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Siculo-Punic Coinage and Siculo-Punic Interactions

The reflections presented in this paper derive from a survey of some of the recent literature on the coinage of Punic Sicily. They are offered from the perspective of a historian exploring questions such as: ‘what is meant by “Punic Sicily”?’; ‘how does one determine what is “Punic”?’; and ‘what was the relationship between that which is “Punic” and the rest of the island?’¹. The material discussed is essentially secondary and I make no pretence to particular expertise in the realms of archaeology or numismatics. However, the problems presented by the coinage seem to raise useful and interesting questions that are of no less interest to the archaeologist than to the historian when it comes to thinking about interactions in Punic Sicily. Coinage lies at the interface between political, economic, and cultural history, and it is the ways in which it is, and is not, used for elucidating both our understanding of the nature of Carthaginian imperialism in Sicily, and the interactions between Punic and non-Punic communities in Sicily, that I wish to explore in this paper. These two subjects, the one superficially more political, the other more cultural and economic, are inextricably intertwined, such that although the first part of the paper focuses upon readings of Carthaginian imperialism, and the second on cultural and economic interactions, the two are never wholly separated out in the discussion that follows.

Siculo-Punic coinage presents a number of apparent paradoxes, most obvious amongst which is the notion that Carthaginian coinage finds its beginnings, c. 410 BC, in western Sicily (perhaps at Entella)². This coinage is associated with the major expedition to reassert Carthaginian control in western Sicily³, and with the installation of (often Campanian) mercenary garrisons, with the result that it is understood above all in the context of political and military decisions. In other words, the traditionally mercantile Carthage enters the world of monetary production for apparently political and military reasons, rather than primarily economic motives⁴. However, the paradox should be rejected. Quite apart from the obvious response that political and military decisions can be motivated by economic considerations, ‘mercantile’ Carthage is a very worn *topos*. The paradox exists by virtue of the stereotype (hence ‘apparently’). Since the evidence points in a different direction, and the contradiction arises purely from the stereotype, if we abandon the stereotype (as being a literary construct of Carthage’s detractors), then the paradox simply disappears. As we shall see in a moment, the coinage can readily be understood as a political statement by Carthage, directed against

¹ And as such belong in the context of an ongoing work-in-progress: see PRAG 2006, 2010 (forthcoming A).

² For the suggested siting of the mint at Entella, see LEE 2000; a more general discussion of the Sicilian beginnings in, e.g., MILDENBERG 1992.

³ For which see, e.g., HANS 1983, LEWIS 1994, ANELLO 2002.

⁴ The paradox is repeatedly commented upon, e.g., CUTRONI TUSA 2008, 398; also VISONÀ 1998, 4.

Syracuse - although that is not to rule out, e.g., economic considerations⁵. Furthermore, the coinage raises significant questions for our understanding of the cultural dynamics at play, since the coinage is visibly 'Greek', or better 'Sicilian', from both a technical (protruding flans, unfixed dies (fig. 1), centrality of the Attic tetradrachm to the issue) and an iconographic perspective (clearly Sikelote, particularly Syracusan, types)⁶.

A no less complex picture of political and cultural interplay can be found in the earlier coinage of the Phoenicio-Punic settlements on the island (Motya, Panormus, Solus). These are the first of the western Phoenicio-Punic settlements to begin minting, and they also do so very clearly within the Sikelote sphere - for a start, they employ Greek legends, although these are soon replaced with Punic. The independent coinage of Motya begins, significantly perhaps, after the Carthaginian defeat at Himera in 480 BC - traditionally seen as the end of the first phase of Carthaginian intervention in Sicily, which resumes with their return (with coinage) in 410 BC. The interaction visible between the Motyan coinage and that of Greek (e.g. Himera) and Elymian (e.g. Segesta) communities in western Sicily, and even with, e.g., Populonia in Etruria, as suggested by the affinity of the coin types, is so close that scholars have often suggested shared workshops, or the physical transfer of dies (fig. 2)⁷. The patterns implied by the coinage compare well with the material evidence for the cultural autonomy of Motya from Carthage (suggested by elements as diverse as relief sculpture, onomastics, epigraphic formulae, and script)⁸. The extent of the integration of the Motyan coin-types with other (non-Punic) cities in the region should be considered alongside, for instance, the recent suggestion that Motya was one of *the* western Mediterranean centres for the production of terracotta altars⁹, or the evidence from the Birgi necropolis of



Fig. 1 - Siculo-Punic tetradrachm, silver, 17.37 gr, 320-300 BC (Jenkins ser. 3a, no.186). Head of Arethusa to left, four dolphins / horse head to left, palm-tree, 'MMHNT. Red lines indicate the die axis on each face, illustrating both the protruding flans and the non-fixed die. This example from GATLIN 2009, http://imagedb.coinarchives.com/img/stacks/stacks_jan09/image02086.jpg (accessed 15.4.09).



Fig. 2 - Example of imitation of Segesta type at Motya (NB for actual die-linkage, see JENKINS 1971, 27-28).

a) Segesta example: didrachm, late C5 BC, silver, 9.02 gr. Hound to right, standing on stag's head and seizing by the nose; above, head of river-god to right / ΕΓΕΣΤΑ[ION], head of nymph to right, ivy-leaf behind; cf. JENKINS 1971, pl.4, C. This example from GATLIN 2009, <http://imagedb.coinarchives.com/img/nac/033/00083q00.jpg> (accessed 15.4.09).

b) Motya example: didrachm, late C5 BC, silver, 8.37 gr. Similar to (a), without legend; cf. JENKINS 1971, Motya II, 36. This example from GATLIN 2009, <http://imagedb.coinarchives.com/img/munzen/020/00004q00.jpg> (accessed 15.4.09).

⁵ As remarked, e.g., by MILDENBERG 1992, 292.

⁶ The technical parallels are lucidly presented in MILDENBERG 1992; the iconographic parallels are discussed further below, and more fully in, e.g., CUTRONI TUSA 2000a, 259-61.

⁷ Principal study is JENKINS 1971 (compare, e.g., plate 2: Motya I.15 with Segesta B); cf. MANFREDI 2000, 12-13. For discussion of the toponym 'Motya' and coin-legends in this context, e.g., NENCI 1993.

⁸ In addition to the references conveniently collected in BONDÌ 1990-91, 221 nn. 31-33, see e.g. MOSCATI and UBERTI 1981, 61-71, and MOSCATI 1995.

⁹ See BONDÌ 2000, 88-9. Cf. the observation regarding the mix of 'Punic' and Sicilian 'Greek' figured terracotta types in CIASCA and TOTI 1994, 7, or the comments of TOTI 2002, II, 555 on the fourth-century ceramics from Motya.

mixed material culture at the site¹⁰, or Diodorus' report of Greek Sicilians prepared to stand alongside the Motyans against Dionysius I in 397 BC (Diod. Sic. 14.53.4, *cf.* 14.77.55).

This raises a basic question, which is one on which I would like to focus: to what extent can the interactions implied by the coinage provide models for other interactions, or at least heuristic tools for thinking about possible interactions? If, for example, a coin-type, or a minting technique, travels from one community to another, does that suggest, at one extreme, political or economic interventions at a state level, or, at the other end of the spectrum, merely the migration of a lone craftsman? Is it a question of movements of people, or skills, or ideas, or cultural ideals, or, should such interactions be thought about only at the level of state decisions about political or economic policy? The latter are readily accepted as motives in the production of coinage, but the inevitable consequence of doing so, quite apart from the inevitable boundaries created by the specialist nature of numismatic studies, is that the implications of the coinage for the movements of peoples and the exchange of ideas and ideals are often either ignored or else set to one side as being of either limited relevance or alternative significance compared to other material culture interactions (visible in pottery, architecture, etc.). The reality of course is that more than one of these aspects is likely to be at work at any one time. The conclusion is therefore an unsurprising one, that either to make a full assessment of the significance of patterns in the coinage, or to evaluate the interactions visible in the archaeology, requires the full integration of these different media. Such a plea for interdisciplinary study is of course not new. However, what has become apparent in undertaking this brief study is that, because coinage is peculiarly suited, compared to other forms of material culture, to answering the needs of political, military, and economic history, it is very often used primarily for such purposes, and arguably its value for exploring the wider range of cultural interactions is set to one side.

Such issues come to the fore if one considers the development of our understanding of the Punic *eparchia* in western Sicily from c.410 BC onwards. Punic historians' grasp of how, over time, this *eparchia* may have developed has changed in parallel with the increasing quantity and sophistication of the numismatic evidence in the last three decades or so¹¹. This does not, I think, have a parallel in the Greek or Roman world, where the literary sources play a more dominant role. The absence of literary sources patently affects the approaches adopted for the Punic world - which is itself worth keeping in mind, not least with regard to the impact of the Greco-Roman literary tradition on attitudes to the Punic world¹². Indeed, we still talk about the *eparchia* (or *epikrateia*), thanks to our Greek literary sources, although the coinage in fact provides the appropriate terminology from the Carthaginian perspective, and indicates that we should talk about the (Carthaginian) 'territory' (in Sicily)¹³.

The rise and fall of the autonomous city-mints in western Sicily (both those that are explicitly Punic in origin - Motya, Panormus, Solus, as in Thuc. 6.2.6 - and others, such as Segesta, Entella, etc.), and the development of the Siculo-Punic tetradrachms (and the accompanying bronze issues), is normally understood to imply a situation in which Carthaginian presence in Sicily acquires an ever more imperial and territorial character from the last quarter of the fourth century BC onwards. Consequently, the debate over whether these coins were minted in Sicily or in Carthage (particularly problematic with regard to the bronze issues) has very considerable consequences for our understanding of Carthaginian imperialism in Sicily (and the rest of the western Mediterranean)¹⁴.

¹⁰ GRIFFO 1997, esp. 915–16, and JEFFERY 1990, 272 and 411 no. 45.

¹¹ BONDI 1990-91, 221 makes this point and brings out several significant aspects; *cf.* MANFREDI 1999, and a stimulating parallel discussion for the small islands between Sicily and Africa in the third to first centuries BC in MANFREDI 2002, esp. 332–6.

¹² See, e.g., BERNAL 1987 (cc. 8–9), VELLA 1996, and PRAG 2006.

¹³ The legend *B'RST* which appears on some later Siculo-Punic tetradrachms (Jenkins' Series 6), on which MANFREDI 1995, 110–11. I return to this below. On the Greek terms *eparchia* and *epikrateia*, see esp. FERRARY 1988, 14–18.

¹⁴ That much of the silver was minted in Sicily appears generally accepted (see the arguments of MILDENBERG 1992); the bronze is more contested. In favour of a Sicilian mint, especially for the anepigraphic bronze issues, e.g., CUTRONI TUSA 2000b, or 2000a; strong arguments for the bronze issues as north African in VISONÀ 2006, 240–41, 1998, 5–6, and in particular 1985, 672; *cf.* MANFREDI 2000 and 2006, 273.



Fig. 3 - Head of Arethusa / Kore on Siculo-Punic tetradrachm and Syracusan dekadrachm.

a) Siculo-Punic tetradrachm, silver, 17.16 gr, c. 350-320 BC. Head of Arethusa or Kore left, wearing triple-pendant earring and necklace; four dolphins swimming around / Horse prancing left before palm tree (cf. JENKINS 1977, ser. 2d, no. 135). This example from GATLIN 2009, <http://imagedb.coinarchives.com/img/cng/059/enlarged/591256.jpg> (accessed 15.4.09).

b) Syracusan dekadrachm of Euainetos, silver, 42.92 gr, c. 400 BC. Quadriga galloping left with Nike above, spoils below / head of Arethusa to left, above ΣΥΡΑΚΟΣΙΩΝ, four dolphins swimming around. This example from GATLIN 2009, <http://imagedb.coinarchives.com/img/gornny/175/image00048.jpg> (accessed 15.4.09).



Fig. 4 - Head of Herakles on Alexander and Siculo-Punic tetradrachms.

a) Tetradrachm minted at Memphis, under Ptolemy I, c.321 BC, silver 17.24 gr. (cf. SNG Cop. 7-8). Head of Herakles right in lion skin headdress / Zeus seated on throne to left, eagle on right hand, scepter in left, rose in left field, to right ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ. This example from GATLIN 2009, <http://imagedb.coinarchives.com/img/gemini/005/image00390.jpg> (accessed 15.4.09).

b) Siculo-Punic tetradrachm, silver 16.44 gr, c.300-289 BC, Head of Herakles right in lion skin headdress / horse's head left, palm tree behind, below ΜΗΝΤ (cf. JENKINS 1978, ser. 5b, no. 370). This example from GATLIN 2009, <http://imagedb.coinarchives.com/img/heritage/3004/image20003.jpg> (accessed 15.4.09).

It is relatively easy to argue that the choices of coin-types on these issues reflect, e.g., political decisions (alone)¹⁵: the Siculo-Punic tetradrachms appear alongside Carthaginian presence on the island from c. 410 BC onwards; the development of types, particularly from the middle of the fourth century, strongly echoes Syracusan types of the fifth century (Jenkins' Series 2 onwards: female head of Kore-Persephone, often read as Tanit, but also clearly imitative of Syracusan Arethusa found on, e.g., the dekadrachms of Euainetos: fig. 3)¹⁶; the coincidence of the cessation of tetradrachms at Syracuse has even led to suggestions of a monetary accord between Carthage and Syracuse, as well as the obvious alternative of a more competitive or hostile political and economic aim (i.e. monetary domination of the island)¹⁷. But, to take one example, should the head of Kore (or Arethusa) be linked to Tanit, or to the importation of worship of Kore to Carthage in 396 BC (Diod. Sic. 14.77.4-5), or, as Jenkins also suggested, be taken merely as 'the continuance of a customary coin design simply as such' (especially if we consider that similar imitation takes place in some mainland Greek mints)¹⁸? The most recent discussion, reasonably insisting on the classification of the type as Kore, observes that 'La ripresa della testa della dea (sc. Kore), quale appare nelle emissioni greche di Sicilia, si motiva con dichiariti intenti turbativi e concorrenziali nell'ambito dei

¹⁵ In addition to the fundamental catalogues of JENKINS 1971, 1974, 1977, 1978, see, e.g., CUTRONI TUSA 2000a, 259-61 on the development of the tetradrachm types, and the general survey of Carthaginian issues in VISONÀ 1998.

¹⁶ Discussion in JENKINS 1977, 7-8, 11-19.

¹⁷ CUTRONI TUSA 1988, 204 for the suggestion of a monetary accord; note that the ΣΥΣ issues include tetradrachms from this point onwards also (GANDOLFO 1998, 349).

¹⁸ JENKINS 1977, 8; for imitation of the Euainetos coins on the Greek mainland by Pheneus, Messene, and Opuntian Locris, see JENKINS 1977, 11 with n. 23 ('a relatively faithful copy of the prototype but reinterpreted in typically fourth century style').

Fig. 5 - Pegasus on Syracusan didrachm of the Timoleon period and on Siculo-Punic 5-shekel issue.

a) didrachm, Syracuse, 341-317 BC, silver, 8.63 gr. Pegasus flying left / head of Athena with Corinthian helmet to right, ΣΥΡΑΚΟΣΙΩΝ on right (cf. R. Calciati, *Pegasi* (Mortara 1990), 607). This example from GATLIN 2009, <http://imagedb.coinarchives.com/img/gorny/175/image00051.jpg> (accessed 15.4.09).

b) 5-shekel issue, Sicily, silver, 37.78 gr. Female head to left / Pegasus flying right, below B'RŠT (cf. JENKINS 1978, ser. 6, no.435). This example from GATLIN 2009, http://imagedb.coinarchives.com/img/stacks/stacks_jan08/image02271.jpg (accessed 15.4.09).



conflitti siciliani¹⁹. Subsequently, following Agathokles' failure to overthrow Carthaginian power in Africa, in the period when he laid claim to the title of *basileus* (305-295 BC) and so equivalence to the other successors of Alexander, while Carthage sought to rebuild its control of the island, the new Head of Melqart type (Jenkins, series 5) is clearly modelled on types of Alexander (fig. 4). As Jenkins suggested, this seems like a logical next step in the employment of coinage on the model of the current 'great power', and clearly indicative of Carthaginian hegemonial claims in the West²⁰. This issue is in turn followed, in the run-up to the First Punic War, by not only a switch to the shekel weight-standard (Jenkins, series 6)²¹, but also the use of a winged-Pegasus type, dominant in eastern Sicily from the time of Timoleon (344 BC onwards) and associated previously with Corinthian coinage, but not attested on Punic coinage either before this time or outside of Sicily (fig. 5). Again, this would appear to be a deliberate choice, outward-looking and making a political statement²². Finally, the legend found on some of these latter issues, *B'RŠT*, 'in the territories', is the most explicit testament to the idea of regional control in Sicily on the part of Carthage²³.

All of these explanations are entirely plausible, and eminently satisfying. But to talk of 'the continuance of a customary coin design simply as such', or the adoption of coinage on the model of the current 'great power' risks glossing over the much deeper interactions which are implicit in these explanations. 'Simply' is disingenuous. These Siculo-Punic issues clearly compete with Syracuse in laying claim to dominance in Sicily; but they also, for example, fill a clear economic gap on the island in the absence of Syracusan tetradrachms for much of the fourth century and in the face of the steady exhaustion of the circulating Attic silver on the island in the same period²⁴. That implies the existence of wider patterns of interaction - quite apart from the interactions implicit in the assumption of a common language of political self-presentation. From an archaeological perspective, it is interesting to observe that black-glaze pottery becomes much more homogeneous in the western part of the island from the later fourth century BC onwards (the range of forms is said to be similar to that found at Carthage, Leptis Magna, and in Sardinia, with Lilybaeum identified as a key centre of production); at the same time, imports of Attic wares fall off sharply and there is a developing interaction with Italian production (although this may not be unique to Sicily in the central Mediterranean)²⁵. This latter pattern is suggested also by the grave goods in the necropoleis of Palermo. As summed up by one of the principal excavators, these show a high level of importation: Attic

¹⁹ ACQUARO 2008, 136.

²⁰ JENKINS 1978, 10; discussion of the type on 8-11, detailed commentary 11-19.

²¹ JENKINS 1978, 36-39. On the weight standard, see CUTRONI TUSA 2000a, 262; compare the debate about the choice of weight standard in the Siculo-Punic coinage during the Second Punic War, for which see MANFREDI 2000, 17, and esp. BURNETT 1995, 392.

²² For the Pegasus type, employed on the 5-shekel coins, see MANFREDI 2000, 16 and 1995, 110-11 (the types employed for Series 6 are not discussed by Jenkins).

²³ For the legend, see MANFREDI 1995, 110-11.

²⁴ CUTRONI TUSA 2000a, 264.

²⁵ DI STEFANO 2000, 1300; cf. DI STEFANO 1993, 55-6 for initial neutron activation analysis of the black glaze, and 39-47 for a summary of the very diverse ceramic interactions in fourth-/third-century Lilybaeum.

down to the early fourth century, and then increasingly Campanian and Sikelote. The overall picture is extremely diverse, and traditional Punic forms are a relatively marginal presence²⁶. Besides the superficially simple question of how we choose the appropriate cultural label for a site ('Punic,' etc.) - on literary, economic, numismatic, ceramic, or other grounds - arguably the coinage becomes more comprehensible and interesting when placed alongside such evidence²⁷.

But if our understanding of the relationship of Carthage to the principal sites of western Sicily is both deepened and complicated by the contribution of numismatics, this is perhaps even more true for the smaller inland western sites such as Monte Iato or Monte Adranone. These sites lie in what might be called a contact-zone, strategic hill-top sites in an area that was regularly fought over during the fourth and third centuries, on the 'border' of Carthaginian territory. The material culture *facies* of these sites offers a highly complex picture²⁸: at Monte Adranone, one of two structures normally identified as a Phoenicio-Punic sanctuary produced large quantities of Siculo-Punic coinage in the layers of burnt animal bones covering the floor; but much of the civic and domestic architecture and material culture is considered by the excavator to be typically Sicilian Greco-Hellenistic and/or indigenous. Punic presence has therefore been considered to be restricted to the religious and monetary spheres²⁹. Similarly at Monte Iato (Iaitas), where extensive finds of Siculo-Punic coinage have been dismissed as marginal for the culture of the city, since such a presence is only otherwise supported by supposedly insignificant elements such as bathing facilities, similar to those at Kerkouane in North Africa³⁰ - even though the site has also, from a very limited set of material, produced evidence for what is presumably a local magistrate bearing a Punic name in the second century BC³¹. How should we interpret the contrasting case of nearby Entella, where the Punic bronze coinage, ubiquitous across so much of the island, is suddenly absent from the site for a generation (c.310-280 BC), although the site remained in use³²? If, as it is common to do, the coinage on these sites is read as a marker for Carthaginian domination, and in particular the physical presence of a garrison (often itself made up of mercenaries of diverse origins), supposedly independent of any cultural implications, what then are we to make of the case of Morgantina, on the fringes of Syracusan territory in the eastern interior of the island and firmly outside the Carthaginian zone on any normal political-historical reading? In the same period, the Siculo-Punic issues, both silver and bronze, are found on this site in almost equal measure with Syracusan issues, and in the Timoleon period they are in the majority³³. In general, what explanation should be offered for a bronze coinage which is so much more widespread than the norm for a civic bronze issue - the normal method for identifying a local civic mint (concentration of findspots) becomes largely irrelevant, it becomes impossible to use roaming garrisons as either the sole, or even the primary agents, and in any case the implied interactions are that much greater. Indeed, what are the interactions implied by a bronze - not silver - coinage that is found extensively across more than two-thirds of the island³⁴?

As things stand, we are left in a strange half-way house, where the old negative image of destructive and hostile Punic domination has been rejected, but, since the revision comes via the coinage, so often taken to reflect primarily political and/or military control, but not cultural domination (or even necessarily

²⁶ 'La ceramica comune presenta solo alcune forme di tradizione punica', C.A. DI STEFANO, quoted in CUTRONI TUSA 2005, 878.

²⁷ BONDÌ 1990-91, 221-22 for a good summary of such interactions.

²⁸ See the comments on M. Iato and M. Adranone, with references, of both CUTRONI TUSA 2008, 402 and BONDÌ 2000, 86-7.

²⁹ FIORENTINI 1999, esp. 71 and 76 with n. 11.

³⁰ ISLER 1993, 91: 'nel quadro della problematica che stiamo discutendo le monete non significano altro se non che il potere politico e commerciale si identificava con l'epicrazia cartaginese, per cui la moneta circolante era quella punica. Non ne deriva invece che la cultura materiale del nostro centro fosse quella punica' (despite the range of material adduced pp. 89-92).

³¹ 'Επι Ταμναίου on a civic tile-stamp of the C2 BC (MÜLLER 1976, 58-9, 69, tav. 28).

³² FREY-KUPPER 2000.

³³ For distribution of finds of the bronze issues in Sicily, see CUTRONI TUSA 2000b, with Morgantina bronze statistics quoted at 373 (47.7% of bronze at Morgantina between 405 and 317 BC is Punic, against 52.3% from Syracuse, which is mostly Dionysian). For the silver at Morgantina, see CACCAMO CALTABIANO 1999, 305 (36.7% Punic, as opposed to 40.6% Syracusan, for 405-317 BC). Both follow GARRAFFO 1993 (*non vid.*).

³⁴ See CUTRONI TUSA 2000b, but also VISONÀ 1998, 5-6 (noting possible military and political motives for the bronze); cf. CACCAMO CALTABIANO 1999.

interaction), the picture is an oddly limited one of extensive economic interaction, apparently without cultural consequences. Punic domination suddenly acquires a very 'light touch' indeed³⁵.

The debates about where the various mints for these coinages might best be placed strike at the very heart of these problems, not least since one common method of mint identification relies upon elucidating the distribution of material, which, as just noted, is hardly typical. Many of the Punic legends to be found on these coins are so debateable in their significance that their interpretation is usually determined by the existing (or preferred) historical narrative. *RŠMLQRT* 'head of Melqart' might be a city coinage (if you can identify the implied 'Cape of Melqart' - Cephaloedium, Heraclea, Selinus, Lilybaeum?); or else minted under the authority of the 'elect of Melqart' (Carthaginian authorities in Sicily - after the fashion of the Siculo-Punic issues in the name of the 'financial controllers', *MHŠBM*, or 'the camp' *MHNT*); and/or signify a hypothetical sanctuary of Melqart (not identified) that provided an extra-civic authority and channel for precious metals, as apparently to be found elsewhere in the Phoenicio-Punic world³⁶. No less problematic, does *QRTHDŠT* on these issues refer to Carthage in North Africa, or to one of the Sicilian cities (e.g. Lilybaeum)³⁷? Solutions to these problems, or explanations of the coin distributions, are inextricably bound up in understandings of the nature of the Carthaginian 'empire' in Sicily, but also in our ability, or otherwise, to interpret the significance of the cultural make-up of a site. Recourse to technical arguments, such as the striking techniques noted at the start or, more recently, metal analysis, adds possibilities, but does not generate any greater certainty³⁸. Much of the Siculo-Punic bronze shows re-use of older metal, and the significant presence of Cypriot copper. But it is another matter altogether to draw inferences from that about networks of interaction. It is, of course, impossible to know in what form the metal was transported, or from where, or when³⁹. Strikingly, the Romans appear to have imported Syracusan metallurgical techniques into western Sicily after the Second Punic War, in order to restart coinage in the region, rather than employing those methods previously in use there - but was that a political decision, a cultural decision, or a purely practical decision (was any minting facility still intact in the west by 210 BC, or anyone still present in Panormus or Lilybaeum skilled enough in minting coins?)⁴⁰. The Roman willingness to adopt and adapt is itself a familiar *topos* (e.g. Diod. Sic. 23.2), but should the concept be any less applicable in the preceding Carthaginian period?

It is always tempting, and certainly easier, to assign coinage political, and perhaps economic, motives and explanations. But the overlaps, in the Sicilian case at least, between material-culture interactions and apparent choices in coinage suggest that neither aspect can be successfully understood without the other, and that such interactions need to be analysed at a much deeper level than mere connections or chronology. Coin types, coin production techniques, and coin distributions offer a well-mapped pattern of interactions, sometimes with associated institutions, some of which open doors to connections that either historical, or archaeological sources alone might not reveal. What they signify is, of course, quite another matter.

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³⁵ Contrasts with the older negative 'model', as expressed for example in GABRICI 1927, 42, 77, drawn by CUTRONI TUSA 2000a, 250.

³⁶ This last idea repeatedly and trenchantly argued by L. I. MANFREDI (e.g. 2006, 278, 286) usually in conjunction with the reading 'elect of Melqart' (MANFREDI 1985; cf. ACQUARO 1988, 189). CUTRONI TUSA (e.g. 2000a, 255-6) is a leading exponent of these as a city issue. Cf. MILDENBERG 1989, 8 (a supra-civic, 'provincial' issue, in tetradrachms only). Overview in MANFREDI 1995, 115-118.

³⁷ For a summary of all these legends, see MANFREDI 1995, 109-111.

³⁸ See the comments of VISONÀ 2006, 243-44.

³⁹ See MANFREDI 2000, 16 and 2006, 273.

⁴⁰ FREY-KUPPER and BARRANDON 2003.

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