

The Classical and Hellenistic Architectural Elements of the Temple of Eshmun in Sidon

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Abstract : The paper focuses on the exploration of architectural characteristics and decorative elements of the temple of Eshmun, emphasizing the socio-economic significance of Sidon during the Greek and Roman periods to understand the implications of their spread and development on the Phoenician cities, as well as reveal the symbolical and societal connotations that may have been connected with the buildings, in order to allow a well-founded examination of common characteristics. In general, studying Phoenician archaeology posed some problems. The main problem is that most major Phoenician settlements lay beneath modern urban centers. This situation often prevented or largely restricted full archaeological investigations; the publications are frequently not complete enough to determine the basic characteristics of the architectural elements. Another key problem is the political instability of the region, which affected the archaeological research in the Phoenician homeland for many years. Nevertheless, during the past decades, an ever-growing cache of data was acquired from the archaeological surroundings of the Phoenician sites. Both the architectural elements from the Greek and Roman period have never been studied as a group before. Surprisingly, they have been largely ignored, despite their apparent profusion throughout the cities. The Roman period of Sidon has generally been neglected in preference to earlier periods, where it is often difficult to distinguish between Roman, Bronze age, medieval and Ottoman structures.

Keywords : archaeology, classical, Hellenistic, Eshmun Temple, architecture, Sidon, Lebanon

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