CULTURAL CONTACTS IN COLONIAL SETTINGS:
The Construction of New Identities in Phoenician Settlements of the Western Mediterranean

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ABSTRACT
The Phoenician settlements of Cerro del Villar (south of Spain) and Mozia (Sicily) constitute two appropriate settings to analyze the processes of formation of new identities in the western Phoenician colonial areas. The material culture of these settlements, founded during the 8th century B.C.E., express the coexistence of Phoenicians with various western Mediterranean populations.

The present study analyzes how the inhabitants of these colonies consciously used their material culture to construct new identities. Architecture, technological innovation, ritual and tableware for the service of food and drinks show a formal homogeneity that expresses links with the metropolis and with other Phoenician Mediterranean settlements. All these elements are highly visible and public, which contrasts with the presence of material elements of local cultures or hybrids in the domestic sphere, or in workshops associated with handcrafted processes already known by the local groups. Architecture, technology, ritual and tableware were all used actively in the construction of new identities in these settlements. These new identities go beyond ethnicity and are the expression of social and political negotiations within colonial spaces.
INTRODUCTION
Phoenician settlements are a perfect laboratory to analyze the processes of constructing social identities. Colonies are one of the physical settings where we can find cultural contacts and encounters between colonial communities and local peoples. There we see the coexistence of peoples with diverse cultural traditions that are in constant transformation. The opportunities of social mobilities, new relations of power and scenery marked by constant social interaction make these colonies culturally-dynamic spaces where the inhabitants must build new social identities.

Cerro del Villar (south of Spain) and Mozia (Sicily) are two Phoenician colonies founded during the 8th century B.C.E. The Phoenician diaspora, headed by the metropolis of Tyre, was a colonial undertaking mainly of a commercial nature, and involved the creation of numerous enclaves along the Mediterranean coastline (from Cyprus to Gibraltar) and in Atlantic territories (including Gadir, Lixus or Abul). (FIGURE 1).

In both of the colonies analyzed in this article Near Eastern groups cohabited with different western Mediterranean populations. This coexistence of different groups of origin and different ethnicities is expressed in household artefacts and products associated with maintenance tasks, as well as in other productive activities. Moreover, material practices related to architecture, tableware, ritual and new technologies show how residents of these colonies created new identities that would legitimize the cultural and social cohesion of these new settlements.

![Fig 1](image_url)
THE SETTLEMENT OF CERRO DEL VILLAR: A PHOENICIAN COLONY IN SOUTHERN IBERIA

The southern Mediterranean coast of Iberia was one of the main areas of attraction available to Phoenician merchants. Between the 8th and 6th centuries B.C.E., Phoenicians created in this area more than ten permanent installations that featured residential areas as well as craft, commercial, and harbour infrastructures. The colony of Cerro del Villar, founded in the second half of the 8th century B.C.E., was one of the main Phoenician settlements in the western Mediterranean area.

For the foundation of this colony, the Phoenicians chose an uninhabited island placed in the estuary of the Guadalhorce River. They were established in a “no-man’s land,” characterized by a marshy, damp and inhospitable environment (Carmona 1999). No local communities’ settlements are reported in the surrounding areas of the colony at the moment of its establishment. The closest one, according to the information available, is the village of San Pablo, under the present city of Malaga, approximately 5 km. away from the Phoenician settlement of Villar. The choice of this emplacement responds to their determination to create an enclave segregated from the local population as well as respect for native structures of power.

During the 8th century B.C.E., in this Mediterranean area the majority of the local population occupied lands relatively separate from the coast, rich in pastures and cattle resources (FIGURE 2). Shortly after the foundation of the Phoenician colony, some indigenous groups created their village at the bottom of the valley looking for better agricultural land. Some of these groups were highly involved in the exchange with the colonial communities along the coast (Aubet and Delgado 2003). Nevertheless, for the first few decades, exchange relations with local groups in the immediate territory seldom occurred, except for coastal settlements, as the low number of Phoenician material found in these native settlements shows.
The Phoenician colonists who founded Cerro del Villar did not value just the commercial possibilities of this territory, but rather its strategic position within networks of terrestrial and maritime communication. Phoenician navigators and Phoenician merchants found in this small island a place protected from winds and maritime currents, which made it a good harbour. Cerro del Villar was also one of the last Mediterranean ports where a navigator could moor before the difficult crossing of the Gibraltar Strait, en route to the markets of the Atlantic territories, and the mythical Tartessos (Aubet 1999a: 41-42). In Atlantic southern Iberia, there were communities with rich mineral and agricultural resources and a long and intense tradition of exchange with foreign merchants (Delgado 2002). From the Guadalhorce’s estuary also began an alternative road, this time by land, to access the Tartessic domain and the rich lands of Granada.

Colonial Architecture and Social Identity

Excavation campaigns carried out by Maria Eugenia Aubet have uncovered around 5% of the total surface of the settlement. In these campaigns several areas have been excavated: residential buildings, a marketplace area and various spaces dedicated to the development of handcrafted activities (Aubet et al. 1999; Aubet 1991: 29-51; Aubet 1997: 11-22; Delgado et al. Forthcoming) (FIGURE 3). Among the latter we must highlight the production of wheel-made pottery and metalwork—iron, bronze, lead and silver. Diverse studies show that in this settlement a socially-complex colonial community was established, with a significant proportion of merchants and craftsmen.

The different buildings excavated in the colony reproduce techniques of construction, manners of distribution and structural configurations similar to those found in the Phoenician cities of the eastern Mediterranean. Orthogonal buildings are distributed along a network of streets and terraces placed in different topographical levels. Houses are composed of several rooms organized around an interior courtyard. Sometimes these buildings consist of two-story stone structures; mostly, adobe and tapial were used for their construction. In addition, lime was used to cover exterior walls, a material that would turn the colony into a visible and noticeable point in the landscape through its intense white colour.

This architectural style expressed in a material way a clear link between the colony and the place of origin of its founders. Through the appearance of their houses, their workshops and stores, the residents created identity ties with the eastern metropolis and with other Phoenician colonies of the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts. At the same time, this eastern architecture created a significant visual separation
between colonial settlements and native villages, characterized by groups of small circular huts, with walls constructed of branches and mud on stone bases. In their early moments, when some members of the native communities had not yet integrated the eastern style houses into their own settlement, colonial architecture favoured the construction of difference expressed visually in the landscape (Delgado 2005a: 585-594). Architectural visibility thus becomes a material element with an enormous communicative potential for those who built it, inhabited it and saw it (Blanton 1994). This potential turns architectural styles into an active element of social mobility strategies and also an element for the construction of communal or civic solidarities; thus becoming an active element in the creation and negotiation of social identities (Blanton 1994; see also Lightfoot 1995; Van Dyke 1999; Voss 2005).

In the eastern-style houses of Cerro del Villar, as we will see further on, we can find households comprised of members of diverse geographical origins (eastern, local or descendants of native Mediterranean populations) that were possibly based on mixed couples. In this pluriethnic context architecture was one of the central elements in the construction of colonial identity: it created ties with the East and with other colonial communities within this Atlantic-Mediterranean net, homogenizing under the same style all the residents of the colony—leaving social differences to be expressed through structural configurations or through the size of their houses—and generated distance with the traditional native communities.

The members of Cerro del Villar deliberately used the style of their houses to express their aspirations to be recognized as members of this community, independently of their place of origin or their ancestors. In this sense, the architecture of the houses was a crucial strategy in the negotiation of new social identities encouraged by the possibilities of social mobility offered by colonial settings both to the residents of eastern origin and to those of native origin. This intentional use of domestic architecture—as well as other practices and highly visible material elements that we will subsequently analyze—was produced in a social context in which the hierarchies of status had a certain mobility and where social groups were not totally defined by birth or ancestry. In this ethnically dynamic social context, domestic architecture became a crucial strategy in the negotiation and the construction of new identities.

Cooking Identities: the Handmade Pottery of Cerro del Villar

The contextual analysis of different spaces excavated in Cerro del Villar provides a clear evidence of a pluriethnic colonial community living in similarly-built houses.
Between the tableware and ceramic vessels found in the different areas of the colony, the presence of handmade ceramics is relatively frequent. These ceramics have similar decorative, technical, and formal characteristics to those found among the traditional tableware of native communities of Iberia (Delgado 2005b: 1249-1260) (FIGURE 4).

The morphology and decoration of these ceramics, as well as the composition of their clays, indicate that they had different origins (Cardell 1999; Clop unpublished). Among the handmade pottery of Cerro del Villar there are some containers typical of the Tartessic area, as well as other ceramics typical of the different native communities of southeastern Iberia. However, most of the handmade pottery maintains morphological similarities with ceramics produced by the native populations of the Guadalhorce area. The analysis of thin sheets and X-ray diffraction points in the same direction: to a variability of origins and a predominance of typical clays in geomorphologic units close to the area of Cerro del Villar. However, we cannot rule out the possibility that some of them were made in Cerro del Villar.

The origin of Cerro del Villar’s handmade pottery offers us information of great interest in understanding the complexity of the social networks created by the entry of the Phoenicians into the markets and networks of exchange in the extreme West. They offer us a totally different vision from the classic dualism of hinterland and colony that still dominates the analyses of Mediterranean protohistoric colonization. In this paper we will focus on how the handmade pottery allows us to identify the presence of peoples of diverse geographical origins among the residents of Cerro del Villar and how these origins were used in the definition of social and cultural identities in a colonial setting.

Whether coming from other communities or manufactured in Cerro del Villar, many of the handmade vessels were for the everyday use of colony residents. In practically all the areas excavated (including poured zones, craft spaces and domestic areas) handmade pottery was found with similar patterns of use and consumption, both clearly marked (FIGURES 5 and 6).
Fifty percent of the handmade pottery are comprised of pots, many of which were used for cooking. Spherical bowls, which could serve for the consumption of certain liquid foods and for the preparation of food, represent almost 25% of the total handmade vessels. The remaining 25% are mainly distributed between large containers for storage, vessels used in metallurgical processes and carinated bowls and cups with elegant surfaces. Open vessels used in the consumption and service of certain foods are totally underrepresented in the colony.¹ Most of these finds were concentrated in a pottery workshop, where we have also documented a large number of other beverage vessels manufactured in non-Phoenician areas—Greek cups and Etruscan kantharoi. In contrast to what is observed in the colony, in the local settlements of southern Iberia carinated bowls and cups are the majority of the tableware in the domestic areas. They are vessels that usually feature a similar decoration of geometric motifs or brilliant and intensely polished surfaces. In the colony of Cerro del Villar only one of the handmade ceramics of beverage features this type of decoration.

Handmade pottery in the colony was used mainly for the preparation of food. Many of the cooking-pots have combustion residue on their surfaces, especially on the bottom. This indicates that they were placed directly into the fire, using occasionally a small support. The thickness of their bases and sides and the technical characteristics of their fabrics, with coarse inclusions, make them especially apt for cooking (Bats 1992: 407-424). In Cerro del Villar we do not find wheel-made vessels with similar technical traits.

¹ Specifically, there have been recovered about 10 open vessels over a total of 14 individuals registered in the settlement.
characteristics except in later periods (late 7th century–beginning of the 6th century B.C.E.) when potters created similar ceramics in the colony's workshops, reproducing in some cases the typical incised decoration that characterizes some of the handmade vessels (Curià, Delgado, Fernández and Parraga 1999: 157-277).

The handmade cooking-pots in the different areas of Cerro del Villar correspond to a specific way of cooking: it is different than the traditional eastern cooking methods, but is characteristic of southern Iberia native communities, where we find similar vessels. The ovoid or spherical shape of these vessels suggests that they were used to cook liquid foods like soup, *pucheros* or *gachas*. We do not know much about the cooking methods that were practiced in colonial Phoenician and eastern communities, but their ovens and the predominance of plates among the tableware indicate the greater importance of solid food in contrast to the local populations’ tableware. The consumption of these liquid foods among residents of Cerro del Villar could be associated with handmade spherical bowls, which would explain why bowls are the second most represented shape among the handmade potteries of the colony.

In the colony of Cerro del Villar there is another vessel-type used for another way of cooking that does not belong to the tradition of handmade cooking-pots, and is instead connected to eastern Mediterranean customs. Having emphasized the domestic ovens that have been repeatedly found in the Phoenician colonies of southern Iberia during the first decades of the colonies’ creation (Aubet 1974: 94-5; 1985: 141-174; 1999b: 84-5), we would also like to remark upon the baking trays used for bread cooking that the first Phoenician traders and craftsmen took with them when they arrived at Huelva as early as the 9th century B.C.E. (González de Canales, Serrano and Llompart 2004). These baking trays were used by Phoenician communities at least until the 6th century B.C.E., as is shown by the pottery workshop found in zone 3/4 of Cerro del Villar. Although we do not know anything about how food preparation and cooking were practiced in colonial communities, as we mentioned above, the presence of these ovens and baking trays, as well as the predominance of plates among their tableware indicates the greater importance of solid food in Phoenician cooking than is suggested by the local population’s tableware.

Material evidence derived from maintenance tasks in domestic spaces has been considered a very reliable indicator in identifying the origin of the individuals that inhabited them (Deagan 1983; Bats 1992; Dietler 1995: 89; Lightfoot, Martínez and Schiff 1998; McEwan 1992; Voss 2005). Diet, the manner of preparation, manipulation and cooking of food are identified as critical evidence for this purpose. Maintenance activities, such as the daily cooking, are practices that are reproduced daily in repetitive and routine form. They respond to a learned way of how “to do
“things,” in the sense that they are mostly unconscious and not directly motivated. Routine or *habitus*, as Bourdieu defines it (Bourdieu 1977), would act as a form of resistance to the adoption of new practices and new ways of doing things. Instruments and cooking sets—ovens, handmade cooking pots—located in different spaces of the colony of Cerro del Villar indicate that different culinary traditions were practiced simultaneously. This would indicate the pluriethnic nature of the settlement. Handmade cooking pots show that native women are present among the residents of the colony, while the ovens located in some of the domestic spaces suggest the presence of eastern people that cooked Phoenician foods in a Phoenician way. Vessels, household sets and equipment for food processing indicate a multicultural setting similar to other historic colonial settlements (Deagan 1983; Lightfoot 1995; Silliman 2005; Voss 2005) and protohistoric *entrepôts*, Greek (Buchner and Ridgway 1993; Curià 2000; Dietler 1995) as well as Phoenician (Martín Ruiz 1995-6; Gómez Bellard and Habibi 2001; López Pardo and Suárez 2002; Mansel 2000).

**Contextual Analysis of the Ceramic Vessels in a Domestic Space: House 2**

Contextual analysis of the domestic spaces within the colony offers us information about each of its households units. It shows us how each one of these units used handmade or wheel-made tableware, and how other household routine artefacts were used in their daily practices. Contextual analyses of domestic spaces also offer us information relating to the cultural origins of their members and help us know how they used, rejected or incorporated these elements of different cultural contexts into a private context, using them in their practices of social interaction and in the construction of their identities. In addition, they not only offer the possibility of taking account of agency in cultural contact processes, but also demand the introduction of gender relations into the analysis of cultural contact, an aspect generally not discussed.

One of the few buildings fully excavated in Cerro del Villar is House 2 (FIGURES 7 & 8). It is a typical eastern construction of modest dimensions (74 m² in floor plan), composed of different rooms whose use and function may be recognized from the analysis of architectural elements, artefacts and another types of deposition and residue (Delgado, Ferrer, García, López, Martorell and Scioriteno, Forthcoming). This house was built and occupied during the 7th century B.C.E., some decades after the foundation of the colony. Its handmade vessels are highly represented in spaces connected to maintenance activities and the consumption of food: rooms 1, 3 and 5.

The household unit residing in House 2 was composed of people of different origins. Its cooking vessels are mainly of local tradition, although there are also some eastern instruments such as iron knives, which are popular among the local population.
of southern Iberia. Other utensils used in Phoenician cuisine are absent: we have recovered no ovens, baking trays, mortars or ceramic tripods. The only evidence for fire usage are elaborate handmade braziers that could serve both as domestic stoves and room heaters.\(^2\) Room 1, the main area of the house, is identified as an area for gatherings as well as food consumption. In this room we have found remains of five Phoenicians red-slip plates, together with two handmade spherical bowls. This tableware indicates that two manners of serving and consuming food, associated with two different culinary traditions, coexist in the same space.

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\(^2\)Those braziers are big handmade open recipients with thick sides and big inclusions, which show clear signs of combustion on its internal sides.
social practice that was taking part in a space where colonial identity was in the process of being constructed. Here tableware acts in the same way as the house’s architecture and ritual practice.

In this domestic space, objects associated with the practice of purification rituals are of entirely Phoenician forms. Bottles and small jugs for aromatic oils, oil lamps that served to illuminate (but also to purify), and an ostrich egg with red ochre in its interior are some of the elements found in House 2 which indicate that its residents carried out ritual practices derived from a Phoenician world vision, shared by great part of the inhabitants of this colony and by other Phoenician communities from the Atlantic and Mediterranean territories. Through ritual practice members of this domestic group actively expressed their membership in the “Phoenician community,” that was understood as an entity extended beyond the limits of this enclave and linked to other Phoenician sites in Atlantic and Mediterranean spaces.

Workshops and Technologies
House 2 has a small room (Locus 6) in which activities related to lead metallurgy were carried out. Although its soil appears essentially clean, we observed on its surface a spot left by combustion activities and small lead drops located close to the burnt pit. There were few ceramic vessels here: only a handmade bowl and a small bottle for aromatic oils, which could be used by the metalworker to purify himself when his daily work was finished.

This bowl has very thick sides and enormous inclusions in its fabric, and also evidence of burning in its interior. There are no metallic adhesions in its interior, but we cannot rule out its use in metallurgical work. In other areas of the site, handmade pottery is frequently present in workshops dedicated to metal manipulation (Delgado 2005b). Also in these metallurgical spaces there are various handmade vessels such as cooking-pots, large jugs of storage and spherical bowls, which seem to suggest a coexistence of domestic activities with craftwork spaces. In the same spaces there were also found handmade ceramics of native morphology that were seemingly used as crucibles. In addition oven-vessels used for small-scale copper production have been located in the colony (Rovira 2005). This technology of limited yields—in comparison to those that characterize eastern metallurgy—has been practiced by the southern communities of Iberia since the third millennium B.C.E.

Primary technologies, sets of instruments, and domestic handmade ceramics all suggest an active participation of individuals of local origin in productive processes. For example, in metallurgical practices we can see how native people could apply their own local knowledge and their own cultural forms to the working of metals that were
already familiar to them, such as copper and bronze. The debate about women’s participation in these metallurgical tasks is still ongoing. Traditional visions of metallurgical work are totally androcentric and do not accept the possibility of women’s participation as active workers. Nevertheless this vision has been criticized by some European Bronze Age archaeologists (Sørensen 1996; Sánchez Romero and Moreno Honorato 2003), who stress the fact that, as happens in some of the metallurgical workshops of Cerro del Villar, in these spaces tools and equipment related to the metallurgical work are mixed together with household goods used in the manipulation and consumption of food, as well as in the development of other maintenance tasks.

Metals constitute one of the main resources that drew Phoenicians merchants to the western Mediterranean. Copper, iron and silver mines in the immediate territory of Cerro del Villar are very scarce, and the ones that do exist are of low yields. The scarce information we possess relating to the exploitation of these mines indicates that the mining activities as well as the first phases of reduction of the mineral were activities that were carried out by the local communities without direct control from the Phoenicians. The latter’s access to minerals, therefore, depends on their relations with these communities. The presence of women of native origin, perhaps of men, alongside the eastern colonists is probably cause of the successful continuity of Cerro del Villar until the 6th century B.C.E. Native women and men were present in this site not only as indicators of reproductive and sexual ties, but also probably provided information about resources, roads and routes, as well as alliances with the communities with which the colonists attempt to negotiate and trade.

The importance of the active participation by individuals of native origin in the operation and the prosperity of Phoenician ‘businesses’ allows us to understand the ‘ethnic’ porosity of the social hierarchies of the colony, and the varied and dynamic nature of social categories during the first decades of life in the settlement. The adoption of a colonial identity by its inhabitants is expressed through the use of architecture, tableware, and certain ritual and technological practices that are clearly eastern. At the same time, some of the inhabitants maintained other learned ways of ‘doing things,’ that linked them to their native populations, thus displaying an identity that was fundamental to the conservation of relations with friends and relatives. This is a basic element through which members of this domestic group could succeed in business and commercial deals.
MOZIA: A PLURI-ETHNIC SITE IN WESTERN SICILY

Cerro del Villar is not the only Phoenician colony of pluriethnic character. The absence of analyses about domestic spaces and the lack of interest in the equipment and tools related to the maintenance activities of Phoenician enclaves, have encouraged the academic dissemination of a cultural homogeneity within the Phoenician colonies that nowadays has been revealed as completely false.

Mozia, one of the Phoenician colonies of western Sicily, was founded in the second half of the 8th century B.C.E., just before the Greeks of Euboea founded the settlement of Naxos in Sicily. Phoenicians chose, as in Cerro del Villar, an uninhabited island close to the coast, in the centre of the Stagnone di Marsala. Salt, fish and clays are the resources with the most exploitative potential in the immediate territory. The native communities settled in high altitude zones that were relatively far from the colony, and available information, while scanty, indicates the existence of low intensity exchanges in the first stages of the foundation (FIGURE 9).

This Sicilian colony comprises, like Cerro del Villar, a commercial strategy with a wide scope. Mozia, with Carthage, controlled the bottleneck that connects the navigation routes of the different communities of the eastern and western Mediterranean. We must also not forget that Sicily is situated centrally in the Mediterranean, acting as a point of connection not only between eastern and western communities, but also northern and southern ones.

Excavations in Mozia (Whitaker 1921; Bevilacqua 1972; Ciasca 1973; Isserlin and du Plat Taylor 1974) begun at the beginning of the 20th century, have mainly focused on the most recent stratigraphical levels (6th–3rd centuries B.C.E.). The first decades of this enclave are less known and the majority of the information comes from the funerary areas: the tophet and the necropolis (FIGURE 10). In accordance with the information available, our study will focus principally on the information derived from one of these funeral contexts.

Mozia’s Necropolis

Funerary areas, situated in the northern area of the colony, were inaugurated a few years after the foundation of the colony. The first tombs are dated to the end of the 8th century B.C.E., which suggests that the inhabitants of Mozia, or rather some of them, intended it from the beginning as a permanent settlement. Necropolis construction responds to an interest in creating a colonial identity quickly, specifically a Mozian identity. This funeral space expressed a link between the colony’s inhabitants and their
ancestors and founders, thus creating memory in a place that was lacking in such references.

In this funerary space, which was in use until the first half of the 6th century B.C.E., only 157 incineration graves have been found together with four *enchytrismoi* (Tusa, 1972: 34-55, 62-79; 1973: 8-62). That is, a low number of burials for a cemetery that was in use for 200 years and that is associated with one of the biggest settlements in the western Mediterranean. By the number of tombs excavated in this cemetery, we can posit that not all the colony’s residents had the right to be buried in the place. This suggests that we are talking about a colonial community with social hierarchies based on the definition of their Mozian colonial identity. The construction and the maintenance of this identity is one of the main mechanisms of colonial control: the access to certain benefits and privileges can be limited to the members of the colonial group (Stoler 1992).

The funerary ritual that we can observe through the tombs excavated at Mozia’s necropolis is characterized by a strong homogeneity. Cremation, as in the Phoenician cemetery of the metropolis of Tyre (Aubet 2004), is the dominant rite (98% of the excavated tombs). The ritual accoutrements are noticeably standardized and again reproduce eastern funeral artefacts: a trefoil jug, a mushroom-rim jug, a food container and, sometimes, a fine drinking vessel. The deposition of this type of grave goods alludes to a funeral ritual in which we can identify acts of imbibing some type of liquid (trefoil jug and beverage vessel), of purification and unction of the dead (mushroom-rim jug) and the offering of certain types of food. As we have seen in Cerro del Villar, ritual acquires a very significant importance in these colonial milieus insofar as they allow individuals to express ties with the original Phoenician community.

At the same time, however, funerary ceremony and deposition practices have characteristics and traits that express a certain distance with respect to the founding metropolis. The creation of new cultural forms is a peculiarity of colonial areas, where inhabitants of these recent settlements create new forms of expression as a result of new social and cultural relations. In Mozia’s cemetery these differences are found, first, in the containers used for deposition of the deceased (amphora, cist or stone monoliths differing from the characteristic funerary urns used in Tyre’s necropolis deposition) and second, in the vessel placed with the deceased to receive the gift of food.
Food for the Deceased

In Phoenician funerary ritual food had an importance reflected in the grave goods recovered. Remains of fish and other types of food were burned in the funeral pyres together with the individuals from the 11th to the 8th centuries B.C.E. in Tyre (Aubet 2004: 466). Some of the food remains that were sacrificed in the pyre were deposited in the funerary urn together with the cremated bones of the deceased. Along with the jugs for imbibing and purification, one almost always finds a vessel to offer food to the buried individual. In Tyre’s necropolis, as in other western Phoenicians cemeteries, those vessels are predominantly a red-slip plate. In Mozia, nevertheless, only seven of the 161 tombs have this ceramic form. In their place, most of the tombs feature a cooking-pot. The substitution of the plate by a cooking-pot indicates a change in the type of food offered to the deceased and, perhaps, a change in the individual performing the offering. This substitution also implies a change from a service vessel to another type used in the domestic sphere for the food manipulation and cooking. If women were typically the ones who prepared food using these cooking-pots, possibly they were responsible for presenting the offerings to the deceased (Van Esterik 1998: 86). In Mozia, and in other central Mediterranean Phoenician necropoleis, women seem to have a different role in funerary rituals than the one that we can normally surmise from the grave goods of other Mediterranean Phoenician cemeteries, which would imply a greater prominence of women in negotiating relations between the living and dead.

In Mozia’s cemetery, cooking-pots that were deposited as grave goods can be grouped into different types each presenting morphological and technological differences. The most frequently found vessel is a cooking-pot with one handle (FIGURE 11 n. 1): 101 tombs have this type of pot, representing 62% of the total from the necropolis. It is a wheel-made pot characterized by a globular body, flat base and circular handle. This type of cooking-pot is also found in the settlement (Tusa 1978: 7-98, figs. 2 and 3). It is a cooking-pot that we find in other Central Mediterranean settlements and that expresses direct links among the Phoenician communities located along the triangle formed by the Tunisian coast, Malta, western Sicily and Sardinia (for Tunisia see Lancel 1979: fig. 601 type 16; Vegas 1998: 148 and 157; for Sardinia see Bartoloni 1983: fig. 8d-e, 9f and 10k).

The other types of cooking-pots are handmade pottery. These cooking-pot forms are morphologically linked with geographically distant communities and different culinary traditions. The first handmade form is a pot with a handle (FIGURE 11 n. 2) that is morphologically similar to the previous wheel-made pot. From time to time, these pots feature a small lump also (FIGURE 11 n. 3). Pots of similar morphology
appear in other Phoenician colonial contexts in the central Mediterranean, and especially in Carthage. Their origin is unknown, though it is likely a native Tunisian cooking vessel form pre-dating the Phoenician arrival (Cintas 1961: fig. VII, type 1, 2 and 3).

A less globular body with two or four lumps in its upper part characterize the second type of indigenous pot (FIGURE 11 n. 4). Although its base is flat too, it presents a greater surface than the previous two. This new form suggests a different type of cooking. Its production area is also unknown—maybe Sardinia, maybe southeast Iberia—and its morphology does not seem to correspond to native Sicilian material culture.

Finally, *pignatta* represents the last form of handmade pot that we find in Mozia’s cemetery (FIGURE 11 n. 5). This pot is characterized above all by its tronco-conical form, presenting straight sides and a flat base of greater surface than the previous ones. This type of pot corresponds to the island’s native tradition, and has been documented in Sicily from the 8th century B.C.E. and until the Middle Ages. *Pignatta* ware is also documented in various local settlements such as Maranfusa (Spatafora 2003: 256-260 fig. 220-224), Montagnola di Marineo (Spatafora 2000: 907) and Morgantina (Leighton 1993: 171, fig. 32, 77 and 99).

Although handmade vessels in Mozia’s necropolis represent a numerical minority (they occur in only 22 tombs of the 161 excavated, 14% of the total), their presence is a clear indicator that Mozia’s women of non-eastern origin played an important role in funerary ceremonies, offering tributes of food to their relatives buried in the cemetery. If the cemetery of Mozia and its burial access rights are expressions of the social hierarchies of the colonial settlement, then the deposition of these handmade vessels would indicate that those categories were not defined primarily through place of origin or ancestors, which we would term nowadays ethnic criteria. The evidence of the necropolis of Mozia indicates that in this context ethnicity was of relatively small importance in the construction of these social hierarchies.

As in Cerro del Villar, the handmade ceramics of Mozia’s cemetery seem to suggest that peoples of various and diverse origins inhabited the colony, a fact that contradicts the traditional trinomial of eastern-native-mestizo. Handmade pots in the cemetery indicate the presence of peoples from diverse Mediterranean areas that traditionally were integrated under the simplistic category of “native.”

**CONCLUSIONS**

Colonial Phoenicians settlements such as Mozia and Cerro del Villar included individuals from different communities of the western Mediterranean. These lived
together with colonial administrators, merchants, artisans and workers from Phoenician cities. In these colonies, artefacts used in maintenance activities show the coexistence of Phoenician women, together with others from western Mediterranean communities. These interethnic household units seem to comprise a relatively common feature, as the frequency of culinary sets related to local traditions demonstrates. Reproductive and sexual ties in these interethnic marriages would therefore establish within a few decades a number of ethnically-mixed populations.

The colonists' diversity of origin was implicated in the construction of new identities in these Mediterranean areas. Material practices such as those associated with architecture, rituals carried out in funerary and domestic spaces, tableware used in the consumption of prescribed foods and beverages and the technologically-novel installation in the western Mediterranean of industries such as iron mining or wheel-pottery, are axes that allowed a particular process of identity construction.

Colonial residents of diverse origins intentionally used these highly visible material practices to create an appearance of homogeneity within these colonies. This type of identity, equivalent to the “aggregative identity” defined by Jonathan Hall (1997) for the ancient Greek world, is the one that we have called colonial identity. Material practices that define this identity reproduce “ways of doing” that are particular to the metropolis, although they are redefined and reinterpreted and thus create new forms, as we have seen in the funeral practices of Mozia’s necropolis. “Metropolitan ways” create a highly visible distance from traditional native communities, at least in the colony’s early existence. But, at the same time, they allow the forging of links amongst the residents of the colony involved in its founding and among members of the “Phoenician community” dispersed at these times throughout different Mediterranean and Atlantic territories. Therefore they play a key role in the creation of a more extensive regional identity.

In both of the contexts analyzed here, colonial identity seems to cut across different “ethnic” categories. Judging by the funeral practices of Mozia’s cemetery, the Phoenician-native-mestizo distinction does not seem to constitute the only axis in the construction of social hierarchies of the colony. Non-Phoenician women had relatives among those that had been buried in the cemetery and, therefore, mestizos were at least acceptable in a space reserved for only some members of the colony. The frequency of mixed couples, from the first moments of these colonial foundations, would result in the presence of a very high number of mestizos that probably would blur the boundaries between social groups based on place of origin and kinship. Therefore, these boundaries would have become totally dynamic and permeable. As
several studies have indicated, ethnicity in antiquity did not have the privileged place that it holds today (Jones 1997; Malkin 2001).

In postcolonial critiques and new perspectives in cultural contact studies the importance given by Mediterranean protohistoric archaeology to ethnicity has continually been trapped in colonist-colonized duality or, in the best of the cases, in the trinominal colonist-native-mestizo. This emphasis on ethnicity has contributed to the erasure of other social identities—of class, of status, of gender, etc.—which are key elements in the construction of social hierarchies in the protohistoric Mediterranean colonies.

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ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1. The Phoenician diaspora: the most important Phoenician enclaves and their metropolis Tyre.

Figure 2. Situation of the Phoenician colony of Cerro del Villar and the closest local settlements.

Figure 3. Plan of the colony of Cerro del Villar with its main excavated archaeological areas.

Figure 4. Handmade pottery—cooking pots and bowls—from Cerro del Villar.

Figure 5. Percentage of handmade and wheel-made pottery from Cerro del Villar.
   Drawing by R. Alvarez.

Figure 6. Percentage of handmade pottery found in different areas excavated in Cerro del Villar in relation to their use.

Figure 7. View of House 2 of Cerro del Villar.

Figure 8. Plan of House 2 of Cerro del Villar with the distribution of finds.

Figure 9. Map of western Sicily.

Figure 10. Map of Mozia.

Figure 11. Different types of cooking pots found in Mozia’s necropolis (after Bevilacqua et al. 1972, tomb 4 and 14; Ciasca et al. 1973, tomb 92 and 121).