

# The Network of Melqart: Tyre, Gadir, Carthage and the Founding God

*Manuel Álvarez Martí-Aguilar\**

## 1 Introduction

This contribution for a volume devoted to warlordism, war and interstate relations in the ancient Mediterranean focuses on the latter from the viewpoint of identity. In the ancient world, war played a remarkable role in the genesis of ethnic and political identities not merely in terms of shaping group identity within a given community facing an adversary. War also encouraged and propitiated the development of solidarity and networks of mutual assistance between communities adopting a common identity. Phoenician communities in the second half of the first millennium BC constitute the case under study here.

Fresh approaches to the matter of cultural and ethnic identities in the ancient world are having both a relevant and positive impact on Phoenician studies. The chief innovation consists of abandoning essentialist standpoints regarding ethnic identity, which nowadays is perceived as an eminently subjective social phenomenon, constructed on the basis of the perception human groups have of themselves. Therefore, identity frameworks are viewed as dynamic structures, whose defining elements undergo constant construction, aggregation and change. A historical and changing nature is thus the essence of the phenomenon of ethnic identities. It is likewise considered commonplace that in the creation of a collective identity, the notion of the group's collective origin and the social construction of memory around a precise foundational moment plays a crucial part.<sup>1</sup>

One of the most significant consequences of these developments in the study of identity in the Phoenician world is the emphasis on the fact that the ethnic term 'Phoenicians' itself is essentially a label external to the world it

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\* This research has been conducted as part of the project grants HAR2010-14893 and HAR2015-66011-P (MINECO-FEDER), funded by the Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad, Spain and FEDER. I want to thank Toni Naco and Fernando López Sánchez for their kind invitation. I am also very grateful to Josephine C. Quinn, Giuseppe Garbati, Carolina López-Ruiz and Corinne Bonnet for their generous and helpful advice on some aspects of this study.

1 Barth 1994; Jones 1997; Hall 1997; Derks & Roymans 2009; Gruen 2005; 2011; Assmann 2011.

defines. It was a label created by the Greeks and Romans and applied to communities such as Tyre, Sidon, Byblos, Berytus, Arwad, etc. who did not seem to recognize themselves as Phoenicians until the Roman period. Greater knowledge of the forms of construction of collective identity amongst these communities reveals the significance of the civic framework and of the role of civic gods in the shaping of ethnicities.<sup>2</sup>

From this point of view, the role of Tyre and its chief god, Melqart, has prompted renewed interest in the assessment of the construction of ethnic identity against the backdrop of a colonial diaspora, amongst peoples who claimed a Tyrian origin.<sup>3</sup> This paper intends to contribute to a better understanding of that ‘colonial network’,<sup>4</sup> built around the symbolic references of Tyre as the mother-city and of Melqart as the god of the founding fathers, and their activation in times of war. The study cases, Gadir and Tyre, at each end of the Phoenician world, reveal the mechanisms at play in interstate solidarity within a colonial network and the role of ethnic identity connections in times of conflict.

## 2 Justin (44.5) Revisited

An improved knowledge of these dynamics may be gained based on a recently proposed new interpretation of the passage on the origins of the Carthaginian presence in the Iberian Peninsula, included in the last book of Justin’s *Epitome to Pompeius Trogus’ Historiae Philippicae*:

5 [1] *Post regna deinde Hispaniae primi Karthaginienses imperium provinciae occupavere. [2] Nam cum Gaditani a Tyro, unde et Karthaginiensibus origo est, sacra Herculis per quietem iussi in Hispaniam transtulissent urbemque ibi condidissent, invidentibus incrementis novae urbis finitimis Hispaniae populis ac propterea Gaditanos bello lacessentibus auxilium con-*

2 López Castro 2004; Lancellotti & Xella 2004; Bonnet 2005; 2008; 2009; 2011a; Delgado & Ferrer 2007; Álvarez 2012a; 2012b; Álvarez & Ferrer 2009; Ferrer & Álvarez 2009; Chaves 2009; Sommer 2010; Quinn 2011; 2012; Quinn & Vella 2014; Escacena 2011; Mora & Cruz 2012; Mora 2013.

3 López Castro 2004; Bonnet 2005; 2008; 2009; Malkin 2005; Álvarez 2014a; 2014b; Garbati 2012; 2015; Hirt 2015.

4 Curtin’s concept of commercial diaspora (1984) was applied by Aubet (1987; 2001) to the case of the Phoenician colonial establishment in the West. A recent review of the network theory in the case of Phoenician colonial expansion in Sommer 2007; 2010. See also Horden & Purcell 2000: 134–135; and Bernardini 2013: 1–7.

*sanguineis Karthaginienses misere. [3] Ibi felici expeditione et Gaditanos ab iniuria vindicaverunt et maiore iniuria partem provinciae imperio suo adiecerunt. [4] Postea quoque hortantibus primae expeditionis auspiciis Hamilcarem imperatorem cum manu magna ad occupandam provinciam misere ...*

IUST. 44.5.1–4; ED. O. SEEL 1972

5 [1] After the Spanish dynasties it was the Carthaginians who first gained control of the country. [2] Following instructions given in a dream, the people of Gades brought the *sacra* of Hercules to Spain from Tyre (also the country of origin of the Carthaginians) and founded a city there, but the neighbouring peoples in Spain, envious of the progress made by the new city, made war on them. The Carthaginians therefore sent assistance to their relatives. [3] The expedition met with success; the Carthaginians both defended the people of Gades from aggression and also, by even greater aggression on their part, added an area of the country to their own empire. [4] Later, encouraged by the success of their first expedition, they also sent their general Hamilcar with a large force to seize the entire country ...

TRANSLATION ADAPTED FROM J.C. YARDLEY 1994

This new and radically different interpretation from that traditionally applied to the passage poses a shift in the understanding of the history of the western Phoenician world in the fourth and third centuries BC.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, a synthesis of this new reading is presented here, incorporating it into a historical analysis of a colonial network based on Tyrian identity. The various reconstruction proposals of the events described in this passage of Justin's *Epitome* have always agreed that the trigger for the sequence was the foundation of Gadir by Tyrian colonists and the establishment of the cult of Melqart in the new city. In the traditional interpretation, there is a gap in the narration after this foundational episode, which is followed by a second occurrence, chronologically difficult to fit into the order of events, when the Gaditanians were attacked by some neighbouring peoples in Hispania, as a result of the rapid rise of the new city. This, in turn, would have provoked the arrival of a Carthaginian auxiliary expedition to aid their relatives. The north Africans' decision to settle in an area of Hispania closes the second part of the narration, and a further gap occurs before the third episode, which in this case can be externally dated: the second

<sup>5</sup> Álvarez 2014a; see also Álvarez 2014b.

arrival of the Carthaginians with the military expedition led by Hamilcar Barca in 237 BC.

The passage has been the subject of extensive interpretation in the modern historiographic tradition, where the main points of contention have been the chronology, and the scope of the first Carthaginian expedition mentioned in the account.<sup>6</sup> The main difficulty is the dating of the attack on the Gaditanians and Carthage's ensuing auxiliary expedition of assistance. This second scene of the account has generally been linked to the so-called 'crisis' or 'transition' of the sixth century BC, a period of change and transformation in both the Tartessian and Phoenician communities.<sup>7</sup> More recently, it has been suggested that the episode should be dated to the middle fourth century BC, a moment when increased Carthaginian presence in the southwest of the Iberian Peninsula has been detected in the archaeological record.<sup>8</sup> Yet, this would leave an enormous chronological gap implicit in Justin's narration, spanning over five centuries, from the initial foundational episode to the Carthaginian auxiliary expedition, if we accept that Gadir was founded in the ninth century BC.<sup>9</sup>

However, the text itself suggests that there was no significant gap at all. Justin's abridging technique does not consist of summarizing the information provided by the *Historiae Philippicae*, but simply of omitting various parts of Trogus's original narration.<sup>10</sup> These omissions can be identified by the use Justin makes of certain expressions, to link the paragraphs he preserves with each other. As López Castro suggested, it is possible to identify the two places in the passage where omissions of Trogus's original text could have occurred.<sup>11</sup>

The first omission can be detected in the words used at the beginning of the chapter: *Post regna deinde Hispaniae primi Karthaginienses ... Deinde* and the allusion to the subject of the previous chapter—the *regna Hispaniae*, in 44.4—are indications that Justin omitted certain content immediately prior to the matter of the *imperium* of the Carthaginians.<sup>12</sup> After this omission, the structure of the passage follows a well-defined sequence: in order to explain the origin of Carthaginian *imperium* in Hispania, the account goes back to a previous episode in time, the foundation of a city by the Gaditanians, resulting from a

6 Schulten 1924; García y Bellido 1942; Bendala 1987; López Castro 1992a; Ferrer & Pliego 2010; Domínguez 2012; Fernández 2013.

7 López Castro 1992a; Aubet 2001: 341–346; Martín 2007; Neville 2005: 159–170.

8 Ferrer & Pliego 2010.

9 Gener et al. 2014.

10 Forni and Angeli Bertinelli 1982; Alonso 1987; López Castro 1992a.

11 López Castro 1992a: 224.

12 Castiglioni 1925: 3; López Castro 1992a: 224.

dream oracle, which ordered some *sacra Herculis* to be transferred from Tyre. The narrative of events seemingly continues to flow uninterrupted until the appropriation of some *pars provinciae* by the Carthaginians. The second omission can be detected in the words used to open the fourth paragraph: *Postea quoque hortantibus primae expeditionis auspiciis ...* A new sequence of events starts by recounting the expedition of Hamilcar, prior to which Justin could have omitted content corresponding to an undetermined lapse of time, from the moment when the Carthaginians gained certain Iberian possessions up to 237 BC, when the Barcids arrived at Gadir.

Historical interpretation of this passage has never been fully satisfactory and this has generated uncertainty regarding its reliability as a source of information.<sup>13</sup> Possibly, this is due to complications arising from the belief that the beginning describes the foundation of Gadir. This involves, in the first place, acknowledging a large lapse in time between the foundational episode described at the beginning of the account and the attack on the Gaditanians by ‘neighbouring peoples’. If we accept that the ninth century BC<sup>14</sup> was Gadir’s foundation date, then the gap would span from three to five centuries, depending on whether the attack is dated to the sixth or to the fourth century BC.

On the other hand, should the attack on the Gaditanians and the arrival of the Carthaginians be dated to the sixth century BC, which has usually been the case, the link established in the text between the second expedition (Hamilcar’s in the year 237 BC) and the first—occurring about three centuries earlier—would be totally inconsistent. This has led to the belief that continuity between both expeditions is attributable to Justin, who would have connected sections and skipped contents in between them, but not to Trogus himself, whose original narration would not contain a causal link between both missions.<sup>15</sup>

The proposed reading of the passage questions the starting point of the traditional interpretation, which assumes that the oracular order involving the transfer of the *sacra Herculis* and the foundation of a city in Hispania was given by Herakles-Melqart to the Tyrians and, consequently, that the city in question is Gadir. However, a more literal reading of the text makes the Gaditanians (explicitly stated), not the Tyrians, the recipients of the oracle, evidently after the foundation of their own city. Thus, the sequence of events does not start with the foundation of Gadir but of a colony created by the Gaditanians after receiving the god’s dream oracle. The new foundation would then be a different

13 Domínguez 2012: 184–185.

14 Zamora et al. 2010; Gener et al. 2014.

15 López Castro 1992a: 225.

city not mentioned in the text, which according to the tradition compiled by Trogus, would have been founded in Iberia by the Gaditanians at an indeterminate point in their own history.

As already pointed out, Justin's epitomizing technique involves skipping contents rather than summarising them. No omission can be detected in the sequence of events starting with the oracle given to the Gaditanians—*Nam cum Gaditani ...* (44.5.1)—and ending with the appropriation of *pars provinciae* by the Carthaginians, after which the second of the omissions of part of Trogus's original account occurs. Therefore, it seems likely that the events described in the sequence, starting with the oracle and ending with the first Carthaginian conquest, are closely connected, both chronologically and causally. Consequently, all the events included within that section of the passage could have occurred within a relatively limited time frame. The oracle's reception would have been followed by the transfer of the *sacra* from Tyre, and the founding of a city, whose prosperity would stir envy amongst certain peoples of Iberia. The time lapse between the founding of the new city by the Gaditanians and the reaction of the neighbouring peoples against its success may not have been long. This hostility towards the Gaditanians could have been immediately followed by the Carthaginian auxiliary expedition and the subsequent appropriation of some Iberian territories.

If it is accepted that the initial episode in the narration is not linked to the foundation of Gadir, then the general chronology of the sequence of events is freed from a forced stretching and could easily range up to the year 237 BC. This date ought to be the starting point from which to reconstruct the entire sequence of events and to ponder on its possible beginning. Thus, the second omission in the passage could feasibly include Trogus' original contents, corresponding to a not too extensive period of time and therefore the two Carthaginian expeditions in Hispania would be linked both in time and cause in the original work, as the text states: 'Later, encouraged by the success of their first expedition ...' (Iust. 44.5.4). Finally, if the first Carthaginian expedition was not too distant in time from that led by Hamilcar, the foundation of the Gaditanian colony at the beginning of the sequence, which ends with the Carthaginian auxiliary expedition, could be chronologically placed not too far away from the year 237 BC.

In summary, according to the new interpretation of the text, the Gaditanians founded a colony at a moment in time not too distant from the year 237 BC with the participation of the sanctuary of Melqart of Tyre, whence the *sacra* were transferred for the occasion. Could we pinpoint the city founded by the Gaditanians? In order to answer this question, and to delve into the role played

by Tyre and its main god amongst its ancient colonies, let us review the foundational traditions and myths of origin within the framework of the Tyrian diaspora.

### 3 Foundational Traditions in the Tyrian Diaspora

#### 3.1 Tyre

The first of the known legends about the foundation of Tyre appears in the preserved fragments of Philo of Byblos' *Phoenician History*. In Philo's account (Eusebius of Caesarea, *Preparatio Evangelica* 1.10.9–11), the origin of Tyre is linked to two brothers of the mythical era, Samemroumos-Hipsouranios and Ousoos. Hipsouranios settled the town of Tyre while his brother Ousoos discovered the art of navigation. During a storm, the forests of Tyre were set alight by the friction of the trees. Ousoos took one tree, cut off its branches and ventured onto the sea for the first time. He then dedicated two *stelai* to Fire and Wind. According to Philo, after the death of the brothers, their descendants worshipped the *stelai* and celebrated, thenceforth, annual festivals in their honour (Eus. *PE* 1.10.10–11).<sup>16</sup> The reference to these *stelai* in Philo, has been connected to Herodotus's famous testimony (2.44) of his visit to the sanctuary of Herakles in Tyre, where he describes two *stelai* made of gold and emerald respectively.<sup>17</sup>

Some elements in Philo's account are reproduced in another well known but much more articulate Tyrian foundation legend, included in Nonnus of Panopolis' fifth-century AD *Dionysiaca*.<sup>18</sup> The circumstances of the origin of Tyre are explained in the account given by Herakles, the god of the city, to his illustrious visitor, Dionysus. Herakles begins by recalling an oracle given in dreams, whereby he instructed some 'earthborn folk' on how to proceed in the foundation of his city:

Now I cherished a passion of love for that city; so I took the shadowed form of a human face, and stayed my step overhanging the head of these earthborn folk, and spoke to them my oracle in words of inspiration ...

NONN. *D.* 40.439–442; TRANSL. ROUSE

<sup>16</sup> Grottanelli 1972; Bonnet 1988: 27–31; Kaldellis & López-Ruiz 2010.

<sup>17</sup> The emerald stele is later mentioned by Theophrastus (*De Lapidibus*, 25; also Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis Historia* 37.75).

<sup>18</sup> On the founding of Tyre in Nonnus, see Bonnet 1988: 31–33; Chuvin 1994: 167–176.

Herakles's account is structured in two parts. The first is made up of the dream oracle, where the god gives his envoys details of the tasks they must complete: they shall build a ship and sail until they find 'two floating rocks, which Nature has named the Ambrosial Rocks' (40.467–469). On them they shall find an ever-burning olive tree—never consumed by the flames, with a snake coiled around its trunk; and an eagle and a vessel on top. Herakles states that the eagle must be sacrificed, after which the wandering rocks shall become fixed 'upon immovable foundations' on which his envoys shall found the city of Tyre (40.469–500). In the second part of the account, the envoys of the god follow the instructions given in dreams, helped by Herakles, who stresses his vocation: 'indulging my mood of founding cities, myself destined to be City holder ...' (40.505–506). His envoys build the ship and set sail, reaching the rocks where they prepare to hunt the eagle who dwelled in the olive tree. But the bird voluntarily submits to sacrifice. Its sprinkled blood 'rooted the seafaring rocks at the bottom near to Tyre on the sea'. Upon those 'unassailable rocks the Earthborn built up their deepbreasted nurse', the city of Tyre (40.521–534). Nonnus's account is dominated by Herakles's role as the genuine founder of the city. His envoys are the anonymous executors of the various acts leading to the foundation, the most remarkable being the stabilization of the Ambrosial Rocks that had been drifting until that moment. This act of cosmogonic connotations seems even more significant than the erecting of the city. To summarize, the story reveals an essential feature of Melqart of Tyre: his position as the founder of cities through an oracle given in dreams, using anonymous human executors.

While Nonnus writes his report in the early fifth century AD, certain Tyrian coin-types from the Imperial period allow us to consider that some structural elements from this tradition were part of the city's legendary heritage from earlier times. In a series of Tyrian coins from the third century AD, an olive tree and the Ambrosial Rocks are schematically depicted—identified by means of the inscription AMBPOΣIE ΠETPE or ΠETPAI.<sup>19</sup> These depictions suggest that the passage in Nonnus contains ancient elements deeply rooted in Tyrian religiosity and civic identity. This thesis is supported by a passage in *Leucippe and Clitophon* (2.14) by Achilles Tatius, where reference is made to the existence in Tyre of a sacred area where a fire-related olive tree grows. This notion is confirmed by a relief on a small limestone plate, housed at the American University of Beirut and analysed by Ernest Will, who dates it to the

19 Cook 1940: 975–1015, esp. 978–983; Will 1950–1951; Naster 1986; Hirt 2015; Bijovsky 2005 suggests that in some coins of Gordian III, the scene with the *stelai*, the olive tree and a flaming altar, describe a specific site in Tyre, the sacred precinct of Melqart.

early Empire.<sup>20</sup> A distinct similarity can be noted between the elements on the relief and the components of Tyre's legendary tradition regarding its origin, as reported by Nonnus: a flaming tree, a snake coiled around its trunk and an eagle. While the exact meaning of the scene has not yet been deciphered, the relief constitutes the most direct indication that the Tyrian foundational myth related by Nonnus already existed in the early Empire.

### 3.2 *Gadir*

The great similarity in various respects between Tyre and Gadir has repeatedly been pointed out, in particular their respective sanctuaries of Melqart.<sup>21</sup> Besides the insular topography, other aspects documented in the literary tradition highlight the fact that key elements from Tyre's foundational tradition also existed in Gadir. Pairs of *stelai* played a highly significant role, with foundational connotations in both sanctuaries. In the case of Tyre, these appear in Philo of Byblos's foundation account (Eus. *PE* 1.10.10–11) and in Herodotus's aforementioned testimony (2.44). These testimonies are accompanied by *stelai*-like representations of the Ambrosial Rocks on third-century coins from Tyre. Similarly for Gadir, pairs of *stelai* are mentioned by Strabo (3.5.5–6; as the possible Pillars of Herakles), Philostratus (*Vita Apollonii* 5.5) and Porphyry (*De abstinentia ab esu animalium* 1.25); and *columnae* are referred to by Latin sources (Plin. *NH* 2.242; Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*. 14.6.7).

As already mentioned, the olive tree plays a central part in the myth of the foundation of Tyre in Nonnus (40.471 ff); it is also mentioned in the city, linked to a fire (Achilles Tatius *Leuc. et Cleit.* 2.14). It appears as a recurrent element on the coins from Tyre, linked to the Ambrosial Rocks, and as a prominent element in the relief of Beirut. In Gadir, Philostratus makes reference to 'the golden olive tree of Pygmalion' dedicated to Herakles in its temple, the Herakleion (*VA* 5.5); also one of the islands of the Gaditanian archipelago is known by ancient tradition as 'Cotinusa, from its olives' (Plin. *NH* 4.120), a name derived from wild olive trees (*kotinos*). In Gadir, there are also references to altars with perpetual flames (Silius Italicus, *Punica* 3.29). Another parallel might be found in the possible existence of a tomb of the god, both in Tyre (Pseudo-Clemens, *Recognitiones* 10.24) and in Gadir, deducible from allusions to the death of the god in Hispania (Arnobius, *Adversus Nationes* 1.36; Sallustius, *Bellum Iugurthinum* 18.3) and to the presence there of the god's *ossa* (Pomponius Mela 3.46).

20 Will 1950–1951.

21 Blázquez 1955; García y Bellido 1963; Bonnet 1988: 203–229; Mierse 2004; Marín & Jiménez 2004; Marín 2011.

All of these elements suggest similar foundation accounts for both cities.<sup>22</sup> To explore this further, focus will be directed to the question of the foundation oracle. Regarding the oracular component of the sanctuary of Herakles-Melqart in Gadir, various testimonies suggest different scenarios.<sup>23</sup> In AD 215, Caecilius Aemilianus, proconsul of Baetica, consulted the oracle (and was executed by Caracalla as a result: Dio Cassius 78.20.4). In other instances, the oracle occurs in a seemingly spontaneous form, through dreams. A celebrated case is that of Caesar's incestuous dream on the occasion of his visit to the sanctuary during his quaestorship in the year 68 BC (Suetonius *Julius* 7.1–2; Dio 37.52.2; 41.24.2).

However, one case bears a great resemblance to Nonnus's report and points to the existence of a myth on the foundation of Gadir that reproduces the myth of Tyre. This account appears in Porphyry of Tyre's *De Abstinencia*, regarding an event that occurred during the siege on the Gaditanian Herakleion by Bogud, the King of Mauretania in the year 38 BC. Due to the siege and the lack of birds for sacrifice, a prodigy takes place which involves a dream oracle from the deity:

The same thing likewise happened at Gades. Bogud was a king of the Mauritanians, who was slain by Agrippa in Mothone. He in that place attacked the temple of Hercules, which was most rich. But it was the custom of the priests daily to sprinkle the altar with blood. That this, however, was not effected by the decision of men, but by that of divinity, the occasion at that time demonstrated. For, the siege being continued for a long time, victims were wanting. But the priest being dubious how he should act, had the following vision in a dream. He seemed to himself to be standing in the middle of the pillars of the temple of Hercules, and afterwards to see a bird sitting opposite to the altar, and endeavouring to fly to it, but which at length flew into his hands. He also saw that the altar was sprinkled with its blood. Seeing this, he rose as soon as it was day, and went to the altar, and standing on the turret, as he thought he did in his dream, he looked round, and saw the very bird which he had seen in his sleep. Hoping, therefore, that his dream would be fulfilled, he stood still, saw the bird fly to the altar and sit upon it, and deliver itself into

22 López Melero 1988; Ribichini 2000; López Pardo 2010; Marín 2011. Regarding the matter of the wandering islands, see Moret 1997 and 2011–2012.

23 García y Bellido 1963: 127–128; Bonnet 1988: 220–221; Hajjar 1990: 2279–2281; Marín & Jiménez 2004: 231–234.

the hands of the high priest. Thus the bird was sacrificed, and the altar sprinkled with blood.

ABS. 1.25; TRANSL. TAYLOR, ADAPTED

The structure of this episode bears a remarkable resemblance to Nonnus's report. In both cases, a revelation takes place in dreams; in Porphyry's story, Melqart also implicitly propitiates it, and both accounts revolve around the sacrifice of a bird that voluntarily submits to death.<sup>24</sup> The two reports repeat the same narrative arranged in two successive moments: firstly the oracular dream is related and secondly its fulfilment is described.

Porphyry's report is an indication of the existence in the Gaditanian Herakleion of a ritual based on the myth of the origin of the sanctuary, which could in turn reproduce Tyre's mythical origin in Nonnus's version. The meaning of the sacrifice of the bird in Porphyry's passage can be related to the meaning of the sacrifice of the eagle in the Tyrian myth. In both cases, the voluntary death of the bird could be linked to the rooting and stabilization of the island on which Gadir, like Tyre, was founded. It is therefore possible that Melqart was considered not only the main god of the city but its very founder, both in Gadir and in Tyre.

It is quite remarkable that Gadir's founders are seldom identified in the available sources on its origins. Reports of the foundation of the city and of the sanctuary of Herakles-Melqart generically refer to 'the Tyrians' (Velleius Paterculus 1.2.3; Pomponius Mela 3.46) or 'the Phoenicians' (Diodorus Siculus 5.20.1–3). There are two exceptions. The first one is a passage provided by Claudius Iolaus, who stated in his *Phoenician Histories* that 'Archaleus, son of Phoenix, founded the city and named it in the writing of the Phoenicians....' (*Etym. Mag.* 219.33, s.v. *Gadéira*; transl. López-Ruiz). In this case, however, it has also been suggested that the figure of Archaleus could actually refer to Herakles and, by extension, to Melqart.<sup>25</sup> The second exception is a brief reference made in the *scholia* to Dionysius Periegetes (454) stating that the Herakles who founded Gadir was the Phoenician Herakles, referred to as *archaiotatos*.<sup>26</sup> Both passages could then support the thesis of a twin foundational myth for both Tyre and Gadir, featuring Melqart and his dream oracle.

24 Bonnet 1988: 221; Ribichini 2000: 664, n. 12; Bijovsky: 832.

25 Roscher 1890; Jessen 1895; Ribichini 2000: 665, n. 20; Tsirkin 2007; López-Ruiz 2010; Álvarez 2014a.

26 'Very old' or 'the oldest', regarding the traditions about different Herakles in Gadir, the Egyptian, the Phoenician and the Theban.

The reinterpretation of Justin's passage has also an effect on the text, which has always been considered its parallel: Strabo's (3.5.5), concerning the foundation of Gadir based on Posidonius' testimony.<sup>27</sup> In this case, the account also starts with an oracle received by the Tyrians, although no reference to dreams is made:

In telling such stories about the founding of Gadeira, the Gadeirans remember a certain oracle, which, they say, ordered the Tyrians to send a settlement to the Pillars of Herakles ...

STR. 3.5.5; TRANSL. D.W. ROLLER

The account differs notably from what must have been the traditional version of the founding of Gadir, deducible from the texts of Justin, Porphyry and Nonnus. These differences could be explained by the dependence of Strabo's narration on the debate about the location of the Pillars of Herakles. The Tyrian envoys sent to fulfil the oracular order do not know the exact location of the Pillars (*stelai*) of Herakles. In an initial attempt, they assume the pillars are 'the end of the inhabited world and of the expedition of Herakles', a place they pinpoint as the Straits of Gibraltar. But the sacrifice carried out to the east of these *stelai*, 'which is now the city of the Exitanians', does not meet with divine approval and they return to Tyre. In a second attempt, the Tyrian envoys identify the *stelai* in a place to the west of the Straits, on 'an island sacred to Herakles, lying near the Iberian city of Onoba', but these sacrifices were not propitious either and once again they returned to Tyre. It was on their third expedition that the Tyrians founded Gadir, placing the city and sanctuary at each end of the island.

The main purpose of this account is to show that, of all the various locations attributed to the *stelai* of Herakles, Gadir was the genuine site sanctioned by the divinity. In the dense digression subsequently expounded by Strabo regarding the whereabouts of the *stelai*, he remarks that Posidonius himself accepted that the true *stelai* of Herakles were the two eight-cubit high bronze *stelai* found in the Gaditanian Herakleion. However, he also points out that, according to Posidonius, the history of the oracle and the many expeditions were a 'Phoenician falsehood' (Str. 3.5.5). Posidonius's judgement could refer not to the oracle as such but to its specific content, according to this story. The three successive journeys involve a significant variation on the Tyrian foundation myth as presented in Nonnus, Porphyry's account or indeed in Justin's passage. They suit the needs of the debate regarding which of the various *stelai*

<sup>27</sup> Cruz 1994; López Melero 1988; Domínguez 2012.

of Herakles in the Straits of Gibraltar and thereabouts were the true ones,<sup>28</sup> but the specific content of the oracle, ‘to send a settlement to the Pillars of Herakles’, does not seem to respond to the logic of the Tyrian model, where *stelai* appear as a consequence of the foundational act, as a stylization of the wandering islands, which were steadied by Melqart.<sup>29</sup>

The account given by Posidonius-Strabo could constitute a highly mystified variation of the original version of the founding of Gadir, which would on this reading be preserved in a less explicit manner, though one more faithful to the original Tyrian version in Porphyry’s report and, indirectly, in Justin’s. Nevertheless, in Strabo’s account the foundation is also preceded by an oracle, Melqart of Tyre presides over the whole process of foundation and his envoys are but anonymous actors, an aspect consistent with the possibility that the god was considered the genuine founder of the city.

### 3.3 *Carthage*

This revision of foundation traditions in the Tyrian colonial diaspora highlights the exceptional nature of the account of the founding of Carthage, as opposed to what seems to be a standard model reproduced for Tyre, for Gadir and for the Gaditanian colony. Apart from possibly the case of Archaleus, the founders of Tyre, of Gadir and of the Gaditanian colony in Justin are mere anonymous executors of an initiative, promoted by the divinity through an oracle given in dreams. The consequence in the case of Tyre, and probably also in the case of Gadir, is that Melqart is considered the genuine founder.

The scenario in Carthage is strikingly different. There is no foundational dream oracle as in the other cases analysed here, and above all, there is one founder, Elissa-Dido, who plays a central role in the story.<sup>30</sup> Significantly, alternative versions do coincide in identifying *oikistai* for Carthage. Thus, for instance, according to the tradition reported by Philistus of Syracuse and by Eudoxus of Cnidus, both in the fourth century BC, the founders of Carthage were two Tyrians, Azoros and Karkhedon (FGrH 566 F47).<sup>31</sup> Appian records this same version alongside the more canonical one featuring Dido, including a key element in all the accounts reviewed so far, the revelation during a dream: ‘Dido, a Tyrian woman, whose husband had been slain clandestinely by Pygmalion, the ruler of Tyre. The murder being revealed to her in a dream, she embarked for Africa ...’ (App. *Lyb.* 1.1; transl. H. White).

28 Álvarez 2014b.

29 Zanovello 1981.

30 Bonnet 1988: 165–166; 2011b; Garbati 2015.

31 Lancel 1995: 20; Hoyos 2010: 6.

Justin's account (18.4–6) can to be taken as the narrative of reference in order to pinpoint the nuances that differentiate the traditional version of the founding of Carthage and that of Tyre or Gadir. The account revolves around princess Elissa, the sister of King Pygmalion and wife to Acherbas, the priest of Hercules who is murdered by the monarch. In contrast to the previous cases, Elissa is the sole protagonist of the founding initiative. But the figure of Melqart is also present in the story. Before leaving for her exile, Elissa takes care of his *sacra*:

... *atque ita sacris Herculis, cuius sacerdos Acherbas fuerat, repetitis, exilio sedes quaerunt*

IUST. 18.4.15

... and so, after gathering the sacred objects of Hercules, whose priest Acherbas had been, they all proceeded on their search for a home in exile

TRANSL. YARDLEY

Once more, similarly to the story of the Gaditanian foundation, the *sacra* of Melqart are involved and, again, questions arise as to their exact nature. It has been commonly believed that they refer to the transfer to the new colony of certain sacred objects, gathered by Elissa and brought with her into exile for use in the new foundation, thus replicating the model of Tyre.<sup>32</sup> But it has also been suggested that the expression *sacris Herculis ... repetitis* may allude to sacrifices made to Melqart before departing.<sup>33</sup> In a recent study, Giuseppe Garbati conducts a thorough analysis of the possible interpretations of the verb *repeto* in the passage.<sup>34</sup> In his opinion, the reference to the *sacra Herculis* ought to be construed in terms of a ritual, which 'recovered' or 'reinstated' them in Tyre itself, and therefore not as identifying artefacts that were moved to the new city. He links this new interpretation with the relationship, in terms of identity, developed by Carthage towards Tyre and Melqart, the god of the metropolis, but not the city's main deity or the central figure in shaping the community's identity, a role played by Baal Hammon and made apparent in such characteristic phenomena as the *tophet*.<sup>35</sup>

32 Bonnet 1986: 212; 1988: 165; Marín 2011: 214–215.

33 Bunnens 1979: 175 n. 105, though he also admits that they could refer to sacred objects carried by the fugitives.

34 Garbati 2015. I sincerely appreciate G. Garbati allowing me to read his forthcoming papers as his approaches have been a genuine inspiration in my own work.

35 Garbati 2013; see also Bonnet 2011a; Quinn 2011.

Tyrian Melqart plays a significant role in the process of founding Carthage, but it is different from the one he played in Tyre and Gadir. No foundational oracle exists in this case, yet Melqart intervenes to secure the fulfilment of Elissa's founding mission. Pygmalion is set to persecute his sister 'with an impious war', though he is deterred 'by his mother's entreaties and by warnings from the gods; for inspired soothsayers predicted that he would not go unpunished if he impeded the growth of a city that has enjoyed the most auspicious foundation in the world' (*aegre precibus matris deorumque minis victus quievit; cui cum inspirati vates canerent non inpune laturum, si incrementa urbis toto orbe auspicatissimae interpellasset*. Iust. 18.5.6–7).<sup>36</sup>

A link could be established between the *sacra Herculis repetita* by Elissa and the expression *urbis ... auspicatissima*. Elissa could have already initiated in Tyre, by means of certain *sacra Herculis* and legitimately as the wife of Melqart's priest, the founding procedure leading to the institution of the new community in Africa. The role of the *sacra* of Melqart in this case seems to be, as Garbati aptly states, some sort of 'Levantine prerequisite',<sup>37</sup> possibly associated to the legitimate Tyrian origin of the new city.

### 3.4 *The Colony of the Gaditanians in Justin (44.5.2)*

Traditional reports, regarding the founding of Tyre and Gadir in contrast to the origin of Carthage, provide a suitable framework to resume the account of the founding of the colony of the Gaditanians in Justin (44.5.2). This could be a further, and to date unknown, instance of a foundation, which takes place against the backdrop of the Tyrian diaspora after an oracle issued by Melqart is received in dreams, similarly to the case of Tyre and probably also the case of Gadir. The new interpretation of Justin's passage directly involves a reassessment of the role of Melqart's oracle and, in particular, of its dream component in foundation accounts within what could be described as the Tyrian *koine*.<sup>38</sup>

Also in this case, the Gaditanians, as the 'earthborn folk' in Nonnus's account, played the part of anonymous executors of the deity's designs. It seems plausible to believe that, after founding the colony, the Gaditanians generated a narrative, which reproduced core elements of their own founding myth, directly inspired in turn by the Tyrian myth in Nonnus's version. On this occasion, the *sacra* of Melqart are indeed transferred from Tyre to Iberia and are directly linked to the founding of the city: *sacra Herculis ... in Hispaniam*

36 Justin uses the same term, *incrementum*, as in 44.5.2, regarding the development of the Gaditanians' colony.

37 Garbati 2015.

38 Álvarez 2014a.

*transtulissent urbemque ibi condidissent*. It is impossible to discern whether they consist of specific sacred objects or refer more broadly to the cult of Melqart.<sup>39</sup> At any rate, the reproduction of core elements in the Tyrian and Gaditanian myth, such as the dream oracle and the reference to the transfer of the *sacra* of the god from Tyre, might indicate that Melqart is perceived, also on this occasion, as the genuine founder of the city. A revision of traditional foundation reports in the Tyrian diaspora reveals, in short, a pattern: the founding of a city after receiving an oracle from Melqart in a dream; the city is consequently considered to have been founded by the god himself.

A hypothesis can be ventured about the identity of the city that conforms to the aforementioned pattern and to the historical and archaeological scenario of the Phoenicians in the Iberian Peninsula. If we contemplate the hypothesis that the Gaditanians could have promoted a colonial venture at a time in history prior to 237 BC, backed by the religious tutelage of the sanctuary of Melqart of Tyre, both archaeological data and literary tradition coincide in pointing to an *ex novo* foundation in a geographical and historical context, which could plausibly be linked to Gadir: Carteia, in the Bay of Algeciras, next to the Straits of Gibraltar. Archaeological work conducted since 1994 by researchers of the *Equipo Carteia*,<sup>40</sup> dates its founding levels to the mid-fourth century BC, perhaps earlier. The city was initially surrounded by a wall and underwent a second phase of monumentalization in the late third century, during the Barcid period. Amongst the findings yielded by the 'sacred area', there appears to be a foundational deposit linked to a series of Phoenician-Punic altars on which a temple was later built in the Roman colony.

A piece of information about Carteia in Strabo acquires new connotations after the revision of the traditional versions of mythical foundations in Tyrian diaspora:

At that point [the strait at the Pillars] there is a mountain belonging to those Iberians called the Bastetians, also called the Bastoulians. It is Kalpe, whose circumference is not large but whose height is so large and steep that from a distance it appears to be an island. For someone sailing from Our Sea to the External, it is on the right, and near it, 40 stadia away,

39 The possibility that they may consist of relics attributed to the deity itself has been linked to Mela's reference (3.46) to the existence of *ossa* of Hercules in Gadir.

40 The *Equipo Carteia*, from the Universidad Autónoma of Madrid, has produced abundant bibliography; as main reference see Bendala, Blánquez & Roldán 2000; Roldán et al. 1998; 2003; 2006; Blánquez 2007; Blánquez, Bendala and Roldán 2009; Blánquez, Jiménez & Roldán 2012.

is the distinguished ancient city of Kalpe, which was once an Iberian naval station. To some it was a foundation of Herakles, among whom is Timosthenes, who says that it was called Herakleia in antiquity, and that its large circuit wall and shipsheds are still pointed out.

STR. 3.1.7; TRANSL. D.W. ROLLER

Strabo's Kalpe is unanimously identified with the city of Carteia. Timosthenes of Rhodes was admiral of the fleet of Ptolemy II Philadelphus. Early in the third century BC, the Rhodian wrote a *periplus* of the Mediterranean coastline paying particular attention to harbours. If Strabo is right, Timosthenes compiled this information less than a century after the city was founded. According to what has been said thus far, we might believe that Timosthenes' report does not originally refer to Greek Heracles but to Tyrian Melqart. Carteia was created as a Phoenician city and its proximity to the most significant sanctuary of Melqart in the West is a convincing indication that the version recorded by Timosthenes is a case of an *interpretatio graeca* of a vernacular legend whereby Melqart was the founder of the city. Yet, we could take one step beyond and propose that Carteia may have been the city founded by the Gaditanians as recorded in Justin's passage (44.5.2). The removal of the god's *sacra* from Tyre could be directly linked to Timosthenes' report that acknowledged Herakles (Melqart) as the founder of the city, as in the cases of Tyre and Gadir. A foundation of such high religious status, with the double participation of Melqart, both through his dream oracle and the transfer of his *sacra* from Phoenicia, provides a coherent context to explain the tradition that attributes the foundation of Carteia to Herakles, which was transmitted less than a century after the city was created.<sup>41</sup>

In the same passage, Strabo reports the tradition, which attributed the ancient name of *Herakleia* to Carteia. It has been suggested that the name may have been a translation of a Phoenician toponym designating it the 'city of Melqart' (*mlqrtyh*), and that *Carteia* was a result of its abbreviation.<sup>42</sup> Ancient literary traditions about Carteia, its archaeology and toponymy, supports this

41 The difference between *transfere* (Iust. 44.5.2) and *repeto* (Iust. 18.4.15) could result from this question: the explicit reference to the transfer of the *sacra* from Tyre in the case of Carteia may be linked to the tradition whereby the city was Melqart's true foundation, unlike Carthage, where Melqart does not play that role.

42 Dietrich 1936: 15–16; Millás 1941: 317; Bonnet 1988: 231. One final argument in favour of the link between Gadir and Carteia resides in certain traditions whose meaning has yet to be fully elucidated and which, in various forms, identify ancient Tarteso both as Gadir and Carteia. See Alvar 1989; Álvarez 2007.

hypothesis identifying it as the city founded by the Gaditanians in Justin's account. Therefore, the ensuing question is whether it would be historically sound to suggest that Gadir promoted the founding of a city such as Carteia in the middle of fourth century BC. The researchers of *Equipo Carteia* have linked its creation to the parallel abandonment of the nearby Phoenician settlement of Cerro del Prado, whose origins go back to the seventh century BC. The new city could have originated due to the population, formerly settled in Cerro del Prado, moving to a larger location, closer to the sea and controlling access to an estuary, which was perfectly suited to host a port.<sup>43</sup> This option would be compatible with the new reading of Justin's text, which gives not only Gadir but also Tyre itself, a prominent role in its foundation.<sup>44</sup> It seems plausible to suggest that Gadir and its sanctuary of Melqart played an active part in the founding of a city so closely linked in literary tradition to Herakles. This does not preclude the possibility that the Phoenician population living in Cerro del Prado—whose origin in the seventh century BC had been linked to Gadir—may have participated in the constitution of the new community.

Identifying Carteia as the city founded by the Gaditanians in Justin's passage provides a chronological anchor for the other episodes described in the account. In the middle of the fourth century BC, according to this reading, Gadir promoted its foundation, but conflict arose with neighbouring peoples after the new city makes progresses. This situation justified the Carthaginian expedition to aid the Gaditanians, and this intervention finally resulted in the establishment of some stable Carthaginian bases in the Iberian Peninsula. This sequence can be directly correlated with our current knowledge of the fourth-century BC historical evolution and archaeological panorama in this zone.<sup>45</sup> During the fourth century BC, a remarkable expansion of Gaditanians productions is documented in the south-western coast of Iberia. This phenomenon, which intensifies in the second part of the century in the Algarve, is labelled as an indisputable 'gaditanização' by E. de Sousa and A.M. Arruda.<sup>46</sup> A similar process in the mouth of the river Guadalquivir and in the environment of the ancient *lacus Ligustinus* is documented, featuring an exponential increase in products from Gaditanian workshops.<sup>47</sup>

On the other hand, in the middle of the fourth century BC, a change in production, trade and population trends has been detected in the Gaditanian re-

43 Blázquez et al. 2012.

44 Álvarez 2014a.

45 See various contributions in Ferrer 2010. Also Ferrer & Pliego 2010.

46 Sousa & Arruda 2010.

47 Ferrer, García & Escacena 2010.

gion and its area of economic and political influence, known as the 'Circle of the Strait'.<sup>48</sup> These changes coincide with an escalation of Carthaginian trading towards the West,<sup>49</sup> and have been increasingly associated with the possible presence of Carthaginian military contingents in the area.<sup>50</sup> Consequently, numismatic evidence has led some scholars to defend the presence of Carthaginian garrisons in Turdetania, prior to the Barcid period.<sup>51</sup> In processes such as the colonization of Gaditanian *campiña* in the fourth century BC, which had been directly associated by modern scholars with Carthage,<sup>52</sup> two moments have been identified, which coincide with the timeline in Justin's new reading: an initial Gaditanian phase and a second phase when the Carthaginian vector takes over.<sup>53</sup>

The possibility of a Carthaginian presence in the area could, finally, be linked to the signing of the second treaty between Rome and Carthage in 348 BC where, according to some scholars, reference is made to the Iberian Peninsula and, in particular, to the area of the Straits of Gibraltar.<sup>54</sup> According to Polybius (3.24.3), the treaty started alluding to the people of Carthage, of Tyre and of Utica. The inclusion of the Tyrians in the treaty could be related precisely with the prominent religious role that the metropolis appear to play among their old colonies in this period.<sup>55</sup> At any rate, the absence of Gadir in the treaty is remarkable, and could bear relation with the decision of Carthage to remain in Iberia after the military crisis, perhaps against the will of Gadir.

Finally, it could even be feasible to attribute references to Carthaginian exploratory and colonial ventures in the Atlantic and, in particular, the travels of Hanno and Himilco, to the period starting after the Carthaginian intervention in Iberia, in the middle of the fourth century BC. Some researchers attribute a late chronology to these travels, which would be in keeping<sup>56</sup> with the new historical and chronological framework resulting from the rereading of Justin's passage.<sup>57</sup>

48 Tarradell 1967; Niveau 2001; Sáez, Díaz & Sáez 2004.

49 Ramón 2006.

50 López Castro 1992b; 2006; López Pardo & Suárez 2002; Ferrer & Pliego 2010; 2013.

51 Pliego 2003a; 2003b; Ferrer and Pliego 2010; 2011; 2013.

52 López Castro 1992b; Carretero 2007. 172–177.

53 Ferrer and Pliego 2010.

54 Ferrer & De la Bandera 1997; Ferrer 2008; see also Moret 2002.

55 See López Castro 2004: 157, who instead suggests that the Tyrians of the treaty refers to the Western Phoenicians, including the Gaditanians. See also Tsirkin 1996; Koch 2001.

56 Mederos & Escribano 2000.

57 An up-to-date account of the discussion in González 2008. All these arguments are delved into extensively in Álvarez 2014a.

## 4 Melqart and the Shaping of Tyrian Identities

The comparative analysis of traditions regarding the foundation of Tyre, Gadir and Carthage not only provides a context for Justin's revised account but also supports the identification of Carteia as the Gaditanian colony. The aforementioned traditions constitute a fundamental reference point for the study of the various forms of identity shaping that occur in the Tyrian colonial diaspora.<sup>58</sup> The revision of Justin's account provides further evidence for and elements to analyse within the process of shaping a religious and identity network around Tyre and Melqart in the sphere of the Phoenician colonial diaspora, whose study is a topic currently attracting great attention.<sup>59</sup> This interest is demonstrated by recent reflections on allusions to Melqart in Phoenician epigraphy in the West, and in particular, in a group of inscriptions with dedications to the Tyrian god, dating between the fourth and second centuries BC.<sup>60</sup>

### 4.1 Archegetes

Bilingual inscriptions—in Phoenician and Greek—on the renowned twin *cippi* from Malta are the most remarkable instances in this group (*CIS* I, 122–122 bis = *KAI* 47).<sup>61</sup> In the Phoenician text, Melqart is called *b'l šr*, 'Lord of Tyre', while in the Greek version he becomes Herakles *archegetes*. Furthermore, in the Greek text, the dedicators explicitly identify themselves as 'Tyrians'. The equivalence between Melqart, *Baal of Tyre*, and Herakles *archegetes* in the inscriptions from Malta is both thought provoking and hard to explain. In the Greek world, *archegetes* is a title given to founders of colonies and civic institutions and an epiclesis applied to deities such as Dionysus, Athena, Hera, Herakles and, above all, to Apollo of Delphi, as the leader of colonial enterprises through his oracle.<sup>62</sup> The term *archegetes* is particularly rich in semantic possibilities in connection with Melqart of Tyre, recently explored by C. Bonnet. The element *archè* conveys a dual concept: 'celui de fondation, dans le sens de début, de naissance, mais aussi celui de fondement, de socle'.<sup>63</sup> *Archegetes* might not only refer to the role as leader of Tyrian colonists in the Mediterranean, but

58 See excellent introductions to the issue in Bonnet 2009; and in Garbati 2012.

59 Malkin 2005; Bonnet 2005; 2009; Bonnet & Garbati 2009; Marín 2011; Garbati 2012; 2015.

60 Amadasi 2005a.

61 Zanollo 1981; Amadasi 2005a: 47–48; Bonnet 1988: 245; 2009: 300–305. Amadasi & Rossignani 2002: 23, for whom the formula and onomastics used in the texts link these inscriptions to the area of Tyre in the third and second centuries BC.

62 Malkin 1987: 241ff.; 2005; Bonnet 2009.

63 Bonnet 2009: 302–303.

also 'au processus d'appropriation culturelle du cosmos et d'espaces habitables par les communautés, tyriennes et diasporiques'.<sup>64</sup>

#### 4.2 *Melqart 'l hšr*

The study of Tyre's role as the epicentre of an identity network of communities who perceive it as their mother-city has been revived, thanks to the reinterpretation of a group of three inscriptions in Sardinia and one recently found in Ibiza, where reference is made to Melqart 'l hšr, that is, 'upon the rock'.<sup>65</sup> The inscription from Antas, dating from the fourth or third century BC, is etched on a bronze plate found in the temple of *Sid b'by* (*Sid/Sardus Pater*) and contains a dedication to 'the Lord, to Melqart 'l hšr'. The shaft of a column from Cagliari, discovered outside its original context, contains an inscription consisting of a dedication to Melqart followed by the same expression: 'l hšr. A text, also found out of context, dating from the third century BC and written on a black paving stone from Tharros, starts with a dedication 'To the Lord, the sacred god Melqart 'l hšr'. In all three cases, the term 'l hšr referring to Melqart has been translated as 'of the rock' or 'who stands upon the rock'. The concentration of inscriptions in Sardinia has led some to consider that šr could allude to a sanctuary on the island, such as the one in Antas,<sup>66</sup> or else it could be a toponym, šr, identifiable not as the Phoenician Tyre but as Tharros.<sup>67</sup>

However, the recent find of a similar inscription in Ibiza, dating from the third century BC has redirected the debate.<sup>68</sup> The inscription from Ibiza is engraved on a cubic pedestal, probably the base of a statue and its text commemorates, also in this case, a dedication to Melqart 'l hšr. This inscription from Ibiza has prompted a reinterpretation of the meaning of the place-name šr.<sup>69</sup> Melqart 'l hšr is, in the first place, the one 'who stands upon the rock'. But šr is, at the same time, the name of Tyre, a city erected on a rocky isle whose foundational myth, as we have seen, revolves around the stabilization of formerly wandering drifting Ambrosial Rocks by Melqart. Finally, in the inscriptions from Malta, Melqart is called *b'l šr; Lord of Tyre*. According to Bonnet and Garbati, šr may designate not a Sardinian or Western toponym but Tyre itself. As a result, the dedications from Sardinia and Ibiza to Melqart, the god of the ancient metropolis, around the fourth or third century BC, could have

64 Bonnet 2009: 303.

65 Amadasi 2005a; 2005b; Bonnet 2009; Marín 2011; Garbati 2012.

66 Perceived as a 'rock': Garbini 1997.

67 Amadasi 2005a.

68 Amadasi 2005a; 2006; Ramón et al. 2010; Estanyol 2010.

69 Bonnet 2009; Garbati 2012.

significant implication.<sup>70</sup> According to Bonnet, the ethnic and religious identity of Phoenician communities settled in Tharros, Antas, Cagliari or Ibiza takes root in the cultural and cultic heritage of their metropolis. Tyre, ‘the primordial rock’, thus becomes a ‘lieu de mémoire’, the ancestral model of a ‘sauvage’ rock regained for civilization by the guardian god of their communities.<sup>71</sup> Besides, Tyre could be the original reference point, the symbolic centre of a colonial network stretching towards the West: ‘Di roccia in roccia, di promontorio in promontorio, i santuari segnano lo spazio fenicio e collegano sia la madrepartria alle colonie ...’<sup>72</sup>

If we connect Melqart ‘upon the rock/Tyre’ from Sardinia and Ibiza with Melqart *archegetes* in the inscriptions from Malta, it becomes apparent that Tyre and Melqart constitute the focal point of representations of religion and identity in Tyre’s old colonies. It has recently been argued that this evidence points to the existence of a ‘Tyrian identity’ built upon shared origins, namely Tyre and its god, Melqart. As Garbati states, ‘Tyre, con Melqart, rappresenta il ricordo fondante, la figura simbolica (il “punto fisso”) attorno al quale si coagula il passato’.<sup>73</sup>

### 4.3 *Herakles para apoikois*

Carthage, in this sense, constitutes a special case. On the one hand, literary sources reporting its relationship with Tyre clearly reveal the intensity and endurance of ties between the metropolis and its colonies. But this case has its own unique features.<sup>74</sup> The evidence demonstrating Carthage’s religious dependence on Tyre—with its economic and political nuances—is well known.<sup>75</sup> Herodotus describes the Phoenicians’ refusal to take part in the campaign Cambyses II planned against Carthage after his conquest of Egypt in 525 BC, ‘for they were bound, they said, by strong oaths, and if they sailed against their own progeny they would be doing an impious thing’ (Hdt. 3.19.2; transl. A.D. Godley). Close enough in time is the episode of Mazeus-Malchus and his son Karthalo, a priest of Melqart, who had been sent to Tyre ‘by the Carthaginians to bring Hercules tithes from the Sicilian plunder taken by his father’ (Justin 18.7.1–5; transl. Yardley). One century later, similar information

70 Bonnet 2009; Garbati 2012.

71 ‘L’identité religieuse se bâtit donc par référence à un passé paradigmatique qui dessine le futur des « bourgeois » occidentaux’, Bonnet 2009: 304.

72 Bonnet in Bonnet & Garbati 2009: 345; see also Garbati 2012.

73 Garbati 2012: 168.

74 Garbati 2015.

75 Elayi 1981; Bonnet 1988: 166–167; Ferjaoui 1993; Lancel 1995: 36–37.

is reported in the context of Himilco's campaign in Sicily. Diodorus (13.108.2–4) recounts that after taking Gela in 405 BC, Himilco sent to Tyre 'a bronze statue of Apollo of colossal size', which was erected on the outskirts of the city. This statue of Apollo plays a significant role in the accounts of Alexander's siege of Tyre. In one such mention, Curtius Rufus underlines the traditional relationship between the Carthaginians and Tyre: 'with many other spoils of the cities which they had captured they had adorned Tyre rather than Carthage.' (Curt. 4.3.22). The siege of Tyre by Alexander in 332 BC (Iust. 11.10.10–14; Arrian, *Anabasis of Alexander* 2.15–24; Curt. 4.2–4; Diod. 17.40–47; Plut. *Alexander* 24.2–25.3) is the source of plentiful stories concerning the links between Carthage and Tyre, as the Carthaginian envoys were present in the city on the occasion of a religious festival (Curt. 4.2.10; Arr. *An.* 2.24), perhaps the renowned *egersis* of Melqart.<sup>76</sup>

At any rate, literary sources agree on the fact that the gathering was an opportunity to worship Melqart as god of the 'fatherland'. According to Arrian, the Carthaginian envoys had 'come to their mother-city to pay honour to Herakles, according to some ancient custom' (Arr. *An.* 2.24.5; transl. E. Iloff Robson). This notion is repeated in a particularly significant passage in Curtius:

Envoys of the Carthaginians had come at that time to celebrate an annual festival in the manner of their country; for the Tyrians founded Carthage and were always honoured as the forefathers of the Carthaginians.

CURT. 4.2.10<sup>77</sup>

The same information is conveyed in the report about the statue of Apollo, which was captured in Sicily and sent to Tyre. In this respect, Curtius (4.3.22) states that the Carthaginians 'had placed it in their ancestral fatherland' (*et in maiore locaverant patria*).

It can be assumed from these sources that amongst the elements of the religious festival in Tyre, the celebration of Melqart as the god of the metropolis seems to have played a prominent role, as the god of the founding fathers who was present at the time of the creation of the colonies and who therefore continued to have a major influence over them. The essential connotations documented so far surrounding the figure of Melqart are combined and condensed in an inscription of Delos from 153/152 BC, containing a decree of the

<sup>76</sup> Amitay 2008: 96 ff.

<sup>77</sup> *Carthaginiensium legati ad celebrandum sacrum anniversarium more patrio tunc venerant: quippe Carthaginem Tyrii condiderunt, semper parentum loco culti*. Transl. Rolfe, Ed. Hedicke.

Herakleistai of Tyre.<sup>78</sup> This community of Tyrians, settled in Delos, describes Herakles (Melqart) as *archegos tes patridos*, ‘founder of the fatherland’.<sup>79</sup> Such a title confirms the attribution of the foundation of Tyre to Melqart and consequently his relevance amongst the Tyrian communities outside Phoenicia.<sup>80</sup>

While Melqart plays different roles in the past of Carthage and of Gadir and, consequently, in the shaping of their civic identity,<sup>81</sup> the strength of the ties between the north African city and Melqart of Tyre is quite remarkable. This is dramatically evidenced a few years after the taking of Tyre, in 310 BC, when it was the Carthaginians who had to endure a siege laid by Agathocles. In the description of the episode, Diodorus reports that the Carthaginians attributed their misfortunes to the wrath of Tyrian Herakles:

The Carthaginians ... because they believed that Heracles, who aids colonists (*para tois apoikois*), was exceedingly angry with them ... sent a large sum of money and many of their most expensive offerings to Tyre. After having come to that city as colonists, it had been their custom in earlier times to send to the god a tenth of all that was paid into the public revenue; but later, when they had acquired great wealth, and were receiving more considerable revenues, they sent very little indeed, holding the divinity of little account.

DIOD. 20.14.1–2; following the adaptation of R.M. Geer’s translation given in Quinn 2011

The meaning of the term *para apoikois* applied to Herakles (Melqart) is not fully defined. According to the text, the Carthaginians believed that the arrogance resulting from their recent affluence and the neglect of their duties towards Tyre triggers the rage of the gods. To try to placate the gods, they then turned to the original practises of their mother-city: ‘But turning to repentance because of this misfortune, they bethought them of *all the gods of Tyre*’ (Diod. 20.14.2; our italics). Numerous gifts were sent to Tyre to placate Melqart.<sup>82</sup> Yet, according to Diodorus, Carthaginians also attributed their troubles to the wrath of Kronos (Baal Hammon), in this case because of irregularities in the

78 ID 1519; Dürrbach 1921: 140–144.

79 Bonnet 2009: 305–308; Hirt 2015: 202–203.

80 See Bonnet 2009: 305–308 on the links between the figures of Melqart and Apollo in Delos.

81 See Garbati 2015; also Bonnet 1986.

82 Bonnet (2015) poses a suggestive connection between the Carthaginian *aphidrymata* sent to Tyre in 310 BC and the *sacra* involved in the founding of the city in Justin’s account.

tradition of sacrifices of children offered to the divinity. In order to pacify the god, 200 children were publicly sacrificed in Carthage and no less than 300 spontaneously (Diod. 20.14.2). The account, as Garbati has pointed out, 'is anyway symptomatic, since different solutions are found in face of the anger of the two gods: in the case of Melqart, the Carthaginians have to go back to their motherland; with Baal, they manage the crisis within the borders of their city'.<sup>83</sup>

In both cases, Carthaginians 'believed that they had neglected the honours of the gods that had been established by their fathers' (Diod. 20.14.5). Melqart (Herakles) *para apoikois*, the god who protects or looks after the colonists is, specifically, Melqart of Tyre, who can be directly associated with Melqart *'l hsr* mentioned in the inscriptions from Sardinia and Ibiza. Melqart remains vigilant and protective of the communities in the diaspora from Tyre itself. Besides, this image of Melqart is consistent with the image of Melqart as *archegos*, the founder of the mother-city, and as *archegetes*, the leader of colonial ventures. The presence of the god in the creation of colonies be it directly as the founder or as the founders' god, creates a manifold yet indissoluble link, associated with a certain level of apotropaic protection deployed from Tyre, the primordial rock.

#### 4.4 *Origo and consanguinitas in Times of War*

This scenario, in which Tyre and Melqart play central roles in a colonial network created around Tyrian ethnic identity, provides a good framework to interpret the episode of the foundation of the colony of the Gaditanians in Justin 44.5.2. Remarkable chronological compatibility exists between the various historical elements at play. Identifying Carteia as the city founded by the Gaditanians in Justin's passage would place the episode in the middle of the fourth century BC. The inscriptions from Sardinia and Malta date from the fourth and third centuries BC. In 332 BC, the siege of Tyre reveals, through various data, the close connection between Carthage with the mother-city and Melqart. In addition, the episode of the Carthaginians resuming their formerly neglected traditions of worship of Melqart of Tyre, *para apoikois*, dates from 310 BC.

In order to create the new community, promoted by Gadir, an old colony of Tyre, certain *sacra* of Melqart had to be transferred from the ancient metropolis. While it is not possible to elucidate the specific nature of these *sacra Herculis*, the most relevant factor here is the extraordinary significance given to the Tyrian provenance of these elements, whether they consisted of actual objects or of the cult of the god or both. It seems that the worship of Melqart

83 Garbati 2015.

in the new community requires the purity or legitimacy, which can only be granted by the sanctuary of the god in Tyre. This becomes apparent in the fact that in Gadir itself there was a sanctuary of Melqart of unquestionable prominence. The Tyrian provenance of the *sacra* and the tutelage, provided by the Levantine Melqart in the foundational episode, would confirm the thesis that the toponym *sr* applied to Melqart 'upon the rock' refers to Tyre itself. All instances refer, indeed, to the relevance of Melqart of Tyre as the religious referent in the context of the network of old colonies.

The mention of Melqart of Tyre in the inscriptions from Sardinia and Ibiza has been understood as a way of recreating Tyrian identity, highlighting the existence of an element of 'fiction', of adaptive construction in local contexts.<sup>84</sup> The episode in Justin contributes certain nuances concerning the figure of Melqart as the active creator of identities. The view expressed by Corinne Bonnet that Melqart is 'il dio delle *fondamenta* (*arché* in greco) e delle *fondazioni*, quindi l'*archégétès*, il fondatore ...' would be confirmed.<sup>85</sup> The foundation of the colony of the Gaditanians might be some sort of action, captured 'live', carried out by Melqart of Tyre as *archegetes*, laying the foundations of the new community, actively building its origin, and also its past, and appearing as its genuine founder, as in the case of Gadir. The foundational ritual portrayed in the account may also involve the creation of a new Tyrian community in Carteia. Melqart's intervention propitiates the formation of a city with its own peculiar civic identity, which would unquestionably acknowledge its filial links with Gadir but which could also ultimately claim a Tyrian *origo*, as Carthage or Gadir did.

Another episode in Justin's passage provides a hint of the political significance of being incorporated, as a new and legitimate node, into the network of cities that shared the belief in a common Tyrian origin. One of the elements shaping Tyrian identity is the concept of kinship, the belief that all communities sharing the same Tyrian ancestry are linked by ties of brotherhood, wherefrom duties of mutual assistance and solidarity are also derived.<sup>86</sup> The existence of ties of brotherhood and solidarity amongst communities of Tyrian origin is reflected in a passage in Justin concerning Carthage and Utica. Soon after the arrival of Elissa and her followers in Africa, 'ambassadors from the people of Utica brought the Tyrians gifts, recognizing them as their relatives

84 Garbati 2012.

85 Bonnet 2008: 676.

86 A highly interesting comparative reference is that of Phocaeen identity in the West: see Domínguez 2004.

(*consanguineis*), and urged them to found a city in that place where they had settled by chance' (Iust. 18.5.12).

The new interpretation of Justin (44.5.2–3) places the episode of the Carthaginian aid to Gadir at a much later time from that of the 'classic' colonial period, dated to the ninth and eighth century BC. Therefore, in the historical scenario proposed, soon after the foundation of the colony of the Gaditanians—Carteia, hypothesized here—hostility from some neighbouring peoples and the ensuing conflict cause Carthage to send military aid to Gadir: 'The Carthaginians therefore sent assistance to their relatives (*consanguineis*) ...'. The passage notably repeats the allusion to the same concept Justin uses in the instance of Utica and Carthage, *consanguinitas*, in this case connecting Gaditanians and Carthaginians because of their common Tyrian origin. It is first stated that Tyre is the common origin of both peoples (... *Gaditani a Tyro, unde et Karthaginensibus origo est ...*), and next their ties of kinship are stressed (*Gaditanos ... consanguineis Karthaginenses*) as a context to explain the Carthaginian assistance. This repeated allusion to a Tyrian origin gains particular relevance when, as proposed, the helping expedition takes place soon after the foundation of what could have been perceived as a new node in the Tyrian network.

It could therefore be concluded that the *consanguinitas* resulting from the shared awareness of a Tyrian origin played a highly relevant part in this multipolar structure of communities, especially in times of war. In fact, it could even be considered as one of the reasons for the endurance and strength of Tyrian ethnic identity. We are still far from knowing what practices consolidated this kinship in time. It would be interesting to speculate that the religious festival, celebrated in Tyre in 332 BC in the presence of Carthaginian envoys, was also attended by representatives from other Tyrian communities, but evidence of this is lacking. The fact that the *sacra* of Melqart were transferred from Tyre to found the Gaditanian colony indicates, in any event, that communication between Tyre and Gadir during the fourth and third century BC must have been much more intense and fluid than we had so far suspected.<sup>87</sup>

It would be inappropriate, however, to idealize the nature of solidarity between nodes within the Tyrian network. Carthaginian prominence in the south of the Peninsula, after their military intervention in the zone, was not necessarily a situation sought by the Gaditanians. Underlying tension between the two cities can indeed be noted at a later period in time.<sup>88</sup> Whatever the level of Carthaginian presence in Iberia may have been after they sent

87 Marín 2011: 219.

88 Pérez 2003; Mederos & Escribano 2000; Chaves 2009; Álvarez 2012a.

assistance to Gadir, it seems to have been seriously affected at some stage between the middle of the fourth century and the year 237 BC. This possibility is supported by the renowned passage in Polybius (2.1.6), who explicitly states that Hamilcar ‘set about recovering (*anektato*) the Carthaginian possessions (*pragmata*) in Iberia’. The possible role played by Gadir in the loss of Carthaginian control over some *pragmata* in Iberia is yet to be elucidated, but the situation by the end of the Second Punic War, with Gadir’s defection to the Roman side in 206 BC, suggests that duties resulting from Tyrian *consanguinitas* did have their limits. The defection of Utica, another node in the Tyrian network, in the framework of the ‘Truceless War’, is a further instance in this respect.<sup>89</sup> But the best example is the very relationship between Carthage and Tyre, the central node in the network. Despite the intensity and long endurance of their maternal-filial bond, it has been shown that it did suffer ups and downs, and the lack of military support from Carthage to the metropolis during Alexander’s siege is clear evidence of this.<sup>90</sup> It could be concluded that Tyrian *consanguinitas* constitutes a potential framework of solidarity and mutual assistance subject to the economic, political and military circumstances prevailing at the time.

## 5 Melqart of Tyre, between Polarity and Multipolarity

J.M. Hall, in his classic study, proposed viewing ethnic identity as ‘the operation of socially dynamic relationships, which are constructed on the basis of a putative shared ancestral heritage’.<sup>91</sup> Based on this definition, the elements analysed in this paper confirm the existence of a Tyrian identity shared by a group of communities that place the city of Tyre and its god Melqart at the centre of their ‘shared ancestral heritage’.<sup>92</sup> The revision confirms the intensity of this framework of identity based on the awareness of a Tyrian origin, long after the moment of foundation of the main nodes in the colonial network, and in particular, Gadir and Carthage. The probable reference to Melqart of Tyre in the inscriptions from Sardinia and Ibiza, the allusions to him as *para apoikois* (Diod. 20.14.1), or the episode of the foundation of the Gaditanian colony in Justin (44.5.2), support the notion of the extraordinary significance Tyre and Melqart had in the sphere of religion and identity for a whole group

89 Hoyos 2007.

90 Elayi 1981.

91 Hall 1997: 16.

92 Bonnet 2009; Garbati 2012; 2015.

of communities, from the eastern Mediterranean to the Atlantic in the fourth and third centuries BC. Melqart's central part in this identity network seems to essentially rest on his position as the founder and lord of Tyre, as the main deity of the mother-city, and as the god of the founding fathers of the colonies. In the context of identity, Melqart is the god of the origins, appropriately placed to allow and facilitate a link with Tyre and between the various nodes of the network.

On the other hand, it could be asserted that what guarantees the true Tyrian ancestry of a new community is not only the Tyrian origin of its founders but the presence of Melqart *of Tyre* in the colony's foundational protocols. In the cases reviewed in this chapter—Tyre itself, Gadir, Carthage and the Gaditanian colony in Justin—the presence of Melqart, although in different forms, is essential in creating a link with the metropolis and in establishing Tyrian ethnic legitimacy. This Tyrian identity is doubly important, because it also serves as the basis for a network of communities linked by ties of fraternity, of *consanguinitas*. Likewise, subtle differences in terms of Melqart's participation in foundation processes contribute to developing civic identities in new communities where Melqart plays different roles. These identity-building processes take place, as Bonnet aptly describes, following 'modalités à géométrie variable'.<sup>93</sup>

In Carthage, Melqart of Tyre is the god of the mother-city and of founders, but he does not appear to be the main religious referent for the creation of civic identity, at least during the period of time dealt with in this chapter. Carthage's civic identity is shaped, conversely, around Baal Hamon and Tinnit, which may be closely connected with the phenomenon of the *tophet*.<sup>94</sup> In Gadir, Melqart is not only the god of the mother-city but as in Tyre, the genuine founder of the city and the indisputable protagonist in the shaping of its civic identity. In fact, Gadir constitutes a very peculiar case, a mimetic transfer of Tyre itself in many aspects, reproducing in the far west the mythical topography of the metropolis. Melqart's role in Gadir, as in Tyre, has connotations beyond the mere foundational process. His participation is, to some extent, cosmogonical: he is the one who stabilizes and consolidates the island on which his city and sanctuary are built. Due to this, Melqart in Gadir plays an apotropaic and protective role towards the community, navigation and essentially, the *oikoumene*, parallel to the part played by Melqart in Tyre.<sup>95</sup>

93 Bonnet 2009: 295.

94 Lancel 1995: 227–256; Quinn 2011; Bonnet 2011a; Garbati 2012; 2013; 2015.

95 Marín 2011: 220.

The Gaditanian colony in Justin's account is, without doubt, a singular instance. The participation of Melqart of Tyre in its foundation may be understood, in terms of identity, as the guarantor of its legitimate Tyrian nature, which would facilitate its incorporation into a network stretching to both sides of the known world. But the possibility of identifying the city mentioned in the account as Carteia opens up new perspectives of interpretation. It allows us to think that, as in the case of Tyre itself or Gadir, the new community was considered as having been directly founded by the god. Should the tradition about the name *Heraklea* correspond to a Phoenician toponym, which includes the name of Melqart, the foundation of the Gaditanians would appear to be particularly extraordinary. When assessing Melqart's possible leading role in Carteia, we ought to bear in mind the ability of the Tyrian god to create networks not only amongst the colonies of Tyre. We should also bear in mind the fact that Melqart-Herakles was traditionally connected with instances of negotiation in inter-cultural encounters in the 'middle grounds'.<sup>96</sup>

Amongst the communities shaping the Tyrian colonial diaspora, links with the period of the origins and with the mother-city unquestionably involve a primordial source of prestige and legitimacy. This particularly applies to communities such as Gadir due to the special role attributed to Melqart in its founding. Ties with Tyre must have been a key factor in the construction of the discourse of power of local aristocracies, especially of sacerdotal elites.<sup>97</sup> Besides, connections with Tyre in a war scenario must have been the essential argument to activate interstate solidarity within a network of communities linked by the figure of Melqart. In conclusion, Melqart appears to be a deity with tendencies towards both polarity and multi-polarity. The power of Melqart of Tyre as a reference for the colonial diaspora is extraordinarily intense. Furthermore, at the same time, the god multiplies himself by being present in new sites within the network and propitiating a radial link of solidarity between its nodes on the basis of a common Tyrian identity.

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96 See Malkin 2005 and the case of Heraklea-Minoa in Sicily.

97 López Castro 1998 regarding the case of Gadir-Gades and its role during the Empire; also López Castro 2004; Álvarez 2012b.

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