

Notes on the History of Valledolmo, Part II Greeks and Carthaginians

Throughout its history, Sicily has been the scene of struggle between those who would colonize the island and exploit her wealth. The first two groups of which we have any record are the Greeks and the Carthaginians. The history of these two peoples on the island is long, complicated, sometimes heroic, and sometimes bloody, but – since they had little direct influence on the area that eventually hosted Valledolmo – they will get only a brief treatment here.

The first permanent Greek settlement on Sicily was established about 734 BC (BCE) near what is now Naxos in the northeast corner of the island. From this colony Greek Settlement spread relatively quickly south and then west, first to Siracusa, Catania, Gela, and even as far west as Agrakas (Agrigento) by 580.

At approximately the same time, the Carthaginians (Phoenicians) were establishing trading posts in the western regions. Their most important ports were Mozia (modern Motya) and Ziz (modern Palermo).



These two cultures continued to make war upon each other under a variety of rulers and at differing intervals until about 265 BC, when Sicily became a battleground in the First Punic War. This ended, of course, with the Roman conquest of Sicily and beginning of the island's long association with the Italian peninsula.

NEXT: ROMAN RULE