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# Working at Home
## Gender and Craft Production in the Western Phoenician World*

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Abstract

This paper examines several craft production activities that were undertaken in domestic contexts in far western Phoenician settings. An analysis of the distribution of artefacts and waste related with craft production activities reveals that these productive activities were not spatially segregated from care-giving practices. On the contrary, these two kinds of practices often took place in the same settings. The study emphasises the relevance of collaborative domestic economies in these historical contexts– contexts in which the limits between "the domestic" and "the productive" appear to have been enormously fluid. The study's conclusions undermine long-held traditional narratives that imagine a clear-cut separation between the productive sphere – "primarily" associated with men – and the private, domestic sphere – considered to be "essentially" feminine. In this way, the study demonstrates the daily life of these communities was characterised by an entanglement between the spaces, practices, material cultures and agents related to craft production activities and those related to care-giving activities. The flexibility and fluidity of these settings is especially apparent in non-elite domestic groups.

Keywords

Gender, Domesticity, Household, Craft Production, Domestic Technologies.

## 1. Introduction

The construction of gender identities, expressions and ideologies has recently become an emerging line of research in the archaeology of western Phoenician and Punic communities. This interest has put an end to the decades-long historiographic silence that has affected the women who were a part of these groups and communities. In Western Phoenician and Punic settings, studies on gender have focused primarily around three main lines of research: maintenance activities, mostly in connection with the preparation and cooking of food; some of the ritual practices that were undertaken in shrines, as well as in domestic or funerary settings, in which women appear to have enjoyed some prominence; and the expression and constitution of gender identities through body representations and performative acts related mainly to sexuality, motherhood and care-giving.

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The irruption of these studies has had some impact on traditional narratives on Western Phoenician and Punic communities. The attention to everyday practices and settings, for instance, has allowed the appearance of new interpretations that have identified women and domestic groups as extremely active social actors in the creation of new communities in the West – communities born out of displacement and migration-[1], as well as in the processes of cultural hybridization and identity-making that unfolded in these settings[2]. The effects of these perspectives, however, has been very limited in the grand narratives that dominate Mediterranean Iron Age archaeological literature and, in particular, that of the Phoenician and Punic worlds. The impact of gender perspectives, with their attention to domestic settings and everyday life, has been practically irrelevant in contemporary dominant perspectives, which have focused largely on urbanisation processes, economic intensification, inequality growth and the construction of globalised economies. In these narratives, women, households, and domestic spaces continue to be perceived as marginal actors and irrelevant spaces in the construction and development of Mediterranean colonial economies – as subjects that were unconnected to the new economic dynamics that, throughout the 1st millennium BCE, brought about a significant growth in production, consumption and exchange. In the study of macro-structural dynamics, the work of women and gender relation continue to be perceived as irrelevant.

This view has not emerged as the result of systematic archaeological analyses. It is in fact the result of an entirely acritical projection into the past of the "domestic woman" paradigm – that is, of an ideology of femininity that spread across the Western world primarily from the eighteenth century and reached its apogee in the second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century[3]. The espousal of this ideology of domesticity, presented as universal and ahistorical, is largely responsible for the scant attention that archaeology – especially Phoenician and Punic archaeology – has paid to domestic settings, everyday practices and material cultures, and gender relations in the economic study of these communities.

This study seeks to make a modest contribution to the erosion of this paradigm by analysing practices of craft production in domestic settings in Phoenician settlements of the far west, and in the Iberian area in particular. This exploration focuses on the distribution of artefacts and waste linked to craft production. It examines the spatial association or segregation of these material cultures in connection with material items related to practices of maintenance and care of the group. The study reveals that production and care-giving activities were not spatially segregated, since they were commonly found in the same settings. In this way, the study foregrounds the relevance of domestic economies in these historical contexts, empowering the so-called "hidden producers"[4] – producers that include the women who were a part of the family group. It also seeks to call attention to the relevance of gender relations and ideologies in examining and interpreting macrostructural dynamics in Western Phoenician groups and communities.

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1 DELGADO 2017.

2 DELGADO 2010; DELGADO – FERRER 2012.

3 ROSENBERG 1982.

4 HENDON 1996.

## 2. Women's place, men's place: An overview of the ideology of separate spheres

The so-called paradigm of separate spheres corresponds to a dichotomic view of the world in which sex emerges as the fundamental social division. It is based on the presumption that a rigidly binary gender system has a precise, sharply defined spatial equivalence. Its imaginary revolves around a world divided into two spheres that correspond to distinct, neatly separate spaces. These two spaces are presented as opposed and mutually exclusive: the public sphere and the private sphere. The public sphere corresponds to public space. It is located outside of the home, it is reserved for men, and it is where both productive economic activity and political life unfold. Its counterpoint is the private sphere, a domestic space that is associated with women, reproduction and family care. The paradigm of separate spheres maintains that economic and political power is exclusively in the public space, that is, by men. The only power to be found in domestic settings – in female settings – is symbolic power.

The argument for the contrast between public and private space rests on a rigid sexual division of labour that assigns clearly defined tasks to men and women – tasks that are linked to different values, uses, and meanings. The paradigm assumes that these differences are largely biologically determined and conditioned by the role of women in human reproduction – and, as such, universally and historically unchanging. One of the longstanding projects of feminist and gender archaeologies has been precisely to question the universalist claims of the modern ideology of femininity, which has been naturalised through excessively acritical and methodologically questionable ways of understanding the past – the foundations of the so-called "original narratives"[5]. Feminist and gender archaeology have proved particularly combative with this issue. Many of its contributions have aimed to shatter universal and essentialising gender views, highlighting instead the heterogeneity in gender experiences, practices and ideologies in the past as well as in the present. By the end of the 1980s, and especially throughout the 1990s, this "fight" focused on the universality of gender roles. It did so by proving, through archaeology, that in many communities of the past tasks that were codified as male or female did not always correspond with stereotypical modern Western roles[6]. This body of evidence was an important warning against methodologically inconsistent gender studies that projected present roles and ideologies into the past in an unproven and acritical manner. It also allowed for the emergence of experiences and practices that did not fit in with the rigid, dual stereotypes of the separate spheres paradigm.

The critique of the separate spheres paradigm, as well as the need to break away from its legacy, has been central to a substantial part of feminist archaeology over the last decades[7]. It owes a great deal to the rise of new theoretical currents – mainly post-structuralism and post-processualism – that argue for the need to break away from dual and essentialising interpretations of gender. These currents reject simplistic and

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[5] CONKEY – WILLIAMS 1991.

[6] See, among others, GERO 1991; COSTIN 1996; ROBIN 2006; BRUMFIEL 2006; MCCLURE 2007; ARTHUR 2010.

[7] Among other studies see ROBIN 2002; SPENCER-WOOD – CAMP 2013; ROTMAN 2006; ROTMAN 2013; BRUMFIEL – ROBIN 2008.

extremely polarized understandings based on categories such as man/woman, production/reproduction or public/private[8].

The arrival of these perspectives has had momentous implications for the study of the work of women. New research has distanced itself from older studies that theorised about the sexual division of labour on the basis of universal models that originated from ethnographic analogies, such as the ones created by Murdock and Provost[9]. These universal models, with their essentialising and ahistorical views, have given way to archaeological studies that have focused on specific historical contexts, micro scales and everyday settings. This approach has revealed the presence of great historical diversity concerning practices, material cultures and labour relations in connection with gender. Studies that result from these perspectives seek to eschew the rigidity of binary systems, emphasising instead the vast flexibility in gender roles in many human communities of the past.

In this sense, studies have shown that not all tasks were at all times and in all places divided and socially organised on the basis of binary gender categories. These significant contributions highlight that, in many human communities, tasks that are not sexually codified coexist with activities that can be preferentially or exclusively undertaken by groups identified with a specific gender.[10] In these human groups, the sexual division of labour exists side-by-side with a notable amount of non-sexed tasks in which men, women, boys and girls collaborate closely, even sharing the same spaces[11].

It has been noted that in several historical contexts this flexibility is particularly apparent among non-elite social groups. In these groups, the allocation and distribution of tasks can deviate significantly from the postulates of the hegemonic gender ideology present in literary and epigraphic texts, as well as in iconographic representations that are largely associated with socially dominant classes. In this sense, new feminist post-processual archaeological studies have discredited older homogenising views of women, underscoring instead the differences between women from different social classes, women of different ages, or women from different cultural or ethnic groups, in connection with the roles they undertook, their responsibilities, and gender values and ideals. Therefore, these perspectives demand we incorporate intersectional approaches that interlink gender with other social identifications – such as age, class or status, ethnicity, and professional group – and with distinct personal experiences and situations[12].

These archaeological critiques have reinterpreted another issue: the spaces where work – including tasks associated with production and those associated with group care-giving – unfolds, and the distribution of artefacts and waste in such spaces. This aspect is particularly relevant in archaeological analyses of female work, as the spatial distribution of artefacts has traditionally been the main source of archaeological information in gendering activities and spaces. Critical perspectives have evidenced that many interpretations of gender roles and relations in communities of the past have been understood through the prism of separate spheres: work that is recorded inside the home is imagined to have

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8 GILCHRIST 1999; MESKELL 2007; VOSS 2008.

9 MURDOCK – PROVOST 1973.

10 BRUMFIEL – ROBIN 2008: 2.

11 ROBIN 2002; MCCLURE 2007

12 See, among others, COSTIN 1996: 114; WURST 2003: 230; PYBURN 2004; BRUMFIEL 2006; VOSS 2008.

been female, as well as liked primarily with care-giving, reproduction and group self-sustainment, whereas work that was undertaken in the space that surrounded the home, or in spaces that were separate from it, is interpreted as male and connected to the creation of wealth or to the market, especially in so-called complex societies.

Over the course of the last decades, many studies have questioned the absolute division between public space and private space. Arguing against the view of a complete segregation of spheres, these new perspectives have underlined that public and private spheres overlapped, commonly with enormously fluid borders[13]. These approaches dispute the universality of a model that derives from the separate spheres dogma, arguing instead for historical diversity in the organisation and use of spaces, as well as in the meanings attributed to them. This very same fluidity and flexibility has been defended regarding the use of space on the part of gendered groups, putting into question the dichotomy that contends that domestic spaces were female spaces – as if men did not live and work in them – and that public spaces were male spaces – as if women did not step beyond the thresholds of their homes. Many domestic spaces from different communities of the past have been reread in this way in the past few years, highlighting that such spaces were not exclusively devoted to reproduction and child-rearing. These studies have drawn attention to the home as a key space in the everyday lives of many communities of the past. Regardless of their gender, members of these communities turned the house into the centre of practices linked to reproduction and group care-giving, ritual experience, economic activity, the forging of social networks and relations, and even the construction of political power.

Especially relevant to this study are the recent contributions on productive activities in domestic spaces. These publications have radically reconsidered the meaning we ascribe to domestic economy in the ancient world[14]. They have questioned the anthropological propositions of the 1960s and the 1970s, which were primarily based on the work of Sahlins[15] – an author who was strongly influenced by the modern separation of spheres paradigm. He defined the "domestic mode of production" as a self-sufficient system that was unable to incorporate neither specialised, high-intensity production nor to generate the surplus necessary for economic systems with high levels of exchange and for social structures with large levels of inequality. This conception of domestic labour was deeply influenced by the ideology of industrial capitalist labour. It has been strongly refuted in analyses of the domestic economies of socially complex communities from, among other contexts, Mesoamerica, the Andes, the Near East and the Mediterranean in the Bronze Age and the Iron Age.

These studies have contradicted Sahlins's postulates in underscoring the economic relevance of work undertaken by domestic groups in these complex communities: in these settings the home was a leading economic unit. This consideration has allowed for an assessment of the tasks that men, women, boys, girls and the elderly undertook in the framework of domestic economies – tasks that have become key to understanding the development of economic, social and political systems, as well as the birth of global

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13 BOWSER – PATTON 2004; ROBIN 2002; BRUMFIEL – ROBIN 2008.

14 See, among others AULT 2007, HIRTH 2009; FEINMAN – NICHOLAS 2011; FAUST 2011.

15 SAHLINS 1972.

economic networks or empires, in the ancient world[16]. In focusing attention on a critique of the model of separation of spheres, these new approaches bring to light new challenges and perspectives for archaeological studies on the work of women and their recognition as economic actors.

## 3. Landscape and craft production in western Phoenician and Punic settlements

The many archaeological investigations undertaken in several western Mediterranean Phoenician settings have established that these communities were socially heterogeneous and economically active. Especially from the 7th century BCE, these communities were characterised by a high degree of economic diversification. Archaeology has revealed that these peoples settled in the Western Mediterranean developed, at different scales and intensities, activities linked to agriculture and livestock production, the exploitation of marine resources, the transformation of products derived from farming, fishing or shellfishing, and extractive and craft activities. To a large extent, such economic activities appear to have revolved around practices connected to trade and exchange on a local and regional scale – but also through far-ranging global networks that encompassed the Mediterranean and, partially, the Atlantic.

Craft production appears to have occupied a central role in the economy of these groups, judging from the substantial amount of archaeological evidence that points to the development of these types of activities in these communities. The volume, spread and diversity of the evidence suggest that craft production was one of the foundations of the economy of these peoples. Despite the centrality of craft production to the daily life of these groups, however, there are barely any studies that have examined in depth craft production in Western Phoenician communities from a social perspective. There are no studies at all that have done so from a gender perspective.

Research on craft activities that has approached the subject from a social perspective has been mainly concerned with tracing the topography of this type work, locating craft production in the western Phoenician landscape. The spatial distribution of productive evidence has identified the presence of neighbourhoods devoted to craft in the peripheries of some Phoenician and Punic settlements. Such neighbourhoods seem to bring together different craft activities – mostly those related to metalwork, dye-making and pottery and glass production. The presence of these peripheral craft neighbourhoods has been established in settlements such as Carthage[17], Soluntum[18], Mozia[19], Ibiza[20], Málaga[21] and Tharros[22], among others.

Another remarkable spatial pattern is the presence of small secondary hubs at some distance from the main settlement. These smaller hubs are characterised by a concentration of pottery workshops – with extensive drying areas and ovens for firing

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16 Brumfiel 1996; Hastorf – D'Altroy 2001; Pyburn 2004; De Lucia 2013; Ur 2014.

17 Rakob 1998: 17; Docter 2007: 38.

18 Greco 2000.

19 Falsone 1981; Spanò 2002.

20 Ramon 1991.

21 Arancibia – Fernández 2012.

22 Acquaro et al. 1996.

ceramics – or metal workshops. This type of landscape has been identified on the Málaga coast, in craft centres located around Morro de Mezquitilla – La Pancha –[23], in Toscanos – Cerro del Peñón –[24] and in dispersed hubs along the mouth of the Guadalhorce river – Marismas de Guadalmar or Cerro del Villar for part of the history of the settlement[25] –, as well as in the area around Cádiz – in this aspect, the pottery ovens of Torre Alta constitute a notable example –[26] or in areas of present-day Morocco – among others, the settlements of Kuass and Banasa.[27] This type of productive landscape, characterised by small, secondary craft hubs dotted around small-scale territories, is likely to have emerged in some Phoenician contexts in the 7th century BCE, if not earlier. It underwent a very significant expansion in the 5th century BCE, during the Punic period.

The spatial distribution of these craft activities – in peripheral neighbourhoods separate from domestic areas or in secondary centres at some distance from the main settlement centres – creates the compelling image of a striking segregation between residential areas and productive spaces[28]. Such cartographies emphasise the idea that in Phoenician and Punic settings domestic life and craft production appear to have developed in unconnected, separate spaces. This seemingly clear-cut interpretation is blurred by an analysis of the spatial arrangement of other archaeological evidence linked to craft production in these very same centres, as well as other Western Phoenician and Punic settlements. A more detailed mapping of craft production evidence reveals that, despite the existence of workshops in peripheral neighbourhoods and in segregated productive hubs, many craft activities unfolded in the midst of neighbourhoods that had a markedly residential character. Archaeological evidence from several Phoenician and Punic settlements clearly establishes that workshops were to be found among homes – and even in rooms within homes. This spatial pattern was in fact common, judging from the remarkable number of workshops or evidence of craft activity found in domestic environments and residential neighbourhoods in Phoenician settlements such as Castillo de Doña Blanca[29], Cádiz[30], Cerro del Villar[31], Toscanos, Morro de Mezquitilla[32], La Fonteta[33], Sa Caleta[34], Kerkouanne[35], Lixus[36] or Sulcis[37], to mention just a few examples. In all these cases terracotta manufacturers, potters, goldsmiths, silversmiths, blacksmiths, leadsmiths or bronzesmiths pursued their daily work alongside domestic areas or in their own homes.

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23 MARTÍN – RAMÍREZ – RECIO 2006.

24 KEESMANN et al. 1989.

25 AUBET et al. 1999; DELGADO 2011.

26 RAMON et al. 2007

27 PONSICH 1968; ALAOUI 2007.

28 FUMADÓ 2010.

29 RUIZ MATA – PÉREZ 1995; ZAMORA 2010.

30 GENER et al. 2012; GENER et al. 2014: 34, fig. 19.

31 DELGADO 2008; ROVIRA 2005.

32 KEESMANN et el.1989; SCHUBART 1985; NIEMEYER 1985.

33 RENZI 2013.

34 RAMON 2007.

35 FANTAR 1984: 521-522.

36 ARANEGUI 2007.

37 POMPIANU 2010.

We must take into account, however, that the concentration of workshops in peripheral neighbourhoods or in hubs that were segregated from the main residential areas is not in itself a solid piece of evidence that allows us to posit that in these historical contexts there was a sharp segregation between the spaces where productive activities were undertaken and the residential spaces where activities related to consumption, rest, reproduction and care-giving unfolded. The workshops' peripheral locations do not seem to respond to a will to separate productive activities and contexts from domestic ones, but rather to the requirements of craft activities that necessitate the use extensive spaces to carry out certain productive tasks, the building of specialised production facilities, the availability of large storage or waste disposal areas, or the ability to access raw material supply sources or distribution hubs for finished products[38]. Additionally, other authors have emphasised that some craft production activities could have been pushed to the periphery of the settlement or to spaces at some distance from residential areas because some of their characteristics – pollution, offensive smells or unpleasant noises – made them disagreeable to the senses[39].

Another aspect to consider is that the distribution of workshops in the margins the settlements or in rural hinterlands isolated from the main settlements does not in itself constitute evidence of complete separation between residential and productive spaces, let alone of segregation between productive activities and reproductive and care-giving activities. Most studies have exclusively explored the spatial distribution of evidence related to craft production – primarily facilities, tools and waste –, ignoring its potential spatial association with other everyday practices. These studies are not useful if we wish to probe the interrelation, overlapping or spatial segregation – let alone the gender segregation – of these productive activities with other everyday practices. The subject requires micro-spatial, contextual analyses of specific archaeological contexts that consider archaeological evidence related to the development of productive activities, as well as to other everyday social tasks and practices.

It is not easy to undertake such a project with the existing published archaeological data, since material evidence associated with maintenance and consumption practices in many productive contexts is often hidden among large amounts of archaeological evidence created by certain productive activities. This situation requires a careful examination that has often been missing. Most publications devoted to these productive settings have prioritised the study of products, facilities, tools or waste, to the detriment of archaeological evidence related to everyday activities such as care-giving practices, consumption practices, and ritual activities. As these activities have not been considered to be "strictly productive", they have been repeatedly ignored, silenced or misinterpreted. The archaeological silences produced by these androcentrically biased methodologies are far from innocuous: they have bolstered the "universalism" of the separate spheres paradigm, thus allowing it to remain unchallenged.

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[38] DUARTE 2000; FUMADÓ 2010; DELGADO 2011.

[39] In this sense, see Harrington's study of the Greek area in the classic and Hellenistic periods. HARRINGTON 2015.

## 4. Houses, households, and workshops

In 2003, the archaeological site of Cerro del Villar, Málaga, saw the digging of rooms in the structure known as House 2[40]. The dig revealed the existence of a house of fairly modest size, with a built area of about 75 $m^2$. The archaeological material recorded in each of the rooms, along with their structural features, allowed a definition of the activities that were undertaken in each of the spaces that made up the building. The house was structured around an inner courtyard that provided access to the dwelling's main room and to a series of small structures that were mainly used as transit or storage spaces (Fig. 1).

The building also contained a small metal workshop, which was accessed through a second entrance that provided direct access to the street. The workshop had a combustion structure that was used in processes related to metalsmithing, as well as small deposits – excavated on the ground – where cupellation remains, lead droplets and galena nodules were stored[41]. This copper and silver workshop produced objects that were not intended for domestic or local consumption. The craft group that managed it accessed raw materials and metal subproducts that circulated through regional networks that spread from the coastal southwest of the Peninsula[42] to enclaves in Atlantic Andalusia[43]. This workshop, where craft activities related to trade were undertaken, was not an isolated structure removed from the residential environment. On the contrary, it was incorporated into the house. This suggests a family-based craft production structure in which production was managed and organised around the domestic group's labour.

A close examination of other craft spaces in other Phoenician and Punic settlements underlines that the integration of craft workshops into houses constitutes a widespread pattern among Western Phoenician communities. In Phoenician settlements such as Lixus, La Fonteta, Doña Blanca, Cádiz or Sa Caleta, digs have revealed several metal workshops in dwellings. The recurring spatial pattern suggests that, at least where metalsmithing is concerned, part of the production destined for trade was undertaken in domestic contexts.

We possess far less information regarding other craft activities. One of the few pottery workshops in which several work spaces have been extensively excavated is the building known as 3–4 in Cerro del Villar, dated to the early 6th century BCE.[44]. In this area, the excavation revealed part of a large building with two sizable rooms that provided access to a spacious inner courtyard and were adjacent to a vast outside space. This outside space contained substantial evidence of large-scale pottery production. As several archaeometric studies prove, this pottery was destined for regional and interregional trade.

The archaeological material recorded in the spaces of workshop 3–4 demonstrates that these spaces saw the simultaneous development of craft and everyday practical activities, although the latter ones have been obscured by the large amount of production material that was stored and/or discarded in these spaces. Several pieces of evidence in the inner courtyard and the rooms point to the development of tasks related to food processing and cooking: cooking pots, braziers, supports or tripods with signs of use, grinders and

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40 DELGADO 2008; DELGADO et al. 2014.

41 DELGADO et al. 2014: 342.

42 RENZI 2013: 73

43 See Hunt's analyses of these materials in HUNT et al. 2010: 291-293.

44 AUBET et al. 1999; DELGADO 2011.

pestles. Equipment related to domestic storage has also been found in significant amounts in these spaces. Many of these objects were produced in the workshop, where they were stored for later distribution. Others, however, were used by the group that inhabited the space, as suggested by the presence of amphorae and other vessels – some with clear signs of use – originating from diverse parts of the Mediterranean. Consumption in these environments is evidenced by the presence of bio-archaeological remains, as well as by the variety in recorded servingware, which includes vessels produced in this workshop but also in various workshops across the Mediterranean – in Phoenician, Greek and Etruscan settings. The vessels, which are characterised by a high degree of formal and functional variability, include remarkable sets linked to wine consumption. Ritual practices too were everyday activities for those who lived and worked in this building, as evidenced by deposits of infant pigs and by two small terracotta items located, respectively, in the inner courtyard and on the floor of room A3. The range of activities that are archeologically present in the building allows us to argue that the space was simultaneously a residential environment and a craft production workshop. The coexistence of domestic and productive practices can also be deduced from Ponsich's description of pottery workshops in the Punic settlement of Kuass[45].

In Cádiz's Teatro Cómico area, recent excavations have unearthed houses with evidence of craft activities[46]. One of the buildings, named "structural group A" (Fig. 2), has several rooms that contains tools and facilities related to craft practices. In room A4, the dig has uncovered a set of ivory and bone punches, associated with two ceramic vessels, one Phoenician amphora and a handmade bowl, which contained ochre. Those responsible for the digging the site have linked this set of items with the decoration of products that would have been turned in a different space, A5. In this space, which corresponds to the house's inner courtyard, a facility related to craft work was discovered. This was a circular platform into which a quartzite piece could be imbedded. It was located in the deposits that filled in this space and it has been interpreted as the bearing of a rotating device used for turning[47].

Once again, this house highlights that in these contexts there was no radical spatial separation between domestic and productive activities. The craft work platform was unearthed next to the house's kitchen area, which was also in the inner courtyard. Only a very small wall stands between the craft work space and the food preparation area, identified by a *tannür*-style oven and a small stove. The digging of the oven has uncovered strikingly unique findings, such as the five clay cretulae that were found in its interior. The discovery seems to be the result of the intentional burning of five papyrus that would have been attached to these five clay stamps, which bear the imprint of different scarabs and signet rings.

Petrographic analyses indicate that the clays used to seal these documents did not originate from the Bay of Cádiz, but from other spaces in the Mediterranean or the Atlantic Maghreb[48]. This suggests that the domestic group that lived and worked in this

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45 PONSICH 1968: 6.

46 GENER et al. 2012.

47 GENER et al. 2012: 141-142.

48 GENER et al. 2012: 165 and 178.

house maintained contractually mediated interregional connections that were probably commercial in character.

The importance of these domestic spaces and groups in Phoenician interregional exchange networks has traditionally been silenced and even questioned in favour of conceptions of trade that posit the predominance of state and aristocratic practices. The cretulae that were thrown into the domestic oven of house A in Cádiz's Teatro Cómico suggest that part of Phoenician trade in the West could have been developed privately, under family organisations. The size of this house, its goods and its craft activities are not those of an elite dwelling, which seems to suggest that family groups of common people ran or participated in these commercial dealings. This hypothesis is supported by the relatively common distribution of small cubic lead weights, equally linked to the development of commercial activities, in other domestic spaces that are very unlikely to have been elite dwellings. This is the case of one of the weights found in a room in Cerro del Villar's House 2[49]. The small shops uncovered in sector 8, in front of a domestic and craft area[50], suggest that in the context of the Phoenician diaspora commercial dealings were partly on a retail and family scale.

Other ancient Near Eastern commercial diasporas developed around craft and trade businesses based largely on family-like structures. The best-known example is that of the Assyrian merchant colonies established in Kanesh in the start of the 2nd millennium BCE. If their case is well known, it is because some of the private archives of these merchants have been discovered: whereas their Phoenician counterparts of the 1st millennium BCE wrote on perishable papyri, these Assyrian merchants wrote on clay tablets, which constitute a more durable support.

These archives preserve some of the correspondence of these Anatolia-based merchants. They include many documents that concern women and their economic activities. Numerous letters written by women who had remained in Assur – the wives, daughters, mothers and sisters of these merchants – demonstrate the dynamism of their domestic economy and their participation in long-distance trade. Of particular note are the references to manufacture – mainly of textiles – that women or domestic dependants under their supervision produced in their homes. These fabrics were sent to relatives settled in Anatolian trading enclaves and then sold on to external commercial networks[51].

## 5. Household economies and gendered practices

In the absence of similar written sources, archaeological evidence in homes and workshops remains the chief source of information to trace the labour organisation patterns of Western Phoenician communities. It is widely recognised that the spatial distribution of activities related to productive work – understood in a classical sense – and activities related to reproduction and domestic group care-giving has implications for the sexual division of labour. Assigning a specific gender to different tasks, however, is always an extremely difficult endeavour. In this sense, the supposed segregation between craft workshops and everyday domestic activities has constituted the main archaeological argument for those who posit that, in complex societies such as the Phoenician one, highly

[49] AUBET 2002.

[50] AUBET 1997.

[51] MICHEL 2006.

specialised and technologically complex craft work was a male task. Evidence from workshops in Cádiz and Cerro del Villar, which are located in rooms inside homes, contradict this classical model. In these workshops, the coexistence of everyday, productive and exchange practices in residential environments highlights, contrary to expectations, the centrality of domestic groups – not just of the adult male individuals who would be actors in the "public space" – in the economy of these western communities.

In these Phoenician contexts, the examination of several craft work spaces reveals a strong interrelation between care-giving and craft practices. Not only do they overlap spatially, but they sometimes share the same utensils, techniques and gestures. This interrelation seriously calls into question the pre-eminence of rigid, homogenous and static patterns of labour division between men and women.

In Cádiz's Teatro Cómico, room A5 in building A, which was examined in the previous section, constitutes a good example of how food preparation and cooking coexisted with craft practices in these contexts. This is a relatively common pattern in numerous metal workshops. In Cerro del Villar's area 8 A-B we find a very similar example. In this craft environment, an iron forge was associated with various tuyères, slags and hammerscales. The forge was located in the central area of the courtyard, which had been partially covered and divided into two spaces with a small bench or a low wall[52].

In this same courtyard, utensils for food preparation and cooking were uncovered. These were mostly handmade cooking pots and jars[53] and a boat-shaped grinding stone with traces of barley[54]. The metal workshops in Morro de Mezquitilla's phase 1B present a similar example. Along with metalwork facilities, the excavation uncovered several baking trays for the cooking of unleavened bread. These kitchen utensils were initially thought to be tools used in metalwork[55].

In Sa Caleta, residential structures also overlap with craft activities, food preparation and cooking, consumption practices, and domestic storage (Fig. 3). This is the case of the settlement's southern neighbourhood, where three long buildings of 20–30 $m^2$ were discovered (areas I, II and III). Unlike the previously examined Phoenician buildings, these houses had one single room, with no internal architectural divisions. In all three of them, the excavation revealed evidence of practices associated with mineral grinding and smelting – primarily iron and argentiferous galena. The evidence includes several utensils and facilities to crush minerals, several iron and argentiferous galena nodules, or slags and lead droplets. In the same rooms, grinders and kitchen pots were also found. They were used to prepare food in areas that were not segregated from the space were metalwork was undertaken.[56]

The overlap of metalwork and care-giving tasks in these craft settings points to the absence of a strict gendered labour division in these contexts. In this strict division, men would limit their activities to craft labour, while women would restrict themselves to reproduction and group care-giving. The spatial disposition of artefacts and facilities indicates, on the contrary, that gender relations and roles were more fluid, but also that

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52 ROVIRA 2005: 1262.

53 DELGADO 2005.

54 AUBET – DELGADO 2003: 64.

55 SCHUBART 1985: fig. 12.

56 RAMON 2007: 29-32.

collaborative domestic economies were dominant. In these economies women, boys and girls – not just adult men – participated in exchange-oriented craft production.

Few studies have explored patterns of craft labour organisation in the context of domestic collaborative economies. The dominant romanticised, Western imagining of craft work has led to the assumption that it was an individual activity. We tend to focus our attention on very particular processes of productive work – especially on tasks that require greater skill, knowledge and experience. In this way, we overlook many tasks that are necessary to complete the productive process, silencing a great portion of the work involved in manufacture production and ultimately creating a group of "hidden producers"[57].

The concept of *chaîne opératoire*, which takes into account all stages and tasks in the productive process, can be extremely useful to examine these domestic contexts where craft production took place. The concept draws our attention to the numerous activities required in the productive process, rather than exclusively to tasks undertaken by a small number of highly skilled, experienced individuals – the individuals we usually identify as craftspeople. The use of this concept allows us to discover the "hidden producers" that may have continuously or intermittently participated in the varied processes that are necessary in craft production.

Moreover, this concept is central to understanding the mechanisms of craft production knowledge and transmission. In the contexts we have examined, these processes seem to have been an integral part of everyday life, as direct instruction was rarely used[58]. While there are no studies on processes of knowledge and transmission of craft work in the Phoenician and Punic worlds, these have been recently analysed in the classical Greek world, producing data and considerations of great interest[59]. These studies of knowledge processes in the Greek context have turned to highly useful sources: iconographical representations of work scenes in workshops – mostly pottery workshops. Some of these images show children and young individuals working alongside adults in diverse tasks: they serve as assistants by spinning the potter's wheel, they extract and prepare clay, they carry turned vases to drying areas, they bring fuel or yet to be fired vessels to the ovens, and they even participate in the production process by decorating vases[60].

These depictions of Greek craft workshops rarely feature women. The image of a woman in a craft workshop would be at odds with the dominant gender ideologies in the classical Greek world, so we cannot rule out the idea that their absence may respond to an intentional silence. In this sense, the scene painted in the Caputi *hydria* is particularly relevant[61]. The vase depicts a workshop scene, with several individuals engaged in decorating vases. They are of different ages, as evidenced by their size and the absence of beards on many of them[62]. The scene also shows an adult woman in the workshop. Just as the male figures, she is decorating a large vase. The scene has led some authors to

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57 HENDON 1996.

58 CROWN 2014: 77.

59 HASAKI 2013.

60 HASAKI 2013: 178-180.

61 VENIT 1988.

62 HASAKI 2013: 180, figs. 9.8 and 9.9.

suggest that the presence of women in the production of vases may not have been exceptional in Athens in the 5th century BCE[63].

## 6. Craft practices and maintenance activities: shared technologies

In Phoenician and Punic contexts, we cannot benefit from such splendid iconographic resources. The engagement of women with craft tasks can, however, be suggested from archaeological evidence. This is the case of the domestic groups involved in mining and metal work we have examined in this article, as well as of some pottery workshops.

In this sense, an intriguing indication can be found in the interrelation between some utensils, techniques and gestures that are present in both craft production and meal preparation. One of the most obvious cases lies in actions related to grinding, milling and crushing. Grinders and pestles that are similar to those used daily to grind cereals were used in pottery workshops such as the ones in Kuass to grind clay and the necessary degreasing materials to prepare ceramic paste[64]. Similarly, grinders that are morphologically similar to those used for food were also used in metal workshops in Phoenician settlements to grind metals and minerals[65], as suggested by one of the boat-shaped mills from Cerro del Villar, which contained copper traces. The analysis of the grinding stone in Calvari del Molar's local settlement, which revealed traces of lead, sulphur and silver, points towards the same direction: these tools were used to grind galenite[66].

Some authors have also underscored the convergence between some facilities and utensils used to cook food and those used in metalwork. It is important to highlight the technical, constructive, morphological and even decorative similarities between some Punic ovens used in mineral smelting and the ovens used in this very same context to bake bread[67].

The shared materials, techniques and gestures once again call into question one of the assumptions of the separate spheres model: the existence of different technologies for female and male tasks, for women and for men, as a result of the development of these tasks in segregated spaces and the alleged low degree of technological refinement attributed to tasks that are traditionally coded as feminine[68]. This supposition contrasts with the evidence from some Punic productive and domestic spaces, where similar tools are used for technological processes that are traditionally defined as highly complex and specialised – such as metal pyrotechnology – and for tasks that Western thought associates with a low degree of skill and experience, such as food preparation and cooking. These markedly androcentric views do not seem alien to the interrelation between technology and male identity in the contemporary world.

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63 VENIT 1988.

64 PONSICH 1968: 7.

65 Among others, RENZI 2013.

66 ARMADA – HUNT – TRESSERRAS – MONTERO – RAFEL – RUIZ DE ARBULO 2005.

67 GUTIÉRREZ 1990-91: 168-169

68 ARTHUR 2010

## 7. Conclusions

The workshops, residential spaces, and practices of food preparation and cooking under examination allow us to argue that in these contexts a large amount of craft production was undertaken in residential spaces or in contexts where manufacturing overlapped with other domestic activities. Shared spaces, gestures and technologies reveal an image that breaks away from the traditional image of a strictly gendered division of labour. They suggest the continued or intermittent participation of a substantial part of the domestic group in highly specialised, exchange-oriented production. In these workshops, some associated with small or medium houses, the work of women, boys and girls, and elderly men and women seems to have constituted a key social strategy for the family's economy.

The collaborative nature of craft production in these domestic economies does not entail that there were no gendered tasks at all, or a preference for some tasks to be undertaken by individuals identified with a particular gender. On the contrary, textual and iconographical references in Levantine and Western spaces allude to gender ideologies that repeatedly express the association of some tasks with the construction of gender identities. This is the case, for instance, of domestic cereal grinding or bread making in non-elite groups[69]. The archaeological evidence under analysis does suggest, however, that tasks were divided along lines that are much more fluid than those derived from these textual discourses and iconographical representations. Several aspects beyond gender identities would have significantly affected task assignation and dominant productive relations in each of these domestic groups: social and cultural categories such as age, status and ethnic or cultural identity; technical skills and abilities; and personal situations and lived experiences. Far from being monolithic, domestic spaces and groups were, as Hendon points out, spaces of inequality and conflict[70].

The diversity in the spatial distribution of productive activities and care-giving practices in the residential spaces under examination in this study suggests that these western Phoenician communities saw the coexistence of domestic groups with varying labour organisation patterns – and, probably, with varying gender roles and relations. While in some residential contexts exchange-oriented craft activities and other everyday actions took place in the same space, as in houses I, II and II of Sa Caleta's southern neighbourhood, in other dwellings they unfolded in rooms that were separate from other domestic spaces, such as in the metal workshop in Cerro del Villar's house 2. This points towards the presence of diverse, heterogeneous experiences in the domestic groups under analysis. It allows us to generate new understandings that break away from the essentialism derived from the separate spheres dogma, forcing us to historicise and contextualise expressions, relations and practices that are linked to gender identities.

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[69] DELGADO 2010.

[70] HENDON 1996.

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# Figures

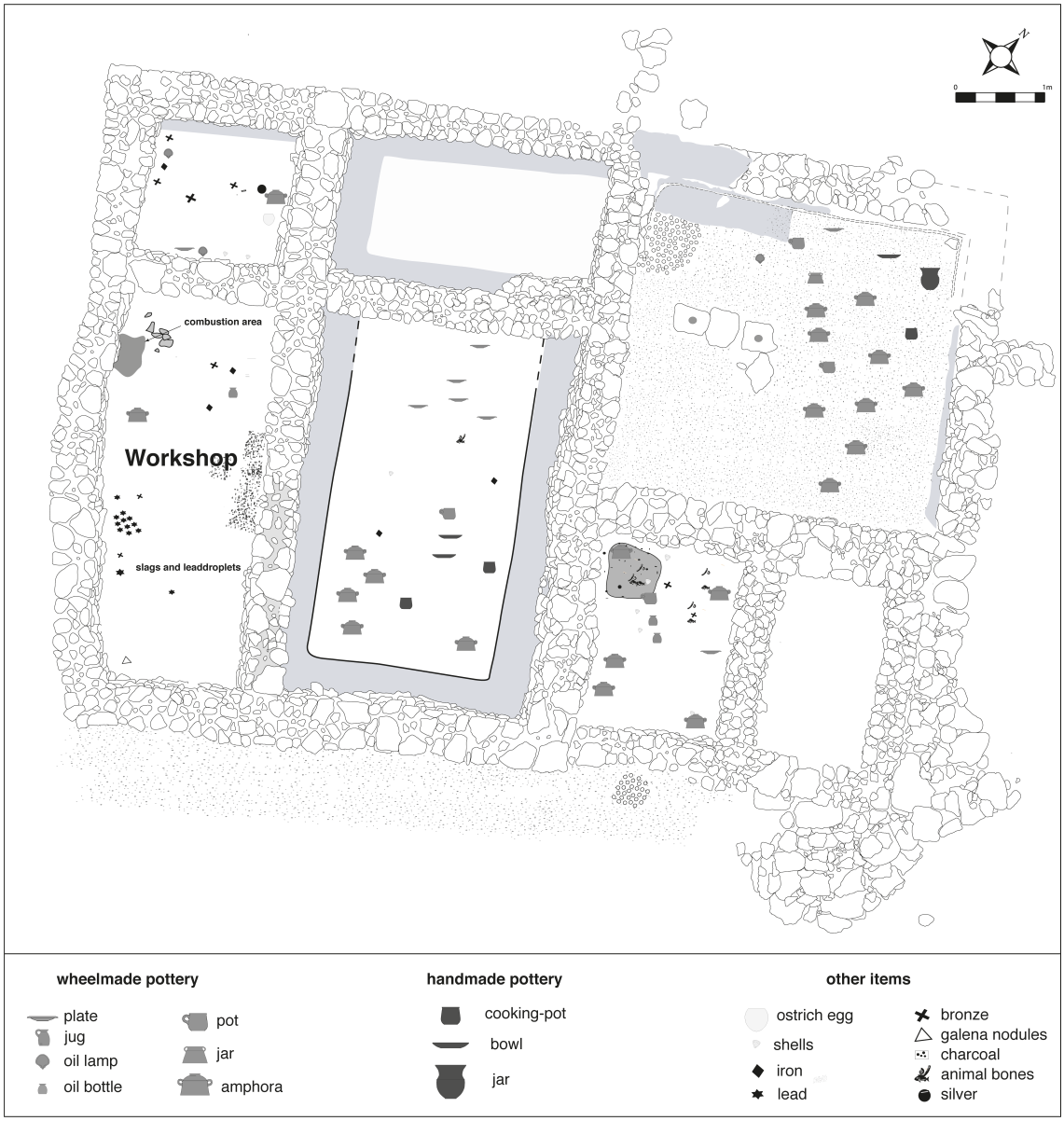


Fig. 1: House 2 of the Cerro del Villar (Málaga), showing the location of the metallurgical workshop (after DELGADO et al. 2014, fig. 1)

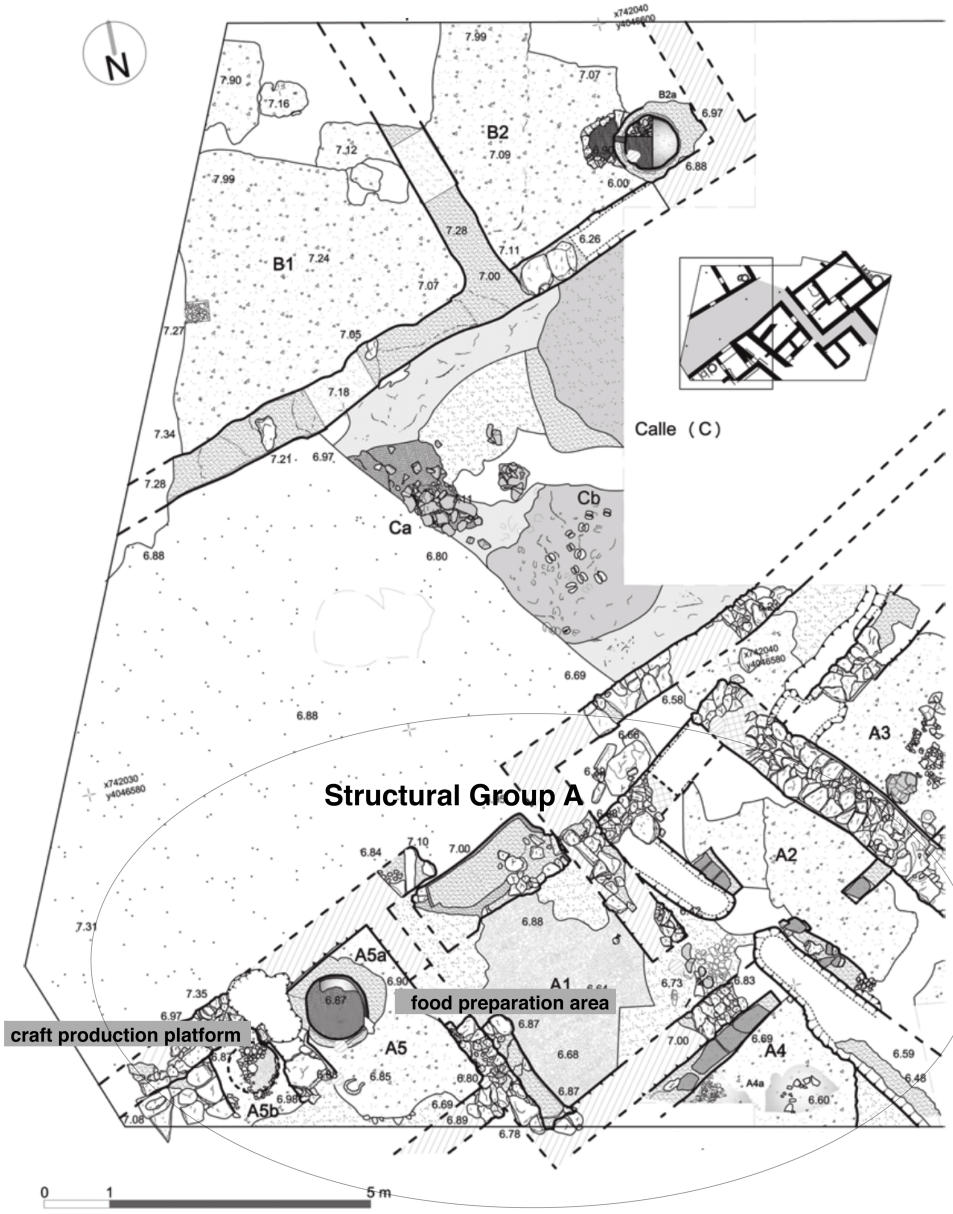


Fig. 2: "Structural Group A" of the Teatro Cómico (Cádiz), showing the food preparation area and the craft production platform located in space 5 (after GENER et al. 2012, FIG. 3)


Fig. 3: Houses I, II and III of Sa Caleta (Eivissa):
distribution of food preparation sets and metallurgical production debris (after RAMON 2007)