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Eastern Mediterranean, included because they were in Hayes 1972.

The volume, published by Quasar, is presented as the first member of a new publication series, 'Material Culture through Ancient and Modern Mediterranean' (MACAM), under the direction of Antonio Ferrandes of La Sapienza University, Rome. It is a

handsome and worthy contribution to the field of late Roman pottery studies. It gave pleasure to John Hayes to see it.

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LE DÉTROIT DE GIBRALTAR (ANTIQUITÉ – MOYEN ÂGE). II, ESPACES ET FIGURES DE POUVOIR

Edited by Gwladys Bernard and Aurélien Montel. *Collection de la Casa de Velázquez, 191, Casa de Velázquez, Madrid, 2022. ISBN 9788490963647, pp. 37. Price: €33.00 (paperback) and €18.99 (e-book)*

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This is the second in a series of three conference volumes dedicated to the Straits of Gibraltar and the surrounding territory, known in Spanish literature as the 'Círculo del Estrecho', a term coined by Miguel Tarradell in the 1960s. Far more than a geographical region, the 'círculo' became a historical reality in Spanish historiography, justifying a claim to Ceuta (as well as to Gibraltar) that continues to this day (Tarradell 1960, 61–63; see on this tradition Callegarin 2016 and Papi 2016; 2018, 427–28. Note that neither of the works by Papi figures in the bibliography of the volume). These volumes are the product of a project by the Casa de Velázquez aimed at studying the history of the region from the time of the Second Punic War through to the fifteenth century. The idea of a common culture, political history, and commercial unity between the southernmost tip of Spain and northern Morocco has persisted to this day in the work of historians such as Noé Villaverde Vega (2001, 157–74). Brent Shaw (2006) sums it up as the idea that the 'Circle of the Straits' was a sort of 'Far West', with Mauretania Tingitana backwards and heavily dependent on the economy of Roman Baetica, well outside the Roman networks. The articles presented in this volume all treat subjects more or less relevant to this area without, in the main, actually addressing the issue: the unity of the area under Carthage at the

time of the Second Punic War was eliminated by the creation of the Roman provinces of Baetica and Mauretania, and was not recreated until the tenth century, when the Omayyads of Cordoba conquered Ceuta. Subsequently, the Almoravids, followed by the Almohads, united the two shores again.

The volume is divided into three sections. The first, 'Agir et Gérer' (11–113), deals with the political and institutional structures within the space: Sabine Lefebvre on the administration of the Western Mediterranean during the civil war of AD 68–69, and Hélène Rougier on the individuals working in the oil trade of the second century described as *diffusores olearii*, among others. We might note that while none of these oil merchants are attested in Morocco, the coast from Lixus to Tingi has a dense implantation of fish-salting vats and merchants – but nothing links the Tingitana merchants with those of Baetica (Papi 2018, 431–32). This section is concluded by Aurélien Montel on the administration of Tingitana under the caliphate of Cordoba, and by Mohamed Chérif on the short-lived, thirteenth-century principality of the 'Azafids at Ceuta.

The second section, 'Construire et Fortifier' (117–79), begins with Sabine Panzram's excellent synthesis of the story of Gades, with a profound consideration of the historiography and reality

of the concept of the 'círculo', making the point that it is quite irrelevant to the history of Cadiz itself. The article is distinguished by its elegant maps. These are, in fact, the only maps in the book, if we except two small maps in the introduction. Their lack is particularly felt in the next two chapters, by Antonio Torremocha Silva and Erwan Le Balch, on fortifications in the area of the Straits, which treat defensive networks, towers, and site-lines without a single illustration, neither a map nor a plan nor a photograph, which is problematic for anyone who might actually be interested in the reality of fortifications and defensive structures as opposed to the documents that show their existence at some point.

The third section, 'Reconnaître et Représenter' (183–301), is the longest. It begins with a chapter by the late Enrique Gozalbes Cravioto on the Straits as a bridge or a border that contains a list of all the military crossings from Hannibal to the Arab conquest of Hispania by Tāriq b. Ziyād, who gave his name to Gibraltar. All the crossings but one, that is: that for the Vandals – among the most significant – is missing from the list. Granted that the work is posthumous, surely the editors might have picked this up? This is followed by a dense piece by Michel Christol on the political conflicts after the death of Commodus, the relationships between the governor of Tingitana and the city of Italica, and the role of the provincial procurators in the Severan period. Next comes a study of the image of Gibraltar at the time of the first Almohad caliph, 'Abd al-Mu'min, by Mehdi Ghouirgate. Presented as a little Eden, this small city was given exaggerated importance in line with the construction of the fortifications which would then form the foundations for those of the Marinids and the British. This Almohad emphasis on the Straits is then taken up by Erwan Le Balch and Christophe Picard, who deal with the maritime representation of caliphal power in the various fortifications and investment in the infrastructure of the ports on both sides of the Straits. Again, maps and figures would have helped: Saltès, Tarifa or Marsā Mūsā, for example, are nowhere found on a map. The final article in this section is a long and charming piece by Gwladys Bernard, Patrice Cressier, and María Antonia Martínez Núñez on an inscribed Roman statue base from Baetica, transformed into a decorated basin in the eleventh century and then transported to Salé where it was further transformed into an elaborately carved epitaph for the Marinid sultan Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf. Properly illustrated, it is an object-biography in the best sense, and gives us an historically nuanced picture of traffic across the Straits.

Patrice Le Roux writes a conclusion that brings us back to the politics of the recent past, where the British hold on Gibraltar is defined as 'colonialist' (Napoleon might have seen it differently) and Ceuta is not mentioned. The Straits is a 'geographical expression' without precise contours or real consistency that came together ethnically, culturally, or militarily at certain moments in its history, but that is about it. Even under the great umbrella of the Roman Empire the two sides were more separate than ever: recent excavations in Algiers have shown that by the second century AD any commerce with Hispania was in steep decline, as each region established its own trade networks with Rome (Quevedo 2020). The evidence from the excavations at Thamusida, too, firmly contradicts the idea of the subalternity of Tingitana to Cadiz (Papi 2018). Its liminality does not unite the region any more than Cadiz did, and Le Roux struggles to find unity, either in the Straits or in the conference. I have very much the same problem.

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THE BIR MESSAOUDA BASILICA: PILGRIMAGE AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF AN URBAN LANDSCAPE IN SIXTH CENTURY AD CARTHAGE

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The Bir Messaouda Basilica is one of the most important excavated churches in Late Roman, Vandal and Byzantine Carthage and the largest known ecclesiastical complex in the *intra muros* area at the city. It comprises, eventually in the later sixth century, a large,

five-aisled basilica with a long, transecting transept on the site of an earlier basilica (from the early sixth century), a baptistery and a crypt, but apparently no atrium. Miles and Greenslade's important final excavation report documents excavations carried out between