

# The City and the Coin in the Ancient and Early Medieval Worlds

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Cover coin: RPC1 172, Obv: AVGVSTVS DIVI F, bare head, r.; Rev: C LAETILIVS APALVS II V Q, diadem (with crescent and lotus above) enclosing REX PTOL. The Trustees of the British Museum.

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# ETHNIC, CULTURAL AND CIVIC IDENTITIES IN ANCIENT COINAGE OF THE SOUTHERN IBERIAN PENINSULA (3<sup>rd</sup> C. BC – 1<sup>st</sup> C. AD)

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## ABSTRACT

Behind the complex systematisation of the coinage from Ulterior lie relevant contributions to the ethnocultural mapping of the region. This paper explores the possibility, as in the case of Phoenician-Punic coinage, of using numismatic evidence from Turdetani, Turduli, Oretanos, and Bastetano cities to identify distinct cultural realities – enhanced or not by Roman presence in the region. It further questions whether these realities correspond with maps based on previous studies on place names, archaeological remains and ancient geographical references.

One of the most important, and hence one of the most exploited aspects in Ancient coinage since early antiquarian studies, is iconography, although perhaps it would be better to say ‘imagery’, so as to also include writing, in its double role as a complement to the designs and as an official document issued by the authorities.<sup>(1)</sup> Without intending to sound categorical, coinage does differentiate itself from other archaeological documents, because it is a ‘thinking source’, in as much as it combines writing and images, which transmit ideas full of meaning, in a similar way to literary sources. Following this idea, and leaving any economic or intrinsic-symbolical value aside, we would like to propose the possibility of finding certain identity markers belonging to the communities that issued these coins -or to be more precise, of those who ordered them to be issued. Identity is understood here as a marker, signalling differences, which were not necessarily exclusive or caused by resistance.<sup>(2)</sup>

## PREVIOUS STUDIES: ETHNICITY IN SPANISH NUMISMATIC LITERATURE OF THE 19TH C

Not surprisingly, such avant-garde concepts in numismatics, ethnicity and identity,<sup>(3)</sup> actually trace their roots to the

19th C, when iconography and coin legends were widely used as direct testimonies of Ancient peoples, the ‘essence’ and singularity of which were reinterpreted in national histories of several European countries (Alföldi 1989, pp. 19-21). While still differentiated, Spanish numismatics did not escape this 19th C trend, and attempted, in tune with the historiographical interests of the time, to recognise the genuine ‘Spanish character’ as far back in time as possible (Wulff 2003, pp. 116-124).

Perhaps the best example for this use of Ancient Spanish coinage, together with other literary, geographical and archaeological sources, is found in the work of Antonio Delgado y Hernández.<sup>(4)</sup> He asserts that the symbols found on medals explain the origin of communities “... *los símbolos contenidos en las medallas, explican el origen de los pueblos ...*” (Delgado, 1871, i), and attributes ethnic identities to certain coin types, which he considers ‘racial emblems’ (“*emblemas de raza*”) (Delgado, 1871, clxii). The ethnicity that according to this author may be identified in Ancient coin types of the Iberian Peninsula supports his claim to the Celtic origin of the inhabitants of *Ostur* and *Celti*, which he deduces from the depiction of wild boars (Delgado, 1871, clxiii, 113-115) (Fig. 1). As much may be said for the interest in documenting Phoenician presence in southern Iberia through coinage, which was not limited to the study of the well-known Phoenician Punic coinage of *Gadir*, *Bailo*, or *Asido* among others, but also included other coastal cities, such as *Lacipo* (Fig. 2) and especially others from the *Baetic* interior, such as *Bora* and *Carmo*. Despite using Latin writing and imprinting a Classical style to the iconography,

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(1) The contribution of coin iconographies to current research is manifest (Caccamo Caltabiano 1998, pp. 57-62); also for Hispano-Roman coinage, *vid.* García-Bellido 1992, p. 240; Beltrán Lloris 2004; Chaves Tristán 2008.

(2) This interdisciplinary approach was first put forth in a Colloquium of the University of Malaga in May 2003, on ethnic identities and political identities in Pre-Roman Spain, which was subsequently published (Cruz Andreotti, Mora Serrano 2004).

(3) Also attempted for Roman Republican (Farney 2007, pp. 82-87) and provincial (Burnett 2005) coinage.

(4) (Antonio Delgado and Hernández 1871-1876), at least the writing of his general comments, inserted in his *Prolegómenos* (Delgado 1871, pp. i-clxxxvii) may be traced back to the mid 19th C. Current interest in these studies, from a historiographical perspective, is more than evident (Mora Serrano 2000a, Mora 2000, pp. 176-178).

they were still presented as evidence for the antiquity and strong Phoenician influence in a large part of Turdetania, which today is completely accepted.<sup>(5)</sup>

The work of A. Delgado constitutes an early example of the exploitation of coin iconography for the study of ethno-cultural identities in southern Iberia,<sup>(6)</sup> but it also addresses the need to overcome the rigid criteria that still today restrains explanations and studies of Ancient coinage of the Peninsula, subject to the type of writing used (García-Bellido 2001, pp. 138-141; Untermann 1992, pp. 29-33). This observation is especially relevant in relation to the important Phoenician Punic presence in the region, recorded by Strabo (3.2.13), Mela (2.94 ss.) or the known passage of Agrippa, reproduced in Pliny (*Nat. Hist.*, 3.7-8). Hence, the revision or discovery of new examples, belonging to well-known 'Latin' coinages of *Uterior-Baetica*, such as *Nabrisa* and especially *Sacili*,<sup>(7)</sup> bearing Neo-Punic inscriptions, only confirms the evidence recorded by Ancient texts and archaeological field work.<sup>(8)</sup>

#### PRIOR CONSIDERATIONS: LIMITS AND POSSIBILITIES IN THE STUDY OF COIN TYPES FROM SOUTHERN IBERIA

Specific studies, particular to numismatics, such as seriation, chronology, production volumes, metrology, etc., should not cloud over the fact that, whether an object or a document, the coin is unable to explain itself on its own. In order to fully understand Ancient coin imagery, in part complemented by legends, it is necessary to first understand the culture, politics, etc., of the people who used them; and above all, the mentalities and identities they promote, which are not only or specifically ethnic in nature.

A mint demanded technical means, but it also needed a specialist able to fabricate the dies,<sup>(9)</sup> and authorities to choose the types and legends that would reflect the essence of the city's political community (Ripollès 2005, pp. 82-83). Origin, choice, and formal adaptation of coin types are complex issues, linked to the propagandistic and self-affirmation needs of each city, and may be directly associated, through iconographic and iconological analyses, to the world of images, which circulated throughout the Mediterranean ecumene in the Late Classical and Hellenistic periods.

As of the mid fifth century BC, and especially in the following two centuries, different cities in Iberia launched their own coinages. Coins were already at this time one of the main iconographic sources for new designs, not only present on prestigious issues –such as *Emporion* and *Arse*,<sup>(10)</sup> –but also on others, less technically demanding, which made adaptations a more comfortable task for the less experienced engravers. On the other hand, the limited space available on the die favoured simple designs, the meaning of which are difficult to interpret, resulting, sometimes intentionally, in multiple, and frequently complementary, readings, all well embedded in the cultural and ethnic diversity of many Ancient populations (Mora Serrano 2000b, p. 164; Chaves Tristán 2008, p. 357, 371). A good example may be found in the clearly Hellenised type of *Gadir's* Melqart (Fig. 3). It has been interpreted as a further piece of evidence for the Hellenisation of Punic Iberia,<sup>(11)</sup> but this is actually a misleading – inexact at least – image of the archaic nature of its cult, which is gleaned from literary sources and archaeology.<sup>(12)</sup>

Much has been written on the meanings of coin types and of the different motives behind their choice, as well as on the limits and scope of the messages they attempt to transmit.<sup>(13)</sup> Coins were official documents, and as such, the authorities that designed and issued them locally during the last two centuries of the Republic, did so following established models of the Greek-Hellenistic period, which tended to portray civic identities as clearly as possible.

The degree to which these messages were understood by the local, largely illiterate, population is unknown to us, and therefore a logical limitation we must bear in mind. As has been discussed for other areas (Butcher 2005, pp. 143-145; Burnett 2005), the complex and educated constructions depicted on Ancient coinage, may have been paradoxically intended for their own creators. This exercise of self-affirmation and legitimation was as little democratic as the election of the coin types themselves,<sup>(14)</sup> and contributed towards the confirmation of certain aristocratic elites and the identity and civic model they aimed to transmit.

There are clear limitations in the communication of such messages, which we sense in the pre-Imperial coinage of southern *Hispania*. They become clearer when examining

(5) Keay 2003, p. 154, 163-166, addresses this numismatic issue; other works also explore it from an interesting and pioneering point of view, that of culture and identity (Domínguez Monedero 2000).

(6) An approach which has led to the publication of interesting studies in the last years, paying special attention to Phoenician Punic presence and influences (López Castro 2004; Chaves Tristán, García Fernández, Ferrer Albelda 2006, pp. 820-824).

(7) First published by Villaronga 2000, and shortly later by Blanco, Sáez 2002.

(8) The sanctuary of Torreparedones (Baena, Cordoba) is a good example, famous for its heterogeneous assemblage of sculpture (Marín Ceballos, Belén Deamos 2002).

(9) Gozalbes, Ripollès 2003, pp. 15-17. Naturally, there are also other factors involved, such as metal resources and the political and economic applicability of the planned issues, etc.

(10) Under the influence of Massalia for the Greek coinage (Campo 2003, pp. 25-26) and of different mints from Magna Graecia and Sicily for *Arse's* first issues (Llorens, Ripollès 2002, pp. 65-66, 110).

(11) Among its numerous characteristics (Bendala Galán 1994, pp. 63-65), the military architecture stands out (Bendala Galán, Blázquez Pérez 2002-2003).

(12) Marín Ceballos 2001, p. 327. Recent revisions (Mierse 2004) also address the archaic features that may be gleaned from Ancient descriptions of the temple of Melqart in *Gadir*, which were already noted in the well-known syntheses of García y Bellido and J. M. Blázquez.

(13) Including the possibility of recognizing 'territorial images' in coin types (García-Bellido 1995, pp. 131-134).

(14) Mora Serrano 2003, pp. 60-61 for Hispano-Punic coinage. A similar development has recently been suggested for the coin assemblage of *Uterior* (Chaves Tristán 2008, p. 361).

later coinage, such as Tiberius' issues from the city of *Abdera*, which have from an early stage been interpreted as a model for the gradual Romanisation of Hispano-Punic coinage (Woods 1964). When analysed in the new political, cultural and economic context of *Hispania* after Caesar and especially Augustus,<sup>(15)</sup> interesting conclusions may be made about the civic images that these southern coin types portray as a group. The mechanisms displayed in the gradual incorporation of municipalities and peregrine cities to Roman parameters made use of the cities' ancient signs of identity, such as coinage, although these new types have no ethno-cultural affiliations, as may be argued for previous periods (Beltrán Lloris 2002, p. 165, 168-171; Ripollès 2005, p. 87).

After an hiatus of inactivity,<sup>(16)</sup> *Abdera* reopened its mint with Tiberius and used previous civic depictions in its reverses. Two tuna substitute the central columns of a tetrastyle temple with the Neo-Punic legend *'bdrt'* placed on the temple's tympanum, creating an image of synthesis with few parallels in *Hispania's* coinage (Fig.4). A common use of Phoenician writing and language should not be deduced from such an instance, for the strokes and the inversion of the legend (Faria 1998, p. 243) denote the engraver's evident ignorance of the writing. Although Neo-Punic still survived in the region, as evidenced in graffiti and, at an official level, in late countermarks, such as the one from *Tagilit*, over a coin from Acci issued in the times of Tiberius (García-Bellido 2006, pp. 142-146), we believe that the message enclosed in the legend was different.

The key to these aporias is found in the variable nature of the iconography itself; similar images that reappear at different times, do so for very varied reasons. If earlier coins could be ascribed to their own civic ethno-cultural identity, later they were incorporated into a new, Roman, political reality, in which different communities competed in antiquity and prestige as part of one common polyadic system.

But perhaps the best exponent of the changes experienced by civic identities in *Hispania*, sustained by local aristocracies that were increasingly integrated in the Roman provincial ideal, is the coinage of *Gades*, specifically its issues of *sestertii* and *dupondii* (Fig. 5), minted during the reign of Augustus.<sup>(17)</sup> Their types and legends have been studied under this light, as good exponents of municipal coinages of *Hispania*,<sup>(18)</sup> and their undeniable interest is due in part to

the possibility of studying them together with the numerous literary sources that comment on this Phoenician city, one of the principal political and economic centres of southern Iberia, transformed through an intelligent and close collaboration between its ruling classes and Rome. Nevertheless, it is increasingly evident from the literary point of view that it constitutes a paradigmatic case of 'identity by prestige', which takes refuge in a mythical and historical past, reinforced both by Herculean and Tartessian (or Phoenician) association (Álvarez Martí-Aguilar 2007, pp. 477-492; Ferrer Albelda, Álvarez Martí-Aguilar 2008, pp. 205-235). Significantly, *Gades* is the only city of Phoenician origin that Strabo describes in his third book in any detail, comparing its foundation to the Greek model, which constitutes a real topos (Cf. *Diod.*, 5.20). It is likewise interesting that Strabo, and later Pliny, recover the ancient polemic concerning the location of the Columns, placing them in *Gades*, i.e., identifying the *finis terrae* with *Gades* itself, yet another element that would contribute to the geographical-religious identity of this city, which traced its prestige to the beginning of historical times in the confines of the world, after the fall of Troy and the end of the 'reign' of Heroes (*Str.*, 3.5 *passim*). While Rome was constructing a cultural and ideological 'Mediterranean civility', based on an overarching framework enveloping diversity,<sup>(19)</sup> *Gades* was promoting an identity of its own, based on its geographical singularity and the facility to incorporate foundational stories and myths, without the need of differentiating that which was genuinely Greek from what was particularly Phoenician, the indigenous from the foreign.<sup>(20)</sup>

All things considered, it becomes necessary to differentiate between coinages, according to a series of criteria, such as the number of issues put into circulation and their chronology. Despite the difficulty of establishing the regularity of a mint and its distribution through time,<sup>(21)</sup> it is convenient to distinguish between mints that issue coinage 'regularly' in the first two centuries BC and the majority, which only mint occasionally. Variations in issues, volume of production, and the possibility of discerning determined typological differences in the reproduction of iconographic programmes,<sup>(22)</sup> are all to be considered when assessing the impact of coin types referencing civic identities. The group would be comprised of coinages from *Gadir*, *Malaca*, *Sexs*, *Ilipa* and *Carmo*, as well as the more eastern *Castulo* and *Obulco*.

(15) In general, cf., Roldán, Wulff 2002, p. 450 ss. The presence of Pompey and Caesar during the Civil War, and especially of the young Octavian, later Augustus, in *Hispania* - 45 BC, 27-24 B.C. and 15-13 BC - undoubtedly affected legal promotions and administrative organisation in the province, but it must have also influenced local coinages (Abascal Palazón 2006, pp. 75-77).

(16) Probably throughout the second half of the first century BC (Alfaro Asins 1996, pp. 14-18).

(17) *RPC* 1, 77-90. (Ripollès 2010, p. 88 ss.).

(18) Beltrán Lloris 2002, pp. 166-169; López Sánchez 2003, p. 103, 105; Ripollès 2005, p. 91. Furthermore, attention must be called on the quantitative importance of these issues, making *Gades* one of the most productive mints of Baetica (Ripollès, Llorens 1993, pp. 317-318). Nevertheless, data

recovered from die studies do not always fit comfortably with finds or with coins from public and private collections of Ancient Iberia.

(19) *Str.*, 3.1.8. Cf. Cic., *Pro Balbo* 29 and his praise of *Gades*.

(20) For Strabo's geography as a cultural and historical geography, *vid.* Cruz Andreotti 2009, pp. 131-144; Dueck, Lindsay, Pothecary (eds.) 2005, *passim*; and Clarke 1999, *passim*.

(21) As noted in the study of the mint of Valentia, although only as an aspect difficult to ascertain (Ripollès 1994-1995, p. 211).

(22) Attempted in the study of *Malaca*, where the introduction of new types and legends in first century AD issues still maintain typological continuities, such as the forceps and astral types (Campo, Mora 1995, pp. 107-113; Mora Serrano 2000b, pp. 161-162).

As for chronology, it is evident that issues dating to the first half of the first century BC experience changes, although irregularly, affecting coin types and legends, as well as technical and metrological aspects, all of which seem to indicate a gradual, although irregular, approximation to Roman models (Ripollès 2005b, p. 197, 199-200). As recently noted, the reasons for these changes must bear in mind the increasing influence of the local elites, and the relevance of Italian emigrants among these (Chaves Tristán 1999; *ibidem* 2008, p. 362, 366). Although probably inspired in Roman *denarii* of the first century BC, it is still striking that *Obulco* chose to substitute the traditional female head of its obverses for that of Apollo, even if it was still combined with the typical reverses of the mint, such as the plough, wheat ear, and yoke, which secured the continuity of types promoting civic identities (Arévalo 1999, pp. 59-61; Chaves Tristán 2008, pp. 367-369). The adoption of this type in other mints of the region, such as *Carbula* and *Salpensa* may be interpreted as an echo of the growing importance of the cult of Apollo in Rome at the time, which may have also spread its influence in *Ulterior*, as evidenced by these coins and other documents.<sup>(23)</sup>

In sum, coinage of southern Iberia gives the impression of undergoing a gradual Latinisation as of the first century BC, especially in the Turdetania region (Untermann 1995, pp. 311-313; Ripollès, p. 2005b, p. 198), but this impression must be compared to the evidence contained in the literary sources –e.g. Strabo’s famous reference (3.2.15)–, archaeology, and the increasingly numerous inscriptions (Stylow 2005, p. 250). The sanctuaries of Torreparedones (Castro del Río y Baena) and Cerro de los Santos (Montealegre del Castillo) or the sculpture workshop of *Urso* (Osuna) are clear testimonies to the continuity of ancient traditions of undeniable cultural and religious content, although they also experienced the gradual reception of Roman Republican provincial models, especially in the valley of *Baetis*.<sup>(24)</sup> When considering the wealth of numismatic evidence for *Ulterior*, attention is paid in the first place to those mints with sufficient types and production to carry out a weighted analysis, in order to gain a proportionate image of the complex monetary reality in southern Iberia. Nevertheless, smaller mints are equally worthy of study, for the analysis of their types and legends also afford valuable evidence in the form of curious iconographic and epigraphic testimonies. An example of the former would be the interesting scene depicted on the reverse of a rare fraction, coined by the mint of *iltiraka*, or better *Ildicira*<sup>(25)</sup> (Fig. 6). Although

(23) Rodríguez Oliva 1994, pp.144-146. As in other cases, a local cult may lie behind this classical form (Chaves Tristán 2008, p. 368).

(24) Although there are precedents, it becomes predominant as of the second half of the first century AD. In this case, old assimilation theories have also been left aside, in order to attempt a closer study of the mutual influences flowing between indigenous communities and Italians, while also considering the common Hellenisation phenomenon of the central and eastern Mediterranean (Noguera, Rodríguez Oliva 2008, pp. 381-382, 394-395, 427 ss.).

(25) Arévalo González 2005, pp. 46-47. Nevertheless, this location and interpretation has been repeatedly challenged by other authors (Faria 2008, pp. 77-78).

we do not share the recent ethnic (Oretani) interpretation put forward for this mint –admittedly complex to narrow down– it is nevertheless interesting to link its iconography and meaning to the ancient warrior elites that constructed the Iberian monuments of the Upper Guadalquivir, such as Pajarillo. It thus follows that the existence of a shared foundational myth would have reinforced the urban network of the populations of Upper Guadalquivir (Mozas Moreno 2006, p. 271, 281-285).

As for epigraphic evidence, smaller mints deserve as much attention as the more relevant coinages. The well-known *Ilipa*, for example, produced interesting and rare testimonies of cursive writing (Mora Serrano 2004, p. 116), but there is also relevant information to be gleaned from minor coinages, as modest as they are rich in data. The so-called ‘monetiform lead tokens’ already captured the interest of 19th C. studies and collections of Roman Republican coinage, as did their counterparts of Italian tradition or origin.<sup>(26)</sup> We will not deal here with problems concerning their chronology and function (García-Bellido 1986, pp. 25-34; *ibidem* 1998, pp. 192-196); what interests us is to call attention to the lead tokens that are closest to our civic coinage, which in some cases they seem to complement and in others even substitute.<sup>(27)</sup>

There is no lack of recent examples to highlight the relevance of these tokens, as evidenced in the Punic use of lead to inscribe the legend *b’b’l*.<sup>(28)</sup> Nevertheless, the group that interests us most is the assemblage with southern Iberian legends –in South-Eastern (Meridional) script– since they contribute to the reduced catalogue of indigenous Iberian place names found on southern coinage. On the one hand, we have the monetiform lead tokens with the legend *gaidur* (García-Bellido 2001b) (Fig.7), which have been linked to intense metallurgic and mining activity, already documented for the area of Punic coinage in the south-east (Alfaro Asins 2000). Written in Levantine Iberian characters, they reinforce the same influences noted for the coin inscriptions of *Ilturir*, although their interest would be even greater if confirmed that the inscription is actually referencing a geographic elevation, as has been recently suggested (Faria 2008, p. 58).

Excepting the afore mentioned Punic examples, the majority of these monetiform lead tokens of *Baetic* origin share a common factor, the use of Latin, which was largely adopted in coinage of the Turdetania region at an early stage, as evidenced in the first bilingual issue from *Obulco* (Arévalo González 1999, p. 47, 87-88). If we disregard the interesting but complex indigenous issues from *\*Beuipo/Salacia*,

(26) Their undeniable association with Italian materials (Stannard 2005, pp. 47-61) make them relevant for the study of early Italian influences in southern *Hispania*.

(27) One should distinguish between the use of these tokens as coins (out of need) and the use of lead as a suitable metal for coinage (Faria 1987).

(28) Attributed, not without reservations, to Hasta Regia (García-Bellido, Blázquez 2001, p. 156). Nevertheless, the existence of a similar countermark on *Asido* coins, does not clarify its explanation as a place name or minting formula (Mora Serrano 2007, p. 423).

as well as other considerations concerning the use of Latin, there is no doubt that the coinage of the valley of Guadalquivir and south-western Iberia significantly contributes to the fragmentary image that exists of the indigenous culture (Velaza 2005, pp. 365-366). Some of the scant exceptions known for the use of South-Eastern (Meridional) Iberian script in the south-west during the Republican period are found precisely among these modest monetiform lead tokens.

Together with types from *Carbula*, the *Ocanaca* inscription found on certain lead tokens (Fig. 8) has been identified with *Canaca*, cited by Ptolemy (2.4.10) as located between *Baetica* and *Lusitania*.<sup>(29)</sup> This exciting suggestion leads us to sense that there are further testimonies to be found inscribed on similar media as well as on inscriptions of ‘Turdetani’ place names. Coins, which were issued officially, substituted Punic for Latin as the official form of writing, in its varied palaeographic forms.<sup>(30)</sup> On the other hand, similar media, belonging to a less official or private sphere, such as the monetiform lead tokens, do bear indigenous versions of the corresponding Latin place names. Although (*O*)*canaca* never minted coinage, if it had, it would have used Latin to portray its civic identity through its coins. We must insist that no mint escaped this tendency, with the exception of the afore mentioned \**Beuipo/Salacia* and coinages of Phoenician Punic tradition.

Bearing in mind all the limitations put forth, it is not our intention to elevate numismatics to the category of paradigmatic – or even portray it as a guide fossil – for the issues dealt here. Even so, it is undeniable that the exploitation of Ancient coinage in the Iberian Peninsula was used for identity purposes; images and texts were combined to create messages charged with references to identity that would be understood by the communities that assumed the use of these coins and/or by the elites that ordered their production. All in all, coins constitute an *unicum* for gauging the complex and dynamic ethno-political world of southern Iberia at such key moments as the first two centuries BC.

Continuity and change, expressed in local variations and iconographic traditions, run parallel to the economic homogenisation of southern Iberia, indicating a possible process, in which ‘cumulative identities’ were constructed (Phoenician Punic, Italo-Roman, indigenous, coastal, valleys...), although not only in local or cultural terms. This process was congruent with the expansion of Roman rule, using the same civic model that had been successful previously in the region, i.e., during the rapid transformation

of ancient Phoenician colonies into Punic *poleis*,<sup>(31)</sup> subsequently influencing a large part of southern Iberia.<sup>(32)</sup> Whether these ‘cumulative identities’ were also expressed politically depends on whether they were used in public or private spheres, on the military and political circumstances of the moment (*vid. Carteia*, *infra*), and on the impact of their dissemination. The identities and politics at play were not as much a mechanism of resistance as a reaffirmation of a common cultural *koiné* of Hellenic origin and of Roman superiority and expansion.<sup>(33)</sup>

#### COINAGE OF PHOENICIAN PUNIC TRADITION: CIVIC AND ETHNO-CULTURAL IDENTITIES

There are many reasons for a city to undergo the technical and economic effort of minting its own coinage.<sup>(34)</sup> We will highlight one: the political and propagandistic intentions of local authorities to promote their civic identity to foreigners and their own citizens.

Although there are other references belonging to previous periods,<sup>(35)</sup> the earliest and most explicit evidence for the use of coinage as an instrument for civic reaffirmation in southern Iberia may be found in *Gadir*, although still not dated with precision. Here, the local authorities decided to incorporate the place name *ḡdr* – accompanied by the formula *mp̄l* or *mb̄l* – to the already established coin types of the ancient Tyrian foundation, which may be referring to the city itself or to the governing civic body in charge of minting these issues (Alfaro Asins 1991, pp. 115-116; Manfredi 1995, pp. 130-132), (Fig. 12). *Gadir* was thus distanced, and not only geographically, from *Ebusus*, which continued using models with no inscriptions. It equally brings to our attention that *Gadir* started using inscription on coins as a form of civic self-affirmation, coinciding with the physical presence of *Carthago* in Iberia as of 237 BC, precisely located in *Gadir* itself.<sup>(36)</sup> Nevertheless, the impact of this civic formula, incorporated by *Gadir*’s coinage, in southern Iberia and the neighbouring North African territories

(29) Published by Casariego, Cores, Pliego, 1987, p. 4 n. 3-4; Faria 2008, pp. 79-80, even if this reading is not universally accepted.

(30) Domínguez Monedero 2000, p. 64, 66); its use in other contexts and social spheres must have been more restricted (Ripollès 2005b, p. 198). On the other hand, the recent discovery of a Neo-Punic inscription from *Ilipa* (Zamora 2007) provides evidence for a wider use of this kind of writing from what may be gleaned from preserved finds – generally scant, except for graffiti.

(31) A term which is used here only in a chronological sense, in reference to the Late Phoenician period, which starts in the second half of the sixth century BC.

(32) López Castro 2002; these influences culminated in the brief, yet intense rule of the Barcid family in Iberia, whose coinage is well known (Bendala Galán 2009, pp. 21-31).

(33) Cf. *Cic.*, *Ad Quintum*, 1.1, 27-28.

(34) (Howgego 1990); for the Iberian Peninsula, there are a multitude of factors involved, complicating the comprehension of this important phenomenon, in which cities played leading roles (Chaves 2007, p. 217 ss.; Ripollès 2005b, pp. 189-193).

(35) Outside our geographical area, southern Iberia, there are earlier precedents in *Emporion* and *Rhode*, which are also important in assessing the impact of coinage on indigenous populations of the north-east (Campo 2004, p. 348).

(36) Carthage’s hegemony over Iberia is disputed, but finds arguments from a political-administrative point of view (Manfredi, 2003, pp. 471-477), in the establishment and later development of *Gadir*’s coinage, which can also be considered from the eccentric position of *Gadir* and its area of influence in relation to the political and administrative – though not cultural and economic – sphere of Carthage in the Mediterranean ‘far west’ (Mora Serrano 2007, p. 412 ss.).

of the future *Tingitana*,<sup>(37)</sup> occurs, as with the majority of coinage in the Peninsula, after the Carthaginian defeat in the Second Punic War and the establishment of Rome's hegemony over the region. The emblematic character of these inscriptions is clearly appreciated in certain reverse dies from *Sexs*. The engraver fitted the mint's inscription on a console, added on to the die by four fixing points at the extremes, creating an explicit example of the incorporation of new legends (Mora Serrano 2007, p. 411), (Fig. 10).

The early minting of coin in the Phoenician Punic area of southern Iberia was associated with the use of place names or more complex formulas and underlines the ancient roots of the urban phenomenon in the region, going back to the sixth-fifth centuries, coinciding with profound changes experienced by the previous colonial system.<sup>(38)</sup> Their transformation into western Phoenician *poleis* (López Castro 2002, pp. 81-84; Ferrer, Fernández 2007) resulted in the creation of a new territorial and economic framework, also affecting ideology, the echo of which may be recognised in the coinage, despite its later chronology.<sup>(39)</sup> Indeed, the coinage of southern Iberia combined its role as a primary document with a logical adaptation to the particularities and evolution of the region's societies during the second-first centuries BC.

Let us recall that the antiquity and extension of the urban phenomenon in a good part of *Ulterior-Baetica* was not exclusive to Phoenician Punic cities; there are many arguments that allow us to speak of an early urban development in other territories of southern Iberia.<sup>(40)</sup> One of the main arguments for comes once again from numismatic evidence (Ripollès 2005b, pp. 195-196). Let us not forget the close relationship existing between coin inscriptions and the urban concept and its organisation, expressed in the inclusion of prefixes or suffixes in the city's name that illustrated its civic organization. In some cases, this occurred doubly, like in the name *Ilipense* (Correa 2004, pp. 21-22), where both the root *Il(i)*- and the suffix *-ense* find parallels in Iberian inscriptions of eastern Andalusia, as well as in more ancient precedents from the Spanish Levant and north-east (Perez Almoquera 2001, pp. 28-34; Correa 2004, p. 21).

(37) Led by *Tingi* and *Lixus* (Manfredi 1995, pp. 183-188); (Alexandropoulos 2002, p. 196 ss.).

(38) Despite the complex transmission of the written source -and the very reasonable doubts surrounding it- Moret (Moret 2004, pp. 40-43; ibidem 2006, pp. 42-45 ss.) versus Ferrer Albelda (Ferrer Albelda 2006, pp. 1997-2008), it does not seem coincidental that, from the group of references to southern *poleis* in Hecataeus, those that may be considered 'genuine' from a literary point of view (according to style, language, etc.) are precisely the Phoenician and 'surrounding' cities (frgs. 38, 40, 42, 43 and 44 Jacoby). A summary, including the entire polemic, in Cruz Andreotti (Cruz Andreotti 2010, pp. 32-36); for the problems concerning the term polis in Hecataeus *vid.* Whitehead (Whitehead 1994, pp. 119-120) and more recently Hansen (Hansen 1997, especially pp. 20 and 27).

(39) This approach has been applied to the coinage of *Malaca* (López Castro, Mora Serrano 2002, p. 186 ss., 205 ss.).

(40) Bendala Galán 2005, pp. 26-27, places particular emphasis on the concept of urban ethnicity.

There is no doubt that in the complex ethnic map of southern Iberia, Phoenician Punic traditions stand out from an early stage as especially cohesive. The recognition of these traditions is facilitated by the wealth of coin evidence, thanks to the iconography, but especially to Phoenician legends in Punic, Neo-Punic or singular Neo-Punic scripts, as the 'Lybian Phoenician' may be called. New readings of the literary sources, based on the growing archaeological record, open new trends that may be applied to traditional numismatic approaches to iconography, which has been studied for a long time from very different stand points -different yet often complementary (Domínguez Monedero 2000, p. 65 ss., 70 ss.; Mora Serrano 2003).

Once these different iconographies are put together and considered in all their complexity several regional variations may be appreciated. For example, coastal mints, coinciding with ancient Phoenician Punic foundations, produce more established iconographic models but are also recognisable by the script used on legends and the presence or absence of personal names. Recognisable are too the differences between the Strait and eastern Andalusia (García-Bellido, Blázquez 2001, pp. 59-62), although with notable exceptions, such as *Malaca*, where there are no types or allusions to the Melqart cycle, which is a striking characteristic of *Sexs*, and also to a certain degree in *Abdera* and *Abla* (Chaves Tristán, Marín Ceballos 1992, pp. 173-175; Mora Serrano 2007, pp. 426-429). Regardless of the iconographic language chosen, a common characteristic for the whole assemblage is the religious imprint, which is recognisable in a good portion of the types chosen; these include the more evident anthropomorphic representations, but also zoomorphic and phytomorphic -good examples being the well-known Lascutani altars and the recently reinterpreted altars from *Tagilit*.<sup>(41)</sup> Nevertheless, despite everything that has been said, there are considerable gaps and a lack of precision in the potential contribution of coin evidence to the Phoenician Punic cultural mapping of southern Iberia, especially concerning territorial influence.

We have already mentioned coinages from *Sacili* and *Nabrissa*; legends, classified as 'uncertain' by numismatic historiography have been reassigned; and Punic presence has been attested in the Turduli *Baeturia* (*Arsa, Turriregina*)<sup>(42)</sup>; nevertheless, of all the relevant cases that could be mentioned, *Carteia* stands out from the rest. Recent archaeological excavations studying its Punic fortifications and their successive remodelling, have argued that, for this emblematic Strait city too, urban and architectural changes that subsequently transformed the ancient Punic-Republican city are not recorded until Augustus, more specifically

(41) Specially interesting is the new reading - as an altar stela to Isis- of one of the types from *Tagilit* (Alfaro Asins 2003, p. 16), although a full understanding of the type depends on the legend (Pérez Orozco 2006, pp. 183-184), which has been read as «minted by *Tagilit* and the assembly», reinforcing the region's tradition of minting civic formulas.

(42) García-Bellido 1995, p. 132; Domínguez Monedero 2000, pp. 70-71. The identification and location of Punic coinage known as 'uncertain' is still problematic, more specifically those attributed by some to *Ituci* and recently to Cortijo de Eborá (Sáez, Blanco 2006).

until the mid first century AD. (Roldán, Blázquez, Bendala et al. 2003, p. 217 ss. 231). Nevertheless, *Carteia's* coinage, initiated in the late second century BC, seems formally unaware of the Phoenician Punic substrate that dominated the city. While acknowledging other possible readings (García-Bellido, Blázquez 2001, I, 67, II, 87), the evidence seems to indicate a singular situation, which is perceived in the difference in coin types chosen by the local authorities (initially with a marked Roman, and later Hellenic, influence) as well as the magistracies and prosopography of the personal names that are included<sup>(43)</sup> (Fig. 9). Nevertheless, such a singularity is not unique, but a good reflection of the weight of the Roman Italian adstratum in the region, adopted by the elites of various important localities, first for military and strategic reasons and later also for economic interests. Furthermore, *Carteia's* coinage is equalled in singularity by the legal status of this colonial foundation -Rome's head of the bridge over the Strait. In this case, cultural and civic identities walk beside each other, but not hand in hand, because of the particular characteristics of the city as a strategic point, subject to various re-foundations.<sup>(44)</sup>

The existence of 'substrates' and 'adstratum' in these territories and the possibility of recognising them in literary and archaeological sources –including coinage– explains the appearance of new approaches to such a complex theme, aggravated by important knowledge gaps and by the need to combine useful global perspectives on concrete geographical and chronological realities.<sup>(45)</sup>

*Ituci's* coinage constitutes a singular example. It was a Punic mint, as evidenced by the coin inscriptions, and its location coincided with one of the best known Tartessian/Turdetani enclaves, now Tejada La Vieja. Archaeologically, Tejada la Nueva (Escacena, Huelva), cannot dispense with its coinage, because it is a key element for addressing the ethnic and cultural mixture of most peoples in the southern Iberian Peninsula, which only further supports the importance of the ancient oriental substrate in the region, which was later reinforced by the equally strong Punic presence. The recent reassessment of the meaning of Tartessos lies behind all this discussion, and actually comes to explain it.<sup>(46)</sup>

(43) Pena 2000, pp. 99-101. There is a preference for certain magistracies – quaestores-, while others are rare –censores-; put together with the study of onomastics, one may presume a central Italian influence; contra: Rodríguez Neila 1995, p. 266.

(44) Wulff 1989, pp. 43-57. Curiously, the identification of *Carteia* with Tartessos (vid. Str., 3.2.14; Plin., *Nat. Hist.*, 3.7; Mela, 2.96; Sil., *Pun.* 3.396-99; possibly: App., *Iber.* 63 o Paus., 6.19.3) or with *Heracleia* (Str., 3.1.7) seems to be a strong indicator of Punic identity in the Late Republic and Imperial period, although institutional "Italianization" was occurring at the same time (vid. infra. n. 83).

(45) Once again, Punic Turdetania is fertile ground for such an analysis (Ferrer Albelda 2004, pp. 287-288); there is a need to distinguish between archaeological dating and established chronologies, and the inexact translations existing between geographical-literary realities and their ethnic components.

(46) Unlike *Carteia*, which constitutes a paradigmatic example, as well as a very particular case, of Roman response to what seems to be a newly acquired 'symbolic' and political identity, *Ituci* shows no contrasts between

*Ituci* acts as a bridge between the Phoenician Punic coinage of the coast and the formally 'early Latinised' great mints of Middle and Lower *Baetis*, evidenced in its choice of coin types (horseman, bull-fish, and especially wheat ears) (Fig. 12) and in the early adoption of Latin inscription combined with conservative Punic script. The continuation of coin types in the Latin issues of *Ituci* spark old debates concerning Punic readings for coin iconographies from different cities in the interior of *Baetica*, including those with no Punic inscriptions. Certain coinages from the *Baetis* valley have taken up most of this discussion, especially *Carmo*.<sup>(47)</sup> Is it possible for coin iconography to reinforce theories on the continuity of a Hellenized Punic substratum? We would argue that it is, although some iconographies do have multiple readings, such as the Heracles-Hercules and the Hermes-Mercury, also present in North African coin iconography.<sup>(48)</sup>

There are also other formal analyses, which portray possible influences of Phoenician Punic mints over other 'Turdetani' coinages. For example, the well-known type depicting two wheat ears and a place name may be interpreted as a version of *Gadir's* reverses (tuna and place name), just like in other North African workshops of the Circle of the Strait (Mora Serrano 1993, p. 75, 78-79; Domínguez Monejero 2000, p. 64). Nevertheless, this possible relationship should not be generally assumed, for there are other adopted types with strong personalities of their own,<sup>(49)</sup> not to mention differences in metrological behaviour.<sup>(50)</sup>

#### TERRITORIAL AND CIVIC IDENTITIES: A CLOSE UP TO THE MYTHICAL GEOGRAPHY OF IBERIA THROUGH ITS COINAGE

We have stressed throughout the possibility of reading civic identities into the majority of coinage from the south of

the earlier period and later developments. *Ituci*, therefore, constitutes an example of an alternative way of dealing with the shared or 'cumulative' identities we spoke of at the beginning. Put into a general context (vid. Álvarez Martí-Aguilar 2007 and Ferrer Albelda 2008, summarised in Cruz Andreotti 2010), at least as of the second century BC, a good part of the southern populations of Semitic origin (not only on the coast) juggled and brought together a more than evident historical heterogeneity, which would ultimately be translated into a Turdetania 'without Turdetani' (Chaves Tristán, García Fernández, Ferrer Albelda 2006, *passim*).

(47) Its oriental past, Punic presence, Barcid influence, and the probable continuity of these Punic influences in Roman cemeteries – summarized in a recent publication on the history and archaeology of a Sevillian locality (Caballeros 2001), still confronts different stances on the reading and interpretation of its coin iconographies (Chaves Tristán, García Fernández, Ferrer Albelda 2006, pp. 823-825).

(48) Rodríguez Casanova 1999, pp. 337-338; Manfredi 1995, p. 164 for *Sabratha* types. They have nevertheless also been interpreted, together with the Halos type, as Italo-Roman (Chaves Tristán 2008, p. 370).

(49) Do not depend on the models that are followed and adapted, as has been pointed out for the Janiform heads (Chaves Tristán, Marín Ceballos, 2004, pp. 353-357, 373); (Chaves Tristán 2008, p. 370), offers different adopted models, some of which are typically Roman.

(50) (García-Bellido, Blázquez 2001, pp. 79-82). *Ituci* is, once again, of particular interest for this discussion; its metrology shows an interesting relationship between the weight system of Punic tradition and that of the great mints of the Middle Guadalquivir valley (Mora Serrano 2006, pp. 47-48).

the Iberian Peninsula, by using evidence from several examples that could be multiplied, especially in reference to formal aspects (types and legends), which were used from the very beginning as instruments of self-affirmation. This interpretation is founded on the ancient and deep urban roots present in these territories, and does not rule out other possible interpretations dealing with the aforementioned 'cumulative identities'. We believe it is thus possible to put forth an interpretation, which combines geographical identity with certain iconographies adopted in various mints of *Ulterior-Baetica*.

In truth, it is common practice to differentiate between the iconographic variety of *Ulterior* and the repetition of types found in most of *Citerior*, mostly known for the combination of male head and horseman.<sup>(51)</sup> In general terms, this assertion is correct, although with nuances that explain the use of certain types and 'common' symbols by different cities, even if they are not mechanical copies of the images.

We will subsequently draw attention to two distinct groups of images, which nevertheless may both be interpreted as the transmission of ancient myths, linked to the 'far west'.<sup>(52)</sup> Transformed through time into literary images, they would be recreated and assumed by the urban elites that controlled the mints. Once again, Phoenician Punic coinage stands out as the clearest example for the use of a common type, that of *Gadir's* Heracles-Melqart, although we should probably be ascribing it to *Hispania* or Iberia. It is worth insisting on the importance and antiquity of the cult in *Gadir*, as well as in other territories of *Hispania*, as attested in the literary sources and archaeology, including numismatics (López Castro 1997; García-Bellido 1991, pp. 49-50, 51-55). This is the case with *Sexs*, an important mint in the south-east that adopted the Melqart-Heracles type in its very first issues, at the end on the third century BC, and transforms in the Late Republic into a striking imitation of *Gadir's* types and legends (CNH 104.5 ss). Aside from other possible explanations,<sup>(53)</sup> Strabo's famous passage (3.5.5) seems especially relevant; it cites a Phoenician presence in *Sex*, or *Ex*, immediately prior to the foundation of *Gadir*. It would therefore be a mythical image, linked to the origins of the city, i.e., with a meaning and identity of its own, which would explain its depiction on the coins, although it was clearly also linked to a certain territory. This mythical

(51) Occasional versions of this type in *Baetica* – Carissa, *Ituci*, armed horseman with round shield, and others from *Obulco*, *Olontigi* and *Laelia* – have not passed unnoticed (Arévalo González 2003, p. 65, 67-68); also mentioned in the search for formal models in Punic areas (Mora Serrano 1993, pp. 73-74; Arévalo González 2003, 70; Noguera Celdrán, Rodríguez Oliva 2008, pp. 397-399).

(52) The bibliography on this topic is extensive. Despite their age, good references are still Ballabriga 1986 and Jourdain-Annequin 1989. We would like to underline the survival and use of ancient mythical geography –practiced by Phoenicians and Greeks– which was transformed in the Roman period, leading to the creation of an Iberian ethnogenesis (Cruz Andreotti 2004, pp. 253-270).

(53) Chaves Tristán, García Vargas 1991, pp. 156-157, offer an interesting explanation for these *Sexs* images as a reflection of a possible commercial route, led by *Sexs* in the south-east, which may have been similar to the gipsy route.

geographical reading is compatible with its civic identity. Furthermore, we believe it is possible to apply this reading to Melqart's images in other south-eastern mints, as found in later coinages of *Alba* (*Abla*, Ameria) and *Abdera* (Mora Serrano 2007, p. 432).

This same mythical geographical perspective, reflected in the adoption of common iconographies, may also be applied to the lower and middle reaches of the Guadalquivir valley. Such is the case with the wheat ear and the shad, adopted from an early stage and later disseminated by the coinage of *Ilipa* Magna throughout the region.<sup>(54)</sup> Interpreting zoomorphic and phytomorphic types, such as those dealt with, is particularly complex, as evidenced by the different readings offered for these interesting images (García-Bellido 1991, pp. 57-59; Chaves Tristán 2007b, pp. 214-215), which are already alluded to in antiquarian literature.<sup>(55)</sup> Rodrigo Caro, in his famous *Chorografía*, full of references to the region's coin evidence, refers to the types from *Ilipa* as testimonies to the fertility of the earth (wheat ear) and to the proximity to *Baetis* (shad) (Caro 1634, p. 98). These two explanations have also been applied to other coin types, as for example, the wheat ears from *Carmo*, the grape cluster from *Osset*, and the shad from *Cun(u)baria* (Caro 1634, p. 157, 114, 96), (Fig. 13).

It is definitely appropriate to carry out an economic interpretation of these images, for there are numerous archaeological testimonies to the fishing exploitation of the river Guadalquivir,<sup>(56)</sup> as well as the fertile plains of the interior (Sáez 2006). As highlighted in recent studies, it is even possible to attribute an excessive –we would say modern-economic interpretation for these images, which sees these local divinities as protecting economic resources. The female divinity on the obverses from *Obulco*, conveniently enhanced by the frugivorous images on the reverses, is a good example, but also a clear model for other mints of the region, such as *Abra* and *Ulía* (Chaves Tristán 2008, p. 358; Arévalo González 2000, pp. 46-48).

The use of these images, whether copies or more complex creations, in other mints of southern Iberia, extensive to other types –such as the grape cluster– (Fig. 14) may also be explained as images of bountifulness, associated from old with Tartessos, and later assumed in Turdetania, while recreated by the Late Hellenistic and Roman literature. If our interpretation is correct, coinage from the region could contribute to evidence the existence of an image of territorial identity, Turdetania, which Strabo (3.1.6; 2.3) identifies,

(54) Its numerous issues have been recently analysed (Chaves Tristán 2007b) as part of a joint publication on the city's history and archaeology.

(55) Such as in the *Antigüedades* of Rodrigo Caro, cited and further discussed in reference works of the 19th C. (Delgado 1871, cli-clii).

(56) A proposal based on more recent references (Chic García 2003, p. 62); some archaeological discoveries provide evidence for fishing and the salting of different species, from the shad to the sturgeon, in the same manner as in the coast (Carreras Monfort 2001, pp. 423-424). Cf. Ferrer Albelda, García Vargas, García Fernández 2008, pp. 217-246; and García Vargas, Ferrer Albelda, García Fernández 2008, pp. 247-270.

clearly for the sake of simplification, with the relevance and wealth of *Baetis*.

The contrast between an overwhelming fertility in the confines of the world with the equilibrium found at the centre is a literary construct as ancient as literature itself (Homer, Hesiod); likewise, liminal territories house heroes and gods; nothing could resemble the world of men, who could not live alongside the gods after the Trojan War. After the colonial development and expansion, the mythical image of the 'far west' did not disappear, and survived in popular and marine cosmologies, as well as in literature, especially where Hellenic presence was less stable and purely commercial, not colonial. It is not uncommon for unexplored or unknown territories to be interpreted in familiar cultural and geographical terms, acquiring qualities that contrast with daily life, which is dictated by the common laws of time, space and man (Janni 1973, pp. 445-500; *ibidem* 1975, pp. 145-178; *ibidem* 1997 [1998], pp. 23-40; Prontera 1990, pp. 55-82).

Literary sources for Iberia, while being different in genre and intentions, are still covered by this halo of preconceptions surrounding the limits of the world, comparable to other literary constructs like the 'wonderful Ehtiopians' or Scheria of the Phaeacians: Stesichorus (frg. 154 Page), Pherecydes (frg. 17 Jacoby), Anacreon (frg. 4 Gentili), Hecataeus (frgs. 26 ss. Jacoby), Herodotus (I 163 and IV 151-153) or Herodorus (frg. 2a Jacoby). Be as it may, they are collateral constructs, with no intention of creating –like in the Italian or Sicilian territories– a mythical and heroic foundational geography of colonial expansion, centred for this time period in the Ligurian, Tyrrhenian, and Sicilian Seas, not the Iberian one.

A different matter arises when these territories become part of a well established ecumene, geographically, politically, and by extension, culturally as well. The continuity of images through time carry a different meaning, even if they may also be explained by ancient literary traditions. It is easier now to appreciate how ancient literary topics transform into cultural elements feeding into identities, although not necessarily ethnic, in territories with hitherto unknown or unrecognized histories. Strabo –and possibly his sources (Asclepiades and Artemidorus)– does not follow the main stream, which identifies Tartessian with Phoenician, and chooses to underline the autochthonous character of Tartessos and Turdetania, directly connecting it to a Homeric-Herculean idyllic past, which was rapidly Latinised, as a reflection of civility and prosperity in the Roman times, just as it had been in the remote past. It is as much a literary construct as the reflection of an existing elite identity, which was furthermore not the only one arising as a result of an urban diversity, which found its only common factor in the *Baetis* valley, subsequently becoming the *prouincia Baetica*.<sup>(57)</sup>

## FINAL REFLECTIONS

What is there to conclude in all of this? At a glance, there is an evident homogenisation taking place in the traditionally Semitic area, most clearly reflected in the political and territorial creation of the *coventus gaditanus* (*Str.*, 3.4.20). Pressing further, one may consider the unity and diversity of coin types and their 'penetration' in the *Baetic* interior as an indicator of civic, not ethnic, identities. This leads us to the delicate and controversial issue of discerning whether these identities were there from the beginning or were created subsequently. From a historical point of view, the second option is the more likely, taking us into the second question. Is Rome, or rather its locally integrated elites, behind the promotion and reinvention of the ancient/new Phoenician Punic identity, linked to the paradise-like image of its territory? A shared cultural context would allow for a subsequent political and administrative –therefore also cultural– exploitation of the region's main weakness. The cities competed among each other for the more 'glorious past'; while only *Gades* could lay claim to a momentous foundation, all of them could call on a mythology relating to the confines of the earth, conveniently Euhemerised into the cult of Heracles/Hercules and a fertility myth. It possibly may be so; furthermore, coinage, as a civic symbol, became the best instrument and the clearest evidence for this process. The so-called 'Punification' of the *Baetic* interior shares many analogies with the concept of 'Romanisation'. Rome and Carthage were two Hellenistic *poleis*, achieving their true political nature through the expansion of *civitas* and Hellenic culture. This is the only context possible for Strabo's (3.4.3) enigmatic affirmation, describing Asclepiades as "a man who taught grammar in Turdetania and has published an account on the tribes of that region".

## ABBREVIATIONS

CNH (1994)= Villaronga L. *Corpus Nummum Hispaniae Ante Augusti Aetatem*. Madrid.

RPC1(1992)= Burnett A., Amandry M., Ripollés P. P. *Roman Provincial Coinage, I. From the Death of Caesar to the Death of Vitellius (44 BC to AD 69)*. London-Paris, (reed. 1999) and Suppl. I.1998 and II.2006 [[http://www.uv.es/=ripolles/rpc\\_s2](http://www.uv.es/=ripolles/rpc_s2)]

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(57) A summary in Cruz Andreotti 2010.

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**LUCHAS DE RAZAS**

Moneda de Cuniovelinus



Moneda Libio feniceo



Moneda encontrada en Orthúela



1



2



4



3 (x2)



5



6



7



8



9



10



11



12



13



14