



THE PURPLE AND THE COCHINEAL

THE PHOENICIANS WERE THE PRECURSORS AND THE PIONEERS IN THE DOMAINS OF ARTS AND IN MULTITUDE OF INDUSTRIES .THEY BECOME FAMOUS ALSO IN THE POTTERY BUSINESS, MIXING METALS ,THE ART OF SCULPTURE, IN MAKING JEWELRIES, THE INDUSTRY OF THE IVORY AND OF GLASS. ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ACHIEVEMENTS IS THAT THEY WERE EXCELLENT IN FISHING AND FISHING INDUSTRY. LACK OF THE PASTURES LET THE PHOENICIAN THEREFORE REPLACE IT BY THE GENEROUS SEA PRODUCTS, I MEAN FISHES AND SNAILS. INDEED THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PHOENICIANS AND THE SEA AND THEIR INTEREST IN FISHING AND SNAILS LEAD TO THE INDUSTRY OF THE PURPLE DYE. THE LAND WAS NATIVELY KNOWN AS KINA'AHU, REPORTED IN THE 6TH CENTURY BC BY HECATAEUS UNDER THE GREEK-INFLUENCED FORM KHNA (χνα), AND ITS PEOPLE AS THE KENA'ANI. THE WORD PHOENICIAN MEANS IN THE GREEK LANGUAGE THE RED PEOPLE. THE NAME PHOENICIAN, THROUGH LATIN POENICUS (LATER PUNICUS), COMES FROM GREEK PHOINIKES, ATTESTED SINCE HOMER AND INFLUENCED BY PHOÏNIX "TYRIAN PURPLE, CRIMSON; MUREX" (ITSELF FROM PHOINOS "BLOOD RED") THE WORD STEMS FROM LINEAR B PO-NI-KI-JO, ULTIMATELY BORROWED FROM ANCIENT EGYPTIAN FENKHU (FNKHW "SYRIAN PEOPLE". THE ASSOCIATION OF PHOINIKES WITH PHOÏNIX MIRRORS AN OLDER FOLK ETYMOLOGY PRESENT IN PHOENICIAN WHICH TIED KINA'AHU "CANAAN; PHOENICIA" WITH KINAHU "CRIMSON". THE PHOENICIAN LEGEND SAYS THAT THE TYRIAN HERACLES AND THE NYMPH TYRUS WERE WALKING ALONG THE BEACH WHEN HERACLES' DOG, WHO WAS ACCOMPANYING THEM, DEVoured A MUREX SNAIL AND GAINED A BEAUTIFUL PURPLE

COLOR AROUND ITS MOUTH. TYRUS TOLD HERACLES SHE WOULD NEVER ACCEPT HIM AS HER LOVER UNTIL HE GAVE HER A ROBE OF THAT SAME COLOR. SO HERACLES GATHERED MANY MUREX SHELLS, EXTRACTED THE DYE FROM THEM, AND DYED THE FIRST GARMENT OF THE COLOR LATER CALLED TYRIAN PURPLE. THE MUREX SHELL APPEARS ON THE VERY EARLIEST TYRIAN COINS AND THEN REAPPEARS AGAIN ON COINS IN IMPERIAL ROMAN TIMES. THE GREEK LEGEND SAYS THAT HELENE OF TROY WHEN WALKING WITH HER DOG ON THE COAST OF THE SEA TO RELAX FROM THE EFFORT AND DEPRESSION CAUSED BY HER BEING CAPTURED, SHE NOTICED THAT HER DOG, WHO WAS COINCIDENTLY TREATING A SNAIL FOUND THAT ITS MOUTH WAS COLORED WITH PURPLE. THIS MARINE ANIMAL OF THE TYPE SNAILS MOST MUREX SPECIES LIVE IN THE INTERTIDAL OR SHALLOW SUB TIDAL ZONE, AMONG ROCKS AND CORALS FAMILY EXTRACTS OF (MUREX) THIS GENUS INCLUDES MANY SHOWY MEMBERS, THEIR ELONGATE SHELLS HIGHLY SCULPTURED WITH SPINES OR FRONDS. THE INNER SURFACES OF THEIR ORNATE SHELLS ARE OFTEN BRIGHTLY COLORED AND COSTLY AND LABOR-INTENSIVE DYES TYRIAN PURPLE (OR ROYAL PURPLE) AND TEKHELET WERE HISTORICALLY MADE BY THE ANCIENT PHOENICIANS USING MUCUS FROM THE HYPOBRANCHIAL GLAND OF TWO SPECIES COMMONLY REFERRED TO AS "MUREX", MUREX BRANDARIS AND MUREX TRUNCULUS, WHICH ARE THE OLDER NAMES FOR HAUSTELLUM BRANDARIS AND THE HEXAPLEX TRUNCULUS. THIS DYE WAS USED IN ROYAL ROBES, OTHER KINDS OF SPECIAL CEREMONIAL OR RITUAL GARMENTS, OR GARMENTS INDICATING HIGH RANK. IT IS THEORIZED THAT THE DYE WAS THE SAME DYE AS THAT WHICH FEATURED PROMINENTLY IN THE ANCIENT TEMPLE IN JERUSALEM, THE CLOTHING OF THE HIGH PRIEST.

THE PHOENICIAN HERACLES PRESENTS FORMAL PURPLE TO THE GODDESS *ASTARTE*. INDEED THE OPERATION OF EXTRACTION OF A LITTLE FROM THIS DYE AND ITS PURIFICATION MATTER WERE VALUABLE. IN THE HELLENISTIC ERA IT WAS USED AS GARMENTS FOR THE KINGS AND THE PRINCES. THE ROMAN PRINCES LOOSE CLOTHES USED THE PURPLE ARAMAIC PRIESTS USED THE PURPLE CLOTHES ADDRESS FOR THE RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY, AND WHAT CATHOLIC GARMENT THE CARDINALS IN OUR DAYS REMAINDER THERE OF THE OLD TRADITION. THE FAST, NON-FADING DYE WAS AN ITEM OF LUXURY TRADE, PRIZED BY ROMANS, WHO USED IT TO COLOR CEREMONIAL ROBES. IT IS BELIEVED THAT THE INTENSITY OF THE PURPLE HUE IMPROVED, RATHER THAN FADED, AS THE DYED CLOTH AGED. VITRUVIUS MENTIONS THE PRODUCTION OF TYRIAN PURPLE FROM SHELLFISH. IN HIS HISTORY OF ANIMALS, ARISTOTLE DESCRIBED THE SHELLFISH FROM WHICH TYRIAN PURPLE WAS OBTAINED AND THE PROCESS OF EXTRACTING THE TISSUE THAT PRODUCED THE DYE. PLINY THE ELDER DESCRIBED THE PRODUCTION OF TYRIAN PURPLE IN HIS NATURAL HISTORY THE MOST FAVORABLE SEASON FOR TAKING THESE FISH [I.E.,

SHELLFISH] IS AFTER THE RISING OF THE DOG-STAR, OR ELSE BEFORE SPRING; FOR WHEN THEY HAVE ONCE DISCHARGED THEIR WAXY SECRETION, THEIR JUICES HAVE NO CONSISTENCY: THIS, HOWEVER, IS A FACT UNKNOWN IN THE DYERS' WORKSHOPS, ALTHOUGH IT IS A POINT OF PRIMARY IMPORTANCE. AFTER IT IS TAKEN, THE VEIN [I.E., HYPOBRANCHIAL GLAND] IS EXTRACTED, WHICH WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY SPOKEN OF, TO WHICH IT IS REQUISITE TO ADD SALT, A SEXTARIUS [ABOUT 20 OUNCES (567 GRAMS) ABOUT TO EVERY HUNDRED POUNDS OF JUICE. IT IS SUFFICIENT TO LEAVE THEM TOO STEEP FOR A PERIOD OF THREE DAYS, AND NO MORE, FOR THE FRESHER THEY ARE, THE GREATER VIRTUE THERE IS IN THE LIQUOR. IT IS THEN SET TO BOIL IN VESSELS OF TIN [OR LEAD], AND EVERY HUNDRED AMPHORA OUGHT TO BE BOILED DOWN TO FIVE HUNDRED POUNDS OF DYE, BY THE APPLICATION OF A MODERATE HEAT; FOR WHICH PURPOSE THE VESSEL IS PLACED AT THE END OF A LONG FUNNEL, WHICH COMMUNICATES WITH THE FURNACE; WHILE THUS BOILING, THE LIQUOR IS SKIMMED FROM TIME TO TIME, AND WITH IT THE FLESH, WHICH NECESSARILY ADHERES TO THE VEINS. ABOUT THE TENTH DAY, GENERALLY, THE WHOLE CONTENTS OF THE CAULDRON ARE IN A LIQUEFIED STATE, UPON WHICH A FLEECE, FROM WHICH THE GREASE HAS BEEN CLEANSSED, IS PLUNGED INTO IT BY WAY OF MAKING TRIAL; BUT UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THE COLOR IS FOUND TO SATISFY THE WISHES OF THOSE PREPARING IT, THE LIQUOR IS STILL KEPT ON THE BOIL. THE TINT THAT INCLINES TO RED IS LOOKED UPON AS INFERIOR TO THAT WHICH IS OF A BLACKISH HUE. THE WOOL IS LEFT TO LIE IN SOAK FOR FIVE HOURS, AND THEN, AFTER CARDING IT, IT IS THROWN IN AGAIN, UNTIL IT HAS FULLY IMBIBED THE COLOR. ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA FROM TYRE INDICATE THAT THE SNAILS WERE COLLECTED IN LARGE VATS AND LEFT TO DECOMPOSE. THIS PRODUCED A HIDEOUS STENCH THAT WAS ACTUALLY MENTIONED BY ANCIENT AUTHORS. NOT MUCH IS KNOWN ABOUT THE SUBSEQUENT STEPS, AND THE ACTUAL ANCIENT METHOD FOR MASS-PRODUCING THE TWO MUREX DYES HAS NOT YET BEEN SUCCESSFULLY RECONSTRUCTED; THIS SPECIAL "BLACKISH CLOTTED BLOOD" COLOR, WHICH WAS PRIZED ABOVE ALL OTHERS, IS BELIEVED TO BE ACHIEVED BY DOUBLE-DIPPING THE CLOTH, ONCE IN THE INDIGO DYE OF H. TRUNCULUS AND ONCE IN THE PURPLE-RED DYE OF M. BRANDARIS.

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