

PROBLEMS OF PHOENICIO-PUNIC ICONOGRAPHY—A CONTRIBUTION

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In the first issue of this journal I discussed the peculiar ram-headed staff ("Khnum sceptre") which appears on Phoenician carved ivories of the 8th century B.C. and on Phoenician and Punic seals of the 600-400 B.C. period.¹ It is carried together with a jug by acolytes of major divinities and serves as a kind of blessing apparatus. The sceptre and jug are carried on the ivories by priests or other human attendants, whilst on seals they are also shown in the hands of human attendants with the heads of falcons.

The well-known "El stela" from Ras Shamra provided the only example of this apparatus in Canaanite contexts and extended its use back into the 2nd millennium. Examination of cylinder seals has now provided a second example, coming from Tell Fakhariyah in N.E. Syria, where several impressions were found of the cylinder seal reproduced here, Fig. Ia, cf. Calvin W. McEwan *et al.*, *Soundings at Tell Fakhariyah*, Oriental Institute Publications, LXXIX, Chicago 1958, p. 78, pl. 73, no. XLIV. The main group of figures shows a seated goddess who is approached by the striding weather god of Ras Shamra Teshub/Baal type. Both grasp a bird-topped staff which is placed between them. Behind the stool of the goddess stands a falcon-headed attendant with a short curved sceptre in his right hand and a jug held down low in the left. Miss Kantor in her discussion of this seal in the Tell Fakhariyah report draws parallels in design from Mitannian and Nuzi sealings, but the weather god is that of Miss Porada's "Second Syrian" group, cf. E. Porada, *Corpus of Ancient Near Eastern Seals in North American Collections*, nos. 967 E and 968. The style greatly resembles no. 107 of H. B. Walters, *Catal. of Engraved Gems, etc., in the Brit. Mus.* (from Cyprus), which has nothing specifically Mitannian about it.

The three hanging tassels or pompons which we see on the kilts of both the weather god and falcon are certainly not indicative of Mitannian work but rather of contemporary seals from West Syria, e.g., Seyrig, *Syria*, XL, 1963, pl. XXI, 2. A less well-

Note: *CIS* is *Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum*. All numbers prefaced Cb are from G. Picard's *Catal. Mus. Alaoui*, New Series I.

1. "The Iconography of Some Phoenician Seals and Seal Impressions", *Australian Journal of Biblical Archaeology*, I (1968), 50-103.

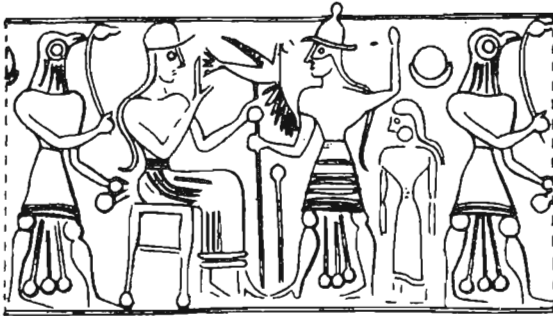


FIGURE I:

a. Impression of a cylinder seal, Tel Fakhariyah, Syria. Late Bronze Age.

b. Punic gold finger ring, Carthage. Ht. 1.5 cm. ca. 600 B.C.

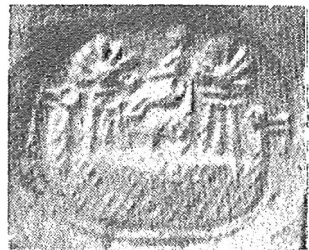


c



c. Grey stone conoid seal, Musée des Beaux Arts (impression), Lyon. Diam. 2.3 cm.

d



d. Hebrew Seal of Gedalyahu (after S. A. Cook).

known weather god stela from Ras Shamra, discovered in 1960 and published by Cl. Schaeffer in *Annales archéologiques de la Syrie*, XI-XII, 1961-2, p. 187f, fig. 5, shows that the tasselled kilt was worn at Ugarit. Other features on the Tell Fakhariyah seal, the long single lock of hair and the knobbed helmet of the young god, point to Canaanite western and coastal Syria rather than Mitannian regions. It must, of course, be admitted that in work of such minuteness the ramhead on the sceptre is not clear: it looks generally birdlike. What, however, is important is the combination of the animal sceptre and jug, for this rather than the sceptre alone is what is characteristic of Phoenician liturgy.

The history of the ram-headed sceptre in Mesopotamian religion has been taken up by Ursula Seidl in "Die babylonischen Kudurrureliefs," *Baghdader Mitteilungen* (Deutsches arch. Inst.) IV, 1968, pp. 165-167. Her study confirms the association of the sceptre with the goatfish of Ea. The Mesopotamian origin of the symbol seems secure and its "Egyptianisation" in the Persian period likely. Miss Seidl quotes two cylinders of the Old Babylonian period, Porada *op. cit.*, I, 374, and 489 where the sceptre is definitely goat-headed, as the only examples of the ram-sceptre before the period of the kudurrus in the late 2nd millennium. On these two cylinders a straight rod with animal-head finial is placed before figures. 374 is inscribed "Martu son of heaven (dumu. an. na.)"—the small seated god might be Shamash, but the sceptre is not placed immediately before him.

There can be added, however, a much clearer example: A Moortgat, *Vorderasiatische Rollsiegel*, no. 517, pl. 62. Here the ram-headed staff stands between the figure of Shamash and a goddess. These are identified as Shamash and Aia by an accompanying inscription. It is classed by Moortgat as Syrian with Babylonian influence: the presence of a tortoise and an open hand in the design strongly suggests Syrian work. An interesting point is that the ram's head is sleeved as on the reliefs of the Sidonian naiskos in the Chiha Collection (*cf.* N. Aimé Giron, "Un Naos phénicien de Sidon", *Bull. de l'Inst. du Caire*, XXIV, pp. 31-42, pls. I and III). Valuable though they are for showing the early use of the "Khnum sceptre" in Mesopotamia, as well as for the suggestion, though nothing more, that the sceptre was associated with Shamash, it must be stressed that its use and appearance on these Syro-Babylonian seals is quite different from that documented for Canaan and Phoenicia. It is, of course, well known that Mitannian seals borrow a considerable number of motifs from Egyptian sources. The same is true of the seals of the Syrian group dating to the late Hyksos period, *cf.* W. Ward, "Un cylindre

syrien", *Syria*, XLII, 1965, pl. V, no. 4, which features a falcon-headed attendant before the figure of a god. But as far as the existing evidence goes, the ram-headed staff first appears in Syro-Mesopotamian contexts and its placing in the hands of an attendant appears peculiar to Syria and Phoenicia.

My previous article also dealt in part with the iconography of Phoenician Baal Shamem (or Baal Hammon at Carthage). To this we must now add the representation of Baal engraved on the bezel of a Punic gold finger-ring illustrated by J. Foucher in *Archaeologia Viva* I, 2, Dec. 1968-Feb. 1969, pp. 132 and 135 pl. XLV, a drawing of which is given here, Fig. I b. It was apparently found by P. Gauckler in his excavation of the Dermech graveyard at Carthage, but does not appear in his *carnets de fouilles* published in *Nécropoles puniques*. Typologically it belongs to the stirrup-shaped rings with ovoid bezels discussed in my footnote 96 and should be dated to the 6th century B.C. The ring shows Baal Hammon or Baal Shamem in the solar barque, identical in type with his image on the "Baal enthroned" seals. It explains the same theme on the setting of the gold ring from Aliseda previously mentioned. On the new ring, the boat carries the brazier, the sun, on the prow. The boat, not the throne is winged: winged boats are not an Egyptian feature: the nearest parallel is the duck-shaped boat which carries the Isis-Ashtart image on the engraved Phoenician boat from Golgoi-Athienou, W. von Bissing, *JDAI*, XXII, 1898, p. 34 ff. There are other noteworthy features of the Baal Hammon ring: in the corner opposite the winged disc is a two-headed serpent, a kind of "Leviathan". Between the boat and the monster is placed a long-stemmed lily between two buds, upside down. This device had some religious connotation to Phoenicians and Carthagians and is found on Cypriot metalwork and Punic terracotta moulds.²

Boat-borne deities are uncommon in west Asiatic art and the adaptation of the commonplace Egyptian iconography is peculiar to the type of Phoenician seals of the type discussed in my previous article and especially to the Isis-Ashtart images thereupon: e.g., J. Vercoutter, *Les objets égyptiens, etc., du mobilier funéraire carthaginois*, no. 560. The Phoenicians were certainly able to adapt the idea as well as copy it: a seal from Tharros reproduced by Ebers, *Annali di Corrispondenza Archeologica*, 1885, pl. F. 21, shows a Phoenician shrine containing a crouching sphinx and thymiaterium, the roof supported by

2. Cf. Miss A. M. Bisi, *Le Stele Puniche*, Nos. 130-131. A solar barque is shown sailing over papyrus marshes on the Phoenician seal, *Cesnola Coll. Atlas* III, pl. XXVI, 1 and Cesnola, *Cyprus*, p. 375, fig. 11, pl. XXVII, 11.

knobbed columns and the whole structure mounted on a boat.³ From the East there is a rare example of the boat-borne deity on a conoid seal in Lyons, *Mélanges Dussaud*, II, p. 912, pl. V, 42 (reproduced here Fig. I, c), which shows a male divinity seated on the sphinx throne mounted on the Egyptian boat of Sokar—or a version of it—distinguished by the gazelle head on the stern. His attendant and thymiaterium are with him and there is a star in the background. The work is not Phoenician, but appears rather to be late Babylonian provincial work, perhaps made in Syria under Nabonidus or the early Achaemenians.

Now the Punic ring from Dermech throws new light on an old puzzle of Biblical archaeology—the seal of “Elishama, son of Gedaljahu”, first published by Dalmann in the *Palästina Jahrbuch* for 1906 under the title “Ein Neugefundenes Jahwehbild” (Fig. I, d). Père Vincent regarded it as a forgery (*Revue biblique*, 1909); S. Cook in his *Archaeology and the Religion of Palestine*, 1925, seemed to accept it and made rather puzzled suggestions as to why Yahweh should be depicted in a boat. D. Diringer included it in *Iscrizioni Antico Ebraiche Palestinesi*, 1934, no. 100, pl. XXII, 13, and J. Simmons in *Jaarbericht Ex Oriente Lux*, 8, 1942, p. 686, gives it cautious countenance. Other modern authorities have accepted it and A. T. Olmstead went so far as to suggest that it might have belonged to the son of Gedalia in 586 B.C. The long history of the squabble as to whether it was “ein eklatantes Beispiel des Jawehbildes”, as Gressmann called it, will be found in Diringer *loc. cit.*

It shows an enthroned figure wearing the flat pileus of the type worn in Phoenicia and Palestine during the Persian period, as M. Dunand, *Oumm el-'Amed*, pl. 39 and E. Babelon, *Monnaies des Perses Achéménides*, pl. XXX, 16.

Père Vincent based his objections to its authenticity on the clumsiness of the design and cutting (especially the indecision of the cutter), the material (a compact limestone with veins, like the material later found in other seals, e.g., Schumacher, *Tell el-Mutessehim*, p. 142, fig. 212) and on the bad reputation of the “malheureux mystificateur” who sold it. It is not so easy to dismiss it on these grounds now, though, of course, certainly not authenticated. Père Vincent incidentally made the interesting observation that the exergue (or boat) was covered with large hatching and that the robe of the seated god was executed in small hatching, a

3. This is No. 29 (p. 16) of *Catalogo della Raccolta Archeologica Sarda del Canon Giovanni Spano*, etc., Cagliari, 1860: “Barcla d'Iside e dentro leone alata avanti un candelabro. Globo alata sopra. sostenuto da due colonne in forma di tempio. Sopra avvi un globo attorniato da due urei’.

detail not apparent in the available reproductions. This is consistent with usage on Phoenician seals, where the robe of Baal is hatched. The palm-like objects flanking the god on the Dalmann seal caused great difficulty. For one "Yahwist" they were prototypes of seven-branched candlesticks; but it is much more likely that they were copied clumsily from the Pharaonic fans which are often mounted on the solar boat. For the boat with duck-heads, the Aliseda ring J. M. Blazquez, *Tartessos y los Origenes de la Colonizacion Fenicia, etc.*, pl. 48A, provides a good parallel. Since many other and well authenticated Hebrew seals are held to copy Phoenician motifs, it is very probable that the seal of Gedaljahu was authentic.

Thanks to the excavations of the German Archaeological Institute at the Phoenician site at Torre del Mar, Malaga, Spain, it is now possible to add another and important example to the known group of Punic medallions with baetylic imagery (*Archiv für Orientforschung* 22, 1968-9, p. 176), Fig. II a. It comes from a grave of the mid-7th century B.C. and is thus contemporary with the Douïmes examples from Carthage.⁴ It differs in two details from the others: the granulated "baetyl" is a mountain, not a sphere (or disc) or bottle as on other medallions; and it is guarded by two falcons as well as a double-headed uraeus. On other medallions the "baetyl" is guarded by two uraeus snakes.

The presence of the falcons reinforces the imagery of the divine dwelling represented by these shapes, which, I argued, represent celestial or other-worldly terrain on which the numinous presence of god was conceived to dwell. For a mountain-shaped baetylic mound on a seal from Byblos, cf. A. de Ridder, *Collection de Clercq; les pierres gravées*, no. 2571. Amongst seals from Carthage there are many examples of a profile view of the mound with a single falcon and single uraeus guarding it: J. Vercoutter, *op. cit.*, nos. 555, 556, 558. On seals where the mounds appear in frontal view, there are no known examples with two falcons, but there are some, as previously pointed out, with two Horus attendants. On the Torre del Mar medallion, as on others, the presence of the divinity above the baetyl or mountain is symbolised by the disc-and-crescent, whereas on the later seals the Egyptian *atef* or *hemhemet* crown is placed directly on the baetylic orb or cone, cf. the Byblos seal mentioned above; occasionally with a small disc or orb between them. Two further examples from Ibiza (A. Vives y Escudero, *La necrópoli de Ibiza*, pl. XXIV,

4. To the List of Examples from Carthage and elsewhere given in my previous article should be added the medallion *Bull. Arch. Sardo*, IV, 5, March, 1858, No. 4 on first page.

13, 14) Fig. II, e, f, show interesting variations: on e both disc and winged disc are placed on a scale-covered hillock, like that on the Torre del Mar medallion. On f, the ovoid shape rests on the ground line and is topped by two *atef* feathers.⁵

The iconography of the Torre del Mar medallion makes a comparison between the Phoenician baetyl and the Delphic omphalos all the more suggestive, since the omphalos too was guarded by two eagles, as well as by the chthonic serpent. It is very unlikely that any specific and direct connection exists: the connection is an underlying one stemming from a widespread, and not necessarily Semitic idea, that there was a navel of the world, a piece of prime matter which was particularly connected with the dwelling of god, and featuring a sacred tree, and living waters, and in some instances was also the tomb of the dying-and-rising god, or god of renewal. Delphi and Shechem are well documented (cf. Hans-Volkmar Herrmann, *Omphalos*, and G. R. H. Wright, "The Mythology of Pre-Israelite Shechem", *Vetus Testamentum* XX, I, 1970, pp. 75-82). The multiplicity of Egyptian concepts of the *benben* stone are also apposite; but with respect to Phoenicio-Punic iconography the stadial point of the night-voyage of Ra may be considered as a source. In his paper "Ressemblance de l'omphalos delphique avec quelques représentations égyptiennes", *Revue des études grecques*, XXXII, 1919, pp. 338-358, Théophile Homolle was struck by the mound which marks the mid-point of night in the sculptured reliefs of the temple of Seti I at Karnak. There is no textual explanation of the mound. Closely guarded by two falcons the mound stands on top of a triangular shape in the base of which is a double-headed serpent. On the top of the mound rests the hieroglyph for the night sky and from its base emerges the foreparts of the kheper beetle, Fig. II b. Emerging from this mound, the kheper beetle, representing the new-born sun, then proceeds on its journey to the eastern horizon.

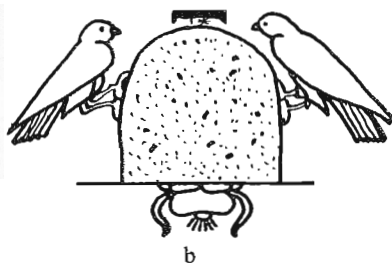
THE "BOTTLE" IDOL

Let us bear two things in mind: firstly that on the Punic gold and silver medallions the orb, hillock and vase are interchangeable. There is too great a degree of iconographic parallelism for them not to relate to the same set of ideas. Clearly also, the object represented is in some instances a vase, with a narrowing base and vase-like profile, as we see in an example from Tharros (Marshall, *Catal. Jewellery Br. Mus.*, 1547, here Fig. II d). In

5. Quite possibly, however, the oval shape in this seal is intended as a cartouche frame.



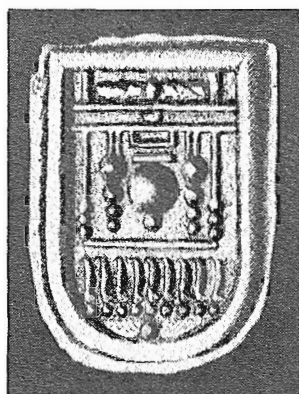
a



b

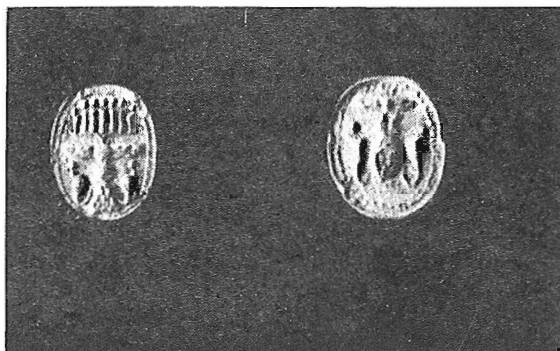


d



c

e



f

FIGURE II: a. Gold Medallion, Torre del Mar, Malaga, Spain. Diam.: 2.8 cm.
 b. The 'Mound of Sokar' from the relief of Seti I at Abydos.
 c. Silver Medallion, Bordj Djedid cemetery, Carthage. 4.4 by 3.1 cm. (after Delattre).
 d. Gold Medallion from Tomb 5, Tharros, Sardinia. British Museum. Ht. 2 cm.
 e, f. Jasper seals from Punic graves at Ibiza (after Vives).

other instances it is vase-like, perfectly resembling the vase-like objects on Punic grave stelae. I have quoted the stone from Akhziv as one parallel known from Phoenicia. We may also quote the coins of Tyre in the reign of Valerian (G. F. Hill, *BMC Phoenicia*, nos. 470, 471, pl. XXXIV, II, and Babelon, *Monnaies des Perses Achéménides*, pl. XXXVIII, 21) where the vase-like object is shown in a Phoenician naos and flanked by serpents—all by way of showing that the cult of this object was at home in homeland Phoenicia as well as at Carthage. It is perfectly consistent with the coin evidence from the *colonia* of Tyre under Valerian that emphasis was laid on honouring and revitalising the archaic Phoenician cults. For good measure, there is the appearance of an actual vase, a handleless amphora, on the coins of Aradus under Gordian III, G. F. Hill *BMC Phoenicia* nos. 387-388, pl. VI, 11 flanked by palms and two sphinxes, obviously with some cosmic implications. This survival through Hellenised and Romanised contexts shows the vitality of the symbol, without of course implying that it bore the same religious interpretations throughout.

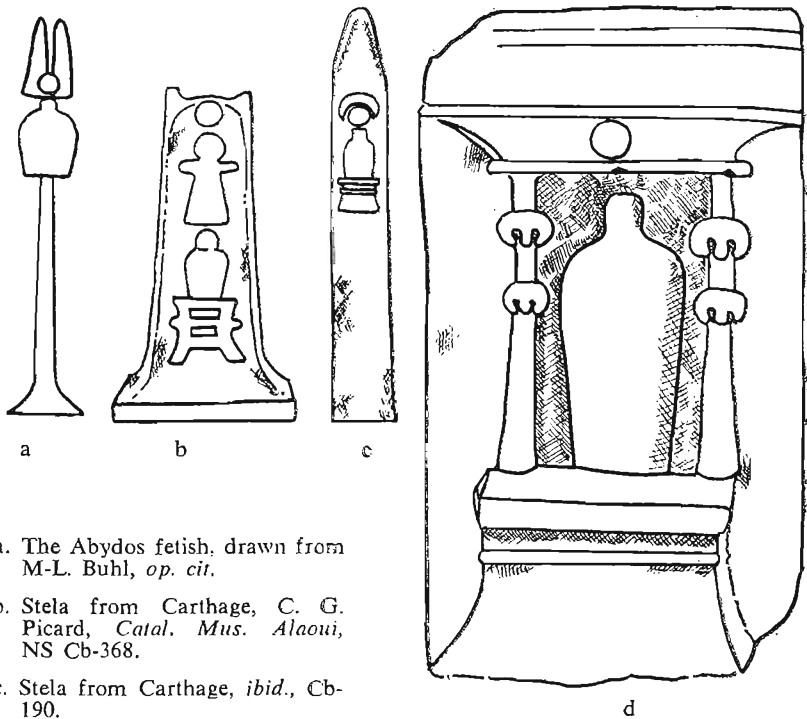
Secondly, all the seals and medallions come from tombs and give us a right to expect that they tell us something about Carthaginian *Jenseitsglaube*. Where we have no written documents, and cannot reasonably expect any, it is obligatory to make some tentative interpretation.

There have been many attempts to interpret the vase or "bottle" on Punic gravestones. It is certainly not intended as a plaque, but is in the round, as a very fine gravestone from Nora shows (G. Pesce, *La Sardegna punica*, fig. 76, here Fig. III d) where the "bottle" is shown in a beautifully constructed naiskos. The suggestion that it represented the sepulchral urn of the Carthaginian cremation burials, whether ordinary cremations or the remains of the *molok* sacrifices, will not pass. All Carthaginian burial urns have lids and handles: the "bottle" never has these; instead it frequently has a rounded top, unlike any vase. Pierre Cintas is surely correct in his suggestion, "Le Sanctuaire de Sousse", *Revue africaine*, XCI, 1947, p. 62, that any similarity to burial urns is brought about by later assimilation. The stratigraphic evidence of the Sousse tophet shows that early examples of "bottles" resemble urns far less than later ones. Even late examples like CIS III, 2 pl. XXXV, 10 show that the concept was still far removed from that of a vase. Nor does the suggestion of Miss Bisi that the "urns" are turned into idols of the heroised sacrificial child victims passed through *milk* carry much weight (*Archaeologia Viva*, I, 2, 1968-9, p. 120) since we have nothing

to suggest that such victims *were* heroised, let alone assimilated to sideral religion as would be suggested by the close association of the bottle with the disc-and-crescent (Fig. III c, f). Furthermore it is odd that apart from a few late cases where "bottles" are given human faces no attempt was made to identify such an urn-hero as either human or ceramic; and even stranger that the bottle on the medallions is guarded by Egyptian uraei. For Mme C. Picard, "Sacra Punica", *Karthago*, XIII, 1966, p. 92, the bottle is interpreted as a Tanit symbol. "Tanit apparait ainsi comme une des nombreuses héritières des Mères égéennes, divinités de fécondité et des morts". This presumably follows the suggestion of Mlle Hours-Miédan, "Les représentations figurés sur les stèles de Carthage", *Cahiers de Byrsa*, I, 1950, p. 15 ff, that there is a relation between the bottle-idol and the Cypriot and Cycladic plaque idols of the Bronze Age. But no such connection is demonstrable or likely. The bottle is not a *plaque*, the chronological gap between Mlle Hours-Miédan's Cypriote plaque goddesses and the Punic "bottle" is over two millennia. Furthermore, the Phoenicians knew very well indeed how to represent the goddess of fecundity, and even where she is represented aniconographically, she is at least identified by spots and blobs (of stars or jewellery) as in the terracotta shrines from Cyprus, *Atlas of the Cesnola Coll.*, II, nos. 101-103. Mme Picard's association of the "bottle" with Tanit is because of its association with the famous Tanit symbol. Admittedly there is such an association, though not common, and even some fusion between the bottle and the Tanit symbol. The weakness is that there is no evidence that the "Tanit symbol" has any specific connection with Tanit. Nor yet has the disc-and-crescent, which Mme Picard also brings into her argument.

G. Picard's idea that it is an aniconic image used to represent Greek divinities before the Hellenistic age (quoted by Miss Bisi, *loc. cit.*) is even more unaccountable. In his discussion of the bottle idols *Catal. Mus. Alaoui*, NS p. 22, Picard interprets them as primitive figurines or fetishes, semi-anthropomorphic, which the Greeks consecrated from immemorial times to the goddess of fecundity and protectress of the dead: 'Ces simulacres primitifs étaient encore vénérées à Alexandrie au 2^e siècle av. J. C. Trois reliefs alexandrins de cette époque: "Le paysan s'en allant au marché", l'hermaphrodite tenant l'enfant Dionysus et celui d'Alba Fucens, représentent des tholos abritant des "bouteilles" de grande taille'. His documentation is meagre and without page or object numbers. The quoted article by Charles Picard, "Observations sur l'origine et l'influences des reliefs pittoresques dits

FIGURE 111:



- a. The Abydos fetish, drawn from M-L. Buhl, *op. cit.*
- b. Stela from Carthage, C. G. Picard, *Catal. Mus. Alaoui*, NS Cb-368.
- c. Stela from Carthage, *ibid.*, Cb-190.
- d. Stela from Nora, Sardinia, G. Pesce, *Sardegna Punica*, fig. 76.

alexandrins" in *Mélanges Maspero* II, 2, (*Mémoires de la Mission Archéologique Française au Caire* (1935-7) illustrates the Palazzo Colonna relief of a hermaphrodite holding Dionysus (fig. 3) as well as the scene of the peasant going to market, a relief of the Munich Glyptothek. In the background of the former can be seen a roofless rotunda in which is a central pedestal with balustre finial. Charles Picard refers to this finial as a "vanne mystique", though, in fact, it is the normal support for the vanne mystique as can be seen in the Munich relief, where a similar balustre pedestal is placed in the middle of a round or rounded enclosure and supports the mystic basket. There is no question here of idoïs, or of goddesses of fecundity or protectresses of the dead—or indeed of *tholoi*. His further reference to Olsen and Lehmann-

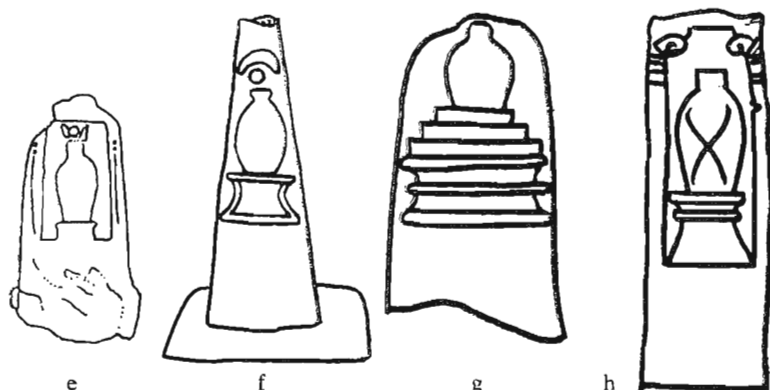


FIG. III: e. Stela from Sousse, after Cintas, *loc. cit.* f. Stela from Carthage, after Picard. g. Stela from Carthage, after Picard. h. Stela from Carthage, after Picard.

Hartleben, *Dionysiac Sarcophagi in Baltimore*, produces neither *tholoi* nor idols. They are completely absent from the "Childhood of Dionysus" sarcophagus fig. 2-6, where we might expect them. A Bacchic sarcophagus in Naples, fig. 38 in Olsen and Lehmann-Hartleben (R. Turcan, *Sarcophages Romains aux représentations Dionysiaques*, pl. 6 a) shows the reticulated *omphalos* in front of a naos, a fitting item in a Dionysiac scene. The index of Turcan *op. cit.* makes no mention of *tholoi* with bottles, and even if they do exist, it would be a very difficult matter, even granted that they might preserve something of an Alexandrian landscape tradition, to show that these reliefs of the 3rd century A.D. faithfully represent the continuum of Aegean cult-practices. We must also stress that such a practice as Picard envisages is a fertility custom not a funerary one and by this alone its relevance would be questionable. There is, in fact, only one object in ancient art which shows the same anonymous variability as the Punic "bottle". It is the fetish of the city of Abydos, which under its many forms represented either the grave of Osiris or the reliquary of the head of Osiris, which at the same time in Abydos cult was conceived to be the primaeval mound.

From the time of Seti I this fetish was established in traditional form in the shape of a tall parallel-sided mound with a spreading vase-like neck and flat rim on which the feathered orb was placed. The full pictorial representations indicate that during the XVIII Dynasty it was made of some kind of papyrus matting bound round with horizontal straps. Its only decoration is the head of Osiris which is placed towards the top of the mound underneath the rim; and an encircling snake. That this object was

also conceived to be a true mound is shown by painted models (Bonnet, *Reallexikon der Aegyptischen Religionsgeschichte*) where it is covered with round spots, the normal Egyptian convention for sand. In its most primitive form as the Old Kingdom city-fetish of Abydos, it is a rather wide mound occupied by the Osirian Djed serpent and crowned by a pair of feathers. Both the Abydos-mound and the Sokar mound are sand-heaps, and both alike are connected with the tomb of Osiris from which the new born kheper beetle will emerge. In the funerary reliefs of Seti I at Abydos, it is on the Sokar boat that the head reliquary is mounted. M. Calverley, *The Temple of King Sethos I at Abydos*, vol. I, pl. 7, shows it in profile, cask-shaped and topped with the head of Osiris; *ibid.*, vol. III, pl. 6, shows the more traditional form, a hump-shaped structure of matting with a frontal face.

The type of model reliquaries lasted well into the XXth Dynasty in Royal iconography (cf. P. Montet, *Tanis*, II pl. XLI), but by the time of Sheshonk III the parallel-sided domed reliquary had begun to narrow at the base and assume the form of a jar-like vase (*Tanis* III p. 59, pl. XXXIV, tomb of Sheshonk III—"l'emblème consiste en un poteau"). Representations of this period are not common, but we may quote a painted mummy case in Copenhagen, *Egypt and Western Asia*, Nat. Mus. Copenhagen, 1968, Inv. no. AAa 1, extremely jar-like, but retaining two horizontal¹ straps of binding.

Coming now to the period contemporary with the bottle representation on Punic stelae, 4th-3rd century B.C., we see on a stone sarcophagus in Vienna studied recently by Marie-Louise Buhl, *The Late Egyptian Anthropoid Stone Sarcophagi*, p. 133, fig. 76, that the fetish (here Fig. III a) has a rounded cap and narrow base. It stands on a pillar between Isis and Nephthys and the scarab beetle flies above it. Another example, *ibid.*, fig. 52 (Maspero, *Guide*, p. 270), shows the fetish as jar-like and with a flat rim. These two examples are of the 2nd century B.C., but a good example of the bottle-form fetish in the Persian period is given by P. Moret, *Sarcophages des époques Persane et Ptolémaïque* (Catal. gén. Caire), pl. IX, the sarcophagus of Ankhophi. In the Saite period it kept its traditional shape but lost much of its exterior detail: Moret, *Sarcophages de l'époque Bubasite à l'époque Saite* (Catal. gén. Caire), no. 41.026.

It was sometimes rendered in quite angular fashion in the late period as is shown by the excellent painted mummy-case in Copenhagen, *National Museets Arbejdsmark* 1969, p. 156, fig. 26 (4th-2nd century B.C.). Another late example in Copenhagen pictured on p. 25 of *Egypt and Western Asia*, Nat. Mus., 1968,

Inv. No. Aaa I, shows a near contemporary rendering of the fetish, shaped like an urn.

Besides being close in shape to the Punic "bottle" icon, the nature of this reliquary might also explain why Carthaginian sculptors sometimes added a human head to the bottle, but made no further attempt to anthropomorphise it. Other contemporary gravestones show that they were reasonably accomplished in the representation of human figures. I suggest that they knew that a "head" was permissible in the tradition of their exemplar, even if they imperfectly understood or had a different interpretation of the Osiris reliquary.

There are some points of divergence: the Abydos fetish is invariably represented standing on a tall slim pedestal in Egyptian art, and mostly this pedestal stands between the twin hills of the "horizon" hieroglyph. On a Phoenician bowl from Nimrud the Osiris aegis stands atop such a pedestal within a shrine. This has no equivalent at Carthage, though G. Picard, *Catal. Mus. Alaoui*, NS, Cb-333; Cb-502 shows the "bottle" mounted on a relatively high stool, certainly upon something which is not the normal Punic altar-like base. A relief from Nora, A. M. Bisi, *Le Stele Puniche*, pl. XLVIII, 1 shows it on a tall stand, whilst a relief from Carthage (Fig. III g) shows the bottle on the altar base but, in addition, with a double-stepped podium beneath it. In Egyptian iconography this podium is of course peculiar to the Osirean mound on which the mummy of Osiris is enthroned. Another divergence is that the Osirian head reliquary is invariably topped by an orb and two straight feathers, whereas in Punic art the bottle, if crowned at all, usually carries the disc, roseate disc (star) or disc-and-crescent symbol (*cf.* Picard, *op. cit.*, *passim*). If one accepts the derivation of the bottle from the fetish then one must assume that the Carthaginians substituted their own solar and lunar symbols for the symbol of Ra. But, in fact, gravestone 89 of Cintas' Sousse collection, *Revue africaine*, XCI, 1947 (here Fig. III e), is crowned by a miniature disc flanked by two feathers.⁶ It is difficult to see where this object came from if it is not from the Osiris fetish.⁷

6. Possibly also the two strange curled antennae-like lines sprouting from the 'heads' of two bottles. *CIS* 3821; *CIS* I. iii. 2. pl. LXXXI 9 are reminiscent of these two feathers, or else are an association with the kheper beetle, which is occasionally found in Punic funerary symbolism: *CIS* 2615. 3679.

7. Poinssot and Lantier interpreted the 'bottle' as a baetyl, an ovoid omphalos with the mouth of a bottle forming a means of *suspension*, *Rev. de l'hist. des Religions*, 1923, I, pp. 32-68. More correctly the vase top is a *support* for the rising sun.

There is actually no clinching argument that the bottle is derived from the fetish; but my contention is twofold: not only is variation of the bottle imagery consistent with the variation in the shape of the reliquary, but also we do know that the cult of Osiris was established among the Phoenicians and that Osiris was identified with Adonis. These two facts taken together make, to my mind, a stronger case than any yet suggested for the meaning of this elusive symbolism.

Stephan Gsell was near the point when he argued that the "bottle" was a canopus, *Hist. ancienne de l'Afrique du Nord*, IV. "bottle" was an image case, *Hist. ancienne de l'Afrique du Nord*, IV. Others have called it a canopic jar, or jar of Pustral water. But a canopic jar in the true sense it is not, for it would be a pointless cult for Carthaginians who had neither mummies nor canopic jars. As for the Osiris Canopus it would be difficult to explain its currency in Carthage before its establishment in Egypt. Anyway, the point about Canopus is that he *has* a head; the Punic bottle for the most part has none. Another characteristic of Canopus is the breast ornament. On date and decoration see Fr. W. von Bissing, *Bull. Soc. Arch. d'Alexandrie*, 24 p. 54 ff. Miss Bisi (*Archaeologia Viva*, cit.) passingly suggests that it was the Osiris mummy because of the X-cross incised on two of the bottles (e.g., *CIS* 2789, Fig. III h). It is rather a strain to see in these the crossed arms of Osiris as she suggests. For Mme Picard they are "bretelles" like those painted on certain Punic figurines.

Let us take the question of shape a little further. In some representations the bottle has a very fluid outline like a bell, or a mound with a lump on top of it—e.g., Cintas, *loc. cit.*, grave-stone 92. This shape is an intermediary between the mound and the jar—or is it simply the mound of the Malaga medallion with the cap? The monticule, which was also the reliquary of Osiris' head at Abydos, was also at the same time a primaeval mound, "The Great Land", and like the *benben* stone at Heliopolis incorporated the idea of world beginnings (H. Kees, *Der Götterglaube im alten Aegypten*, p. 96). This mound, as a grave, was guarded by hawks, still prominent in Greek magical texts: A Delatte, "Études sur la magie grecque" *Bull. Corres. hell.*, 1914, pp. 207-8 . . . *hierakōn tōn pros kephalēs tou ouranou*, relating to the Osiris' grave.

All this does not contradict the interpretation of the bottle and orb as baetyls: what the Carthaginians worshipped in their shrines were probably sacred stones in these shapes, sometimes enthroned on stepped plinths and placed between incense stands.

An obscure silver medallion from the Bordj Djedid cemetery at Carthage, Fig. II c, published many years ago by (R.P.) A. Delattre, *Comptes rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres*, 1908, p. 559, shows us the full-scale shrine, the baetyl appearing as a fusion of the shapes of bottle and orb. It stands on a plinth: cf. C. Pichard, *op. cit.*, no. Cb-305 (cp. Fig. III b, f), and is flanked by stylized trees, standards or candelabra (?) in the celestial naiskos-shrine.

The use of the Osiris reliquary mound expressed, then, the hope of personal renewal in the afterlife. Whilst theophoric names with Osiris are rare, names like Abdosir and Melekosir (CIS 122 and 123 bis and Delattre *La nécropole punique des Rabs, deuxième année des fouilles*, p. 29) speak for themselves and Baudissin in *Adonis und Esmun*, pp. 183-210, has amply documented the Adonis-Osiris syncretism. Even so, the cult of Adonis-Osiris was of minor importance at Carthage, and it is not pretended here that the use of the Osiris reliquary as a funerary symbol was the result of an active Osiris cult. I would, however, contend that there are circumstances favourable to the Phoenician borrowing of such a symbol, apart from the obvious inference from the abundant Egyptian religious bric-à-brac in Punic tombs, especially the amulets from Carthage, Sardinia and Malta containing scrolls with Egyptian magical texts, that Carthaginians revered Egyptian religious symbolism. Phoenicians visited the cenotaph of Osiris at Abydos, leaving numerous graffiti; and at Byblos an annual ceremony involving a reliquary of Osiris was celebrated into the first century A.D. Lucian saw at Byblos the head of Osiris which was supposed to have floated over the waters from Alexandria, and, in a pun, refers to it as *Kephalēn byblinēn*, a head of papyrus. Stephen of Byzantium and the *Etymologicum Magnum* speak of a diadema of byblinon belonging to Osiris, placed there by Isis in mourning for his body.⁸ It is very unlikely that a wreath of papyrus flowers or any other kind of "diadem" is the source of these references, for such Osiris never wears; but it is possible that they refer to the traditional papyrus head-reliquary. At any rate it is certain that relics of Osiris played some part in the cult of Byblos.

The basic and most difficult question about this interpretation (and indeed of all others) is: why cannot the usage of the "funerary vase" be derived from that of Greece, where we see, for instance already in the 6th century on the Clazomenian sarcophagi the

8. Stephen of Byzantium (Byblos), "Alii vero censent nomen inde habere, quod Isis Osiridem defens, illic capitis diadema deposuerit. ex Aegyptia byblo confectum."

funerary lebes (handleless) on top of a pillar standing on a mound? The answer is that the iconography of the Carthaginian stelae must be connected with that of the earlier medallions, whose iconographic source is Egyptian. In these, as on the stelae, the "bottle" stands on a cavetto altar-top, Fig. III c, h. However, the impact of classical art in the late 4th century did influence this usage of the bottle, for we see it (and the pomegranate) used on Punic stelae standing on top of an Ionic columns reminiscent of numerous Attic grave semata, and, in the case of the pomegranate, the well-known tomb cippus of Demetrius of Phaleron at Athens. It is, however, at the same time important to recognize that the Punic usage of these semata is entirely non-Ionic. Either they are used as cosmic emblems, not mere memoria, or are used in pairs according to the old and familiar Semitic usage and doubling as altars. The rather insignificant and non-monumental pomegranates must be related to the other evidence we have for the use of the pomegranate in Punic funerary cult in this period: A. Merlin, *Bull. Arch.*, 1917, p. 136, for Carthage and N. Sardo, *Arch. Storico per la Sicilia*, 1943, p. 161, for Palermo tombs. These are terracotta models of pomegranates like those used in Sicily and S. Italy, whence doubtless the Carthaginians derived the custom of using them. This "elevation" of the offering, in one case a lamb and dish, does not, however, derive from Greek usage and seems pointless unless we are to conceive these pillars as acting also as altars. The fish, a commonly used funerary offering among the Carthaginians, is placed at the base of the pomegranate-bearing pillar, suggesting perhaps that the pomegranate and fish are celestial and chthonic emblems respectively, but, whatever the case, certainly reinterpreting and adapting whatever was borrowed.

But the Greek funerary stela was certainly influential. An Ionic pillar with mounted sphinx *CIS* 4044 (cf. Mme Picard, *loc. cit. infra*, pl. VI for photograph) occurs on a tombstone with a palmette acroterion copied from a 5th century source and the pillar is seen on *CIS* I, 4, 399 topped by the "bottle" symbol very reminiscent of an urn.⁹

Returning now to the development of the "bottle" symbol, there appears to be some stratigraphical evidence from the Tanit Precinct to show that it acquired a face—e.g., Picard, Cb-412—

9. The Atticising style of certain details of Punic stelae in the late 4th century should be seen as part of the general Phoenician contact with Athens at this time rather than a purely Carthaginian phenomenon. There is an important stela in the Louvre from Sidon carved with the figure of a Phoenician priest and surmounted by a palmette acroterion in the latest 4th century Atticising style: H. Möbius, *Die Ornamente der griechischen Grabstelen*, p. 49, pl. 37 B.

only in the 3rd and 2nd centuries B.C. and that in this it most probably shared the contemporary anthropomorphisation of the Tanit symbol. Vegetation sometimes decorates the bottle in this period, appropriate for Osiris, but not for Canopus. A further fusion took place with the foliated cippus: Cb-572; CIS 2733. The cutting of a sharp distinction between the head and the body of the bottle in the form of a pointed neckline can be tied down by its appearance on bottles carved on acroterion stelae which display Greek or South Italian influence. The force of this influence came in the third quarter of the 4th century when Carthaginians were in alliance with Athens, a connection cut off by the rise of Agathocles in Syracuse. This peril disappeared in 307 and the Ptolemaic period brought new prosperity for Carthage and the alliance between Ptolemy and Tarentum an important new trading alliance in the west Mediterranean.

The implications of Carthage's Greek and South Italian connections during this period have been treated by C. Picard in "Thèmes hellénistiques sur les stèles de Carthage", *Antiquités africaines*, I, 1967, pp. 1-30. It is particularly noteworthy that the Phoenician Egyptianising naiskos gives place to the classical *heroön* of South Italian vases and that the anthemion is placed inside them on the Punic stelae as in the painted vases of South Italian workshops. From the same Hellenistic source comes the fluted crater to be found on many of the stelae, identical in the form of its foot to that in the Hellenistic wall-painting tradition, as Lehman *op. cit. infra*, pl. XXXIX. For Picard, loc. cit., p. 26, this is a Bacchic emblem, but as yet the precise source of the Carthaginian *usage* of the crater has not been investigated.

We can be sure that the Carthaginians in this period borrowed much of their apparatus from Italy. A terracotta tub found at the Punic site of Solonto in Sicily, *Fasti Arch.* VII, 3770 is decorated with an upper frieze of architectural triglyphs and below engraved with Tanit signs, caducei, other religious emblems and lion heads. It is directly related to the stucco supports from Pompeii like the ones published by E. Pernice in F. Winter, *Die hellenistische Kunst in Pompeii*, V, p. 31 ff; pl. 12; and pl. XXI, 1 for the lion heads.¹⁰

LITURGICAL APPARATUS

It is at this period that we see appearing on Carthaginian gravestones the apparatus of Punic ritual. Appertaining to it, one of the objects with which Mme Picard does not deal has not been

10. Dr. L. Carton. *Sanctuaire punique découvert à Carthage*, pp. 23-24 describes a number of cylindrical terracotta cult vessels with triglyphs and garlands in relief.

clearly understood and has given rise to some false and misleading interpretations. It is a strange object resembling a pineapple on a stand (Fig. IV a, b, c). The recent suggestion, *Archaeologia Viva*, I, p. 145, that it is a beehive is quite absurd. There are no bees, and the associations (*CIS* II, 4, 2071, 2150) show clearly that it went together with the cultic jug and low-domed pyxis in a set of liturgical apparatus. The best photograph of the most detailed example (*CIS* 2652) is in *Carthage punique* by G. G. Lapeyre and A. Pellegrin, pl. 4 a. The two lion's feet with which it is provided show quite clearly that it was a thymiaterium, comparable with similar objects known in Hellenistic tradition and with some surviving directly comparable examples. Fig. IV e shows an incense-stand and domical lid from Touch el-Garmous belonging to the early Ptolemaic period. Thymiateria of this type are Alexandrian in origin. Theodor Schreiber has collected some examples of them in his *Alexandrinische Toreutik*, pp. 444-5, where he suggests that their currency in the Greco-Roman world probably came about through the cult of Isis. None of Schreiber's examples is precisely like what appears on Carthaginian grave-stones, but the Ptolemaic example quoted above (taken from Wigand's "Thymiaterium", *Bonner Jahrbücher*, 122, 1912, p. 73. pl. V, 3, 4) gives a precise parallel except for the pinecone-like top. A Hellenistic example from Taranto has exactly such a pinecone. P. Wuilleumier, *Le trésor de Tarente* (Paris, 1930), pp. 48-55, pl. VII.

Another thymiaterium of this type is to be seen in the "Cup of the Ptolemies" in Bibliothèque Nationale—Alexandrian work of the first half of the 1st century B.C.; cf. A. Adriani, *Divagazioni intorno ad una coppa Paesistica del Museo di Alessandria*, Rome, 1959, pp. 23-24. Incense-stands of this type continued in use in Alexandria into the second half of the 1st century A.D., cf. Adriani, "Ipogeo dipinto della via Tigran Pascia", *Bull. Soc. Arch. d'Alexandrie*, 41, 1956, p. 72, pl. III, I. Domical incense-stand covers with lattice design can also be seen in the paintings of a 3rd century B.C. tomb from the Hadra cemetery at Alexandria, B. R. Brown, *Ptolemaic Paintings and Mosaics and the Alexandrian style*, catal. no. 31, pl. XXIII. From Alexandrian metalshops it found its way to Italy and appears in the Hellenistic wall-painting tradition at Boscoreale, P. W. Lehman, *Wall Paintings from Boscoreale in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, 1953, pl. XVIII, XIX, where one is shown in front of the facade of the temple of Aphrodite. A fluted incense-stand, without lid, but holding a large pinecone, was used in the mysteries, M. P. Nilsson, *The Dionysiac Mysteries of the Hellenistic and Roman Age*, p. 83,

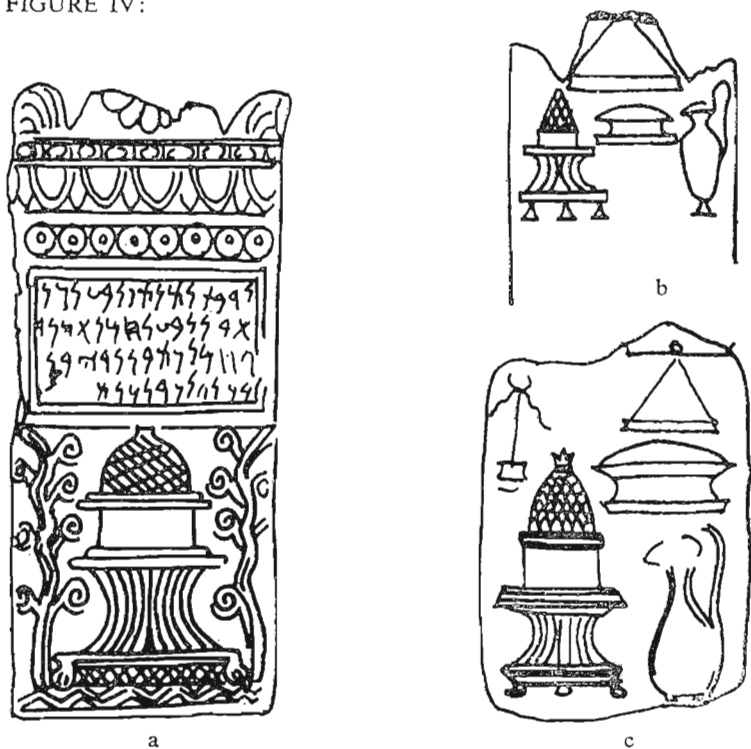
fig. 14, where it is shown together with a *cista mystica* on a glass vessel in Florence, Fig. IV d.¹¹

We must clearly dismiss therefore the suggestion of Mlle Hours-Miédan that these domed objects are themselves *cistae mysticae*: though it is true she was aware of Lapeyre and Pellegrin's passing suggestion that they were thymiateria. Mme Picard also refers to mystic cists on the stelae of Carthage, and in "Sacra Punica", *Karthago*, XIII, 1966, p. 114, speaks of "cistes, paniers de fruits" on them.¹² Here in the context of her discussion of sacred congregations at Carthage it is more important to correct this matter. Nothing clearly resembling the *cista mystica* appears on Punic gravestones though there is a candidate CIS 291, where the discussion illustrates two other examples, open and containing simpula. One of these cupboard-like structures resembles the kind of mystic cist seen in the Ostia wallpainting, F. Matz, *Dionysiakē Teletē*, pl. 25: but they might simply be tabernacles for liturgical vessels without any connection with "mysteries".

CIS 2652 (here Fig. IV a), which is the fullest representation of the incense-stand, has details which suggest that it is more than a piece of cultic apparatus. Its position between trees (or ivy bands) and the rippled lines of water under the base suggest that it is cosmic. There are somewhat similar presentations of the Tanit symbol: CIS 3550 and 5732 show this standing on water and the underworld fish and there are numerous representations of the Tanit symbol between trees. There is not enough circumstance to warrant our regarding the incense-stand as a deity-substitute for Baal Hammon, but it is not without interest that the Roman coinage of Byblos shows a chapel containing an incense-stand on one side of the temenos. This shrine can scarcely be regarded as an adyton, since the incense-stand stands in the way of entrants. It is quite possible that the altar of incense was an icon in its own

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11. It is probable that Picard's Cb-698 and Cb-705 represent incense-burners with their covers removed. It is very likely that the pinecone lid derives from the custom of placing pinecones in the incense, as we can see on the glass vase in Florence, Fig. IV d. From Carthage there are many low-domed lids of incense-stands decorated with circles of stepped moellons, like the pieces illustrated by P. Gauckler *Nécropoles puniques*, pl. CXCVI. This would give something like the effect of a pinecone even though the moellon itself has probable associations with mountains and altars. In both Hellenistic Syrian religion and at Rome the pinecone had an important place in ritual offerings, probably for its symbolic associations as well as for its perfume.
 12. *loc. cit.*, p. 26: "Le rinceau qui apparaît à l'origine lié au décor des cellae, devient ensuite un motif passe partout: on le trouve encadrant la ciste mystique sur la stèle CIS 2652."

FIGURE IV:



a. *CIS*, 2652.

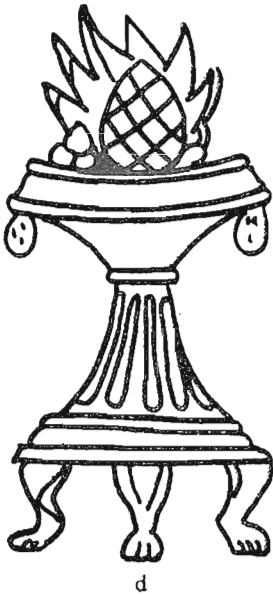
b. *CIS*, 2017.

c. *CIS*, 2161.

right in the late period. The cosmic implications of the pinecone lie outside the scope of an article such as this. Suffice it to refer to the ideas of Balwin Smith in *The Dome* and to point here simply to the iconographic origin of the pinecone top out of the use of real cone on incense-stands and altars appertaining to Isiac and Dionysiac rites, of which we illustrate an example, Fig. IV d.

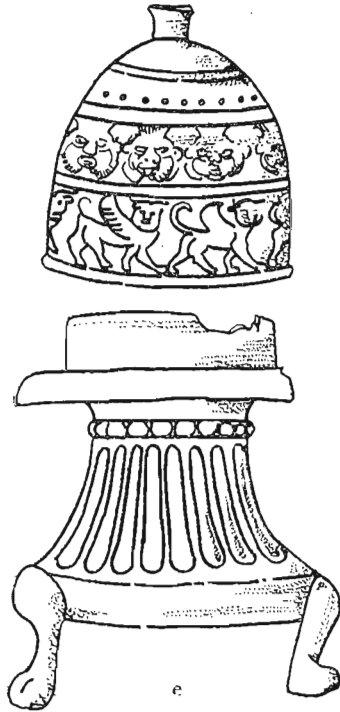
Nor is this the place to add to the discussion of the meaning of the Tanit symbol which has been interpreted as almost everything from the female pudendum to a stylised altar of incense, as Mesnil du Buisson, "L'autel à parfum" *Bull. de la Soc. Nat. des Antiquaires de France*, 1942, p. 95 ff. I fully concur with M. Cintas' recent expression of the futility of seeking an explanation of this symbol in terms of cult objects or usages (*Archaeologia Viva*, I, 2). This sign is a contrived expression of the Cartha-

FIGURE IV:



d

d. Thymiaterion from a vase in Florence.
e. Thymiaterion.



e

ginian faith in the reality of the divine milieu and the divine presence. It is a statement of belief, for which there is really no exact equivalent.

This last statement is mine, not Cintas'; and like all such statements is beyond any substantiation. A partial analogy is the *djed* pillar in Egyptian religion which stood for a set of forceful ideas concerning the afterlife in Osiris but which in itself suggested none of these.

But in the final analysis, what is the *djed* pillar? It is a support, an altar on which Osiris dwells and is the associate of his presence. Unlike the Tanit symbol, however, the *djed* pillar doubtless had a physical origin, for as an object, a pillar, it can be traced back to Dynasty II. It is not, therefore, "invented" or "contrived" like the so-called Tanit symbol, which from its inception bears no relation to any physical object we know of.

The cross-bar element on the Tanit symbol is the only one for which a physical, liturgical origin is likely. It suggests the

“horns” of the Semitic altar form, which in turn is a horizon symbol. Most surviving Punic altars do not have horns, but are derived from the flat-topped *djed* altar with cavetto mouldings or the Egyptian pylon. However, *CIS* III, ii, pl. XXVI, 13 shows a pair of altars of classical derivation, rather incongruously provided with four horns each. It does not appear to be going too far to suggest that the disc and altar horns of the Tanit symbol belong to a common set of ancient Mediterranean ideas which conceived the sun or sky-god to emerge from his chthonic regions between “horns” or mountains, or to dwell beyond them. And as Mlle Hours-Miédan’s useful analysis appears to show, the pristine form of the symbol is not that of a manikin with out-stretched arms, but is a triangle or trapezium topped by the crossbar (with or without horns) over which, and separately from which, the disc-and-crescent is placed. Whilst therefore it is the *cosmic* altar, consistent with the entire Semitic concept of the microcosmic nature of an altar, we cannot expect it to correspond with an actual cult object any more than the Christian trefoil of *tres-in-uno* can be expected to turn up as a cult object in a Christian shrine.

Naturally archaeologists rest uneasily with such interpretations. But what a tragic mistake would have been made if the explanation of the rebus and acronymic of *ichthys* was all that had survived to explain the Christian symbolism of the fish, and no scholars humane enough to guess the further implications. The presence of the cavetto altar top beneath religious emblems on both Punic medallions and gravestones is quite obviously the iconographic “shorthand” for removing them into the world beyond. Mythical Egyptian creatures on Phoenician bowls and the representation of the deceased on the gravestone from Sidon, mentioned below, stand on pylon-like altar tops, as indeed does the entire shrine on the Bordj-Djedid medallion, Fig. II c. It is, I think therefore, permissible to postulate a connection between the Tanit symbol and the *idea* of an altar, but no liturgical object—least of all the incense-burner—and no cult object (unless we spare a passing glance at a late relief published by Beule, Fig. V f) bears any resemblance to it.

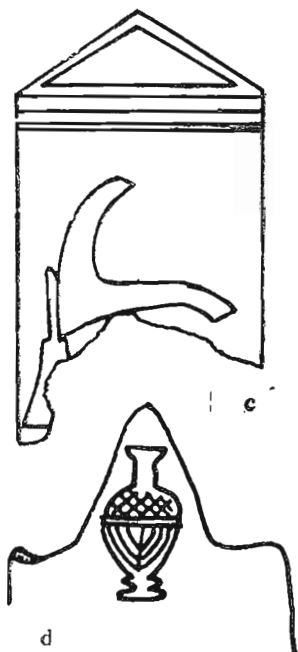
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On two of the Carthaginian stelae the incense-stand is accompanied by a low-domed pyxis and a tall jug, a copy of a gadrooned metal jug obviously. The low-domed pyxis is relatively frequent *CIS* 1577; 2071; 2150; 2650; 3145; 3287; 3483; 3537; 3625; 3626; 3675. It compares closely in contours with the circular domed-lid box carried by reliefs of Punic clergy carved on the lids of sarcophagi, *Catal. du Musée Lavignerie de St.*

FIGURE V:



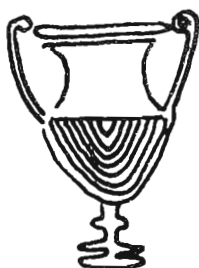
a



d



b



e



f

- a. *CIS*, 326.
 b. Stela of Beitenas Hermes.
 c. Cyprus Museum Stela from Larnaca.
 d. *CIS*, 2148.
 e. *CIS*, 2010.
 f. Beule, *Fouilles de Carthage*, relief.

Louis de Carthage, I p. 70, pl. IX, p. 72, pl. X and *ibid.*, *Suppl.* I, p. 9, pl. 2 as well as by the priestess *ibid.*, p. 15, pl. III. This combination of domed incense-stand and long-lipped jug most likely is taken from Alexandrian cultic apparatus: the two feature together in the reliefs of a silver cup in the Boscoreale treasure, *Monuments Piot*, V, p. 80, pl. XV, alongside the handle.

I have previously remarked on the importance of this jug in Punic cult, one of which appears to have the head of a sheep for a spout. This latter feature may be a development from or related to the upper handle attachments on metal jugs like the one carved on the gravestone Picard, Cb.-687. Apart from this, the vessel type with its high-swung handle is not taken from Punic ceramics, or, as far as we know, from Punic metalwork tradition, since all metal jugs found at Carthage after 400 B.C. are either South Italian imports or local copies. The type of bronze oenochoe, either Alexandrian or South Italian, *Wyndham Cook Collection*, p. 118, pl. XXXIX 57, with its widely spaced flutings, was copied in pottery at Carthage¹³ and the ram's head on the top of the handle might well be connected with the development of the ram-headed spout on the gravestone jugs (*CIS* 5775).

There can be no doubt that the kantharos (Fig. V e) depicted on the stelae is derived from classical models cf. *CIS* III, ii, pl. XXXI, 12, which has its engraved ivy band; and *ibid.*, pl. XXVII, 3, shows the complete form of the puzzling handleless ampulla which commonly appears on the gables of stelae (Fig. V d) in this period, for occasionally it has the small curled handles of a hydria of Cumaean or South Italian type.

Another vessel type has passed without comment: this is what the *CIS* editors sometimes call a situla but is in fact a kyathos or simpulum. The associations (*CIS* I, iii, 3, 5927 with a caduceus; *CIS* I, iii, 2, pl. XLIII, 18 with Tanit symbol and caduceus; I, iii, 2 pl. XXXVII, 21, pair of them at each side of a double axe) mostly suggest that this was a ceremonial vessel. The simpulum was associated with the axe in the cultic apparatus of the early Roman priesthood and the simpulum with low curved handle and the sacrificial knife is placed with the tall spouted jug on early Roman coins struck in honour of persons raised to the priesthood¹⁴ (cf. Daremberg-Saglio, "simpulum"). At Carthage the priestess carved on the well-known sarcophagus lid, *Catal. Mus. Lavigerie*, Supp. I, pl. III, carries such a simpulum.

13. *Catal. Mus. Alaoui* I, pl. XLI, 17, and a very good example from Algeria, *Le Bardo, Mus. d'Ethnographie et de Préhistoire d'Alger*, endpiece.

14. Its use in Isiac ritual is attested by the famous Belvedere relief, Daremberg-Saglio illustration 4103.

The association of the simpulum with the balance *CIS* I, 4, 291, is probably non-cultic and relating to the profession of the deceased.

There is another object, or rather pair of objects occurring together on Punic stelae *CIS* 265, 326 to which Mlle Hours-Miédan has given a religious interpretation, *loc. cit.*, p. 57, pl. XXX a-c, here drawn Fig. V a. She sees in the flat blade-like object with a tenon, a handle for burning coals on the altar and in the strange object shaped like a hoe perhaps an axe, "un cuisse votive" or perhaps the Punic "razor", which has been given a religious interpretation.

The answer is quite different and was given briefly in a different context long ago in a short paper by M. E. Michon, *Bull. de la Société Nat. des Antiquaires de France*, 1900, pp. 98-102. On the 2nd century B.C. tombstone of Beitenos Hermes, a couch-maker (*kleinopēgos*) from the Peloponnese now in the Louvre—Fig. V b. A stela in the Cyprus Museum from Kition, Fig. V c, has a much closer representation to the Punic combination and is inscribed with a 3rd century Phoenician inscription, J. L. Myres, *Catal. Cyprus Mus.*, p. 172, a chariot maker.

The stela of Beitenos Hermes shows quite clearly that the blade was fastened to the frame by a strap. Two small straps are quite clear on the gravestone from Carthage. Although the resulting instrument is quite different from the Roman plane (*runcina*) there can be little doubt that a planing instrument is intended. The matter is clinched by *CIS* 326 on which the dead is described as a cabinet maker. Thus with three out of four representations of these instruments specifically associated with carpenters, we cannot interpret them as cult instruments. It is also noteworthy how often the set square and dividers which accompany the plane on the Beitenos Hermes stela occur on Punic gravestones. Classical texts leave us in no doubt of the ability of the Carthaginian craftsmen in making couches and beds. Finally we may note that the identical instrument occurs together with a set square and plumb-bob on a Roman gravestone in Florence published by H. Gummerus *JDAI*, XXVIII, 1913, p. 113.

THE PUNIC "CADUCEUS"

Alongside the appearance of apparatus of Alexandrian or South Italian derivation appears the "caduceus". Mlle Hours-Miédan has correctly stressed that the Carthaginian caduceus has nothing directly to do with the Greek and Roman staff of Hermes and Aesculapius, whilst Miss Bisi, *loc. cit.*, p. 204, regards it as

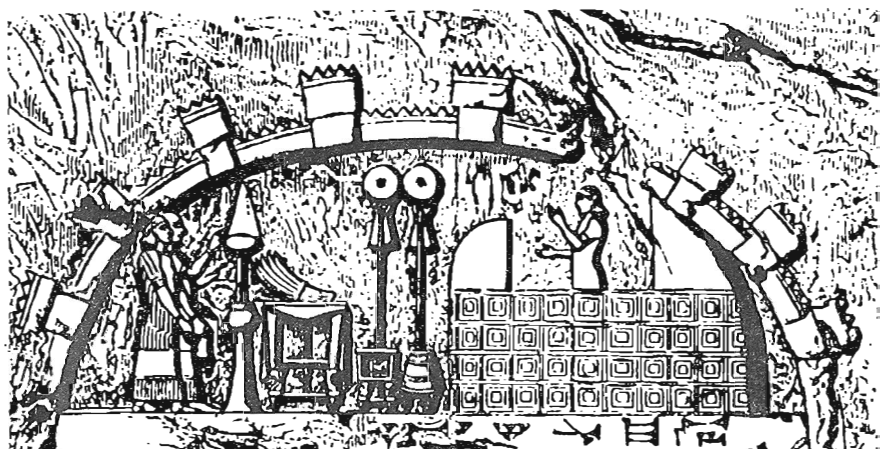
borrowed.¹⁵ From scores of examples which can be checked it is clear that the "caduceus" at Carthage seldom has snakes and never wings like its Greek counterpart. Furthermore, although the Punic caduceus can occasionally be shown to have been put in the hands of a Tanit symbol-like figure, like a wand, its usage is entirely different. They are used singly or in pairs, or more rarely in triads (CIS 689, 2296).

In by far the majority of cases the caduceus on the Punic stelae was set upright in a stand or set up on a cavetto dais (CIS 2257) or triangular base (CIS 1904; 2235) and most frequently they are used in pairs to flank the Tanit symbol or other religious emblem. By the Carthaginian artists it was assimilated to a tree, shown with reticulated trunk and flanked by the two lotus buds which characterise the Phoenician Tree of Life—Fig. VI, b. In these and less arboreal examples the top appears to be a disc topped by a crescent, an arrangement to which there are some Near Eastern parallels in a certain standard associated with the moon god Sin at Harran. Gadd has published a stela from Yarimca, near Harran, *Anat. Studies*, I, 1951, carved with a signum consisting of a small orb topped by a large crescent. This is the same type of signum used on the 9th century B.C. stela of Bar-Rekub from Senjirli, and its long life is attested by its occurrence at Dura Europos (Bossert *Alt-Syrien*, 567) of the 2nd century A.D., where, like the Punic caduceus, it was provided with flying ribands. It is often represented on Parthian coins: G. F. Hill, *BMC Parthia*, pls. XXVIII, XXXV.

Crescent-moon standards of this type are not shown used in pairs: however, it was normal Mesopotamian practice to flank the temple gates with standards of a slightly different kind, the sugariaum with its disc-like top and hanging tassels. Mrs. E. van Buren in *The Symbols of the Gods*, pp. 90-93, and *Clay Figurines* no. 238, where they are shown flanking a model shrine, discusses these sun discs and shows that they do not belong exclusively to Shamash. On active service the priest of the Assyrian army erected a pair of them besides the field altar, Fig. VI a. The texts prove that the sugaru could be drawn up or pulled down from its place. The word *sugaru* itself, according to Mrs. van Buren *Symbols*, p. 91, has a basic connotation of the twig or branch of a date

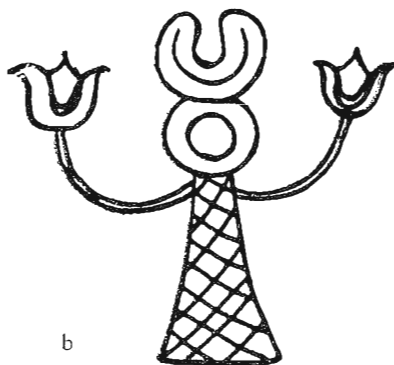
15. The arguments of G. Picard, *op. cit.*, p. 27, that Hermes was assimilated to the Punic pantheon has admittedly a little more ground to rest on than the caducei, but insofar as he places significance on these emblems, they are a weak argument, for caducei belong equally to Aesculapius, whom we know to have been assimilated to Eshmun at Carthage. The serpent-end caducei he quotes, Cb-803, 836, 845, do not appear entirely convincing.

FIGURE VI:



a

- a. Field altar in Assyrian army camp, Assyrian relief.
 b. The Punic caduceus as a 'tree'.
 Beule, *Fouilles de Carthage*.



b

palm, and indeed the remains of the trunks of these objects with their metal coverings embossed to look like date-palms were found at the entrance to the temple in Khorsabad.

It is tempting therefore to connect the Punic caducei with Canaanite *asherim* which were "implanted", "cut down", "uprooted" and "burned", and for which the women of Shechem wove some kind of clothes (Deut., 16:12)¹⁶. The time gap is a large one, but in this case there is a circumstantial bridging provided by the continuity of the pair of sacred pillars to flank the cult object on a great number of Carthaginian stelae, repeating the well-known Biblical and Canaanite usage.

16. R. Patai, "The Goddess Asherah", *JNES*, 24, p. 37 ff.

Apart from appearing in the positions noted above the Punic emblem is also depicted on gravestones standing on the sterns of ships, Hours-Miédan pl. XXXIX d (*CIS* 4394). This is a useful pointer, for a very similar standard consisting of a globe topped by a crescent and supported by a high pole is carried on the sterns of Phoenician galleys depicted on the coinage of Sidon during the Persian period. The clearest example is the excellent double shekel of King Straton I of Sidon (370-358 B.C.) with a Phoenician galley "am Heck Standarte mit Globus und Mond-sichel", *Antike Münzen* Auktion 12-13 April, 1962, Adolph Hess A.G., Lucerne, no. 366, p. 52. There is also a good example, Sylloge N. Copenhagen, no. 207. On the British Museum Phoenician coinage this standard is not so clear in most cases. It first appears on the galleys of the coins attributed to the end of the 5th century. G. F. Hill, *BMC Phoenicia*, p. 139. Hill, p. 143, notes the globe and crescent standard on the stern of a ship on a bronze double shekel of about 380. It can also be very clearly seen on the half and sixteenth shekel pieces *ibid.*, p. 140-142 on the sterns of ships outlined against the walls of Sidon. It does not appear on issues later than Straton II and is absent from galleys on the Phoenician coinage of Byblos. A case can be made out for its appearance at Sidon, slightly before the end of the 5th century, for the issues preceding the war galley issues depict a sailing ship with furled sail (*BMC Phoenicia*, pl. XVII, 12, 13), on which the pole of the standard but not the top can be made out. Clearer is G. MacDonald, *Catal. of Greek Coins in the Hunterian Coll.*, II, p. 249, pl. LXXVI, 13. It is clear also on the rare issue no. 271, *Monnaies et Médailles*, Vente Publique 37 (5 Dec., 1968), a didrachma of about 475 B.C.

The caduceus emblem on Punic stelae has sometimes two or more superimposed discs (*CIS* 396) and two examples have termini in the shapes of spears: *CIS* I, ii, 2, 1097; Perrot and Chipiez, *Hist. de l'art*, II, fig. 60. These look uncommonly like Roman standards and this likeness opens the very difficult question of the oriental origin of Roman standards, both of the signum and the quiris, the oak lance which preceded it. The semeion in the Hierapolis temple described by Lucian *De Dea Syria*, 33, cf. A. B. Cook. *Zeus*, I, p. 587, is depicted on the coins as an object resembling a Roman standard and a similar object appears on the well-known relief of Bel and Atargatis from Dura Europos: cf. H. Stocks, 'Studien zu Lukians "De Dea Syria" *Berytus*, IV, I, pp. 17 ff.

Certainly the Persian flag *solem depictum in linteo* (Tertullian, *Apologia*, XV), surmounted by an eagle, precedes its

Roman counterpart and there is considerable opinion that elements of the standard if not the entire idea were acquired by the Romans from the Hellenistic armies of the east. Tertullian informs us that the cult of standards was the entire worship of the army and it is interesting to compare this with R. Labat's remark on Assyrian standards: "Ces enseignes étaient vénérées, à l'instar des statues divines, comme la personification même du dieu. Dans les champs, on leur offrait des sacrifices", *Le caractère religieux de la royauté assyro-babylonienne*, p. 259.¹⁷

Now whilst it is admitted that the form of the Punic caduceus was influenced by its Classical counterpart and whilst a few of them do appear to have snake heads (although purely Hellenistic ones) what is finally decisive in this argument is the way in which the caduceus is used. We have two excellent examples on Punic stelae, one of very Greek style, from Lilybaeum, Bisi *op. cit.* fig. 112, pl. XLIII, 2.¹⁸ On these the "caduceus" has a conical base and stands beside the altar of incense (a "lily" stand) whilst the Grecian ladies worship. It is not a rod: it is that type of divine instar which we have reason to believe stood by Semitic altars as the asherim stood by the baalim.

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17. The evidence that standards were worshipped by Oriental armies before the Roman cult of signa is discussed by F. Sarre, *Klio*, III, p. 370 f, and cf. J. Przyluski, "Le culte de l'étendard chez les Scythes et dans l'Inde," *Zalmoxis*, I, 1938, p. 13 ff. As yet, however, whilst it is certain that Syria and Iran had a cult of standards independent of Roman practice, the evidence for the derivation of the Roman cult from the East is lacking. The parallelisms in the forms and of Roman and Oriental standards are, however, too striking to be coincidental.
18. Another stela, apparently now lost, was described by Lagumina *Archivio storico per la Sicilia orientale*, VII. pp. 122-125.