



MYTHICAL ORIGINS OF GREEK TOPONIMY IN THE NORTHWEST IBERIAN PENINSULA¹

Domingo Plácido, Universidad Complutense, Madrid
placido@ghis.ucm.es

The northwest area of the Iberian Peninsula is the furthest from the Mediterranean World, which means that it is that much less influenced by the colonial world, Greek and Phoenician, in the archaic age. Hence the presence of place-names interpreted as a Greek Toponymy sets out specific problems, different from that raised for the Mediterranean and meridional worlds.²

From the perspective of classical authors, it seems that the presence of metals in the basins of the Minius and Sil Rivers has influenced the

¹ This paper is part of the project *Formas de ocupación rural en el cuadrante noroccidental de la Península Ibérica. Transición y desarrollo entre épocas prerromana y romana*, subsidized by the Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia, with reference number HUM2004-04010-C02-01, and was presented in the conference *Mythology and Iconography of Colonization*, held at the Villa Vergiliana, Cumae, Italia, at 2-6 October of 2006. I thank professors Alfonso Mele, from the Università di Napoli, and Terry Papillon and Ann-Marie Knoblauch, from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, for the invitation. Their interventions in the colloquium, together with that of other participants, such as Yolanda Gamboa and Noemi Marin, have helped to improve the contents.

² Adrados 2000, and 2001.

geographic configuration of territory. Thus, Strabo, in 3.2.9, where he collects information from Posidonius (F239 Edelstein-Kidd= 47 Jacoby) about Artabri, in Lusitania, underlines that their soil abounds with silver, tin and white gold, brought by the streams. Posidonius seems to have received his knowledge as a result of contacts with the Roman armies in the age of Brutus and, in his account, already mentions metals in relation to the Artabri. He may refer therefore to the region south of Galicia and north of Portugal when he describes the Artabri as “farthest on the northwest” of Lusitania; he does not consider the subsequent conquests as far as the Cantabrian coast, on the concept that Lusitania made up a projection from what in the beginning of the expedition was considered inhabited by those who were already labeled Lusitani. From the southwest the name is extended as far as the borders of the campaign. Then the knowledge of the Peninsula’s far west by Roman people starts with Decimus Brutus’ campaign, who, according to Velleius Paterculus’ description, reached all the peoples of Hispania (*penetratis omnibus Hispaniae gentibus*), empowered many men and towns and, for the sake of extending Empire upon those hardly heard of, *aditis quae uix audita erant*, deserved the cognomen Gallaecus (Vel. Pat. 2.5.1). Velleius’ language shows him to be the leader of the campaign.

Florus (1.33.12), for his part, says that Brutus went through the River Oblivion (*flumen Oblivionis*) and he didn’t go back, after covering the ocean coast, until he had contemplated the sunset and the fire extinction in the water, not without a certain fear of committing a sacrilege on the part of his troops; the river, fearful to the soldiers, is mentioned in the descriptive progression, after *Celticos Lusitanosque et omnis Gallaeciae populos*. The tradition gathered by Florus locates, thus, “all the peoples of Gallaecia”, the same as Lusitanians and Celts, before the River Oblivion, in this way constituted as earth’s border before the access to the enigmatic world of the west. Orosius (5.5.12), however, separates the Gallaeci from the Lusitani, as a people who came in their support, as if the northern border of the *prouincia Lusitania* was already established, because the flight is placed *in ulteriore Hispania*.

The geographic localization of the campaign is thus enclosed from the start by a mythical reference to world’s edge. Also, according to Appian (*Hisp.* 72.304-305), Brutus was the first Roman who went over the River Lethe, Oblivion, in 137 BCE, after crossing Durius. Then he advanced through Minius and fought against the Bracari, who would be settled between Oblivion, *Lethe*, and Minius. Here Gallaeci are not mentioned, surely because the presence of these ones as a people

localized in the vicinity of Durius has become diluted before the spreading out of the name as far as the conventional spaces of the *Lucenses* and the *Bracarenses*, as they are defined and localized in Pliny, 3.28, or in Ptolemy, 2.6. Tranoy³ believes that the name *Callaeci*, in a restricted sense, would be placed in the age of the campaign, in the region of *Cales* (*ItAnt* 421.8: *Calem*), in the outlet of the river (*TIR* K29 VI f), a region where the combats of Brutus took place. Actually, near Porto was found the dedicatory (*CIL* II 2422) of *Gallaecia* to a grandson of Augustus⁴, interpreted by Tranoy⁵ as a sign of Roman will to define the ethnic and territorial entity *Gallaecia*, which in this way is spread out to territories that will be credited consequently to *Bracarenses* and *Lucenses*.

Plutarch (*Quaest. Rom.* 34, = *Mor.*, 272D) says that Brutus, who invaded Lusitania, was the first to cross the River Lethe with an army, from which is deduced that the idea of an extensive Lusitania remains, as far as the borders reached by Brutus. Livy (*Per.* 55) refers to the conquest of Lusitania, which he spreads likewise as far as the Ocean: *Lusitaniam ... usque ad Oceanum perdomuit*; as his men refused to go beyond the River Oblivion, he himself seized the flag in order to persuade them. What spreads up to the Ocean is indeed an unknown land identified as Lusitania. The *Periochae* from *Oxyrhynchus* states: *Oblivionis flumen planus transiit*. Strabo, in 3.3.4, when he refers to the River Lethe, says that some identify it with Limaeas and the others with Belion; he mentions Baenis or Minius, and thus he marks the border to the campaign of Brutus and thus in the same way the border to the realist perception of the territory. Strabo says that, according to Poseidonios, Minius begins in Cantabria⁶. The pass of the borders of River Oblivion toward Galaic territory, now identified, serves likewise as access to a new territory characterized by the presence of precious metals, about which there are only mythical references linked to the experiences of the colonial world. However, Minius serves as communication to the territories where the conquests of the republican age have occurred, a region in parallel with that inhabited by the Artabri. The *Cantabri* are known, through Cato's *Origines*, 7.28.4, as a reference for the localization of the source of River Iberus. Poseidonios establishes the

³ Tranoy 1981: 66.

⁴ Dopico and Rodríguez 1992: 395.

⁵ Tranoy 1981: 150.

⁶ F224 Edelstein-Kidd=49Jacoby.

link between the north of Lusitania and Cantabria across the River Minius, identified to the Sil, between the campaigns of Brutus and those of Cato.

Such experiences constitute the place from which Justin's mention of River *Chalybe* would proceed. The text of Justin is included in a longer reference (*Epit.* 44.3) that contains a description of the wealth in metals of Galicia⁷. The metals are found, then, among the factors that favour the establishments of archaic contacts, in a field where literary tradition establish a certain parallelism between east and west⁸. The presence of metals, what is identified in several authors with Galicia, would be the basis even for the extension of the name, which is defined already in the Roman Age in the moment of the campaigns of Brutus and Caepio, at the same age in which the reference to Greek tradition appears applied to the region. So, Justin says that *Gallaeci* had a Greek origin (*Gallaeci autem Graecam sibi originem adserunt*) and relates to that the River *Chalybe*, where gold is found. Justin speaks about its wealth in gold and calls the River in it Chalybus, a name used also in Black Sea. Metals are in the root of name of Gallaecia in the age of conquest of Brutus, as is mentioned by Posidonius, who first speaks about the geographical space.

It would be the place that Pliny attributes to *Helleni, Groui, Tyde*, names of peoples identified as Greeks, *Graecorum subolis omnia* in 4.112. Indeed, Pliny, in this text, after the *Cileni*, in the direction of south, begins the description of the *conuentus Bracarum* including the peoples of Greek stock: *Helleni, Groui* and the *castellum Tyde*, which would be placed to the northwest of the Minius, toward the coast. Also there is the *oppidum Abobrica*. To the north of Minius only the names that Pliny enumerates as being of Greek origin belong to the *Conuentus Bracarensis* (*Graecorum subolis omnia*), beside the *oppidum Abobrica* and the peoples *Leuni* and *Seurbi*, to which a firm localization is not attributed⁹.

Ptolemy (2.6.44), mentions *Toûdai* of the *Grouii*, localized, in his coordinates, far inside the *conuentus Bracarensis*, quite in the south of Minius, while *TIR*, K29 VId, places them quite near the coast: *Tyde* in Tuy, at the outlet of Minius. *ItAnt* 429.7 goes through from Bracara and mentions Limia, Tude, Burbida, etc., in the direction of *Luco Augusti*, where such names have been integrated in Roman Geography.

⁷ Camassa 1984: 173-4. Gangutia 1989: 103-109.

⁸ Plácido 1996: 55-63.

⁹ *TIR* K29 V/VId; Plácido 2002: 131.

Strabo mentions also Amphilochos, who died *en Kallaikois*, among Galaici, in the tradition of burials of Trojan heroes. The Ambracian gulf, where Amphilochia is found, is a place of Hellenisation through heroes like Odysseus. Hecataeus cites Ambracia as land of Geryon. Teucer comes through Cyprus, a Phoenician place, where the cult of Astarte is placed. From the point of view of the material culture, objects from Greece are found in Phoenician places, in a koine in which Cyprus has an important place.

Strabo, 3.4.3, mentions likewise two towns, one named *Hellenes* and another *Amphilochoi*, immediately after his reference to Teucer's expedition, all according the authority of Asclepiades of Mirlea because this says that some of those who made the expedition with him set up among the Calaici, *en Kallaikois*, and explains the name of *Amphilochoi* by the fact that Amphilochos died there and his companions wandered nomadically as far as the inland. The figure of Amphilochos appears very often in traditions about origins of cities in Asia Minor, in a narrow correspondence between the myth and the heroic cults that usually are identified with burials, on several occasions with an oracular character linked to the figure of the seer Calchas (Strabo 14.1.27; 5.16). Herodotus (7.91) attributes to the Pamphilians an origin coming from the companions of Amphilochos and Calchas in the return journey from the Trojan War. Also according to Herodotus (3.91), Amphilochos founded Poseideon, in the border between Syrians and Cilicians. The features of the mythical personage would be adapted by Asclepiades to northwestern regions of the Iberian Peninsula lately known by Romans, where they found traces of the previous presence of populations, protagonists of the western colonisations, more probably Phoenicians than Greeks. According to one of the versions of the legendary traditions, Teucer himself would have gone from Troy to Cyprus, a place very related to the Phoenician travel toward the west. This is, then, a first impression about the Greek references as forms of taking on possible evidences about Phoenician travellers.

Justin, 44.3.3, also refers to *Amphilochoi* as *Gallaeciae... portio*, in the same context that he deals with metals. About Amphilochoi, Gangutia¹⁰ connects the mention of their presence in Hispania to the reference of Hecataeus to Gerion, as a result of a tradition from Ambracia's gulf, whose Hellenism is linked to the same myth¹¹. It looks then like an

¹⁰ *THA* IIA, p. 140, with n. 289.

¹¹ Malkin 1998: 144-145.

instrument for ethnic self-definition, as Odysseus himself in other cases, mainly among peoples that are difficult to define. From Thucydidean narrative (3.107-114) and from the way in which he refers to those peoples, Malkin deduces that the Attic historian contemplates the phenomenon as one peculiar form of being lately Hellenized¹². In the far northwest of the Peninsula this identification would appear through the action of Roman Hellenized expeditionary people who search for precedents in the colonial world, in spaces identified with mythical Hellenic travels.

Through Archaeology, thanks to the objects of the material culture, we can claim an approach to historical phenomena that with some certainty are behind such mythical traditions and toponymic references.

The objects of Hellenic origin that are found in different points of the Western Mediterranean Sea would arrive at first through the Phoenicians, whose travels and stable establishments are documented in a systematic way at least from the 7th Century, but the Greeks themselves would frequent at least sporadically the different regions starting from the previous Century¹³. In this span of time, the role of Cyprus as a vehicle for the traffic is very illustrative, as well as the settlements in the Syrian coast, such as Al Mina, where the abundance of Greek objects reveals the existence of important contacts, at least from the origins of Archaism. They are the stages of collaborations or rivalries that define a cultural *koiné*, through which common ideas that affect the peoples known by the Phoenicians at the pre-colonization age are transmitted¹⁴. Herodotus (7.90) refers to Cyprus as a place of meeting for Salaminians, Athenians, Arcadians, Phoenicians, Ethiopians...¹⁵. In 7.195, Herodotus himself mentions the Aphrodision of Paphos, a religious centre of the island related to the cult of Phoenician Astarte.

Collaboration between Phoenicians and Greeks exists in places on the Peninsula. Strabo tells about Odysseia near Abdera, a Phoenician colony, and his citation is seen in Poseidonios, Asclepiades, and Artemidoros. Hellenic tradition chooses also Phoenician places as localisation for other heroes. Strabo speaks also about information about lotophagoi from Gadeira.

Collaboration between Phoenicians and Greeks in the colonial world was developed in places as significant as Pithecousai, where contacts and

¹² Malkin 1998: 154.

¹³ Perreault 1993: 81.

¹⁴ Baurain 1997: 248-269.

¹⁵ Bunnens 1979: 119.

an intensive cultural transfer take place before the Persian Wars¹⁶. When the Greeks arrive in Sicily, on the other hand, Phoenician colonies were already settled there (Thuc. 6.2.6). It is common, however, to accept an older date for Phoenician colonization in the west generally. There they enjoy prosperity in the 7th Century. Since that time objects of Greek pottery begin to appear in the necropolis in the Phoenician colonies of the Western Islands¹⁷. Also the Phoenician colonies in the Iberian Peninsula were characterized by the presence of Greek pottery at least since the 8th Century¹⁸. Results of archaeological research point out then the way in which the ways of cultural transfer were produced.

Strabo referred to a Phoenician foundation (3.4.3) before coming to the northwest lands, to the place called *Odysseia*, in Baetica, settled above Abdera, and he quotes Poseidonios¹⁹, Asclepiades and Artemidoros as sources. The city of *Odysseia*, placed in the south of Iberia, is linked, according to the author to a sanctuary of Athena where shields and breakwaters were deposited as records of Odysseus' travel. Greek tradition chooses places identified as Phoenician to localize the spaces linked to their heroes.

The geographer joins the foundation of a place, Opsicela, to Ocelas, Antenor's fellow, who is likewise mentioned in 3.2.13, together with other heroes, Trojans, like Aeneas, or Achaeans, like Diomedes or Menelaus, or like Odysseus himself and the city of *Odysseia*, with Athena's sanctuary, where his weapons are found, beside Heracles, whose expedition is linked to the Phoenicians' travels. Antenor appears likewise linked to foundations in Cyrene and in Venetus, among another places. The geographer comments that Homer knew the excellence of the West Lands throughout the Phoenicians, which allows him to transform them into a scenario for the heroes' wanderings. In 3.4.3, Strabo mentions that some, like Artemidoros, trust in the information about the Lotophagi proceeding from Gadira's merchants. To Strabo it seems to be evident that the Greek references are linked to the Phoenician presence in the Peninsula.

The relations between Greeks and Phoenicians continued active as a scenario for cultural transfer at least until the Persian Wars²⁰. Gadir pursued direct contact with Greeks uninterruptedly at least until the 6th

¹⁶ Domínguez 2000: 247.

¹⁷ Tusa 1995: 24.

¹⁸ Sanmartí-Grego 1995: 72-73

¹⁹ F247 Edelstein-Kidd= 50 Jacoby

²⁰ Plácido 2000: 269-270.

Century, as is shown in potteries bearing salted fish found in Greece, as in traditions that also help to shape western images among the Greeks²¹.

Greek travels along the Mediterranean Sea, such as they appear reflected in the most ancient mythical traditions since the Homeric poems, are linked in the literary references themselves to Phoenician travels, placed between traditions and the new realities that incorporate them as a part of the symbolic memory. Greek travels are connected to traditions of Phoenician trips. Menelaus and Odysseus travel in Phoenician ships through Cyprus, Phoenicia, Libya. The knowledge of west by the Greeks comes from the Phoenician experiment.

Thus it appears in Menelaus' travels in *Odyssey* or in the references of fictitious travels of Odysseus. The travels of Menelaus, in *Odyssey* 4.83-85, throughout Cyprus, Phoenicia, the Egyptians, Ethiopes, Sidonians, Erebi, and Libya, are mentioned in Strabo's commentary, 1.2.31-35, who, in order to do a realistic interpretation, alludes, among another places, to Gadir and to the Columns. On this basis, Fear²² links some fragments of *Odyssey* to the knowledge of Far West by the Greeks in the age of the poem, always on the idea that such knowledge was possible because of their contacts with the Phoenicians.

The tradition of Homeric heroes is projected throughout the Hellenistic and Roman ages, in a particular way in Strabo, worried by the geographical historicity of "the poet". However, traditions about the connection with the Phoenician world extend also down to him. Thus, in 3.4, he refers to Abdera as a Phoenician foundation that seems to be confirmed by the data that archaeological research is revealing²³. Strabo himself links this place to the Athena sanctuary in the inland highlands. Athena is, in the epic narrative, the deity who appears as protector and guide for Odysseus and considered as a navigator along Mediterranean Sea. Strabo depends on Poseidonios, Artemidoros and Asclepiades of Mirlea, on Hellenistic tradition. In these authors general references to the *nostoi* would be found, and concretely to Teucer and his travels down to *Gallaecia*. Also Artemidoros is the author referred by Stephan of Byzantium in connection to Abdera of Iberia (*THA* IIB142a). Tradition goes back then to the world of the *nostoi*, understood as a point of reference toward the ethnic identification of the periphery populations from the Archaic period down to the Hellenistic²⁴. Athena plays a

²¹ López Castro 1997: 95-105.

²² Fear 1992: 21-23.

²³ López Castro 1995: 33.

²⁴ Malkin 1998.

traditional role in the mythical manifestations of heroes' ordeals, with the capacity to become also a patroness to Hellenized emporia cults. In many occasions, the mythical origins preserved in long-standing traditions had in the Hellenistic World a key moment, as a factor to assume the past in order to shape an imaginary world, solid and prestigious. It seems that Poseidonios must have been an important element in the creation by his learned mentality and his wishes to retrieve the past in the presence of the transformations that his own age experiences, between the Greek past and the establishment of the Roman hegemony. In Hispania, Poseidonios shows signs of knowing the regions of southwest, of colonial tradition, and of northwest, where mythical references here said to appear and where he emphasizes the territorial importance of River Minius, as a point for the delimitations and for the relations to the peoples settled to the west and as a point of reference in the metals' production.

Odysseus and Menestheus appear in mining regions and Ports of Trade. Olyssipo is situated on a tin route of the Atlantic. Occupation was made by Brutus in 139 BCE. A tradition of travels by North Africa appears in Colaios' story, heir of Heracles and Melkart. The translation of myth to the north is placed by Brutus. The River Oblivion is the border line. In the Rias Bajas there are remains in Vigo, perhaps a sanctuary, found in the works of Sea Museum. Brutus Galaicus was in contact with peoples of the world's edge, the names that Pliny enumerates as being of Greek origin (*Graecorum subolis omnia*), between Spain and Portugal, in Cale, Oporto. They are exotic places with memories from orientalizing ages.

In Hispania, Odysseus and Menestheus appear localized, respectively, in the mining regions inside the Baetica and in the harbour, as a reflection of colonial concerns that can go to the Phoenicians, as well as the foundation of Olyssippo in the tin routes²⁵. Pliny (34.156-7) and Strabo (3.2.9), refer likewise to tin in Galicia.

The occupation and fortification by Brutus in 139 resulting in the Phoenician reference becoming a Greek reference, which produces the effect of defining it as Greek in Roman ages. Odysseus' story as well as Heracles' and the Argonauts' in their travel over the west²⁶ develop in soils that already had been visited by the Phoenicians²⁷. Odysseus grows firm in

²⁵ Fabre 1981: 166

²⁶ Plácido 1996.

²⁷ Fabre 1981: 333

the myth as a pattern for colonial promotion toward the west and his figure experiences a long legacy until the Hellenistic Age.

In the literary tradition the transfer is produced from Phoenician travel along the north of Africa (Diodorus, 4.17-18) to the ordeal travel of a young citizen performed by the traveller Coleus²⁸, who reaches the oikoumene's limits, on the footsteps of the ordeal myth by antonomasia, Heracles' western travel, who arrives also to the limits and even marks them with columns as signs, but who follows in his turn the footsteps of Phoenician Melkart, with whom he shares cult places. Melkart's sanctuary can be prior to Gades' foundation, defined as a free place in the interchanges in the transitional period. The real presence of sanctuaries devoted to deities entrusted to guarantee civilization²⁹ favours the development of imaginary travels with Heracles as protagonist. In this way, many places are used as a point of contact between colonists from both origins, which makes the cultural transmission and the assimilation by the Greeks of Phoenician experiences easy, which take form in the mythical legends. The Islands of Rhodes and Cyprus, the coasts of the far east of the Mediterranean Sea, Pithecousae, and many other colonial centres work as such centres³⁰.

Heroic myths embody the representation of exploits and dangers, throughout which the travellers are stimulated and advised. Myths correspond frequently to cult places devoted to heroes, but also to sexual attraction sanctuaries, like those devoted to Aphrodite and Astarte. In the female are concentrated the contradictions between necessity and travels' dangers³¹. The excavations in colonial necropoleis show how much the connection to native women determined the colonies' formation, which had to cause an impact in the configuration of Greek imaginary for that purpose. The preoccupation with the female reflects the problem of reproduction in a travellers' world. Females gain a special protagonist role in the cults of the goddess Iuno, Aphrodite, Astarte, as revealed in the frequent presence of images³². The tradition related to the colonial world gathers the travels of other Homeric heroes, as Teucer and Anphilochos, localized in the northwest of the Iberian Peninsula, in the space where Greek names of Galicia mentioned by Strabo, Pliny or Ptolemy are localized.

²⁸ Plácido 1993: 81-89.

²⁹ Moreno 2001: 99-117.

³⁰ Plácido 2003: 7-18.

³¹ Plácido 1991: 567-577.

³² Blázquez 1992: 192.

In his description of the western coast, Mela, 3.10, quotes *a Durio ad flexum Groui*, the Grovi as a people differentiated from the *Celtici*, who occupied the Atlantic front, and localized where the *Minius* flow and the *Limia* River, *cui cognomen Oblivionis*, “whose surname is Oblivion”. The *flexus* is that which is shaped after the western right line to the Celtic promontory (9). Sieberman³³ understands by this the aggregate of estuaries known as Rías, Vigo, Pontevedra and Arosa. The course from southwest to northwest is carried through on the basis of colonial age.

This is the space where the tradition of the river Oblivion is localized, related to Brutus by every source. Thus, Strabo, 3.3.4, as is seen above, mentions River *Lethe*, which some call Limea and other Belion; this comes from the territories of the *Vaccae* and *Celtiberes*; he also mentions the river Benis that they call *Minius*. Strabo considers it the biggest among the Rivers of Lusitania, which reflects the conception derived from Brutus’ conquest, as an occupation of an ample territory inside which the *Galaeci* are included, and this favors the use of epithet *Galaicus*. Also *Artabri* are the furthest in Lusitania. The conception derived from the expansion from the south is present in every case. Thus the peoples of Greek Lineage are linked geographically to the space of the Rivers identified to the River Oblivion. They are new and exotic places that hold a memory of the colonial orientaling age.

They are the imagined landscapes that everybody joins until the age of the Roman conquest, perhaps the base of traditions loaned on their contacts with exotic peoples.

The Port of Menestheus, near *Turris Caepionis*, from *Caepio*, in the expedition of 139, constitutes the toponymy tread by Roman expeditions towards the north. He takes *Via de la Plata*, *Cancho Roano*, the way of penetration of orientaling style. Before that, there is already a tradition from *Avienus*, who cites Phoenician *Himilco*. Philhellenic Romans assume mythical ideology, elaborated with Phoenician realities and Greek objects.

To the furthest southwestern end of Peninsula, Strabo, 3.1.9, refers to the “port called of Menestheus”, perhaps connected to possible Attic interests, corroborated by the ancient presence of Attic pottery, where we find the oracle of the same hero and *Caepio*’s tower. The description of this place makes the scholars think about a Phoenician Hellenized cult. Mela, 3.4, refers to *monumentum Caepionis*. The consul of 140, *Q. Seruilius Caepio* returns to the war in *Baeturia*, invades the *Vetones*’

³³ *Ad loc.*, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1988.

territory and founds camps, like *Turris Caepionis*, *Castra Cepiana*, in Setubal's estuary, and *Castra Seruilia*, near Casar de Cáceres. The treason of Viriatus in 139 contributes to forming the myth. His actions are set in the beginning of the so-called Vía de la Plata, between the Rivers Tagus and Durius. Also the pacts of Caepio with the grant of lands are placed here. In the same year 139, he undertook the expedition towards the territory of Galaeci, after having fought against Viriatus (Appian, *Hisp.*, 70.300). His celebrity was characterized by his connection to philhellenic circles³⁴.

Concerning the northwest, it is a region well known by Phoenicians and Phoenecians (Avienus, *Ora maritima*, 114-7), where colonists from Carthage arrived and also from the people established about Heracles' columns. Avienus makes a reference to Himilco's travel, maybe before 480. Such considerations coincide with the evidence of a Phoenician presence in material culture, of orientalizing style, according to the last finds. Therefore, Avienus refers to that territory as a possible basis for a Phoenician periplus³⁵ or for Himilco³⁶. The references (114-45; 380-89; 404-15)³⁷ allude frequently to tin, a fundamental preoccupation of Phoenician travellers. However, Greek toponymy also reveals contacts with possible navigators, indicative of the existence of a *koiné*³⁸.

All this encourages the theory, applied normally to the spaces either in the Mediterranean Sea or linked to the strait³⁹, where the Greek myths work themselves out through awareness of the Phoenician accounts, but leaned back on Greek experiences, that in turn lean back likewise on Phoenician precedents. The phenomenon corresponds thus to a complex frame of relations in which the chronological precedence in no way imposes its conditions. In short, Greek myth, as a privileged way of expression, specially suitable to express the human preoccupations of societies in the origins of Archaism⁴⁰ in the formation of the imaginary world, assert itself as an instrument to explain Phoenician contacts integrated in a certain way as Greek History.

Phoenician places and sanctuaries have Greek objects, which become fundamental to Greek names by philhellenic Roman generals. Greek

³⁴ See Salinas 1988, *passim* and, mainly, p. 145.

³⁵ Alvar 1995: 21-37.

³⁶ Salinas 1992: 469.

³⁷ González-Ruibal 2006: 126.

³⁸ González Ponce 1995.

³⁹ Plácido 2002a: 123-136.

⁴⁰ Plácido 2002b: 5-19; 2004: 19-40.

myths lie on Phoenician knowledge and Greeks contacts, but not always on direct experience, like commodities. Greek people feature a mythology on Phoenician knowledge that travels, like Greek ceramics and *emporoi*, in Phoenician ships. Roman Philhellenic people give Greek names to place with a Phoenician real presence and metals and confuse memories of Greek knowledge.

In the territories of northwest Peninsula, obvious contacts are established, from the 5th century, with the Mediterranean peoples, throughout Gades, as a centre for the southwest settlements and for relations between the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean, on the basis of former contacts documented on Atlantic coasts since the Bronze Age. The Phoenician sailors can have arrived in those regions from the 9th century, which is linked to the so-called Tartessian orientaling world, that projected itself to the image of the *Oestrinnis* of Avienus. On the other hand, in the Tartessian world, Greek contacts of places like *Onuba*⁴¹ are neat, localized in the southwestern area, perhaps a starting point for northwestern contacts. For a hypothesis has been set out that neutral sanctuaries exist in the southwest of Galicia⁴², in the style of that of Melkart, as can be the case of the remains found in the Museo del Mar (Sea Museum) that is in construction in Vigo. Greek pottery appears all over the area from Vigo, in La Lanzada Beach, and towards the south, where a rectangular structure exists with a foreign aspect, of the 5-6th centuries⁴³. In this way, significant also is the deposit of the Castro del Torroso in Pontevedra that gives occasion to the beginning of the First Iron Age in Galicia, that is, the Castreña Culture⁴⁴. In Castromao, where *Coeliobriga* is localized, between the Limia and Minius Rivers, Greek vessels of 4th century have been found.

The Phoenician contacts with the regions of the northwest Peninsula are always clearer. The mythical or geographical references are found in Greek literature. Pliny's and Ptolemy's descriptions and the hero's references in Strabo represent the projection in the Roman age of mythical Greek creations that alluded to that space, where Greek presence appears secondary and subsidiary in relation to Phoenician presence. News comes from the age of the creation of a colonial Mediterranean *koiné*. Information about the northwest is doubtless

⁴¹ Fernández-Miranda 1979: 49; 1991: 87-96.

⁴² González-Ruibal 2004.

⁴³ González-Ruibal, 2006, 132.

⁴⁴ Mederos and. Ruiz 2004-2005: 351-409.

subsequent to the apogee's period of colonial practice, but from then on identifications could be started when communities were influenced by orientalizing culture. This will supply the attribution of Hellenic features to the Atlantic spaces, only grown firm throughout the Roman's philhellenic arrival at the expansion's time from *Olisipo* to the River Oblivion, which was linked to diffusion of denominations as Celtics and Turduli, already applied beforehand to the southwest Peninsula. Thus, they occur as mythical traditions to ambiguous remains and records derived from the complex relations of the colonial world.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adrados, F. R. 2000 'Topónimos griegos en Iberia y Tartessos'. *Emerita*. 68: 1-18.
- _____. 2001. 'Más sobre Iberia y los topónimos griegos'. *AEspA*. 74: 25-33.
- Alvar, J. 1995. "Avieno, los fenicios y el Atlántico", en *Kolaios*, 4 (*Arqueólogos, historiadores y filólogos. Homenaje a Ferando Gascó*, I): 21-37.
- Baurain, C. 1997 *Les Grecs et la Méditerranée orientale. Des siècles obscures à la fin de l'époque archaïque*, Paris, P.U.F, 1997.
- Blázquez, J. M^a.1992. *Fenicios, griegos y cartagineses en Occidente*, Madrid, Cátedra.
- Bunnens, G. 1979. *L'expansion phénicienne en Méditerranée. Essai d'interprétation fondée sur une analyse des traditions littéraires*, Brussels-Roma, Institut historique belge de Rome, 1979.
- Camassa, G. 1984. "Dov'è la fonte dell'argento. Strabone, Alybe e i Chalybes", in F. Prontera, ed., *Strabone. Contributi allo studio della personalità e dell'opera*, Perusa, Università degli Studi, 155-186.
- Domínguez, A. J. 2000. "Algunos instrumentos y procedimientos de intercambio en la Grecia Arcaica". In P. Fernández Uriel, C. González Wagner, F. López Pardo, *Intercambio y comercio preclásico en el Mediterráneo. Actas del I coloquio del CEFYP (Madrid, 9-12 de noviembre, 1998)*, Madrid, Centro de Estudios Fenicios y Púnicos, 241-258.
- Dopico, D. and P. Rodríguez. 1992. "Paleoetnografía de Gallaecia". In M. Almagro-Gorbea and G. Ruiz Zapatero, eds., *Paleoetnología de la Península Ibérica. Complutum*, 2-3, 395-398.
- Fabre, P. 1981. *Les Grecs et la connaissance de l'Occident*, Université de Lille, 1981.

- Fear, A. T. 1992. "Odysseus and Spain", *Prometheus*, 18: 21-23.
- Fernández-Miranda, M. 1979. "Horizonte cultural tartésico y hallazgos griegos en el Sur de la Península", *AEspA*, 52: 49
- _____, 1991. "Tartessos: indígenas, fenicios y griegos en Huelva", *Atti del II Congresso Internazionale di Studi Fenici e Punici*, I. Roma, CNR: 87-96.
- Gangutia, E. 1989. "La península ibérica en la tradición homérica". In *Actas del VII Congreso español de Estudios Clásicos, Madrid, 20-24 de abril de 1987*, Madrid, Universidad Complutense: III 103-109.
- González Ponce, F. J. 1995. *Avieno y el Periplo*, Écija, Gráficas Sol.
- González-Ruibal, A. 2004. "Facing two Seas: Mediterranean and Atlantic Contacts in the Northwest of Iberia in the First Millennium BCE", *OJA*, 23, 2004: 284-317.
- _____, A. 2006. "Past the Last Outpost: Punic Merchants in the Atlantic Ocean (5th-1st centuries BCE)", *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology*, 19: 121-150.
- López Castro, J. L. 1997. "Los fenicios occidentales y Grecia". In *Chaîre. II Reunión de historiadores del mundo griego antiguo. Homenaje al Prof. Fernando Gascó*, Sevilla, Scriptorium :95-105.
- López Castro, J. L. 1995. *Hispania Poena. Los fenicios en la Hispania romana*, Barcelona, Crítica.
- Malkin, I. 1998. *The Returns of Odysseus. Colonization and Ethnicity*, Berkeley and Los Angeles.
- Mederos, A. and L. A. Ruiz, 2004-2005. "Un atlántico mediterráneo. Fenicios en el litoral portugués y gallego", *Byrsa*, 3-4: 351-409.
- Moreno, F.-J. 2001 "Sobre anomalías e interpretación de los objetos orientalizantes en la Meseta", *Gerión*, 19: 99-117.
- Perreault, J. Y. 1993. "Les *emporion* grecs du Levant: mythe ou réalité", A. Bresson, P. Rouillard, eds., *L'emporion*, París, De Boccard:59-83.
- Plácido, D. 1991. "La naturaleza femenina en la imagen griega del extremo occidente". In G. Duby, M. Parrot, eds., *Historia de las mujeres. I. La Antigüedad*, Madrid, Taurus: 567-577.
- _____, D. 1993. "La imagen griega de Tarteso", In *Los enigmas de Tarteso*, Madrid, ed. by J. M. Blázquez and J. Alvar: 81-89.
- _____, "Les argonautes, entre l'orient et l'occident", en O. Lorkipanidzé, P. Lévêque, *Sur les traces des Argonautes*, Besançon, Centre de Recherches d'Histoire Ancienne, 1996, 55-63.
- _____, D. 2000. "Los viajes griegos arcaicos a Occidente: los procesos de mitificación". In P. Fernández Uriel, C. González Wagner, F. López Pardo, *Intercambio y comercio preclásico en el Mediterráneo*.

- Actas del I coloquio del CEFYP (Madrid, 9-12 de noviembre, 1998)*, Madrid, Centro de Estudios Fenicios y Púnicos: 269-270.
- _____, D. 2002 “La estructuración territorial y étnica del *conuentus Bracarensis*”. *Minus*, 10: 131.
- _____, D. 2002a. “La Península Ibérica: Arqueología e imagen mítica”, *AEspA*, 75: 123-136.
- _____, D. 2002b, “La ciudad griega arcaica: las comunidades, los territorios y el mundo imaginario”, J. F. González Castro, J. L. Vidal, eds., *Actas del X Congreso Español de Estudios Clásicos (21-25 de septiembre de 1999). III Historia Antigua. Humanismo. Tradición clásica. Didáctica. Instrumenta Studiorum*, Madrid, SEEC: 5-19.
- _____, D. 2003. “Los viajes fenicios y los mitos griegos sobre el lejano occidente”, B. Costa, J. H. Fernández, eds., *Contactos en el extremo occidente de la oikouménē. Los griegos en occidente y sus relaciones con los fenicios. XVII Jornadas de Arqueología fenicio-púnica (Eivissa, 2002)*, Ibiza, Conselleria d’Educació i Cultura: 7-18.
- _____, D. 2004 “La formación de la ciudad griega y la creación de un mundo imaginario”, *Incidenza dell’Antico*, 2: 19-40.
- Salinas, M. 1988 “El ‘Hieron Akroterion’ y la geografía religiosa del extremo occidente según Estrabón”, *Actas del I Congreso peninsular de Historia Antigua*, II,
- Salinas, M. 1992. “La *Ora Maritima* de R. Festo Avieno, una obra literaria del siglo IV”, *In memoriam J. Cabrera Moreno*, Universidad de Granada: 469.
- Sanmartí-Grego, E. 1995. “La présence grecque en Péninsule Ibérique à l’époque archaïque”, *Les Grecs et l’Occident. Actes du Colloque de la villa “Kérylos” (1991)*, École Française de Rome, 1995, 71-82.
- THA IIA= Mangas, J. and D. Plácido, eds. *Testimonia Hispaniae Antiqua II A. La península Ibérica en los autores griegos: de Homero a Platón*, Madrid, Universidad Complutense-Fundación de Estudios Romanos, 1998.
- THA IIB= Mangas, J. and D. Plácido, eds. *Testimonia Hispaniae Antiqua II B. La península Ibérica prerromana de Éforo a Eustacio*, Madrid, Universidad Complutense-Fundación de Estudios Romanos, 1999.
- TIR K29= Unión Académica Internacional. 1991. *Tabula Imperii Romani, hoja K29: Porto*, Madrid.
- Tranoy, A. 1981. *La Galice romaine. Recherches sur le nord-ouest de la péninsule ibérique dans l’Antiquité*, París, De Boccard.

Tusa, V. 1995. "Greci e Punici", *Les Grecs et l'Occident. Actes du Colloque de la villa "Kérylos" (1991)*, École Française de Rome, 1995, 19-28.