

COLONIES AND PLACE NAMES

As we know the Phoenicians extended their trade routes to all countries in the Mediterranean basin, passing through the pillars of Hercules (today's Gibraltar) and reached the British Isles. For trading purposes they used to settle and remain in many places, which in the course of time developed into cities. Their most well known city is Carthage (Carta – Hadta) which was established as a colonial settlement on the North African coast (in the region of today's Tunis). It is generally accepted that the name Carthage = Carta Hadta means New town (Keret = town, Hadta = new),¹ But, as is known the word Keret means a metropolis, such an explanation of the name implies that the city from its inception was built to be a large city, a fact which does not fit in with the legend of the building of Carthage. Was the building of Carthage so different from that of other Phoenician colonies, which were built as trading posts², some of which became cities only in the course of time? On the other hand the term "Kiria" (town) or "Keret" for a metropolis occurs in the Bible³ and in the Ugarit tablets but not "Karta", not even in apposition to Keret. Why therefore should the case be different with the name "Karta Hadta"? , And why "Hadta" and not "Karta" alone? .

The explanation "New Town" given to Cartago is not plausible even though we find in it the adjective New (= Hadta).

The adjective "New" can be found in many town names in our own era. Such as: New-England, New-Orleans, New Mexico, New-Bedford, New-York, New Brunswick, New Amsterdam, New Hampshire and many others. The common denomination for all of them is that the adjective "New" is intended to differentiate these cities from cities having the same name

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- 1 Carpenter, *Phoenicians In The West*, AJA, 1958, (62), p. 42
Neiman, *Phoenician Place Names*, JNES, 1965, p. 114, note 14.
Carchedon –New City, JNES, 1966, pp. 42–47.
Conder, *Syrian Stone Lore*, p. 66.
Whitaker, *Morya – A Phoenician Colony In Sicily*, p. 29.
Contentau, *La Civilisation Phénicienne*, p. 74.
Moscati, *The Carthaginian Empire*, p. 54 in *The Phoenicians*, Bompiani, 1988.
Moscati, *The World of The Phoenicians*, p. 116.
 - 2 Moscati, *ibid.* p. 117.
Moscati, *Colonisation of The Mediterranean*, p. 49 in *The Phoenicians*, Bompiani, 1988.
 - 3 In Proverbs 8: 3 we read "Fi Karet" (in the Hebrew text) translated "at the entry of the city".

in the home country of the town builders e. g. – England, Mexico, York, Amsterdam, Hampshire etc. Such a practice is not unique for our era but can also be seen in antiquity. In the book of Joshua for example we come across the names Hazor, and Hazor Hadta (Jos. 15: 22–23) namely Hazor and New Hazor. Such must we also understand "Karta Hadta" namely "New Karta", and "Karta" is simply the name of the city from which the builders of the city of "Karta Hadta" came. A town called Karta is to be found in the inheritance of the tribe of Zebulun⁴, who are considered to be seafarers. It is worth mentioning that another Phoenician colony with a similar name "Carteia" was known to have existed in the bay of Algeciras.⁵

By analogy with our own times we may also learn about other "Phoenician" colony names. As noted above many city names were formed by adding the adjective "new" to the name of a town in the country of origin, but we often see that the names of new towns correspond identically to the town names in the country of origin. For instance: Plymouth, Cambridge, Dartmouth, Bridgwater, Weymouth, Gloucester, Bristol etc. in England with exactly the same names to be found in America⁶.

This phenomenon is not rare but occur in all periods, even in ancient times. We find for cities in different regions identical city names. e. g. Luz, Gilgal, Kedesh, Hazor, Arad, Carmel, Carthage, Melita (Malta), Thebes and others⁷.

On the basis of what has been said above, let us examine the names of some Phoenician towns and colonies.

The founding of the city of Toledo in Spain is ascribed to the Phoenicians. Around this town we find today towns called Escalona, Avila, Joppa Maqueda. – names which phonetically recall the names Ashkelon, Avel (Abel), Jaffo (=Joppa=Jaffa), Makkeda. All these names appear in the days of king Solomon in the region of Judah,⁸ and before that in the regions of the tribes of Judah and Dan. And there we find in the lot of the tribe of Judah, a town by the name of Eltolad (Jos. 15: 30) which is also mentioned as Tolad (1Chr. 4: 29) a name very similar to that of Toledo. As we know the present day Spanish city of Cadiz was built as a Phoenician colony named Agadir Strabo (3, 4,

4 Jos. 21: 34

5 Rawlinson, *ibid.* Phoenicia, p 68.

6 Plymouth, Cambridge, Dartmouth, Bridgwater, Wymouth etc. see also: "El Nombre de 'Sefarad'" by A. I. Laredo and D. G. Maeso. in revista de La Escuela De Estudios Hebraicos año IV madrid 1944. Fasc. 2.

7 Bet-el was called Luz (Ju. 1: 23), and a man from this town built a city in the land of the Hittites, and called it Luz (Ju. 1: 26), Kedesh in Judah (Jos. 15: 23) and Kedesh in Naphtali (Jos. 19: 37). Hazor in Judah (Jos. 15: 23) and Hazor in Gallilee (Jos. 19: 36) ; Carthage on the African coast and Carthage on the Spanish coast.

8 Jos. 15: 41; Ju. 1: 18.

2), as mentioned by Slouschz⁹ calls it Gadara. Whereas Pliny (3, 3) calls it Gades from which the name Cadiz derives.¹⁰ No less than a city by the name Gederah is to be found in the region of the tribe of Judah (Jos. 15: 36). Near the city of Cadiz there are two cities called Jeres (הֶרֶס–Heres)¹¹ and Sidonia, which are similar to the names Heres in the tribe of Dan (Ju. 1: 35) and Sidon in the tribe of Asher. The city Constantin in Algeria was called Kirta while coins found there had the name Cartan (כִּרְטָן) impressed on them¹². A name Kartan, which phonetically is identical to the name of the city Kartan occurs in the list of the cities of the tribe of Naphtali. (Jos. 21: 32). Near this city there is a town built by the Phoenicians called Igilgili¹³ which is identical to the name Gilgal in Judah. (Jos. 15.)

Other names of known "Phoenician" colonies are Thebes (in Greece), Golos (near Malta), Kitera, Beerot (today's Syracuse), Motya, Araden, Lebena (in Rhodes), Idalium (in Cyprus). These names are to be found in Israelite cities. Thebez (Ju. 9: 50) Giloh—in Judah (Jos. 15: 51) ; Kitron in the lot of the tribe of Zebulun (Ju. 1; 30); Beeroth in Benjamin's lot (Jos. 9: 17); Moza (Jos. 18: 25) ; Arad in Judah (Ju. 1: 17); Idalah in Zebulun (Jos. 19: 15) ; Libnah in Judah (Jos. 15: 42). In Lixos on the coast of Morocco (today's Larach) a coin with a bilingual inscription was found with the name L. K. S. (ל.כ.ש.)¹⁴ which might be read as Lachish (לַכִּישׁ) in Judaea

According to Prof. Slouschz¹⁵ the name of the city Tripoli in Lybia was Oea. Coins found in the place have the name Ha – Ayat (הַ-עֵיִת – The Ayat) in Punic letters –inscribed on them, and he ascribes this name to a Judean town Ayat – עֵיִת (Aya – עֵיִת) "He is come to Ayath he is passed to Migron" (Is. 10: 28), "The children also of Benjamin from Geba dwelt at Michmash, and Aija" – (עֵיִת – Aya), (Ne. 11: 31) Conder¹⁶ remarks that in Rhodes there is a holy place, probably Phoenician, named Zeus Atabyrius which Reland identifies with the name Tabor (in the lot belonging to the tribe of Zebulun). Berard¹⁷ also points to this fact but adds that a similar name existed also in Sicily.

In the Bible we encounter genealogical tables of certain families¹⁸ together

9 The name Agader אַגְדֵר is inscribed on coins found on the site: Slouschz Otzar Haketovot Hafenikiot p. 52 (Hebrew); See also: Rawlinson, Phoenicia, p. 290.: Neiman, Phoenician Place Names, JNES. 1965, p. 114, note 12.

10 Slouschz, Otzar Haketovot Hafenikiot, p. 152 (Hebrew)
See also Moscati, *ibid.* p. 122

11 The Spanish j is pronounced as KH.
12 Slouschz, *ibid.* p. 219.

13 Barnette, Phoenician – Punic Art, EWA, p. 295. ; Moscati, *ibid.* p. 122.

14 Slouschz, Otzar Haketovot Hafenikiot, pp. 219, 227 (Hebrew)

15 Slouschz, Masai Beertz Luy, part II, pp. 13, 121. (Hebrew)

16 Conder, Syrian Stone Lore, note, p. 127.

17 Berard, Les Phéniciens Et L'odyssée, p. 193.

18 See Genealogy of Judah: 1Chr. chaps. 2; 4; Gen. 10. See also

with their places of settlement, such that the place names are identical with the name of the head of the family.

Clermont Ganneau who refers to the town Arsuf (Reseph) in the territory of Ephraim remarks¹⁹: "In accordance with old Semitic fashion many of the names of towns are enumerated under the forms of eponymous personages: Reseph, רשף is one of these (1Chron. VII. 25.)"

As known Reshef was the name of the "Phoenician" Apollo, while a town by the name of Reshef (Arsuf – Apollonia) existed in the territory of the Ephraimite tribe. Ganneau points out this fact and says: "Therefore the ancient Ephraimite town of Arsuf would be one of the principal centers of the worship of the Phoenician Apollo"²⁰.

In the light of the above it may be presumed that the names of Sardinia and Sardes (in minor Asia) derive originally from the name "Sered" which was the head of a family in the tribe of Zebulun (Gen. 46: 14) which was known as a seafarer tribe.

Today's Spanish settlement of Ibica was formerly called Ibasim, and later Ebusus. On a coin the name of the place appears "יבשם" and "איבשם" (Ibsam)²¹, and the very name יבשם (Ibsam) appears also as a name of the head of a clan in the tribe of Issachar. (1Chr. 7: 2)

The town of Monaco is known to be considered a "Phoenician" settlement by the name Manahat. This name is found in 1Chr. (2: 54) as that of the head of a clan (המנחתי) The Manahathite = that pertains to Manahat.

In this way we may also explain the name "Crete" perhaps based on the name of the Creti who dwelt in the south of Judah (1Sam. 30: 14). It is worth mentioning also a river with the name of Krit (transcribed in English Cherit) in Israel (1Kn. 17: 3)

In Crete there is a mountain called "Ida" which might be regarded as a distortion of Yehuda (Judah), and even Tacitus²² tells about the origins of the Judeans as follows: "...it is said that the Jews were originally exiles from the island of Crete who settled in the farthest parts of Libya at the time when Saturn had been deposed and expelled by Jove. As argument in favour of this is derived from the name: ...There is a famous mountain in Crete called Ida, and hence the inhabitants were called the Idaei..."

This story of Tacitus is interpreted in many ways, but it is agreed by all that Tacitus was mistaken and confused the name Ida with Yehuda (Judah), a confusion which results from the fact that he bases his story upon common

Aharoni, Eretz Israel In Biblical Time, Geographical History, 1962, pp. 78, 211

19 Ganneau, Notes, PEP. 1896, pp. 259–261

20 Ganneau, *ibid.* p. 260.

21 Slouschz, *Otzar Haketovot Hafenikiot*, p. 151

22 Tacitus, *The Histories*, translation Moore, Heineman, Harvard University Press, MCMLXII, p. 177.

hearsay. I will refrain from discussing these interpretations, and will refer only to Tacitus words alone. From his words (in the first half), it appears that the Judeans lived in Crete from where they were expelled and then settled in Libya. In other words the Judeans who settled in Libya immigrated there from Crete. But the Judeans are known to have settled in Judah, and therefore Tacitus words were considered as erroneous.

From his words (in the second half) it may be understood that they emigrated from Egypt to the surrounding countries. Therefore we might see in Tacitus words a reference to two emigrations: the one from Egypt to Judah and the second from Crete to Libya . Such an account falls in well with the immigration of the "Phoenicians" (i. e the Israelites) from Israel to Crete and then onward to Libya and other places.

It is interesting that Homer²³ points out a river in the same region of Crete called Jordan, which indicates just as with the name Ida, a certain link with Judah.

A river by the same name of Jardanus also existed in Greece. Indeed Kohler²⁴ believed the name to be derived from the ancient Persian language (he explains: yar – year; Danus – river)namely Jordan is a river that flows the year long. All my efforts to find a basis for his belief were unsuccessful. Why should a river in Israel, in Greece and in Crete be called Jordan, presumably a Persian name, while there are no rivers in Persia itself called Jordan?

Victor Berard²⁵ lived for several years in the Greek islands studying the names of sites and his conclusion is that "most of the Greek islands bear names which have no meaning in Greek and do not seem to be Greek originally"²⁶. According to him "each island has a few names one of which is authentically Greek, whereas the next is incomprehensible".²⁷ For the understanding of these names Berard drew upon the narratives and descriptions in the Iliad and the Odyssey as well as on descriptions and information from ancient historians. According to him the names of most Greek islands and many cities in the Mediteranean region, are of Semitic derivation, either from Hebrew or from what he calls Phoenician. Here are some examples:

The island "Siphnos" was also called "Merope" and "Akis". Pliny notes that "Siphnos ante Meropia et Acis apellata". Akis in Greek means healing and according to Berard Akis is the Greek transcription of the semitic word

23 Homer, *Odyssey*, III, 276 – 300. p. 38 in translation by Lang, Leaf and Myers, *The Modern*

Library edit. N. Y. p. 35 in translation by Alexander Pope, *The world's popular classics*, Books, inc. N. Y.

See also Berard, V. *ibid.* Vol. II, p. 280.

24 Kohler, *Lexicologische Geographisches*, ZDPV. (62), pp. 115, 120

25 Berard. V. *Les Phéniciens Et L'odysee*

26 Berard, *ibid.* p. 117.

27 Berard, *ibid.* p. 123.

"marpe" (מרפא) meaning healing – medicine, which was corrupted into Meropia. (ibid. p. 157).

In Cyprus and Messina there exists the name Aipeia which in Greek means: hard–stiff. Aipeia is also called "Soloï" and according to Berard the name Soloï is given to regions in high places. A town by the name of Soloï is found in a rocky region on the Cilician coast. as well as the city Soloïes in Sicily who later changed into Solontum. According to Berard Soloï is simply the Hebrew name Sela (סלע = rock), and Aipeia is its transcription into Greek (ibid. pp. 171–177). Not far from Soloï in Cilicia there is a river the Greeks call Koiranos or Saros. In the Homeric epics the name Koiranos is synonymous with king, chieftain, whereas Saros is its exact transcription into Hebrew – Sar (chieftain–שר) (ibid. p. 178).

In Messina there was a place called Aipeia which in the course of time came to be called Turia. This is seen by Berard to be the Hebrew–Aramaic name Tur = mountain and strangely enough in Beotia there is a mountain the Greeks call Orthophagus but which is called also Turion (ibid. p. 179) In the light of Homer's Odyssey, Berard explains the names Scyla and Charybdis as a corruption of the Hebrew words Skilla (stoning) and Khorban (destruction). The name Solyma which is a place name and is applied also to a ridge of mountains around a bay, is according to Berard of Hebrew derivation: Sulam = ladder, such as "Sulam of Tyre". He gets support for this in Strabo's words depicting the mountain ridge of Solyma, In the form of a ladder. (ibid. p. 190) In this ridge of Solyma not far from the sea there is a volcano crater called Chimaira where, according the Iliad (VI, 182), there lived a monster spouting fire. Berard regards the name chimaira derived from semitic etymology "Yehemar – = יהמר to seeth, boil." The same name Issa Chimaiara is also to be found in the island of Lesbos; in Sicily near the "Phoenician" city of Solontum – where there are hot water springs said to be generated by Hercules. The Greeks built thermal baths there named Chimaira (today called Termini) (Ibid. p. 190–192.)

The place name Aegilia is called Ogilus in Greek, and Berard regards it as an Hebrew name Agol, (=round),²⁸

The name Amorgos–Amargo, he equates with the Hebrew word Margoa (=rest–repose). Strabo remarks²⁹ that "Neda is the name of a river that comes down from the Arcadian mountains and its well springs were opened by Rhea who came there to get purified after she had given birth to Zeus". While Pausanias³⁰ remarks that "the river of Neda receives near Phigali the stream of impurity Lumax which derives its name from the purification of Rhea".

28 Berard, ibid. p. 209.

29 VII. 3, 22

30 VIII. 41–1

Berard who cites those passages³¹, remarks that "the Greek name for impurity–Lumax, is the exact translation of the Hebrew word 'Nida' which denotes in Hebrew every kind of impurity but especially the impurity of the woman during her menstruation period, or after giving birth, and in the scriptures we find 'Nida waters' to denote unpurified waters. Neda–Lumax is a couplet of Greek–Semitic names to denote this river of unpurification". This river of impurity flows, as mentioned, near the town of Phigali. According to Berard, also the name Phigali is the Hebrew word "Phigul" which is synonymous with impurity (defilement).

I have mentioned here only a few of Berard views and examples, and even if not all of Berard's statements are accepted by the reader nevertheless most of them are well founded and his line of inquiry leaves the reader full of admiration. Bochart (1599–1667) who regarded the Hebrew language as a base for the understanding of European languages and culture, tried before Berard to explain many names in Europe according to Semitic (Hebrew) etymology. But his theory collapsed, and as Berard (who was not Jewish) explains, The reason for this was that: "The xviii century by separating truth from religion, also separated 'sacred history' from history proper, and expelled Phoenicians and Jews from the ancient world of philosophy"³².

In the Bible we are told that king Solomon traded with many countries, and greatly increased the wealth of the country till "silver was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon. For the king had ships that went to Tarshish..." (2Chr. 9: 20–21). He sent ships to Tarshish, Ophir and the lands beyond the sea. Where is Tarshish?

The Septuagint sometimes translates Tarshish as Carthage (Is . 22: 1 ; 18, 27: 12; 38: 13) at other times it leaves the name as it is, Tarshish (Gen. 10: 4 ; Is. 60: 9 ; Jona. 1: 3 ; Ez. 1: 16 ; 1Chr. 1: 7), and occasionally translates it as sea. The Aramaic translation sometimes reads Tarshish – Carthago, though not always corresponding to the verses in the Septuagint. At other times the Aramaic translation reads –Tarsos for Tarshish. and occasionally translates sea as in the Septuagint. Eusebius believes that Tarshish is Carthage (Onomasticon v. Carchedon) It seems therefore that in these translations Tarshish is identified either as Carthage or as Tarsos in Cilicia. But it is generally accepted that Tarshish be equated with a city by the name of Tartesos, Why?

Herodotus (IV, 152) tells about Greek sailors who passed through the pillars of Hercules (today's Gibraltar), and arrived at a town by the name of Tartesos bringing gold from there to Greece. D'horme who refers to this story sees it as analogous to the biblical narrative on the bringing of gold from Tarshish. As in the ancient Hebrew the letters Shin and Sin are

31 Berard, v. *ibid.* p. 351.

32 Berard, *ibid.* p. 120

interchangeable, therefore he believes that the name Tarshish might be read Tarsis and according to him Tarsis is a distortion of the name Tartesos³³, which, as pointed out, is the generally accepted view on the issue today³⁴, and it finds support from Diodorus Siculus who remarks (V-35) that "this land (Iberia-N. G.) possesses, we may venture to say, the most abundant and most excellent known sources of silver...Now the natives were ignorant of the use of the silver, and the Phoenicians, as they pursued their commercial enterprises and learned of what had taken place, purchased the silver"³⁵ So Tartesos was identified with Tarshish. On the basis of Latin and Greek writers from ancient times Cintas³⁶ concludes that Tartesos is Cadiz.

In the biblical list of nations (Gen. 10: 4; 1Chr. 1: 7) it reads as follows: "And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim", (Javan in Hebrew = Greece. – N. G.) It is obvious that the Bible links Tarshish with Yavan (Javan – Greece), and since in ancient Hebrew the letters Shin and Sin are interchangeable, therefore we are right in reading Tarsis, and it may be assumed that Tarshish – Tarsis is only a slight distortion of the Greek city of Tarsos in Asia minor. Josephus in Antiquities also identifies Tarshish with "The city Tarsos in Cilicia"³⁷, and some scholars agree with him³⁸. As mentioned above, the Aramaic Translation to the Bible sometimes translates Tarshish – Tarsos. This city of Tarsos was known in antiquity as a very wealthy city, inhabited by many Phoenicians.

The trade expansion of the "Phoenicians" reached its peak between the years c. 900 –1000 B. C.³⁹ a period which parallels that of King Solomon's trading activity. Harden⁴⁰ asks why the Phoenicians did not set out on their travels across the sea before then? and he answers: "Some infusion of new ideas and of new blood must be postulated to account for their sudden maritime activity, and these probably came from the Mycenaeans.", But in

33 D'home, Les Peuples Issue De Japhet, SY. XIII, 1932, p. 45

34 For example: Slouschz, Sefer Hayam, p. 143 (Hebrew)

Cullican, The First Venturers, 1966, p. 114.

Maspero, The struggle of the nations, Egypt, Syria, And Assyria, 1910, p. 740.

Moscato, The World Of The Phoenicians, 1968, pp. 96, 100, 231–232,

Carpenter. R. Tartesos, p. 123. EB, 1929 edit. (part archaeology –article Spain).

35 Diodorus Siculus, translation Oldfather. C. H. London, Heinemann

36 Cintas, Tarsis – Tartesos – Gadess, Semitica, XVI, 1966, pp. 5–37.

37 Josephus, Ant. IX, 209 ; I, 127.

38 Conder, Notes, PEF, 1892, pp. 44–45.

Notes, PEF. 1896, p. 168.

The Onomasticon, PEF, 1896, p. 239.

Mieses, Les Juifs et Les Etablissements Puniques en Afrique Du Nord, p. 116.

39 For example see: Harden, The Phoenicians, pp. 22, 52.

Contenau, La Civilisation Phénicienne, p. 56

Albright, The Archaeology of Palestine, 1949, p. 122

40 Harden, *ibid.* p. 51.

the light of what has been said before the answer must lie in the coming of the Israelites (The Phoenicians) who replaced the Canaanites. In this same sense we must also understand Hecateus when he says that Phoenicia was formerly called Chna, (Canaan), and Philo of Byblus words: "Chna who was afterwards called Phoinix".⁴¹ namely that a change of cultural values took place in the region.

41 Fr. Hist. Grec. I, 17 ; III, 569. see also Phoenicia, EB. 1929 edit. p. 766a