

Carthage and the Spoils of War: an update¹

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During much of the 5th and 4th centuries BCE, the Carthaginians were engaged in a series of battles with the Greek city states over the control of Sicily. The vicissitudes of these wars, commonly known as the Sicilian or Greek-Punic Wars, can be followed through the accounts of Classical Greek authors (chiefly Diodorus Siculus); Punic historical accounts are conspicuously absent. Although our sources thus provide us with only one side of the story, we may grasp some details that are of interest for the present subject, the booty taken by the Carthaginians after their victories that were either sold on the spot or taken to Carthage in triumph. In this contribution it is investigated whether the well-known historical information can be supplemented with archaeological data that may be interpreted as part of the Carthaginian booty of the Sicilian Wars. More in particular, five casestudies are discussed of which four may have belonged to the spoils of the so-called Second Sicilian War, conventionally dated between 410 and 340 BCE. To these, two discoveries from the Straits of Sicily viz. the seas around Sicily that may equally be interpreted as booty are added. These have been dated to the 4th or 3rd century BCE or even later and may possibly be connected with the First Punic War viz. with the Vandal Sack of Rome of 455 CE.

Historical background

Conventionally, the Sicilian or Greek-Punic Wars are considered to be three. The first one started and ended in 480 BCE when Carthage came to the aid of its ally Terrilus, the tyrant of Himera, who had been removed from power by the tyrant Theron of Akragas (Lancel 1995, 89-91); it ended in the massive defeat of the Carthaginian troops at Himera. The second Greek-Punic war is dated to 410-340 BCE and the third to 315-307 BCE (Diodorus XI,1 and 20, 24).

Equally three are the Punic Wars that Rome and Carthage fought between 264-241, 218-201, and 149-146 BCE respectively and ended with the final destruction of Carthage after a three-year siege. The First Punic War that may have played a role in one of the pieces discussed below essentially was about the control over Sicily. It was fought partially on Sicily, partially in the hinterland of Carthage and mostly on sea. In 241 BCE, Carthage was forced to sign a peace treaty and evacuate her territories in Sicily, apart from having to pay Rome heavy war indemnities.

Between June 2 and 16, 455 CE, Rome was sacked by the Vandals led by Genseric after the death of the Roman emperor Valentianus III and broken alliance promises.

¹ Part of this article had been written for a book accompanying the exhibition *Sicilië en de Zee / Sicily and the Sea*, in the Allard Pierson Museum, Amsterdam (2015-2016). Unfortunately, and contrary to the initial invitation, the editors decided to shorten the argument and leave out all bibliographical references, hence indeliberately creating the impression that some ideas formulated in the text would have been mine, see Docter 2015a, 2015b. In order to do justice to those authors who have been at the base of that text, it has been decided to include a fuller text version in the present volume of *Carthage Studies*. It is updated and now includes four other pieces dating to the 5th, 4th and/or 3rd century BCE or, perhaps, the Roman period.

The cargo of the Porticello Shipwreck

The shipwreck was found in the Strait of Messina near the mainland village of Porticello in 1969 and then partly looted by a gang of illicit divers and fishermen (Paoletti 1993). The remaining portion was excavated under scientifically controlled conditions in the following year by a team of Texas University led by D. Owen. Its publication by C. Jones Eiseman and B.S. Ridgway (1987) showed that a small merchantman of some 16/17 or 20 m and 30 tons had been wrecked on the treacherous shores of the Strait in the decades around 400 BCE. It had carried a mixed cargo of some 130 transport amphorae, both Punic (Carthaginian and Maltese), perhaps for olive oil and fish sauce, and Greek ones for wine (Byzantine, i.e. from Byzantium and Hellepont, northern-Greek from the city of Mende, and west-Greek), together with Greek utilitarian pottery (ink wells), Attic lead ingots from the Laurion mines, and fragments of Greek life-size bronze statues (**Fig. 1a**). Since then, more objects have turned up that can in all likelihood be attributed to the same context, and that stem from the initial clandestine looting of the site. Among these is another head of a male figure, once in Basle (Switzerland) but now returned to the Museum in Reggio (Paoletti 1991/1992, 119, fig. 1; Paoletti 1993; here **Fig. 1b**).

In 1991/1992, M. Paoletti published a thought-provoking article on the cargo of the shipwreck, temptingly and convincingly arguing that the bronze sculptural fragments were transported as scrap metal and originally were part of the spoils of the Sicilian Wars, in particular the period between 409 and 405 BCE. In 409, the Carthaginians took both Selinus (present-day Selinunte) and Himera and sacked their temples; in 406/405 the same befell to Akragas (Agrigento) and in 405 Gela and Kamarina. Diodorus (XIII,19,4) vividly describes the fate of Akragas and its treasures:

“But [the Carthaginian general] Himilcar, after pillaging and industriously ransacking the temples and dwellings, collected as great a store of booty as a city could be expected to yield which had been inhabited by two hundred thousand people, had gone unravaged since the date of its founding, had been well-nigh the wealthiest of the Greek cities of that day, and whose citizens, furthermore, had shown their love of the beautiful in expensive collections of works of art of every description. Indeed a multitude of paintings executed with the greatest care was found and an extraordinary number of sculptures of every description and worked with great skill. - The most valuable pieces, accordingly, Himilcar sent to Carthage, among which, as it turned out, was the bull of Phalaris, and the rest of the pillage he sold as booty.”

The original publication of the bronzes in the Porticello shipwreck counted 18 bronze fragments attributed to only two statues (Paribeni 1985; Paribeni *et alii* 1985). In the 1987 publication, Ridgway raised the figure to 22, attributing them to four or five individual statues. Paoletti could already add the ‘Basle’ head to the original number of

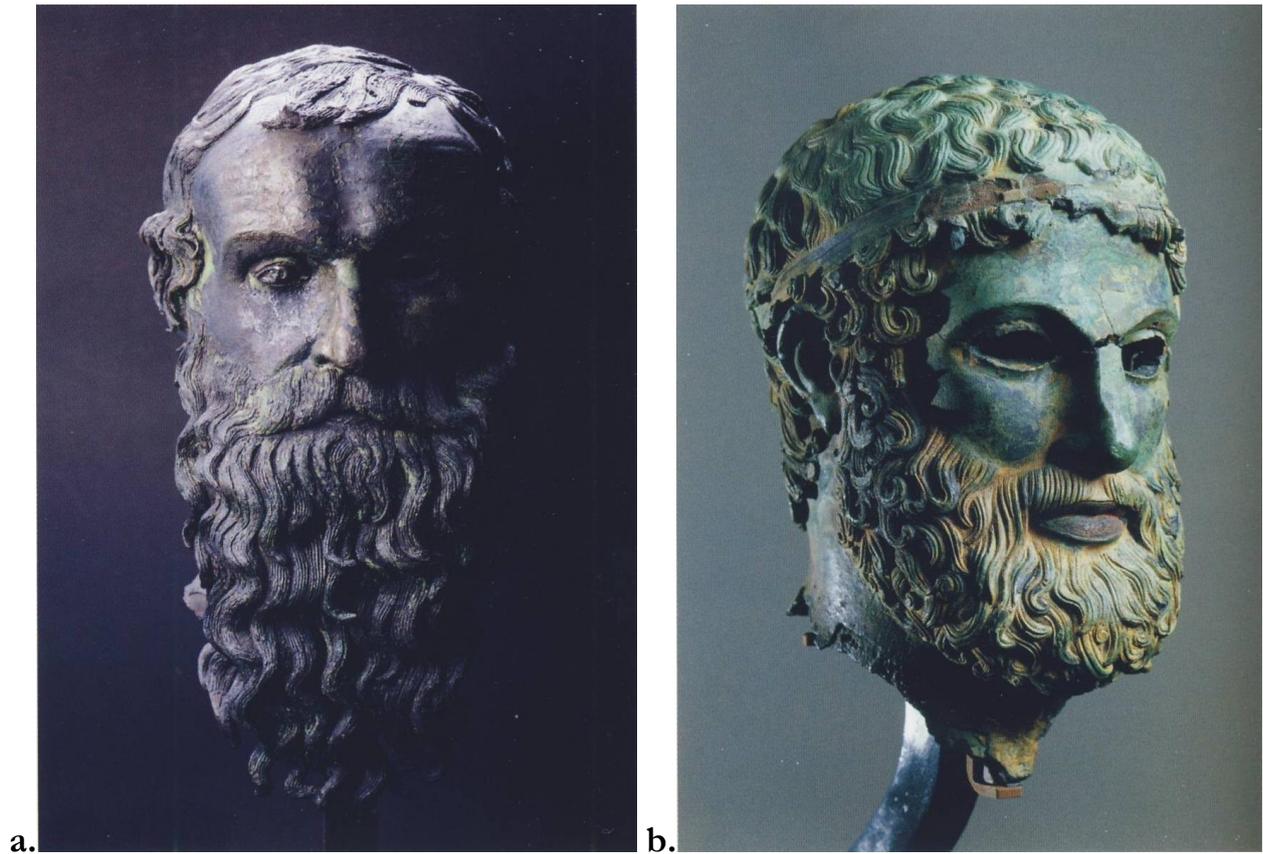


Fig. 1. **a.** Bronze head of a philosopher from the Porticello wreck; **b.** bronze head of a male statue, Reggio Calabria (after Docter 2015a, 88, fig.).

statues. Ridgway initially dated them to the third quarter of the 5th century BCE. The head formerly in Basle had been dated to the second quarter of the 5th century BCE, implying that bronze sculptural fragments would have covered a fairly wide time span. Although there was much debate on the chronology of the twenty or so fragments of bronze statues in the cargo, the identification of the depicted figures, and in fact the number of original fragments,² it now seems generally accepted that the fragments belong to two statues that once may even have formed a group. These are generally dated to the third quarter of the 5th century BCE, or even as late as 420 BCE (Ridgway 2010, 340).

The tempting suggestion of Paoletti (1991/1992) that the bronze sculpture fragments originate from the Carthaginian sack of Greek towns on Sicily in 409-405 BCE (“the rest of the pillage” sold as booty, as mentioned by Diodorus) implicitly narrows down the date of the shipwreck. This narrower date within the 415–385 BCE span that was initially proposed, seems to find corroboration in the lead ingots that have archaeometrically been attributed to the Laurion silver mines in Attica. Silver and lead mining in the Laurion seems to have come to a standstill after the Athenian defeat in 405 BCE (Mussche 1998, 62-63). It was only resumed in the 370s BCE. A date for the cargo before c. 405 BCE is therefore most likely.

² Paribeni 1985; Paribeni *et alii* 1985; Eiseman, Ridgway 1987; Paoletti 1991/1992; Ridgway 2010.

The ‘Youth of Mozia’

In a recent article, Olga Palagia rediscusses the famous marble statue known as the ‘Youth of Mozia’ or ‘Charioteer of Mozia’ that was found on the West-Sicilian island in 1979 (Palagia 2011; **Fig. 2**). It had been carefully buried by the people of Mozia upon their return after the destruction of the island by Dionysios I of Syracuse in 397 BCE. It was found covered by destruction debris in an area not far away from the Cappiddazzu sanctuary, where it once may have stood (Falsone 1988).

The statue is made of Parian marble and on the basis of solid comparisons, especially in the “transparent draperies with crinkly folds” Palagia attributes it to an itinerant Parian workshop (Palagia 2011, 287, 290, 293, fig. 6; Papadopoulos 2014, 396, 399, 418, n. 16). It is generally dated to the decades 480-470 or 470-460 BCE on stylistical and historical grounds, although later chronologies have been proposed (Palagia 2011, 283, n. 6-7; Papadopoulos 2014, 395, 417, n. 2, both with references).

The singularity of the monumental piece of Greek sculpture in a Phoenician-Punic *ambiente* has given rise to a large discussion on the identification of the figure and its interpretation, to which the contribution of Palagia is one of the latest (Palagia 2011, with references). An only slightly later article by John K. Papadopoulos (2014) proposes again an alternative reading and offers an even fuller set of references to the contrasting views. In the frame of the present contribution, the identification problem can be condensed into two categories:³ those that see the statue as a purely Greek work of art, brought by the Carthaginians to Mozia as loot, and those that consider the piece to represent a Punic official or deity, made by a Greek sculptor.⁴ The latter set of interpretations, *par force*, would exclude any implication of loot, so it is perhaps best to start with these.

The more Punic readings of the Mozia Youth that have been proposed in the past have been carefully discussed by Papadopoulos (2014, 395-396, 418, n. 13-15; see esp. also Bisi 1988). The statue would represent Melqart, Baal, a priest of Melqart (Falsone 1987), a notable, a heros or peltast, or Hamilkar as heros, the Carthaginian general defeated in the Battle of Himera, but immortalized by his alleged suicide on an offering pyre (Bode 1993; 2001). Especially for the latter reading confirmation has been found in Herodotus (VII.166-167): “(...) sacrifice is offered to him, and monuments have been set up in all the colonists’ cities, the greatest of all which is in Carchedon [Carthage] itself.” It remains to be proven, however, that these monuments (“μνηματα”) were indeed Greek-style statues rather than baetyls or columns, as would have been more in line with Punic custom (but see Bisi 1988).

The Greek readings of the Mozia Youth, however, are more numerous. On account of the chiton with chest belt, the statue had initially been interpreted as a charioteer (Zancani Montuoro 1984), mainly in confrontation with the famous bronze one from Delphi, dedicated by Polyzalos, tyrant of Gela in 478 or 474 BCE after his victory in the chariot races (Bell 1995; but see Papadopoulos 2014, 418-419, n. 26). Still, the stance, transparency of the chiton, and the width of the chest belt are

³ The references offered here are far from exhaustive; for these one may refer to the endnotes in Papadopoulos 2014, 417-423.

⁴ Only R.R.R. Smith (2007, 134) hypothesizes a Greek dedication on Mozia itself; Papadopoulos 2014, 395.



Fig. 2. Slightly over-life-size statue from Mozia, 'Youth of Mozia', in Parian marble, Museo G. Whitaker I.G.4310 (after *Website Beni Culturali*).

conspicuously different (Palagia 2011, 286). If the Mozia youth were a charioteer indeed, however, the most likely candidates to have set up a monument in their Sicilian hometown would have been Theron, tyrant of Akragas, or rather his brother Xenokratis, both Panhellenic victors in the period 485-470 BCE (Bell 1995; Palagia 2011, 286; Papadopoulos 2014, 395). Akragas was destroyed and looted by the Carthaginians in 406/405 BCE, but Diodorus (see above, p. 84) does not mention the transfer of statuary to other Punic towns, viz. to Mozia. Palagia rightly poses the question why the Carthaginians would have been interested in transferring a statue of a charioteer as part of a group celebrating a victory at the Panhellenic Games, to Mozia in the first place (Palagia 2011, 286). The only explanation would be that it is a politically charged monument, which in the case of a culturally so alien victory seems very unlikely. She correctly concludes that we are not faced with a charioteer at all (Palagia 2011, 287).

Alternative, 'Greek' readings are plentiful and have been discussed *in extenso* and most recently by Papadopoulos (2014, 396-400, 418-419, n. 17-45). They range from an identification with Daidalos/Ikaros, a transvestite god or hero (Achilles on Skyros?), a transvestite dancer, an actor, to a youth dressed for initiation. Also the interpretation as the mythical charioteer Pelops would fall in this alternative category rather than in the victorious charioteer interpretation discussed above.⁵ None of these readings would convincingly explain why this Greek statue with such clear Greek connotations was chosen to be taken to Mozia as part of the spoils of war within the 5th century or at least before 397 BCE.

A recent discussion of the statue by Palagia (2011, esp. 288-290) sees the statue as part of a monumental group composed of the victorious tyrant of Syracuse, Gelon, (not preserved) and a seer wearing a helmet and holding a spear, the Mozia Youth (Papadopoulos 2014, 399-400, 419, n. 43-45). Palagia offers a few 5th and 4th-century BCE parallels for these attires of seers in the army (Palagia 2011, 288). The occasion for the erection of the monument would have been Gelon's victory in the Battle of Himera of 480 BCE and for the original set up Palagia suggests a temple at Himera. Classical sources offer some evidence for monuments celebrating the victory:

“The fairest part of the booty he put to one side, since he wished to embellish the temples of Syracuse with the spoils; as for the rest of the booty, much of it he nailed to the most notable of the temples in Himera, and the rest of it, together with the captives, he divided among the allies, apportioning it in accordance with the number who had served with him.”
(Diodorus XI,25,1)

But also in Greece the victory was commemorated as Pausanias (VI,19,7) relates, describing the 'Treasury of the Carthaginians' at Olympia, which is the one built by Gelon of Syracuse and most likely paid with the spoils of Himera:

⁵ See ultimately a thesis forwarded in 2013 by Caterina Greco, as referred to in Papadopoulos 2014, 399, 419, n. 38.

“Next to the treasury of the Sicyonians is the treasury of the Carthaginians, the work of Pothaeus, Antiphilus and Megacles. In it are votive offerings— a huge image of Zeus and three linen breastplates, dedicated by Gelon and the Syracusans after overcoming the Phoenicians in either a naval or a land battle.”

With the capture and sack of Himera by the Carthaginian troops under Hannibal (not the one of 2nd Punic War!) in 409 BCE, this clear political sculptural group, would then have been taken to Mozia and set up in the major Cappiddazzu sanctuary, highlighting this revenge for the 480 BCE disaster.

A similar political connotation and justification for the transfer of the statue to Mozia as part of loot from the Carthaginian victories of 409-405 BCE, is seen in the identification proposed by Papadopoulos (2014). He draws the attention to the unusual number of five holes in the head of the statue, which remained unexplained in all previous interpretations (Papadopoulos 2014, 419-420, n. 56, 61). When headgear had been foreseen in previous reconstructions, like a helmet, a Lydian/Phrygian cap, a crown or diademe, a victor’s wreath, or a *meniskos*, the number of holes, their placement, and especially the large central hole, do not add up to a logical, structural explanation.⁶ As Papadopoulos concludes (2014, 404) “it must have been something considerably larger, heavier, and more elaborate.” On the basis of ample iconographical and historical arguments he convincingly proposes the statue to have worn a basket and, hence, to have been a Kalathiskos Dancer at the Festival of Apollo Karneios. He would then have been represented at rest after having performed the dance as an initiate of the god (Papadopoulos 2014, esp. 408-409, fig. 25). Expanding upon the suggestion made by Palagia and following an interpretation of A. Precopi Lombardo (1989), and on the basis of ample (circumstantial) evidence, Papadopoulos builds a very strong argument for the suggestion that the Mozia Youth is to be identified with Gelon, tyrant of Syracuse, who died in 479 BCE. It could have been dedicated at Himera, Akragas or – as Papadopoulos argues – most likely Gela:

“As a representation of Gelon himself, or even as a dedication by Gelon, the statue would have been an in-your-face reminder of the man who meted out one of the humiliating Carthaginian military defeats in history. If the statue depicts a youthful and unarmed initiate, the insult was greater still – this was not a sculpture of a heavily armed military giant, but a beardless boy: the tactical genius Gelon as an initiate to the Dorian god par excellence. Art, initiation, and performance were fused into a powerful political message.” (Papadopoulos 2014, 416)

This is exactly the kind of political statuary that would have been targeted as loot and subsequent re-dedication as war trophy in one of the Punic/Carthaginian sanctuaries.⁷

⁶ Papadopoulos 2014, 399-404, 419, n. 40, 46, 50-51, figs. 11-16.

⁷ Himera was sacked in 409 BCE, Akragas and Gela 406/405 BCE. A transfer from Selinunte, sacked in 409 BCE, had been proposed earlier by Greco 2009, 533-537; see also Papadopoulos 2014, 418, n. 20.

A lion's head water spout from Carthage

In 1986, a team of the University of Hamburg found a large fragment of a marble water spout in the shape of a lion's head on the east slope of the Byrsa hill in Carthage (**Fig. 3**). It was embedded in the huge early Roman leveling layer that covered the remains of the Punic city and that is mainly composed of debris resulting from the destruction of Carthage in 146 BCE. The excavator, Hans Georg Niemeyer, immediately recognised its importance and already in 1989 published the architectural element in a short article (Niemeyer 1989; see now Kunze, Niemeyer 2007, 253-254, fig. 90, pl. 28,1004). A concave funnel-shaped channel runs through the fragment from back to front in a downward direction. This allowed the identification of the fragment as the right corner block of a *sima*, the part of the construction that marked the transition of the entablature to the gabled roof of a temple in Greek style. Water spouts, mostly in the form of lion's heads, drained the water from the roof to the sides at regular distances.

The fine-grained yellowish marble, the craftsmanship and stylistic comparisons all hinted at a still unknown Greek workshop active in Magna Graecia, or more precisely on Sicily. The preserved height of the piece (0.34m), broken off in its upper part, clearly suggested its belonging to a monumental construction, probably a temple. Stressing its monumentality, Niemeyer compared the size to the lions'-head spouts of the Athenaion (Athena Temple) in Syracuse, which measure 0.25m. On the basis of stylistic comparison with pieces from Sicily (see a.o. Mertens-Horn 1988) and Athens, he proposed a date within the first half of the 4th century BCE. Lacking the larger part of the lion's face, offering a more precise date would have stretched the evidence too much.

Niemeyer interpreted the *sima*-fragment as having been part of a freestanding temple of Greek architectural order, constructed within the city of Carthage during the first half of the 4th century BCE. This would not be completely improbable, since also the Punic pantheon of Carthage is characterized by a strong assimilation with Greek gods from the 4th century BCE on, especially with regard to the iconography. In 396 BCE, the cult of Demeter and Kore (Persephone) was introduced in Carthage from Sicily in compensation for the sacrileges committed by the Carthaginian troops of Himilko in the Greek Demeter and Kore temple of Syracuse and the resulting plague that struck the troops in Sicily (Diodorus XIV,77,5; cf. Lancel 1995, 345-347).

Three arguments may be brought up against this explanation of the *sima* block's presence in Carthage. First, no other example of a freestanding temple of Greek design is known in the Punic world at this time (cf. Lancel 1995, 214); the Punic-Roman temple of Antas Pater in south-west Sardinia at first sight would be the exception to the rule, but its present state is of Roman date. Secondly, if this element was part of a Greek-style temple erected in Carthage, the implication would be that the Carthaginians had commissioned and shipped the architectural elements of a complete and monumental temple from Sicily to Carthage. Although not impossible in itself (and there are some examples attested in Antiquity for the wholesale transport of temples), it would be a rare exception. Thirdly and most importantly, the fragment itself offers an argument against this interpretation. Already Niemeyer was puzzled by

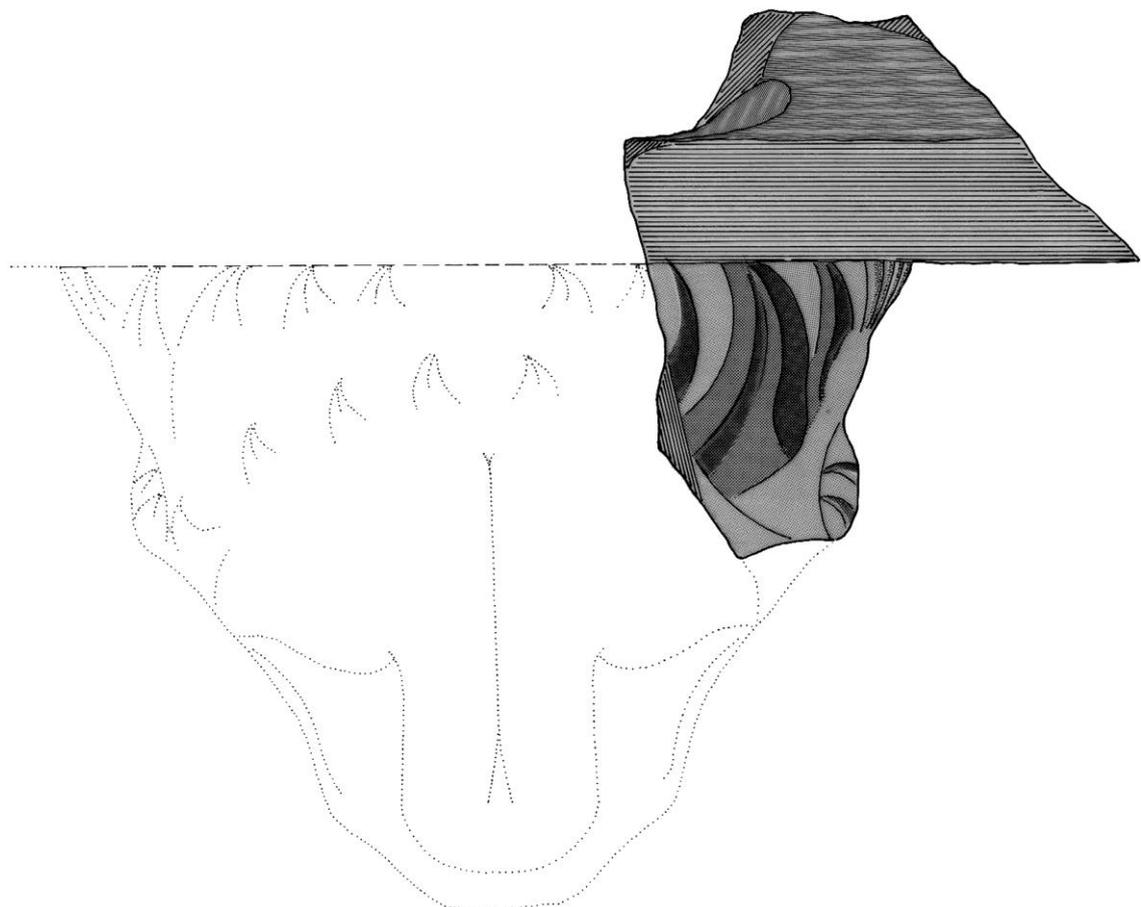
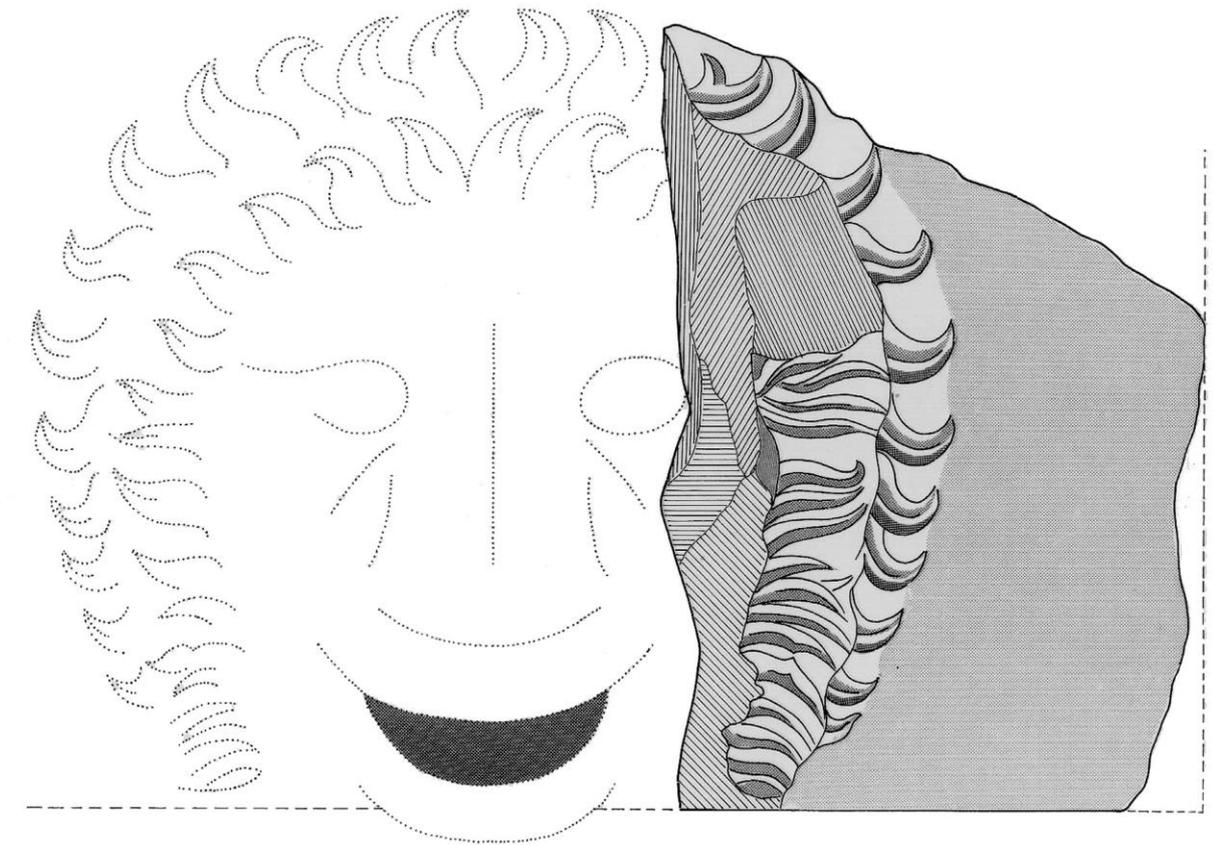


Fig. 3. Sicilian lion's-head water spout from Carthage (after Kunze, Niemeyer 2007, 254, fig. 9).

the absence of calcareous sinter traces on the surface of the water draining part and tentatively suggested that a lead pipe, now lost, had covered the interior. If this were the case, one would have expected the lead to have left at least some traces on the marble surface, which is not the case. Rather, it seems that the block was never used for its primary function at all, neither in its place of production (Sicily) nor in Carthage.

The suggestion that I would propose here, is that the architectural element was originally meant for a Sicilian Greek temple or other large public building that was under construction when the Carthaginians took over the city. It was then seized in the workshop and brought to Carthage where it was dedicated in a sanctuary, displayed in public or even in private. If this interpretation is correct, two questions remain: Why then a lion's-head water spout, or in other words, why a lion? And on which historical occasion was the piece taken from Sicily to Carthage?

The first question is perhaps easiest to answer. Lion-headed gods and goddesses played an important role in Carthaginian religious beliefs (Redissi 1990). First and foremost is the goddess Sekhmet of Egyptian Memphis, who was venerated as a goddess of war (amongst other roles), incorporating aspects of revenge, curing illnesses, and protecting the royal (pharaonic) family (Hoenes 1976). She had been assimilated with Astarte, both in the East and in Carthage, in the latter Astarte was worshipped especially during the 4th and 3rd centuries BCE (Redissi 1990, 166-167 with references). It is therefore not unlikely that the Sicilian lion's-head spout had a particular appeal for a Carthaginian conqueror and made an appropriate gift to a sanctuary upon his victorious return

The second question is more difficult to answer. Seeing the typological date of the piece and assuming that it had never been used when it was taken by the Carthaginians, any victorious occasion would come into consideration. The historical evidence for the first half of the 4th century BCE, however, is not quite complete, so assigning the piece to one particular occasion would probably stretch the evidence too much. Among the possible occasions one might nevertheless mention e.g. the Carthaginian siege of Syracuse in 397/396 broken off when a plague hit the troops, or General Himilco's victories over Syracusan troops in 376 BCE.

The historian Appian, writing in the 2nd century CE, basing himself on the writings of Polybius who had witnessed the end of Carthage, gives us a good insight into what happened when Carthage itself was finally taken by the Romans in 146 BCE (Appian VIII,1: XX.133):

“Carthage being destroyed, Scipio gave the soldiers a certain number of days for plunder, reserving the gold, silver, and temple gifts. He also gave numerous prizes to all who had distinguished themselves for bravery, except those who had violated the shrine of Apollo. He sent a swift ship, embellished with spoils to Rome to announce the victory. He also sent word to Sicily that whatever temple gifts they could identify as taken from them by the Carthaginians in former wars they might come and take away. Thus he endeared himself to the people as one who united clemency with

power. The rest of the spoils he sold, and, in sacrificial cincture, burned the arms, engines, and useless ships as an offering to Mars and Minerva, according to the Roman custom.”

Diodorus Siculus (XIII,90,4) explicitly states that the famous bull of Phalaris mentioned before was returned to the people of Akragas on that occasion, and that it was still in the city at the time he wrote his *World History* in the 1st century BCE. The lion’s-head spout, evidently of lesser intrinsic value, was never reclaimed by any Greek city on Sicily and remained buried in Carthaginian soil.

A gold *phiale*, probably from the waters of Sicily or the Straits of Sicily

The Metropolitan Museum in New York houses a spectacular gold *phiale* with a Greek and a Punic inscription (**Figs. 4-5**). The *phiale* is said to have been found in the Mediterranean Sea (Von Bothmer 1962, 155). An underwater context for the piece seems proven by the description in the first publication: “parts of a heavy incrustation, evidently the accumulation of ages, and especially well preserved under the overhang of the omphalos, turned out under the microscope to be the calcareous remains of various marine invertebrates, chiefly bryozoa and annelids” (Von Bothmer 1962, 155). Strangely enough, this underwater provenance is omitted from the object’s page on the Museum’s website, where only the infamous art dealer Robert E. Hecht is mentioned as having been the previous owner.⁸ Still, one may be fairly sure that when the Punic and Greek inscriptions on the bowl add up to the argument, the waters around Sicily or the Strait of Sicily between the island and North Africa form the best candidates for a more precise provenance.

The Punic inscription is discussed in more detail in a contribution by Philip Schmitz in this volume (pp. 103-110), as well as in one by Víctor Martínez Hahn Müller (pp. 111-142). Especially in the latter article a strong case is made for dating the *phiale* to the period 350-320 BCE or perhaps the middle of the 3rd century BCE on metrological grounds. The attempted obliteration of the Greek inscription and the reading and interpretation of the clearer, more recent Punic inscription suggest that the piece had formed part of loot, stemming from the sack of a Greek temple. The historical context may have been the Third Sicilian War or the First Punic War, in both cases implying a transfer from Sicily to Carthage (see pp. 111-142).⁹

⁸ *Website Metropolitan*. “[Until 1962, with Robert E. Hecht, Jr.]; acquired in 1962, purchased from Robert E. Hecht”. On this art dealer, see Watson, Todeschini 2006, 156-181, esp. 157. On pp. 231-232 the Metropolitan gold *phiale* discussed here is mentioned (although with acquisition year 1961) in connection with the gold *phiale* that had been found near Caltavuturo on Sicily between 1976 and 1980. It had been exported illegally to New York, but has been repatriated to Sicily in 2000. See also Merryman, Urice 2007, 290, and esp. Guzzo, Spatafora, Vassallo 2010, 462-463 fig. 15). Since both *phialai* are so closely related, and in view of the fact that the underwater provenance is omitted from the website, it is not to be excluded altogether that we are dealing with a fabricated provenance as happens so often with essentially unprovenanced objects. If the *phiale* would have been found in international waters, the museum would not have compromised itself in legal terms.

⁹ To the options Martínez Hahn Müller offers on how the *phiale* may have ended up on the seabed, one may hypothetically add one, namely that it had been unclaimed 4th or 3rd century BCE Sicilian booty, taken by Scipio from Carthage to Rome in 146 BCE, looted there by the Vandals in 455 CE, and lost on its way back to Carthage, see also the next case study. It would make sense, but probably stretches the evidence too much.



Fig. 4. Greek gold *phiale* of the 4th or 3rd century BCE. The Metropolitan Museum of Art 62.11.1. a. interior; b. exterior; c. Punic inscription; d. top side view (after *Website Metropolitan*).



Fig. 5. Greek gold *phiale* of the 4th or 3rd century BCE. The Metropolitan Museum of Art 62.11.1. Detail of obliterated Greek graffito “Pausi” (after *Website Metropolitan*).



Fig. 6. **a.** More than life-size bronze statue of dancing Satyr (after *Website Mazara del Vallo*); **b.** Life-size bronze elephant's foot of the 3rd century BCE (after Giglio 2015b, 95, fig.).

A monumental bronze elephant's leg and the 'Dancing Satyr'

In 1998, the trawler 'Capitan Ciccio', sailing from Mazara del Vallo (SW Sicily) and fishing in the Strait of Sicily to the West of Trapani, at or near the Skerki Bank, caught an over-life-size bronze statue of a dancing satyr in its net (**Fig. 6a**). Only a year earlier, at the same spot, it had fished up the leg of the same statue, and a year later it recovered the life-size bronze foot of an elephant (**Fig. 6b**). The seabed at this point was said to have a depth of c. 500 m and apparently is the site of a wrecked ship that transported works of art.¹⁰ The Skerki Bank lies on the direct open-sea route from Rome to Carthage.

After its discovery, the Dancing Satyr immediately attracted a lot of scholarly attention, being an original work of the famous Late Classical Greek sculptor Praxiteles, who had been active between 370 and 330/320 BCE, or an Hellenistic or Roman copy thereof (a.o. Parisi Presicce 2003; Bonacasa 2004; Moreno 2005; Andrae 2009a-c). The relatively high lead content of the bronze, however, seems to favour a later date for the statue than the 4th century BCE, viz. the Hellenistic or Roman period.¹¹ Pliny The Elder (*NH* XXXIV,19), writing in the 1st century CE, describes the (original?) statue amongst the most celebrated works in 'brass' in the city of Rome:¹²

“Praxiteles, who excelled more particularly in marble, and thence acquired his chief celebrity, also executed some very beautiful works in brass, the Rape of Proserpine, the Catagusa, a Father Liber, a figure of Drunkenness, and the celebrated Satyr, to the Greeks known as ‘Periboetos’.”

The Mazara del Vallo statue may well be equated with the one seen by Pliny (being the original or not). The connection with the elephant's foot (**Fig. 6b**) is telling in this context and strengthens a City-Roman origin of the cargo. It cannot but have belonged to one of the elephant's quadrigas that have been attested on Imperial triumphal arches in Rome and Ostia (Andrae 2009a-c). The occasion on which the cargo would have been lost is then without doubt the Vandal sack of Rome in 455 CE, which lasted 14 days: “In the same year, Rome was emptied of all her treasures by Geiseric.” (Cassiodorus 1263). And, as Procopius (III,V,5) clearly states: “But of the ships with Gizeric, one, which was bearing the statues [“τὰς εἰκόνας”], was lost, they say, but with all the others the Vandals reached port in the harbour of Carthage.”

¹⁰ See also above, n. 9. Several shipwrecks have been investigated in the area during a deep water survey, McCann, Freed 1994.

¹¹ Ingo *et alii* 2010, 788-789: “EDS analysis carried out on the not corroded regions (1 × 1 mm analysed area) allowed to determine the chemical composition of the arm: Cu 75.4 wt%, Sn 9.1 wt%, Pb 15.5 wt% and of the hair: Cu 77.8 wt% Sn 10.9 wt%, Pb 11.3 wt%.”

¹² Although Pliny does not mention explicitly that this statue is in Rome, as he does for some other ones, and as he also lists works being in Athens, Delphi, Olympia, Thespiae, Didyma, ..., the context is clear: “The most celebrated of all the works, of which I have here spoken, have been dedicated, for some time past, by the Emperor Vespasianus in the Temple of Peace, and other public buildings of his. They had before been forcibly carried off by Nero, and brought to Rome, and arranged by him in the reception-rooms of his Golden Palace.” (XXXIV,19).

It is, hence, most likely that we see here part of the cargo of this very ship, carrying both Classical statues and politically charged monuments, meant to embellish the Vandal capital of Carthage in a truly imperial way (Andreae 2009a-c).

Concluding remarks

The objects discussed above have in common that they can be considered as the archaeological traces of spoils of war, associated with Carthage. The Classical sources, generally interested in matters of war, relate extensively on the act of looting cities, the procedures of dividing the booty, and sometimes the particular reasons for transporting part of the spoils to their own city.¹³ On the basis of the archaeological case studies discussed here one may discern at least four different reasons for the appropriation of enemy's goods:

1. The intrinsic value of looted items like the gold *phiale* (**Figs. 4-5**) is probably the most obvious reason for shipping “the most valuable pieces” (Diodorus XIII,19,4, see here p. 84) to Carthage. Even less conspicuous objects like the Porticello bronze fragments (**Fig. 1a-b**), interpreted as scrap metal, would have represented a certain intrinsic (rest) value worth selling and shipping abroad.
2. Social or status aspects played a role in other cases, as with the Dancing Satyr (**Fig. 6a**).
3. Objects like the Mozia Youth (**Fig. 2**) or the bronze elephant's foot (**Fig. 6b**) would have been shipped off because they had been invested with high political value or propagandistic power by their previous, now defeated owners. In setting them up in their own temples or public spaces, the conquerors made these symbols of power and victory ostentatively their own.
4. Finally, religious connotations of objects, ascribed to them by their new victorious owners, like the lion's head water spout (**Fig. 3**), may perhaps form another, not so obvious reason and, hence, may previously have remained undetected in the archaeological record.

By discussing these casestudies, it is hoped that also in the archaeology of the Carthaginian and Punic world more attention will be paid to the acts of looting and the varied ways in which objects may have changed ownership.

¹³ The literature on looting and spoils of war in Antiquity is extensive, and a full discussion thereof would stretch the format of the article too much. Moreover, this literature is mainly dealing with Roman and to a lesser degree Greek situations; general literature on the phenomenon in Carthage and the Phoenician-Punic world seems to lack to the best of my knowledge. By way of introduction in these writings one may mention few recent works: Rouveret 2000; Coudry, Humm 2009; Carl, Bömelburg 2011. On some of the Classical sources referring to spoils of war in the Punic period, see also the contribution of Martínez Hahn Müller, here, pp. 111-142).

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