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Roman Settlements / Punic Ancestors. Some Examples from the Necropoleis of Southern Iberia

Introduction

The presence of Phoenician settlements in the south of the Iberian Peninsula can be traced back archaeologically at least to the end of the 8th or the beginning of the 7th century BCE. Colonies like Gadir, Malaka, Sexs, Abdera or Baria did not, however, fade out after the conquest of the south of the Iberian Peninsula, first by Carthage and later by Rome during the Second Punic war, and continued to be occupied throughout the late Republic and the early Roman Empire. Traditional approaches to the process known as 'Romanization' have usually taken into account the interaction between Roman colonists and native populations around the Mediterranean. But how did the settlement of Punic communities in certain cities affect the redefinition of identities in Republican and early Imperial times? Can certain common trends in rituals, town planning or settlement in the landscape be detected in these contexts? Is there a distinctive way of 'becoming Roman' in these areas?

In this paper I will focus on the necropoleis of *Baelo Claudia*, a Roman town often included in the group of cities where Punic traditions were still alive in necropoleis dated to the Late Republic or early Imperial times (fig. 1). Different examples of 'archaisms' in funerary contexts in the city, which could have been perceived as a link with local ancestors, have in this case been found by archaeologists side by side with a town apparently planned according to Vitruvian parameters. I will compare the cemeteries of *Baelo Claudia* (modern Bolonia), a Roman town with Punic ancestors, with the burial places of other settlements, like Carmo (Carmona), Baria (Villaricos), Sexs (Puente de Noy) or Gadir (Cádiz), located in territories previously colonized by

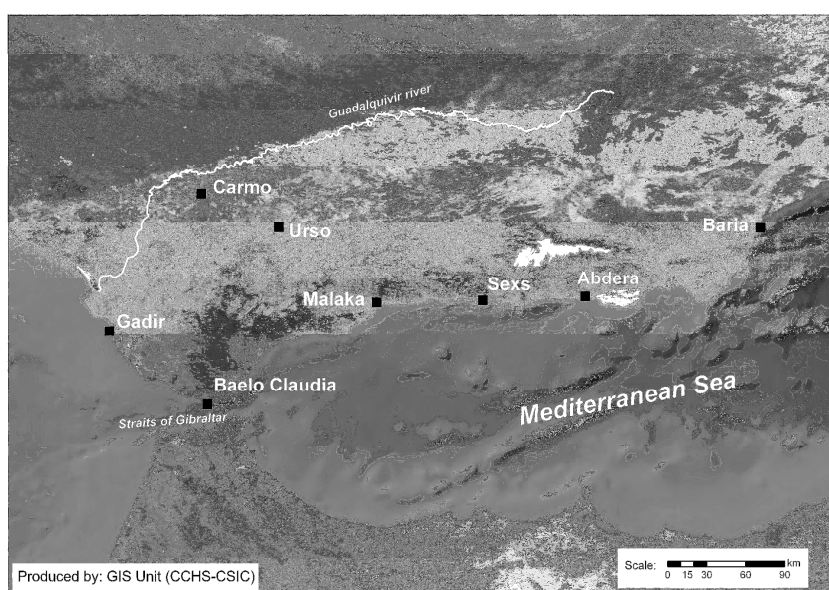


Fig. 1 – Location of main sites cited in the
 text. Cities with 'Punic' traditions
 in Roman times.



Fig. 2 — Location of *Baelo Claudia* and the pre-Roman settlement of Silla del Papa (After ARÉVALO and BERNAL 2007, fig. 2).

Carthage in southern Spain that all seem to share a group of interesting traits, including not only ritual aspects that could be seen as links with local pasts, but also, sometimes, a set of objects present in tombs that are, however, dated to Roman times. I will focus then in the significance of these peculiarities in the context of Roman Baetica, drawing the conclusion that we must take into account in our research the development of 'local versions' of Punic culture and their role in the construction of hybrid Roman identities in the early Empire.

***Baelo Claudia* (Bolonía, Cádiz)**

Baelo Claudia, located in the Straits of Gibraltar facing the coast of Tangiers, is an especially interesting example for the study of colonial contacts. The city was founded at the end of the 2nd century BCE in an empty area close to the coast and to a pre-Roman town¹ (fig. 2). At least in this early phase the city elites seem to have used Neo-Punic inscriptions for public purposes, as shown in the legends of the republican coins minted in the settlement, which tell us the city's name: Bailo, also interpreted by some authors as a toponym with Punic origins² (fig. 3). Both the weight system and the iconography of these pieces show connections with the north of Africa³. Even nowadays, visitors to *Baelo Claudia* can observe some of the most characteristic elements of a Roman town: a grid of rectilinear streets, a forum, temples, a *macellum*, a basilica, baths, a theatre and aqueducts (fig. 4). However, most of these elements were built in a late phase of the history of the town – during the reign of Claudius – and it is quite possible that the city did not received the status of *municipium Latinum* before that time. The necropoleis of *Baelo Claudia* can be dated roughly in the first half of the 1st c. CE as well; however, certain elements can still be linked with other 'Punic' settlements of the south of Iberia or the north of Africa.



Fig. 3 — Late republican coins of *Baelo Claudia* with bilingual inscriptions (Neo-Punic and Latin) (After GARCÍA-BELLIDO and BLÁZQUEZ 2001, 51, 1^a 1).

Archaeologists working in the site at the beginning of the 20th century were able to identify two main areas of funerary deposits, located along the two Roman streets that left the city from the west and east gates. In the eastern necropolis some tombs lined both sides of the street over some meters, displaying

¹ For the results of a preliminary survey carried out in the pre-Roman site of Silla de Papa see MORET *ET AL.* 2008.

² SOLÀ-SOLÉ 1980, 44; GARCÍA-BELLIDO and BLÁZQUEZ 2001, 51-52. According to SOLÀ-SOLÉ (1980, 40) and GARCÍA-BELLIDO (1985-1986: 506), some of the formulae used in the legends of these coins may also hint at the existence of Punic magistratures.

³ GARCÍA-BELLIDO 2001, 326; on the koine of the "círculo del Estrecho" in the Late Republic from a numismatic point of view, see CHAVES *ET AL.* 1998, 1313-8 and CALLEGARIN 2008, 305-315, with previous bibliography.

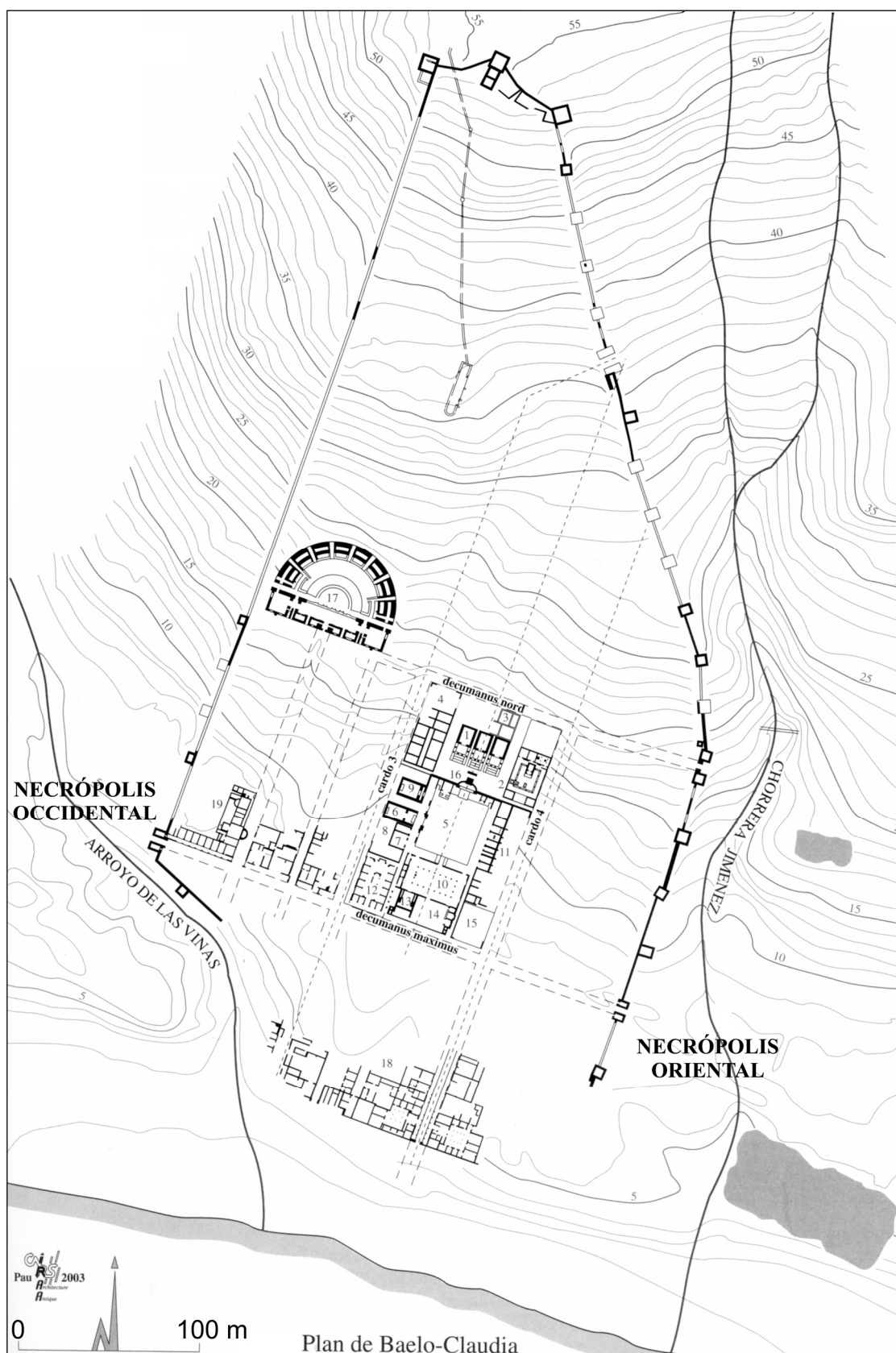


Fig. 4 — Map of the Roman town with the location of the western and eastern necropoleis
(After NEY and PAILLET 2006, fig. 1).

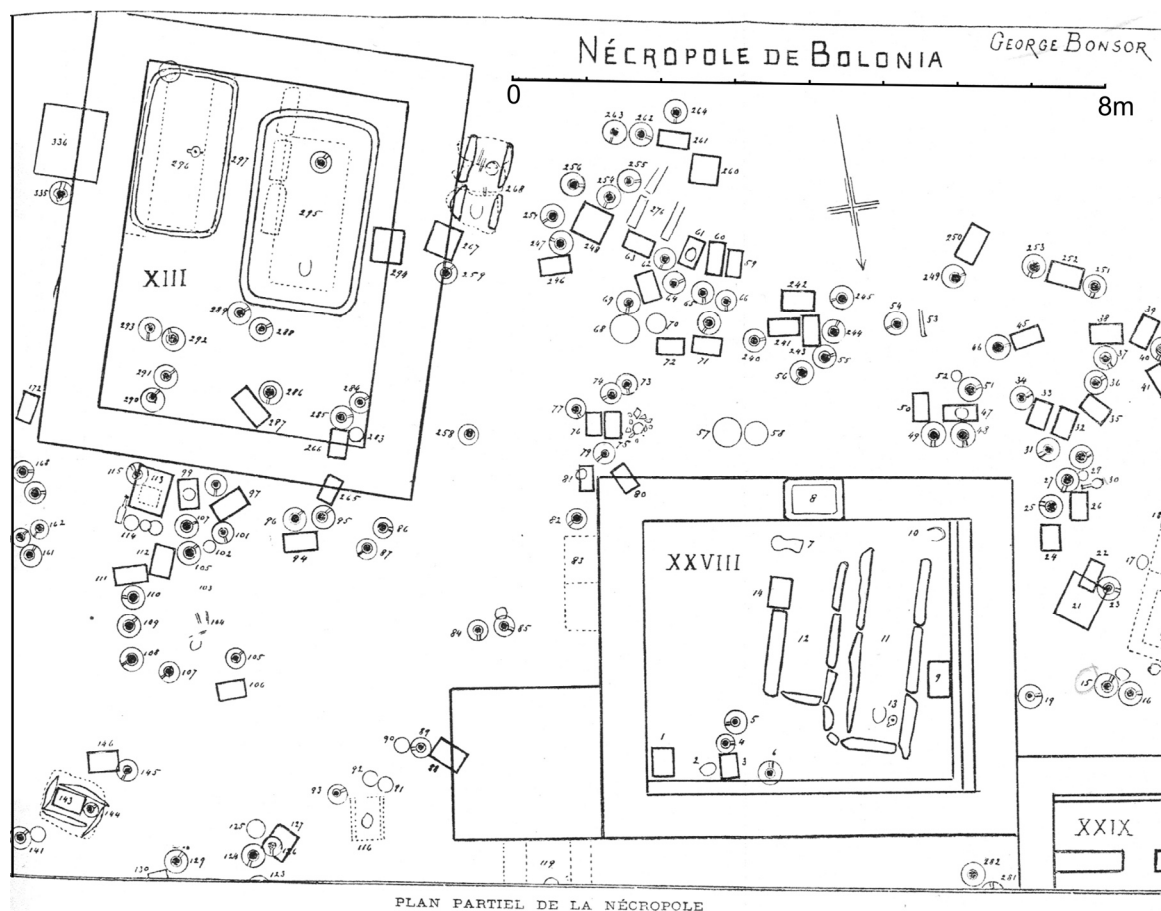


Fig. 5 — *Baelo Claudia*. Partial map of the eastern necropolis
(After PARIS ET AL. 1926, pl. I).

inscriptions and monuments to the passer-by, while others (very simple tombs as well as quite important mausolea) were arranged in apparent disorder⁴ (fig. 5). The data available for the western necropolis are scarce, but it seems to have had a similar distribution of space.

Types of Tombs

Most of the funerary containers were box-shaped limestone urns that held the ashes of the deceased and were placed in simple holes in the ground or under various types of monument. This kind of receptacle was also known in Italy⁵, but they were also the most popular type of cinerary urn in Carthage from the 4th century BCE⁶ as well as in cities like Lepcis⁷. It could be said that the equivalent receptacles for inhumations were the stone sarcophaguses also found in Punic necropoleis of southern Iberia or the north of Africa, like

⁴ MERGELINA 1927, 5. Only two partial plans of the excavations carried out in the necropolis at the beginning of the 20th century have been published so far (P. PARIS ET AL. 1926, Pl. I and I bis). Unfortunately these do not include a clear indication of the topographical relation of the area represented with the ancient town.

⁵ TOYNBEE 1971, 101.

⁶ LANCEL 1994, 207.

⁷ FONTANA 2001, 163. In Lepcis, half of these limestone urns had an inscription –in Neo-Punic or Latin– recording the name of the deceased, which is also the case in Carmona, where anthroponyms are inscribed using the Latin alphabet, even if the normal Roman nomenclature (*tria nomina*) is not used.

Jardín, Puente de Noy, Cádiz, Villaricos or Byrsa, to name just a few examples⁸. It is interesting to note that in some of these burial places the inhumation rite was also preferred in the 2nd and 1st centuries BCE, in a time when cremation was the normative funeral rite in the south of the Iberian Peninsula.

Some of the Algerian memorials had a small underground chamber to deposit the funerary urns, just like the “Tumba de la gran estela” or Mausoleum 514 in Bolonia, although others might have been solid, like certain examples at *Baelo Claudia*⁹.

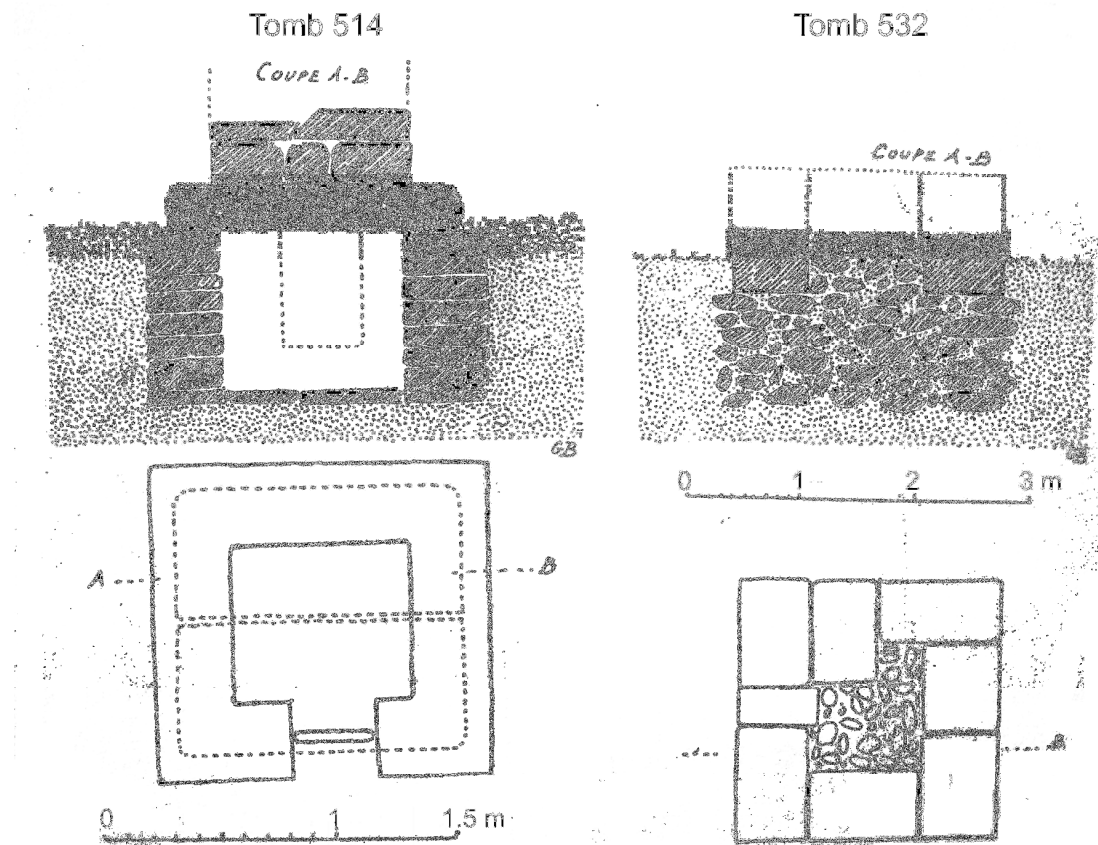
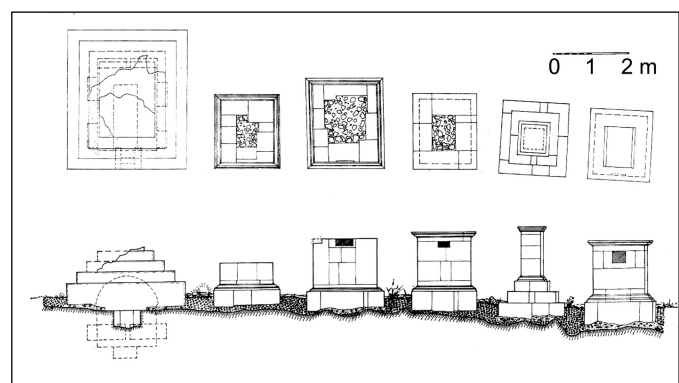


Fig. 6 – *Baelo Claudia*. Eastern necropolis. Tombs 514 and 532 (After PARIS ET AL. 1926, figs. 40 and 41).

Lancel¹⁰ has suggested that these monuments could have had a quadrangular base crowned by a pyramid, according to the evidence provided by the discovery of some stones showing acute angles. It is quite possible that at least two monuments in *Baelo Claudia* also had a



⁸ TEJERA 1979, 57-78; BENICHO-SAFAR 1982, 97-100; AUBET 1986, 615-616, 621; GRAS ET AL. 1991, 135. Stone sarcophaguses are less frequent at *Baelo Claudia* than limestone urns and have been usually dated to the Late Antiquity: PARIS ET AL. (1926, 92-101), AREVALO ET AL. 2006, 68-70; JIMENEZ 2008a, 198-199.

⁹ Mausoleum 496 and the so-called “Hornillo de Santa Catalina”.

¹⁰ 1970, 183-203.

Fig. 7 — Monuments of the necropolis
of Porte de Césarée, Tipasa (Algeria)
(After LANCEL 1970, fig. 50).

pyramidium on the top (figs. 8 and 9). It is important to note that monuments in the shape of altars or *naískoi* with quadrangular foundations were present in Rome as well since Republican times¹¹. However, none of the typical adornments usually associated with this kind of memorials (sculptural reliefs, *pulvini*, gables, freizes) have so far been found in the necropoleis of *Baelo Claudia*. In other cases, the quadrangular base of a monument appeared associated with a funerary enclosure and was probably sometimes used as a support for an inscription (fig. 10)¹². Enclosures of this sort are also present in various Roman necropoleis. What made these constructions original in the context of Roman Hispania is that the small chambers of *Baelo Claudia* were only large enough to contain the stone funerary urns. These little chambers were ritually closed after every burial and were decorated with paintings



like more spacious hypogea found Africa and other Roman necropoleis with Punic roots in southern Iberia like Carmona¹³. It is also possible that a structure that was first interpreted as a nymphaeum could have been a funerary tumulus of a type also common in North Africa¹⁴, although the evidence recovered at the beginning of the 20th century remains inconclusive¹⁵ (fig. 11).

The landscape of the necropoleis of *Baelo Claudia* probably also looked similar to certain cemeteries in North Africa because of the presence of *cupae* (fig. 12). Even though these monuments have been also documented in Italy at a fairly early date, the heyday of this kind of

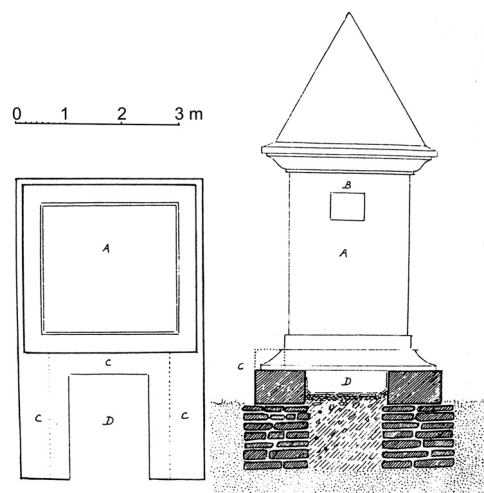


Fig. 9 — Mausoleum 496
(After Paris ET AL. 1926, fig. 43).

¹¹ VON HESBERG 1994, 197; GROS 1996, 389, 392.
Fig. 8 — *Baelo Claudia*, Eastern necropolis, Hornillo de Santa Catalina (After PARIS ET AL. 1926, pl. IV).

¹² Enclosures n° 963, 958 or 686; PARIS ET AL. 1926, 46, 66.

¹³ This type of 'Neo-Punic' hypogea built in the early Empire with the entrance sealed with slabs is characteristic, for example, of the area around Lepcis (G. DI VITA EVRARD ET AL. 1996, 87; MUSSO ET AL. 1997, 276). An interesting group of examples has been retrieved in Baetica as well: ASTRUC 1951; BENDALA 1976, 2002; BELÉN 1983; ALMAGRO GORBEA 1984; VAQUERIZO 2001. In a recent publication, PACHÓN and RUIZ (2006, 454) propose a new date (late Republic and early Empire) for some of the funerary chambers at Urso (Osuna), which could be then included in this set.

¹⁴ FERCHIOU 1987. Fentress links these tumuli with local traditions and not with "the highly Punicized customs of the Numidian upper classes" (FENTRESS 2006, 17). For circular mausolea with burial chambers underneath found at Carmona see BENDALA (1976, 87-89).

¹⁵ PARIS ET AL. 1923, 106-110; SILLIERES 1997, 189.

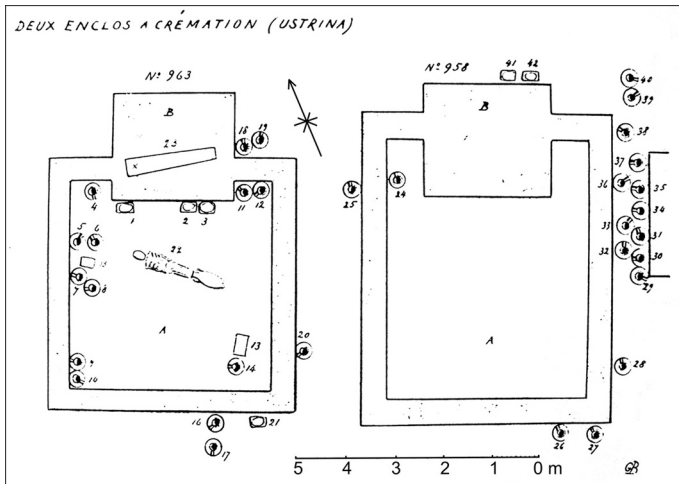


Fig. 10 — *Baelo Claudia*. Eastern necropolis.
Funerary enclosures 963 and 958
(After PARIS ET AL. 1926, fig. 28).

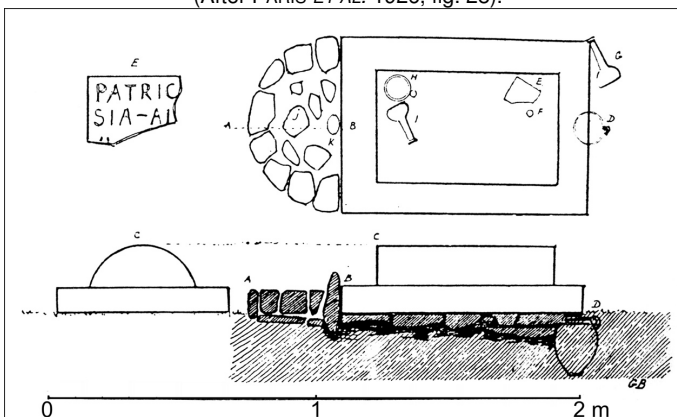


Fig. 11 — *Baelo Claudia*. Western necropolis. Rounded structure with hypogeum, probably a funerary tumulus
(After PARIS ET AL. 1923, pl. XVIII).

Fig. 12 — *Baelo Claudia*. Eastern necropolis.
Cupa with 'baetyl' embedded in the front
(After PARIS ET AL. 1926, fig. 51).

tomb comes between the second half of the 2nd century CE and the first decades of the 3rd century CE in the Italian Peninsula¹⁶. In Northern Africa *cupae* and stepped stones were abundant in Mauritania *Caesariensis*, Numidia and Africa Proconsularis. Some examples have also been attested in certain coastal sites in Tripolitania, with a number of monuments dated between the 1st century BCE (Cirta) and the 1st century CE (Cherchell, Tipasa, Timgad and Setif¹⁷) (fig. 13). *Baelo Claudia* shares with these sites not



Fig. 13 — Tipasa. *Cupae* (After LANCEL 1970, fig. 11).

¹⁶ i. e. *cupa* Museo Civico de Troia, first half of the 1st c. CE, *cupae* of Luzzi, Cosenza, 1st-2nd c. CE, *cupae* of Ostia 1st-2nd c. CE. BACCHIELLI 1986, 310-319.

¹⁷ LANCEL 1970, 179; STIRLING 2007; JIMÉNEZ 2008a, 206-212.

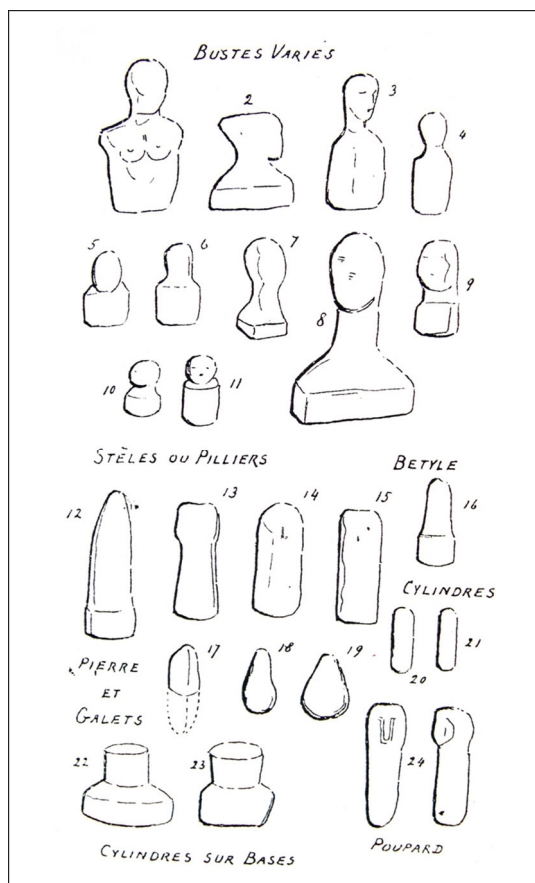


Fig. 14 – *Baelo Claudia*. Types of funerary cippi
(no scale provided with original figure,
After PARIS ET AL. 1926, fig. 65).

only the high number of *cupae* recovered and the early chronology¹⁸, but also the masonry structure, the paintings and some ritual aspects, like the *mensa* for libations and the 'baetyl' embedded in the front, as in the cemeteries of Hadrumetum (Camp Sabatier) or Henchir Zouira (Susa). The so-called 'baetyls' or funerary *cippi* are not exclusively located in front of *cupae* in *Baelo Claudia*. They have been found in association with simple urns and monuments. Their meaning has been subject to debate for decades since, according to the archaeologists digging at the site at the beginning of the 20th century, they were too 'primitive' and 'rude' to be considered a Roman depiction of ancestors (fig. 14). A further problem is posed by the fact that to date it has not been possible to find in the Iberian Peninsula any ensemble that can match –quantitatively and qualitatively– the collection at Bolonia. Some of these pieces roughly resemble the human figure, while others have an ovoid shape or the form of a column. The main characteristic of these sculptured stones is their liminal position between the underworld and the living family. Several of them were placed next to urns covered by earth, semi-interred in the base of a monument or even embedded in the masonry of a funerary construction (figs. 15 and 16). It has been proven that there was no relationship between the number of *cippi* and the number of burials located underneath them and that these objects were connected with libations. As if they were used to communicate both spheres – in the fashion of libation pipes – a number of them were found on top of *mensae* or surrounded

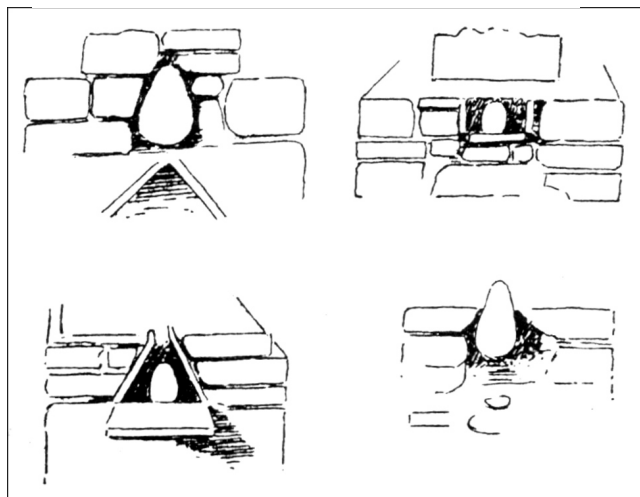


Fig. 15 – *Baelo Claudia*. Cippi stuffed into the masonry
of funerary monuments
(No scale provided with original figure,
After PARIS ET AL. 1926, fig. 66).

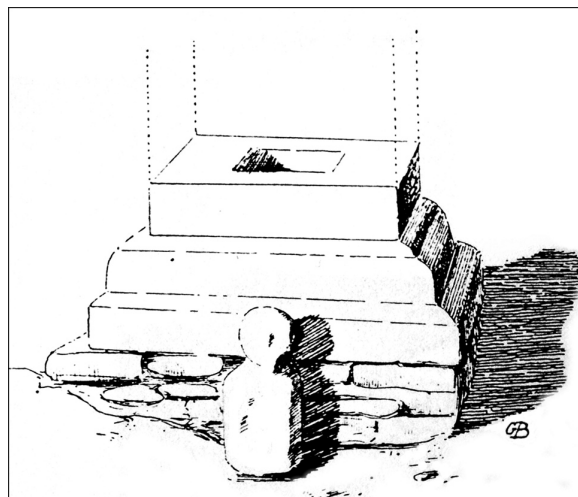


Fig. 16 – *Baelo Claudia*. Eastern necropolis "Tumba del muñeco". The *cippus* was only partially visible in Roman times, as indicated by the position of both the base of the monument and the neck of the figure at the same height
(No scale provided with original figure,
After PARIS ET AL. 1926, fig. 17).

¹⁸ According to PARIS ET AL. (1926, 69), these tombs can be dated in *Baelo Claudia* between the reign of Domitian and the first half of the 2nd century CE.

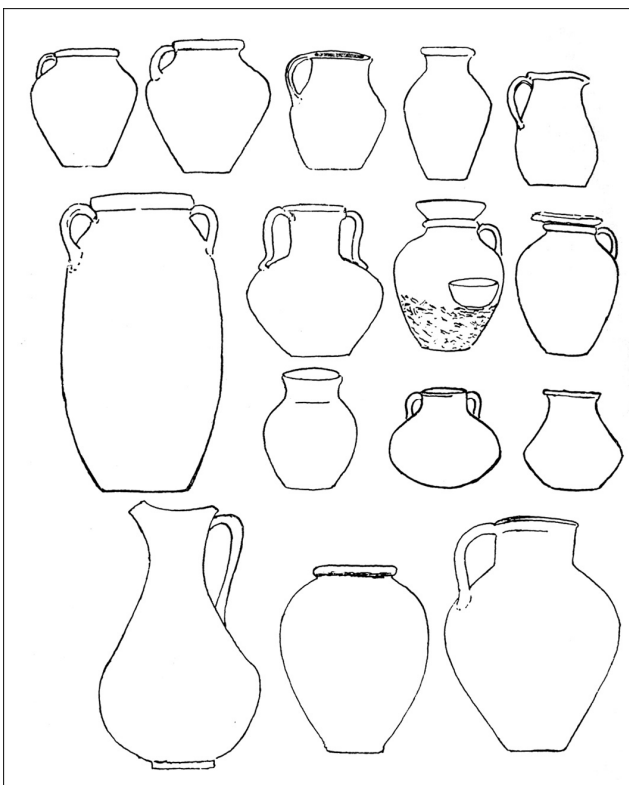
by broken ceramics presumably used in funerary offerings. Remesal¹⁹ suggested that they have a connection with the *stelae* in the form of baetyls that are present up to Hellenistic times in certain cemeteries of the north of Africa and there is certainly a ritual convergence with the sculptured stones embedded in *cupae* of this region. However, the Punic *stelae* do not share the chronology (1st century CE) of the *cippi* found in *Baelo Claudia*, and it is quite difficult to relate the most anthropomorphic pieces with North African examples. In my opinion, a link can be established not only with the traditional Punic grave markers in the shape of baetyls but also with funerary *cippi* present in Republican necropoleis of Etruria and Campania²⁰ (figs. 17). The important point to be made here is that, if we consider the *cippi* of *Baelo Claudia* either from an Italian or an African perspective, where similar objects were used for the cult of ancestors up to Hellenistic times, the *cippi* of Bologna, dated to the early Empire, should be reckoned an 'archaism', regardless of the claimed place of origin of this funerary ritual²¹.



Fig. 17 – Funerary *cippus*
from Tarentum
(After PENSABENE 1975, pl. 88)

Grave Goods

In *Baelo Claudia*, the funerary urn was commonly found associated with a jug that probably contained some kind of offering (fig. 18). These receptacles, which were possibly used to pour liquids during the funerary rituals, frequently contained a little vase and were covered by a flat stone or



a bowl. Leaving aside this typical burial ensemble, the grave goods commonly found in *Baelo Claudia* are unguentaries that usually appeared inside the cinerary urn. The absence of the typical imported ceramic of the date – *terra sigillata* – is remarkable. However *sigillata* was well represented in the broken ceramics found in large quantities surrounding the burials. These fragments can be interpreted as traces of the funerary banquets and libations that took place to honour the deceased. The contrast between the ceramics introduced intact into the burial pit and those that were broken around the tombs allows one to draw an interesting distinction between 'traditional-looking' objects accompanying the dead and the 'fashionable' *silicernia* that were ritually destroyed after the banquets. It is possible to question then the hypothesis that states that the absence of *sigillata* in the tombs is a sign of the location of a given town outside the routes of commerce or an indication of the poverty of their inhabitants.

Fig. 18 – *Baelo Claudia*. Eastern necropolis. Grave goods and urns. (No scale provided with original figure, After PARIS ET AL., 1926, fig. 11).

¹⁹ REMESAL 1979, 42-44.

²⁰ For a wider discussion on the possible relation with other funerary cults in the western Mediterranean: JIMÉNEZ 2007, with further bibliographical references. See also VAQUERIZO 2008.

²¹ JIMÉNEZ 2007, 101.



Fig. 19 – Necropoleis of Carmona. Jars and bottles
(No scale provided with original figure,
FERNÁNDEZ-CHICARRO 1970, figs. 3, 4 and 5).

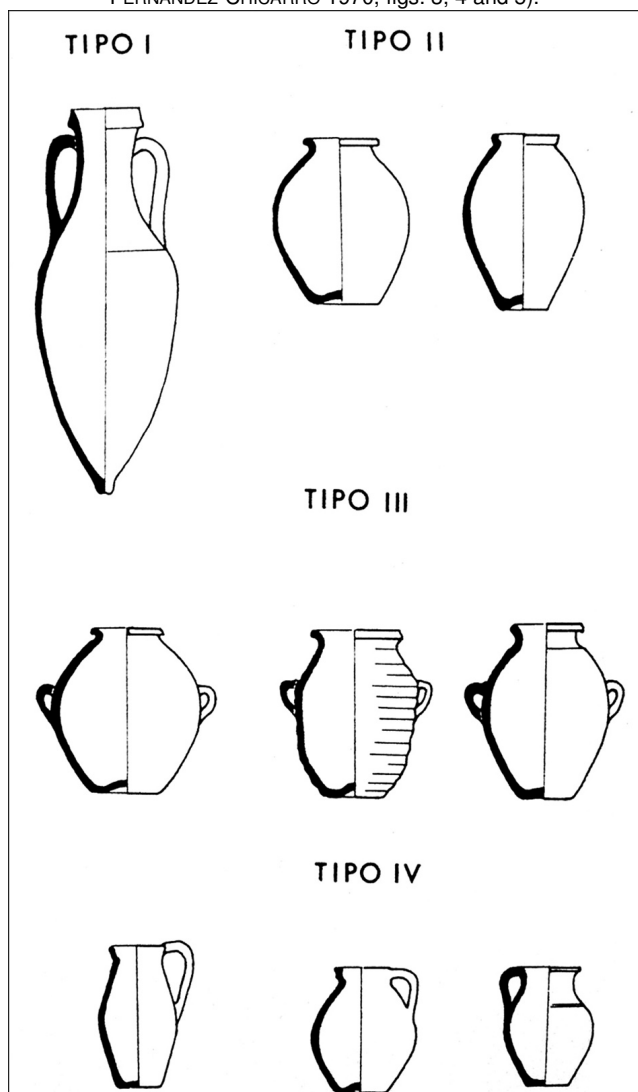


Fig. 20 – Necropoleis of Villaricos. Funerary urns.
(No scale provided with original figure,
ALMAGRO GORBEA 1986, fig. 5).

Expensive ceramics were present in the funerary banquets and were not only used during the funerary rituals, but also offered to the deceased through their 'sacrifice' or breakage near the tomb. Nonetheless, for some reason these receptacles were not considered appropriated to accompany the funerary remains.

Certain necropoleis with Punic roots in the south of the Iberian Peninsula like Carmona, Villaricos, Puente de Noy or Cádiz share several characteristics with the burial places of *Baelo Claudia*, even though there are always idiosyncratic aspects in every settlement and in some cases chronological differences.

In Carmona, where the tombs have been dated in the early Empire, more than 2000 stone-urns have been found, similar to those of *Baelo Claudia*, although slightly smaller and often inscribed with the name of the deceased. They were usually placed in funerary chambers, where different pots containing funerary remains have also been discovered. There is a characteristically local ceramic bottle that might have been used for the same ritual end as the jug in the necropoleis of *Baelo Claudia* (fig. 19). More than 1000 of these vases without handles were recovered in the excavation that took place in one of the necropoleis of Carmona in the early 20th century. At the time Bonsor interpreted these containers, which were used in different types of tombs, as libation vases. Other elements present at *Baelo Claudia*, like glass unguentaries or eggshell vases, were also abundant in Carmona but, unlike in *Baelo Claudia*, Roman lamps from the early Empire are also found among the grave goods there. Interestingly enough *terra sigillata* was rarely included among funerary offerings.²²

The time span of the necropoleis of Villaricos is certainly more extensive than those of Carmona and *Baelo Claudia*, but the scarcity of imported ceramic (campana and *sigillata*) in the burials of the late Republic and early Empire has also been pointed out by Almagro Gorbea²³. Limestone urns are rare, but the use of vases to pour liquids as

²² BENDALA 1976, 126; 1991, 184-6.

²³ ALMAGRO GORBEA 1984, 213-4, 1986, 636.

offerings for the dead or as funerary urns has been documented in inhumation tombs of the 4th century BCE and the custom was kept in later burials up to the early Empire (fig. 20). A number of tombs that included one or several jars, and sometimes plates, unguentaria, lamps and little cups as grave goods have been dug up at Puente de Noy. The jars have been dated between the 4th and the second half of the 2nd century BCE (fig. 21). In Cádiz this type of jug seem to have been less frequently used for funerary purposes, although some examples dated to the late Republic or the early Empire are known²⁴ (fig. 22).

Outside the Iberian Peninsula it is possible to see this association of funerary urns and containers for liquid offerings at various sites. In Puig des Molins (Ibiza), as in other necropoleis, the number of imported materials tends to diminish during the Hellenistic period. However, the same kind of objects as in the 5th-4th century BCE can be found in Hellenistic tombs: lamps, numerous jars, *pateras*, unguentaria and ceramics that imitate the shapes of black glazed ware (fig. 23). Finally, between the 1st century BCE and the beginning of the 1st century CE, ceramic and glass unguentaria became very popular, as did eggshell vases. There are also scarce instances of *sigillata* plates in funerary chambers. Offering jars, quite often inspired by local ceramic shapes, have been also recovered in necropoleis like Lilibeo (Sicily), Tiddis (Algeria) or Tipasa (Algeria).

One could ask whether the association of funerary urn, jar and bowl could be somehow connected with the common representation of a patera and an *urceus* on Roman altars -both funerary and votive-, as a symbol of the libations to the Manes or of the ablutions performed before funerary banquets. Without denying the presence of jars in tombs from different regions of the Roman Empire, it is possible to assert that the ensemble "funerary urn-jar-bowl" has not been documented in other Roman necropoleis of the Iberian Peninsula in such a quantity and in such a systematic way as it has been found at *Baelo Claudia*. Therefore in my opinion these traits could have been perceived as a link with burial customs documented in the region before the arrival of Roman settlers in necropoleis that seem to have shared Punic traditions.

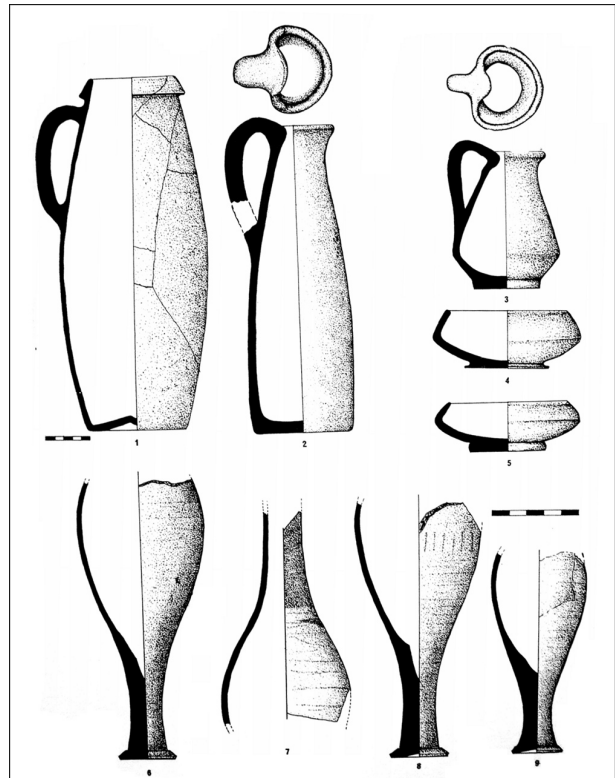


Fig. 21 — Necropoleis of Puente de Noy. Grave goods of Tomb 1, Zone D. (MOLINA ET AL. 1982, fig. 108).

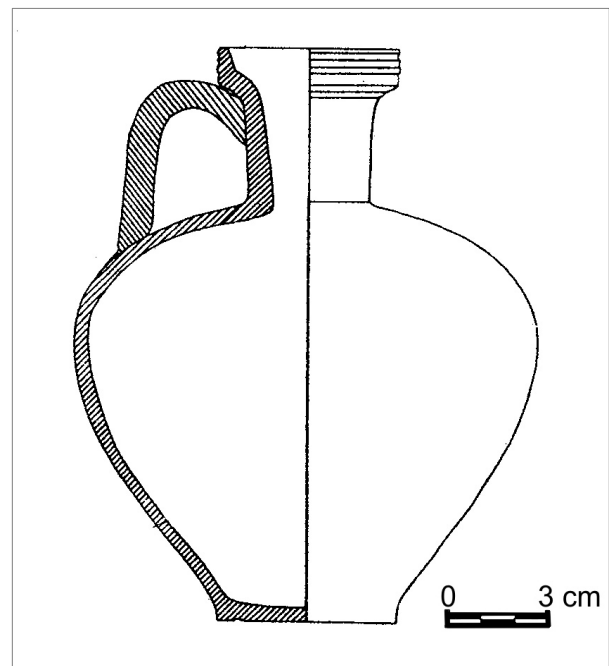


Fig. 22 — Necropoleis of Gadir.
Tomb 1, calle Juan Ramón Jiménez
(PERDIGONES ET AL. 1987, fig. 8).

²⁴ For a postcolonial approach to the Phoenician necropoleis of the Iberian Peninsula: VIVES-FERRÁNDIZ 2006; DELGADO, 2008. A good 'state of the art' in the mid 90s: LÓPEZ CASTRO, 1995, 198-206. A 'longue durée' study of the pattern of change and continuity in the material culture of the 'Phoenician' necropolis from the 8th to the 1st c. BCE of this region still remains to be made.

Concluding Remarks. Punic Ancestors / Roman Towns?

How can we make sense of these data? Is there a distinctive way of 'becoming Roman' in towns that probably shared 'Punic' pasts in comparison with other settlements of southern Iberia? In many of these cities, the layout of the funerary space –on both sides of the main roads of the town- seems to follow the usual 'Roman' display, but the placement of tombs inside the necropolis was not arranged in a system of secondary funerary streets or *diverticula* like those found in other cemeteries of Roman Hispania. In some necropoleis, like Puente de Noy and Cádiz, the inhumation rite prevailed, in contrast with the predominance of cremations in late Iberian or early Roman contexts, but cremation was also the predominant ritual in Carmona or *Baelo Claudia*. Despite the existence of common elements, the characteristic funerary chambers of Carmona or Villaricos are present only in a 'reduced version' in *Baelo Claudia*, where it is possible to find, on the other hand, tower tombs that are absent in other cemeteries in Hispania. Underground shaft graves were not uncommon in Carthage and many other African cities, but they tended to be abandoned during the

late Hellenistic period, while in Villaricos or Carmona and interestingly also in cities of Africa Proconsularis like Lepcis or Assuras, these hypogean tombs, used sometimes for generations, were a peculiar trait of the early Empire necropoleis.²⁵

Tower tombs crowned by pyramids or representations of them are also characteristic of the funerary landscape of Northern Africa, where 2nd century BCE tower tombs inspired by Phoenician, Hellenistic and local models were built in Numidia²⁶ but, in contrast with the mausolea found in the eastern necropolis of *Baelo Claudia*, they are usually isolated from settlements, although there are famous exceptions in Africa Proconsularis, such as the monuments built not far from the city walls at Sabratha (mausolea A and C) and Dougga. Recently this type of mausoleum has also been documented in the area surrounding Carthage, in addition to painted or inscribed representations of them found on the walls of the rock-cut tombs of Cap Bon, in 'Libyan' haouanet in the northern Mogods and on stelae.²⁷

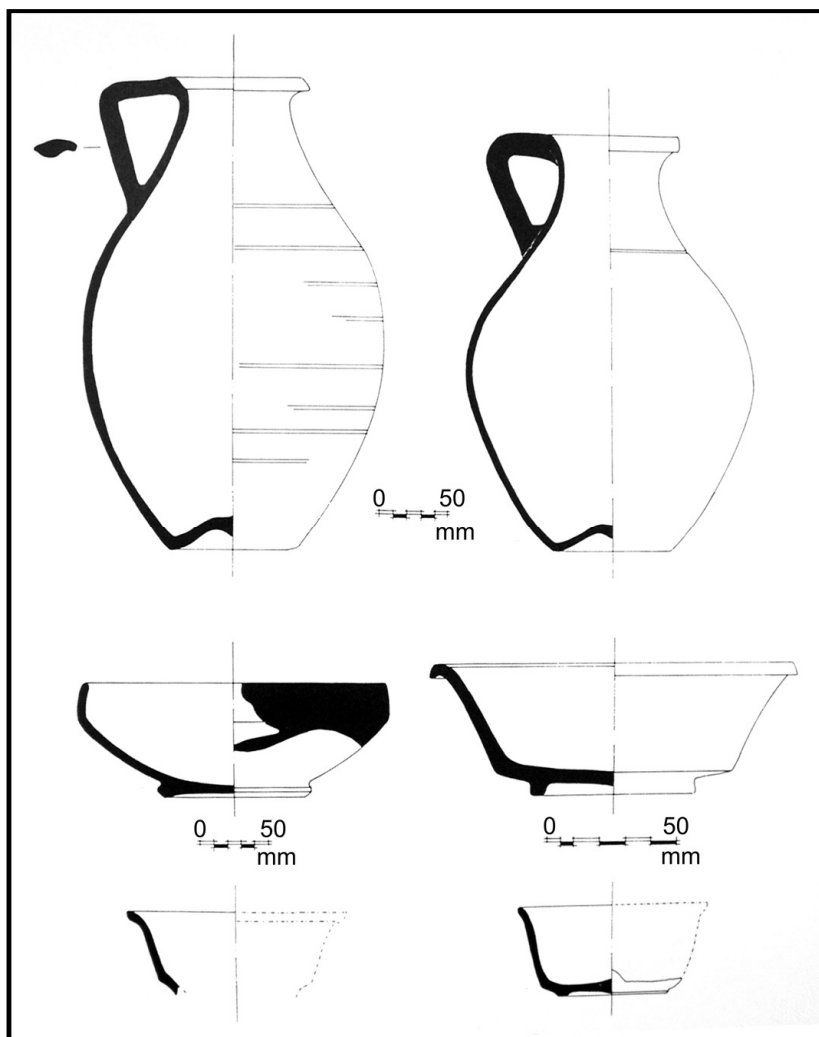


Fig. 23 – Necropoleis of Puig des Molins (Ibiza).
Grave goods found in the Hypogeum 17
(After GÓMEZ BELLARD 1984, fig. 19).

²⁵ FERCHIOU 1987; FONTANA 1996; 2001, 163, MOORE 2007, 81-84.

²⁶ PRADOS 2008, 91-137.

²⁷ ABAD and BENDALA 1985, QUINN 2003, 24; MOORE 2007; PRADOS 2008 with previous bibliography. On monumental tombs as boundary markers see most recently: STONE 2007, 140-141 and PRADOS 2008, 211-213.

The lack of sigillata in the grave goods that accompanied the deceased has been noted in this group of necropoleis, but also in certain burial areas of the Roman capital of *Hispania Baetica, Colonia Patricia (Corduba)*²⁸ and even though the association of the funerary urn with a little vase and receptacle used to pour liquids is a trait these sites share in common with 'Punic forefathers', the specific type of jar or pitcher seems to have been peculiar to each necropolis.

Funerary cults were closely connected with domestic religion and family traditions and, therefore, although individuals made use of common symbols of ancestry – or at least identity symbols that could be recognized by other members of the community – the ritual topography of every necropolis was always highly idiosyncratic. It is also necessary to acknowledge a certain amount of variability in the cultural milieu of Carthage and Rome²⁹ – no longer to be considered as fixed 'models' or bounded and homogeneous 'cultures' in the fashion of 19th century interpretations of archaeological cultures – and at the same time to be aware of the importance of the meaning of using a 'peculiar' type of monument or ritual in disagreement with the norm of a given necropolis. A good example of this would be the hypogea found in Corduba, the capital of the Roman province, side by side with 'characteristically Roman' monuments. A parallel 'dialogue' to that observed in the different forms of raising memorials to the dead in diverse areas of the same cemetery or in different funerary areas of the same town can be observed if we compare various necropoleis of the same region. In the wider frame of Roman Baetica the peculiar similarities of the funerary landscape of *Baelo Claudia* to some African cities must have been remarkable.

At this point it is interesting to go back once more to the republican coins of *Baelo Claudia*. The first issues of the town had a bilingual legend, in Roman and in Neo-Punic, but the Neo-Punic script deployed in this coinage is far from the more or less 'normative model' used at the time in the north of Africa and in the coinage of some mints of the south of the Iberian Peninsula. These bilingual coins can be used as a metaphor to understand a more general phenomenon: the 'independent' pattern of cultural change and continuity showed by communities with Punic origins in different regions of the Mediterranean. In a time when Carthage had already fallen under the control of the Roman Empire, they seem not to be Punic, nor entirely Iberian or Roman but, at this stage, somehow local communities, a point made convincingly by van Dommelen in his analysis of a group of settlements of Punic Sardinia engaged in constructing local versions of their pasts³⁰ and by Mattingly in his analysis of funerary rites at Fazzan³¹. In this way we can better interpret local hybrid practices and escape from the persistent habit of comparing –it looks Roman/it looks Punic, but not quite³²– and interpreting elements of provincial culture as failed attempts to mimic Rome or Carthage³³. We should keep in mind that, as in the case of bilingual coins, there is more than one straightforward reading, in a Mediterranean context, of the ritual elements present in the necropoleis³⁴.

²⁸ VAN DOMMELEN (2007, 59) has also pointed out the significance of the absence of *sigillata* in Punic farms of west central Sardinia, like Bau Angius, in the context of the regular consumption of this kind of import in other settlements of the area. See ROWLANDS, 1999, 336, for an alternative example of exclusion of colonial material culture in Palmares (Brazil).

²⁹ On the one hand, the trope of certain cities of the Empire as *simulacra* of the *Urbs* and, on the other, the idea of Rome as a compendium of the Empire or *cosmopolis* can be traced back to the ancient sources. For the latter, see EDWARDS and WOLF 2003. The particular cosmopolitanism, as a consequence of the conquest, of important administrative Roman nuclei that acted like gravitational centres of their region is hinted at by the particularly mixed or 'hybrid' funerary record of *Colonia Patricia (Corduba)*, the capital of the Baetica. JIMÉNEZ 2008a, 348-352. Cosmopolitanism of colonies, ROWLANDS 1998, 331.

³⁰ "[I]n the context of Sardinia of the 3rd and 2nd c. BCE, Punic culture was not synonymous with Carthage, but represented local communities in local terms, even if drawing on material culture and traditions derived to varying degrees from N Africa and the Punic world" (VAN DOMMELEN 2007, 66); which "constituted first and foremost the cultural foundations of their *local* communities" (VAN DOMMELEN 2007, 67).

³¹ MATTINGLY 2007, 161.

³² I borrow the sentence from BHABHA (1994, 86).

³³ MATTINGLY, 1997b, 11; VAN DOMMELEN 2001a, 71. The use of the concept 'Carthaginian culture' in the north of Africa or labels like 'Punic', 'Libyan' or 'Numidian' as meaningful cultural categories beg the same kind of questions as the conceptualization of 'Roman culture' in the provinces. QUINN 2003, 24; FENTRESS 2006, 4-5.

³⁴ Another interesting example of diglossia can be seen in the city of Lepcis Magna, where the first public inscription in Latin is recorded at the end of the first c. BCE, while in funerary monuments the Neo-Punic epigraphy is preferred. The use of Latin began only sporadically in inscriptions visible from the outside of funerary monuments in the second half of the first century CE. Latin entered in the tombs even later, since it began to be used on ash-urns inscriptions in the first decades of the second century CE, although only about a

Objects like the funerary cippi of *Baelo Claudia*, for example, appear to be particularly ambivalent: probably both visitors from the Italian Peninsula and the north of Africa could have made sense somehow of the ritual and linked it with an archaic way of offering cult to ancestors, like the stelae in the shape of baetyls of North Africa that fell into disuse in Hellenistic times, or the funerary cippi of the Etruscan necropoleis of the late Republic, even if the characteristic details of the performance of the ritual seem to have been quite specific to *Baelo Claudia*. Archaisms, 'traditional' material culture and cultural continuity demands, therefore, as much explanation as cultural change³⁵, especially if we take into account the variation of meaning over time of comparable objects and rituals³⁶. Also, as a conclusion, it could be said that, in regarding funerary rituals, some traits may be seen as rather normative at the level of the town, which can be considered a useful unit of analysis allowing comparisons in a wider frame with other regional settlements. In this respect it is especially interesting not only to contrast different types of burials present in a given necropolis but also to study the dialogue between the expression of different types identity in a certain town and its necropoleis, which take us once again to the question posed at the beginning of this paper: if they had Punic ancestors, did they really have Roman towns?

Apparently, the representation of different types of 'collective' memories in the forum and the tomb took place in the same cities and in the same chronological contexts. *Baelo Claudia* seems to prove the co-existence of parallel discourses about the meaning of 'being Roman' in the province of Baetica that cannot be properly understood if they are not analysed as two phrases of the same sentence. This dialogue questions the ideal of the existence of a unique and homogeneous 'imagined community' in every town and gives archaisms a certain subversive value, by way of displacing or reinterpreting the strategies of 'Romaness'³⁷. Of course, reality was still more complex, because it would be naïve to expect only an integration of the Roman and the local pasts of every city: as Mattingly has written, "[w]hat was being constructed was not simply different variants of Roman identity, but also different ideas of what it mean to be non-Roman". But even if we can compare with benefit the representation of collective identity in the forum with family identity in the tomb or the official discourse spread in public spaces with the discourse about the origins of a single individual represented by a funerary monument as a way to overcome the traditional focus on elite culture in our explanations of 'Romanization', the apparent contrast between the Roman city and the Punic necropoleis should be qualified. Despite the fact that we can say that the city of *Baelo Claudia* 'looks' Roman because of its public buildings, certain elements like the so-called capitolium (in fact not a temple with three chambers, but three separated buildings, like the 'capitolium' of Sufetula, Sbeitla in Tunisia)³⁸, need to be studied in detail and diverse possible readings for different individuals and for every symbol considered. This will make it possible to take into account 'discrepant experiences' within the provinces and to realise that the mechanisms of change could hardly have been solely dependent on the choices of the elite, expressed through the discourses displayed in the written sources or the imagery of the forum³⁹. It is necessary to go beyond linear readings of 'Romanization' that understand the process of colonization as the slow imposition of Roman customs and rituals. As the example of certain types of funerary monuments like the *cupae* shows, the way that the material culture of different provinces spread around the Mediterranean was also a characteristic outcome of Roman expansion. In a context related as much to ancestors as cemeteries, Roman or Carthaginian mausolea were not always the model to be imitated. On the contrary, for example, in some settlements of North Africa this role was played by types of monuments favoured by the

tenth of individuals show a fully Latinized naming system. The use of name and patronymic, typical of Punic communities, seems to have been the norm even for families that had already received citizenship, maybe indicating that the same individuals might have made use of a 'Roman' name in the public sphere and a 'Punic' name in the tomb (FONTANA 2001, 166-168 and fig. 14.6). For a study of the meaning of the coexistence of Latin and Punic inscriptions in public buildings at Lepcis see Quinn's article in these proceedings.

³⁵ WOOLF 2002, 7-8. On the concept of resistance and its relation to the persistence of Punic or Iberian traditions in Roman times, VAN DOMMELEN 2007; JIMÉNEZ 2008b.

³⁶ VAN DOMMELEN 2007, 61.

³⁷ ROWLANDS 1995, 32.

³⁸ BENDALA 1989-1990, 14-17; BONNEVILLE ET AL. 2000, 183 and Quinn in these proceedings on the three temples of the old forum of Lepcis.

³⁹ MATTINGLY 2004, 9. More on the concept of 'discrepant experiences', borrowed from SAID (1993, 35-50) in MATTINGLY 2006.

elites of the Numidian kingdoms, which might have been in turn a source of inspiration for Hellenistic-Roman tower tombs like those found in Sarsina⁴⁰. In our interpretations of the funerary record of southern Hispania we might be influenced by contemporary geopolitics, and interpret the Straits of Gibraltar as a frontier. In fact, both shores could have functioned more like a mirror or an interactive net with important anchors in towns such as Gadir, as it can be seen if we contemplate the similarity of the funerary landscapes – covered with tower tombs, hypogea, cupae and surface graveyards with single tombs - of certain settlements on both sides and the connections described in different realms of material culture in the so-called “Círculo del Estrecho”⁴¹. As Alcock⁴² has claimed, provincial identity played a part in the creation of provincial landscapes, affecting choices of residence, social priorities or economic strategies that might account for the heterogeneity of the archaeological record. In this sense, Woolf has pointed out that Roman colonization was not the “replacement of diversity with uniformity so much as the replacement of diversity generated by local choice with diversity ordered by imperial power”⁴³, able to create new kinds of difference between social classes, regions and individuals. Therefore in the early Empire, the local can be seen as generated through factors that are, at the same time, global and indigenous, and heterogeneity as some sort of “binding force of imperial stability”⁴⁴.

The interaction of Rome and the provinces has been studied a great deal, maybe as a consequence of our fixation with the nature of the interplay between ‘Rome’ and ‘natives’ even in the most recent studies, where those categories are presented in an increasingly fragmented fashion,⁴⁵ but much remains to be said about “how different social and economic groups within these regional communities were incorporated in the new Republican setting”⁴⁶ and the relationship between different regions of the Empire that had close connections before and after the conquest.

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⁴⁰ QUINN 2003, 21.

⁴¹ On the “Círculo del Estrecho” in the late Republic and the early Empire, CHAVES *ET AL.* 1998; CALLEGARIN 2008 with previous bibliography.

⁴² ALCOCK 1997, 109.

⁴³ WOOLF 1997, 344, 347.

⁴⁴ HINGLEY 2003, 118 and 2009. Increasing recognition of this tension between heterogeneity and homogeneity, local and global in the Roman Empire accounts for the increase in the number of works dealing with the concept of ‘globalization’ and its applicability to the Roman Empire in the latest years: WITCHER 2000; FAVRO 2005; HINGLEY 2005.

⁴⁵ PITTS 2007, 695.

⁴⁶ VAN DOMMELEN and TERRENATO 2007, 7.

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