

Motya, a Phoenician Colony in Sicily. By JOSEPH I. S. WHITAKER. Pp. 357, with frontispiece, maps, and 116 text illustrations. London: G. Bell & Sons, 1921.

The small island of San Pantaleo, north of the modern Marsala, has long been recognised as the site of Motya, one of the oldest and probably after the Greek invasion the most important of all the Phoenician *entrepôts* in Sicily. Stormed and sacked by Dionysios of Syracuse in 397 B.C., it was not reoccupied on his retreat by the Carthaginians, who, instead, established themselves at Lilybaeum on the mainland, probably because, as Mr. Whitaker suggests, the island was too cumbered with ruins. There is thus probably no Phoenician site which offers greater promise to the excavator; and the author of the book under review, after having for forty years cherished the project of excavation, had at length the satisfaction of becoming sole proprietor of the island. One could wish all ancient sites were equally fortunate. Digging was at once commenced, but then came the war and the work had to be suspended; and pending its resumption, Mr. Whitaker was well advised to publish this book, which will call attention to the site and its possibilities.

The book is, of course, only a preliminary report, and most of the problems of the town still await solution; but useful work has been done on the fortifications, the dock or 'cothon,' and the burial-grounds. The individual finds are well illustrated; nothing seems as yet to have appeared which might modify the low value set nowadays on Phoenician art. We find the usual Punic stelae, and masses of deadly dull pottery; and all finer pieces are Greek importations. A curious mosaic (Fig. 24) deserves mention; it obviously derives its inspiration from South Italian red-figure vases. We await with interest the final report which Mr. Whitaker will give us some day, after the completion of the excavation.

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Heft 2. Die griechische Inschriften der Palaestina Tertia westlich der 'Araba. By A. ALT. Pp. 62, 10 illustrations.

Heft 3. Petra. By W. BACHMANN, C. WATZINGER, TH. WIEGAND. Pp. 94, 2 plates, 79 illustrations.

These two works form the second and third parts of Wiegand's report of the activities during the War of the German Commission for the protection of Ancient Monuments on the Palestine front. The first part, dealing with the ancient sites of the border region lying between the desert of Sinai and the hills of Southern Palestine, was reviewed in this Journal about twelve months ago. Part II. is a collection of the Greek inscriptions found within the same area. It must be confessed that the material is poor and unpromising; beyond a tariff inscription from Bir Saba, previously edited, there is little but Byzantine epitaphs; still the editor has striven diligently to squeeze from them such scraps of information as they contain with regard to the social conditions of this little-known Debatable Land.

Part III. is of more general interest; it is a report of a lengthy re-examination of Petra, and contains much that is new. The high dates assigned to some of the monuments will, we think, hardly commend themselves; it is startling, for instance, that the Hasné, which the late Sir Mark Sykes has somewhere aptly likened to a colossal drawing-room clock, is considered to be of the early Hellenistic period. An appendix, 'Zur Erklärung der Petraischen Felsfassaden,' by K. Wulzinger, propounds a novel explanation of the peculiarities of Petraean architecture; it is suggested that the architects, forced by the exigencies of the site to build perpendicularly instead of horizontally, developed a perspective style as in scene-painting for the stage, and that the piled-up stories with their broken pediments and aedicula are meant to represent the normal domestic architecture of the period with fore and back colonnades brought into the same plane. The illustrations of some of the monuments are inadequate, but the work is of course not designed as a definitive publication of the Nabataean capital.