITERRANEAN MIRROR

CULTURAL CONTACTS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA BETWEEN 1200 AND 750 B.C.

International Post-doc and Young Researcher Conference
Heidelberg, 6th-8th October 2012
The Conference would not have been possible without the generous support of the undermentioned sponsors.

The Publication of the Proceedings has been generously supported by

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Herstellung: betz-druck GmbH, Darmstadt
Printed in Germany.
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In many aspects, the period between the 12th and the 8th century BC, which covers most of the Late Bronze Age and the transition to the Early Iron Age of southern Portugal, is a turning point in the long-term historic process of this portion of the Portuguese territory. In this period, long distance commercial and cultural contacts with both the Atlantic and the Mediterranean spheres intensified, and it is a focal point if we are to understand the distinctive historical processes that took place during the 1st millennium BC and beyond. For obvious reasons I will focus here on the connection of southern Portugal – that is to say, the territory to the south of the Tagus River – with the Mediterranean; however, it must be said at this point that the impact of this connection is very uneven over the period that I will address. The Mediterranean impact on southern Portugal during this relatively long period assumed, in fact, different modalities, with different natures and intensities, and stemmed from very different historical contexts. The question I would like to explore here is how this connection evolved diachronically, and to try to ascertain the cultural significance of the »Mediterranean connection« in both moments. In order to do so, I will try to undertake a necessarily cursory presentation of the available data for both the Late Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age, attempting to assess the significance of Mediterranean cultural traits in each period in relation to the overall historic process.

A MARGIN BEYOND THE MARGINS? THE LATE BRONZE AGE

I should start by saying that our overall knowledge of the 2nd millennium BC in southern Portugal is fairly uneven. The vast work of synthesis undertaken by H. Schubart, which was fundamental in the definition of a culturally autonomous historic process in the southwest of the Iberian Peninsula, and namely in southern Portugal, during the Bronze Age,2 albeit illuminating, clearly reveals the asymmetric nature of the available data. In fact, a considerable volume of data was gathered for the Early and Middle Bronze Ages, but virtually all of it regarded funerary contexts which are abundant and fairly well known;3 in contrast, the habitats are scarcely documented, a fact that could point to a rather disperse settlement pattern, but also to a cultural choice to emphasize the spaces of death as the pivotal points in the construction of social cohesion.4 The situation changes drastically in the last third of the 2nd millennium, in the transition to the Late Bronze Age. In fact, and for a long time, knowledge regarding the southern Portuguese Bronze Age was limited to the identification of, and small interventions in, fortified hilltop settlements, such as Outeiro do Circo, Beja,5 Corôa do Frade, Évora,6 or Passo Alto, Serpa;7 as for the funerary contexts, the invisibility was almost complete, contrasting sharply with the preceding moments. In fact, only the exceptional tomb of Roça do Casal do Meio8 stood as testimony of Late Bronze Age funerary practices.
Since the 1990s, however, and especially due to recent work, derived both from research projects and from preventive archaeological interventions, growing light has been shed on this long marginalized phase of transition between prehistory and protohistory. I do not intend to present here a thorough historiographical synthesis of the research undertaken in the last decades, but I would like to point out some of the more recent contributions to the social and cultural characterization of the Late Bronze Age communities of the westernmost Iberian Peninsula. One of the most important aspects that arose from the several survey works undertaken since then, especially in the interior areas of Central and Lower Alentejo, is the fact that we now know that the large, fortified hilltop settlements that were once considered to be the main feature of Late Bronze Age territoriality are not isolated. In the territories that were more extensively explored, such as the Portuguese left side of the Guadiana and the mountainous areas of Central Alentejo, these large sites, that present complex fortification systems, appear in fact to articulate complex, apparently hierarchized settlement systems, comprising also smaller fortified settlements controlling strategic points and small open settlements directly related to the more fertile agricultural areas.

The existence of such diversified settlement systems which, on the other hand, seem to be well articulated with specific territories is consistent with the overall image of a growth in social complexity, which was already strongly suggested by such elements as the warrior stelae – that constitute one of the iconic features of the Late Bronze Age in the Southwest of the Iberian Peninsula – or the important concentration of gold and bronze deposits in Central Alentejo. The absence of systematic excavations and published data hinders our understanding of the socio-political and economic basis of such a process, but I would suggest that the explanation is probably manifold. At least part of the explanation must indeed stem from internal factors, such as an intensification in agriculture and herding, and the development of a full-fledged binary bronze metallurgy that in southern Portugal doesn’t in fact appear to become generalized until the Late Bronze Age.

As for the external factors, their weight and position in the overall historic process of this period remains difficult to assess; it has recently been noted that the whole area to the south of the Tagus, by opposition to the central Portuguese territory, remained rather on the margin of the Atlantic and Mediterranean networks of circulation and trade, a view supported by the scarce presence of exogenous elements.
in Late Bronze Age contexts. A recent inventory of materials of Mediterranean origin predating the beginning of Phoenician colonization20 demonstrated that besides from few in number, such elements are also fairly standardized in nature, dominated by far by the fibulae – of the »elbow« and »rolled arch« types first, and later on, in moments that can already coincide with the presence of the Phoenicians in the West, of the double spring type – and other cosmetic and adornment elements, such as tweezers, ivory combs or glass beads (fig. 2). Some iron tools like small knives, are also present.21 Unfortunately, many of these elements come from debatable contexts, and the assessment of their chronology and true meaning remains problematic. It has been noted that even in the coastal areas, all the imported elements appear to arrive no earlier than the 10th century, and in the interior most of them could easily be placed in the 9th century and even later, so a connection with early Phoenician trade cannot be completely discarded.

The problem is that there is still a great deal of uncertainty regarding the origins of the Late Bronze Age territorial systems mentioned above,22 so it is very difficult, not to say for the moment impossible, to relate these imports and the evolution of settlement patterns, and try to draw any observations regarding the possible impact of the former in local socio-political structures. It has been suggested that, given the lack of data regarding the foundational chronologies of the large fortified sites, a direct relation between the rise of such »central places« and the social complexity it entails, and the arrival of the aforementioned Mediterranean imports cannot be excluded.23 This hypothesis cannot be categorically proved or dismissed, but the example of Castro dos Ratinhos (Moura), a fairly large settlement with a complex fortification system whose foundation predates the arrival of oriental elements,24 suggests that such foreign elements must have been introduced in a historical process of growing complexity that was already developing on a local/regional scale.

I myself think that one must not see the growth of complexity in local communities as an episodic moment of transition from the Early/Middle Bronze Age to the Late Bronze Age or, for that matter, as an equally episodic response to external stimuli, but rather as a diachronic movement that must have started within Early/Middle Bronze Age communities, and that kept on intensifying during the entire span of the Late Bronze Age. From this point of view, the contact with more or less distant communities and the growing – albeit marginal – integration in long distance circuits must have played a part in the progressive construction of the ideological discourses of power that gave rise to the relative complexity that characterized the Late Bronze Age, but that growing complexity and the rise of local elites, politically able to coordinate productive efforts and to organize the distribution of foreign goods within the local social structure, must have been a critical factor in the attainment by western Iberian communities of a more active role in those circuits.
The presence of the Mediterranean in the southern Portuguese territory, however, would only become fully consolidated in the late 9th century, when the first attested direct contacts with the Phoenician merchants and colonists—that had likely settled in the south of the Iberian Peninsula since the middle of the century— took place. The available panorama for the transition from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age was until recently a fairly simple one: in the coastal areas, a pronounced oriental presence was documented, dictating a rapid »orientalization« of a considerable number of coastal settlements, most of which have yielded evidences of Late Bronze Age occupations; on the other hand, the interior areas seemed to have remained rather on the margin of this process of »orientalization«, having adopted certain, limited, foreign objects within their own sets of practices and ways of living, and then so only in relatively late chronologies, from the 6th century onwards.

Recent research and the publication of new data has come to show, however, that there is much more to be said about this transition phase, as well as about the mechanisms behind the apparent opening of local communities to the Mediterranean and its cultural inputs. This apparently simple pattern was finally disrupted by the recent publication of the results of the important excavation work undertaken in the site of Castro dos Ratinhos (Moura, Beja).

One of the excavated areas corresponds to what appears to have been an acropolis within the site, with independent walls demarcating an apparently reserved space and a complex sequence of occupation during the Late Bronze Age, with several superposing levels, in which oval huts of large dimensions were documented. For the purposes of this exposition, however, the most interesting element is that in a moment dated by 14C from the end of the 9th century (that is to say, roughly contemporary or just a few years later than the coastal contexts where the earliest oriental elements were documented, as we will see), a reform of the »acropolis« took place, and an orthogonal building (fig. 3), completely alien to the local architectural tradition, was built on this area of the settlement. This building closely follows well-known oriental architectural models and, in fact, it was demonstrated that the construction was modulated using Near Eastern units of measurement. Both the plant and several features documented in the interior of this building allowed for a functional interpretation as a sanctuary, undoubtedly designed and executed by individuals holding an oriental know-how, a fact that seems rather perplexing given the geographical setting of the site, the very archaic chronology obtained for this structure, and the fact that the coastal settlements connected to the Guadiana do not yield any evidence of important contacts with oriental merchants and colonists at such an early stage. This oriental building within a clearly indigenous settlement in the interior area of southern Portugal does not, on the other hand, correlate to any significant imported elements. The entire array of archaeological material connected to this phase, which consists mainly of handmade pottery, is of local tradition, a fact that seems also rather baffling.

Also puzzling is the fate that this building was to suffer. Constructed, as noted above, towards the last quarter of the 9th century, this building and its contemporaneous circular huts appear to have been destroyed towards the mid-8th century, a moment that seems to have been characterized by episodes of violence, as shown by evidences of fires associated with crawls from the wall that delimitated the acropolis. It has been suggested, and I tend to agree, that the end of this fairly short, episodic oriental presence in the Late Bronze Age site of Castro dos Ratinhos ended with a movement of rejection by the local community of the foreign, oriental element. Such a rejection is also exemplarily demonstrated by the construction of new structures with the ancestral, local techniques over the partially destroyed sanctuary, showing what some might perceive as a general cultural »retrocession«. It is curiously, however, in this phase that the only—and, indeed, very few—imported materials make their appearance in the site.
The empirical documentation of such a rejection movement is, in my opinion, one of the more interesting contributions of the archaeological works undertaken on this site. It goes to show that the presence and/or influence of Phoenician merchants and colonists do not necessarily entail a progressive, linear evolution pattern towards some sort of acculturation that would mark the transition to the so called orientalizing period. The reception of such foreign stimuli was necessarily a negotiated process, with social and political overtones. I have suggested elsewhere, very much in line with the interpretation of the researchers that undertook the intervention in Castro dos Ratinhos, that the presence of this oriental building in such a geographical and chronological context would perhaps be more easily explainable from the point of view of the indigenous historic process, rather than from the point of view of the interests of the oriental merchants and colonists.

Indeed, it goes without saying that the distinct local communities of the Late Bronze Age of the Southwestern Iberian Peninsula were organized in complex regional networks, and that the first impact of the foundation of Cádiz must have sent shockwaves through these networks, news of it reaching fairly distant communities. This being said and given that, as I discussed earlier, the local elites were still (in fact, I would almost say always) searching for new ways of legitimation and new elements to enrich their power discourses and to make them more socially compelling, it seems possible, if not even probable, that the leaders of some of the local communities may have taken an active stance, effectively seeking contact with the newly arrived Eastern Mediterranean populations in order to gain access to a new vector through which to build and, especially, to express their power and their social identity, with obvious consequences in the overall social structure. This could well explain the presence of a conceptually oriental sanctuary in the context of a possibly privileged area of a local settlement.

I must admit, however, that we have fairly limited evidence for the actual impact this sanctuary and its builders may have had on the site and, for that matter, on all of its surrounding areas. The fact is that geography
was against this undertaking – accessibility must have been a serious problem, at a time when, as far as we
know, there was no network of sites of similar characteristics in place to support a hypothetical commercial
route. And perhaps the resources of the territory directly explored by Castro dos Ratinhos were not enticing
enough to Phoenician merchants.

But the case of Castro dos Ratinhos must not have been an isolated one either. The fact that the presence
of Phoenician imports coincides with the last moments of the life of – at least some of – the large fortified
settlements is, indeed, fairly well documented in other contexts, such as the site of Alto de S. Gens (Re-
dondo, Central Alentejo), where Phoenician imports dated to the 7th century (in historical chronology) were
exhumed together with the typically local material of the Late Bronze Age.39

The hypothesis that the material retrieved in Alto de S. Gens, both the local and the exogenous, belonged to
a single phase of occupation40 – which would of course imply that this site was founded already during this
transition phase – is very suggestive, but unfortunately, the poor state of conservation of the site does not
allow for a contextual analysis of these imported materials. And given the longevity of the typical local Late
Bronze Age pottery types, this possible (even plausible) late foundation and the short life of the settlement
cannot be completely demonstrated. What seems clear is that, whether the settlement was long standing or
short lived, the introduction of Phoenician imports in this site must have shortly predated its abandonment
during a far-reaching process of transformation of the social landscape of the interior territory of southern
Portugal. In fact, and for the entire region of inner Alentejo, symptomatically, virtually none of the large
fortified Late Bronze Age sites – and, for that matter, none of the small open ones either – present signifi-
cant evidences of continuity into the Early Iron Age. The settlement solutions documented for the Early
Iron Age41 are, indeed, very different in their nature to the Late Bronze Age ones, and the Mediterranean
element, which is reintroduced in later moments of the first half of the 1st millennium, is handled in very
different ways than in the coastal settlements.42

It has recently been proposed that there is no significant relation between the establishment of more direct
commercial ties with the Mediterranean in the wake of the Phoenician colonization of the southern Iberian
Peninsula and the collapse of the Late Bronze Age social formation, together with the settlement pattern
it generated. In this view, this collapse must have stemmed from endogenous factors.43 In my opinion, it
seems too much of a coincidence that the moment of the first more or less direct contact with oriental mer-
chants just happens to be the moment when the local social structure exhausts itself and collapses. I believe,
in fact, that the oriental element must have been the trigger of the radical and generalized transformation
that took place in the local groups somewhere between the late 8th and the mid- to late 7th century; of
course, such a trigger must have been an indirect one.

When I commented on the possible explanations for the construction of the oriental sanctuary of Castro dos
Ratinhos, I stated my conviction that the local communities of the Late Bronze Age must have been organ-
ized, in one way or another, in complex networks that entailed social, economic, and demographic relations,
and naturally required a certain degree of inner balance. The establishment of close ties between the indig-
enos coastal settlements that show, from the 8th/7th century BC on, signs of a profound »orientalization«
and the Phoenician merchants, and even the installation of small exogenous, oriental communities in those
sites, with all the economic, technologic, ideological and social transformations it entailed, may have been
more than enough to topple off the whole balance of the local networks of socio-economic relations. In this
scenario, the elites of the inner territories may have been unable to maintain their social and political influ-
ence mainly because they no longer had the material, but even more so the ideological, means to deal with
their coastal counterparts in equal terms, with all the effects such a situation would have had on the overall
balance of power. The explanation for the different developments of coastal and inner regions should then,
from my point of view, be searched primarily on the different social positions that each territory came to
play in a new regional network, that was directly connected with the Mediterranean and the Near East. This
differentiated development had, of course, cultural implications that are also mirrored in the different ways
in which the foreign, Mediterranean elements were manipulated.

GO WEST: THE PHOENICIAN COLONIZATION IN SOUTHERN PORTUGAL
AND THE RISE OF THE »ORIENTALIZING« CULTURAL DISCOURSE

As hinted above, on the coastal areas the dynamics of the transition from the Late Bronze Age to the Early
Iron Age appear to have been quite different. There is, in fact, a network of settlements directly connected
to the estuaries of the main rivers – Castro Marim in the Guadiana, Tavira in the Gilão, Alcácer do Sal and Setúbal in the Sado, Almaraz, Lisbon, and Santarém in the Tagus, and also, already in Central
Portugal, Conimbriga, bordering the Mondego – that show evidence of rather direct contact with Phoeni-
cian merchants and colonists which entailed a profound cultural transformation with long-term effects on
the cultural identity of the local communities.

Available data, namely from the $^{14}$C dating of the horizons with the earliest evidences of oriental presence
in several Portuguese sites (fig. 4), points to the last quarter of the 9th century as the moment of the first
impact of the Phoenician merchants and colonists in the Portuguese territory, but the progression of that
impact is not linear. In fact, careful consideration of both the archaeological material and the radiocarbon
dating for Early Iron Age contexts appears to demonstrate that the earlier impact took place in the Tagus
estuary where the sites of Santarém and Almaraz yielded rather archaic chronologies that appear to
place these sites in the second wave of Phoenician colonization in the west, only a generation after the
foundation of the first colonial settlements, in Eastern and Western Andalucia.

This points to the possibility that this area, along maybe with the Lower Mondego in Central Portugal, was
in this moment the primary goal of the Phoenicians sailing into the Atlantic shores of Portugal, a fact that
could be correlated, as has already been pointed out, to the well-known abundance of mineral resources in
the Beiras region, and in fact should also be put in relation with the abundance of elements of Mediter-
ranean (and also Atlantic) origin in the Late Bronze Age of that region.

In the 7th century (in historical chronology), however, the number of »orientalizing« sites – that is to say, sites
which denote a strong Mediterranean influence and a pronounced transformation of their cultural features
– multiplies. The beginning of the »orientalizing« horizons in most of the known sites appears, in fact, to
take place in this second moment, which suggests that the first contacts gave rise to a fully structured net-
work based on a positive reception of the oriental cultural inputs by the local communities of the coastal ar-
eas, in sharp contrast with the situation described above for the interior areas. I would like to stress though
the fact that several, if not most, of these sites, such as Castro Marim, Alcácer do Sal, or Conimbriga,
show clear evidences of occupation previous to the impact of the Phoenician colonization, in moments that
can be easily placed in the Late Bronze Age.

It was also in this moment that the only two known ex novo foundations of properly colonial, oriental char-
acteristics took place. In the Sado river, the site of Abul A – founded in the mid-7th century, and profoundly
remodeled in the end of that century – is a small, isolated building, with clearly oriental architectural fea-
tures that was considered to be a Phoenician commercial settlement but can, alternatively, be interpreted as
a polyvalent emporium-like sanctuary, where commercial and even socio-political interactions were placed
under the protection of the divinity.

As for the other ex novo foundation – Santa Olaia, in the Lower Mondego – will not be discussed here in
full given its position outside the geographical scope of this synthesis, but I can say that its foundation also
appears to take place in the second half of the 7th century. It is a small, fortified settlement, almost certainly of colonial nature, which revealed an important industrial activity, with a significant number of furnaces for iron reduction. It must have been directly connected to a number of sites in the Lower Mondego basin, and even beyond, that have yielded evidences of »orientalizing« contacts. These two small sites are, indeed, the only direct evidences of what could be construed as a properly colonial phenomenon in southern Portuguese territory, and even then it must be said that neither Abul A nor Santa Olaia appear to be colonies, in any sense of the word, but rather commercial enclaves. The hypothesis that small oriental communities may have settled inside the indigenous settlements is very suggestive, and helps to explain the rapid adoption of certain technological features, such as the potter’s wheel or iron metallurgy, but also the transformations that occurred in architecture, urbanism, and even other aspects of the life of local communities, such as religious and funerary practices that, having deeply embedded ideological overtones and a particular link to the identity of the groups, are good indicators of a more general cultural transformation that can only be explained in a context of close cultural interaction.

But before leaving the topic of Phoenician colonization in southern Portuguese territory, I would like to state that the fact that there are no »real« colonies – in the sense of permanent settlements founded by people of exogenous origins with administrative autonomy and control over a well-defined territory – does not necessarily imply that the westernmost part of the Iberian Peninsula held a marginal position in the Phoenician colonial network. In fact, and even recently, J. Alvar demonstrated with compelling historical and anthropological arguments that within the Phoenician colonial process, as well as in other colonial situations, there were different, distinctive but complimentary modes of contact. The coastal areas of southern Portugal can easily be placed within what he designates as »non-hegemonic contact mode« – in the sense that there were systematic contacts, supported even by the presence of permanent intermediaries and, when necessary, by the creation of small-scale settlements that were in all likelihood dependent on the local socio-political structures. In this mode, however, the foreign element does not exert a direct, hegemonic control over local people and/or local resources. Such an interpretive framework also implies – and this is a point that I would especially like to stress – that the indigenous groups played a very active role in the construction of what is usually named the »orientalizing period«, and this fact must be taken into account when considering the dynamics of cultural contact and the deep-seated reasons and mechanisms behind the cultural transformation – i.e., the »orientalization« – of the local communities.
The research undertaken in the last few decades regarding the southern Portuguese Early Iron Age has focused mainly on establishing a solid framework of reference regarding the geographies and chronologies of Phoenician commerce and colonization, and to group and delimitate distinctive archaeological groups that denote different positions in the overall historic process of the early 1st millennium BC in this territory. The exploration of the mechanisms of interaction and the dynamics of cultural transformation it entailed were not often addressed, mostly because of the lack of more basic data that have been progressively accumulating in recent years by continued research. When we expand our horizon to a more general frame of reference, however, it can also be said that the overall explanation of the origin of the so-called »Orientalizing Period« in the southwestern Iberian Peninsula – that is to say, the explanation for the cultural transformation that took place within the indigenous communities in the wake of Phoenician colonization – has been, from my point of view, underexplored. The adoption by local communities of cultural traits distinctively oriental in their origin was in fact often taken as a »natural« process, a (non) explanation that either explicitly or implicitly – and perhaps, in many instances, even unconsciously – assumed the perceived superiority of oriental culture and technology as the only necessary reason for its diffusion within the culturally »inferior« indigenous communities.

As for the models which did attempt a more systematic, anthropological approach to the process of interaction and cultural transformation, they have been heavily influenced by materialist frameworks of reference, and put the emphasis on the control by local elites of commercial and socio-political relations with the Phoenicians as a way of maintaining and furthering their power and status. But the fact is that, even if during the first phase of direct contacts with the Phoenicians the acquisition of exogenous elements may have been restricted to the elites who kept manipulating them as prestige goods, very much in the same way their Late Bronze Age ancestors may have handled the few Mediterranean imports discussed earlier, the same cannot be said for the following phase. When this cultural horizon was consolidated in the 7th century, there was no clear differentiation even in the most »generic« elements of material culture between an orientalized elite and a larger conservative social mass that maintained its ancestral culture. Both these views appear thus no longer to be completely adjusted to the growing volume of data available, and do not entirely account for the internal complexity that has become apparent within the ever growing black box that the »Orientalizing Period« label has become. From my point of view, different theoretical and methodological tools can now be employed in the analysis of this transition phase. It is not my intention, however, to present here a fully articulated alternative theoretical model, but only some key reflections on possible lines of inquiry and a theoretical hypothesis that, I hope, may help to shed some light on this very complex, dynamic historic process of cultural interaction, transmission and transformation.

We must in fact seek a model that accounts for a profound and generalized transformation, but also for the fact that this transformation was not a mere transposition of the oriental culture to the west, but rather a dynamic process of adoption of exogenous elements as building blocks for new cultural entities, whose cement was most likely composed by indigenous social relations and practices. This statement is not meant as a denial of the enormous importance of the Phoenician commerce and colonization in southern Portugal during this period – the contact with oriental merchants and colonists was certainly the key to unblock certain homeostatic mechanisms that must have been in place within the preexisting sociopolitical system of the Late Bronze Age, and thus had far reaching consequences in the indigenous hinterland. I would suggest, nonetheless, that the cultural transformation of the coastal settlements under discussion should also be placed against the backdrop of these transformations. It seems plausible that the broad political, social, and even territorial transformation that took place within the transition phase addressed
above, the new situation that arose in the wake of the collapse of the Late Bronze Age social structure in the interior areas and the reorganization of regional political and economic networks gave rise to the need for new social and cultural discourses aimed not only at legitimizing the new status quo, but also at expressing the new – or maybe it would be better to say renewed – identities of the different communities touched by this overarching process.

The fast and far reaching adoption of cultural traits of oriental origin that can be traced in the archaeological record by transformations in aspects such as architecture, urbanism, religious and funerary practices, as well as in food production and consumption – not to mention the mobile material culture itself, with significant transformations in pottery or metallurgy – can thus be seen as an active utilization of the cultural language made available by the Phoenician presence as a discursive resource in the construction of new local identities that were, nonetheless, shaped and consolidated by indigenous needs. The so called »orientalization« must have been conditioned by local practices and autochthonous social structure, and it is to be seen not as any form of acculturation or emulation, but rather as a process of construction of new, hybrid cultural identities. Such hybrid cultural discourses would have had both an internal significance, as a base for group identity and for the representation of each community within the regional, social, and commercial networks, and an external one, as they facilitated the integration of the Iberian Far West in the long distance Mediterranean circuits.

This brief presentation goes to show that there are currently more questions than actual answers regarding this very dynamic, complex, and diversified historic period of the ancient history of southern Portuguese territory. Hopefully, new research and, especially, new theoretical frameworks will be able to tackle these questions and, in due time, contribute to a clearer, more solid picture. One thing, though, is for certain – the link forged in this period between southern Portugal and the Mediterranean was never to be broken again, and the Mediterranean was always, through ancient, medieval and even modern history, the mirror where this western territory more easily recognized itself.

**Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank the Castillejos de Alcorrín project, for allowing me to write this essay with a view to the Mediterranean. I would also like to thank the team from the 2012 excavation in Castillejos de Alcorrín for their friendship and the interest they have shown for this work as it was being written. I would especially like to thank Dr Peer Fender for reviewing an early draft of this text and for his useful commentaries and clarifications.

**Notes**

2) Schubart 1975.
3) Schubart 1975.
21) Vilaça 2006.
22) Mataloto 2004a, 168.
34) Berrocal-Rangel/Silva/Prados Martínez 2012, 181.
35) Prados Martínez 2010, 274.
38) Berrocal-Rangel/Silva 2010, 421-422.
40) Mataloto 2004a, 151.
43) Mataloto 2012, 209.
52) Arruda 2005a, 294.
55) Arruda 2005a, 294.
67) Arruda 2011, 151.
68) Sommer 2011, 185-188.
72) As an exception, we could point to the comprehensive synthesis for this period by A. M. Arruda (1999-2000) where such mechanisms are frequently analyzed.
73) Several examples of such interpretations are discussed in Blázquez 2005.
74) See, for instance, González Wagner 1995; Aubet 2005.
75) See van Dommelen 2006; Dietler 2010.
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