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LATE PUNIC OR EARLY ROMAN?

A 2ND CENTURY BC DEPOSIT FROM GADIR/GADES (CADIZ BAY, SPAIN)

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Abstract

Through the study of an unpublished context of the Torre Alta kiln site (San Fernando, Cadiz, Spain), this contribution explores the transformations of the Punic communities of the Strait of Gibraltar region during the earlier stages of the Roman Republic rule. It can be presumed that some Punic communities, such as our case study (*Gadir-Gades*), seem not to have been wiped out during the conflict and were soon politically and economically integrated into the Roman sphere. Nonetheless, the economic and cultural consequences and traces of this transition into the Roman world are still poorly archaeologically defined. It was a period of cultural and economic mixture particularly difficult to analyze from an archaeological perspective. Thus, on the basis of material culture studies, the work reflects on how should we name and read the items with Punic form but that were produced during the Roman period. Also, the paper focus on the analysis of this transition phase identified as “Late Punic”, paying attention to both the epistemological conditions of such a study and how this political situation could had an impact on material culture.

Keywords

Gadir, Gades, pottery, amphorae, kilns, Late Punic, economy, acculturation, Romanization, numismatics

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Introduction

Scholars dealing with archaeological sites, texts or any type of historical sources attempt to understand and explain the past as accurately as the current research tools using all available data have made possible. Unfortunately, both archaeologists and historians quite often deal with fragmentary data extracted from material contexts, literary evidence, epigraphy, coins, etc. Thereby, an attempt to build a complete scientific historical passage about an entire culture or period becomes almost impossible on the basis of the discoveries provided by a specific context. The particular information from an item, structure, layer, site, or group of sites could not be representative of a more general historical process. In the same way, the data obtained from literary sources could be very useful for the definition of general trends, but can obscure important features of daily life or other aspects not relevant for ancient authors. Thus, to achieve a better picture of the past, in a scientific way, an important amount of information is needed as well as an interdisciplinary approach combining archaeological and historical data and methods.

As well as the number of variables to analyze, their quality is an important factor in the completion of a real scientific historical inference. On the other hand, historical events and periodization could also be, from an archaeological perspective, excessively rigid and compartmentalized, leaving in the background or completely obscuring key features of cultural change and

interaction (which, by contrast, leave identifiable traces in material culture, settlement patterns, technological evolution, etc.). This contribution intends, based on a particular case study, to reflect on the relation between traditional Classical History and Archaeology. More specifically, we would like to consider the relevancy of the historical frameworks underlined by various terminologies commonly used to refer to certain periods/scenarios of political and cultural transition from the Punic sphere to the Roman Republic.

To achieve these goals an archaeological example has been selected: an unpublished deposit from a pottery workshop (Torre Alta, in San Fernando, Cadiz) located in the territory of one of the major coastal cities of the Western area of the ancient Mediterranean (*Gadir/Gades*), dated within the decades following the Roman annexation of the southern region of Iberia. The data obtained from this context of Torre Alta workshop fit together with the available information recovered in other sectors of the ancient Bay of Cadiz. Previous research on the production areas of the insular *Gadir*¹ suggests a great homogeneity among them (settlement patterns, technological features, etc.), and the continuity of this uniformity at least until the second half of the 2nd century BC. Thus, Torre Alta can be evaluated as a prototype of the workshop of Punic and “Late-Punic” *Gadir* (5th-2nd centuries BC), just one of the dozens located all around the insular territory of the city. At the same time Torre Alta could be considered one of the best-studied regional pottery workshops so far², so the material assemblage discussed provides particular data that can also be evaluated in a much broader way.

Through the analysis of the items included in this artisanal deposit and its accurate dating it will be possible to discuss the suitability of applying certain widespread-terms in the Mediterranean historiography (such as “neo-Punic”, “Late Punic” or “post-Punic”) not only for the characterization of these archaeological transitional phases but also to define historical periods marked by profound and gradual processes of cultural change (in this case, the “Romanization” of the formerly Punic areas incorporated by the Roman Republic between 206-146 BC).

Additionally, the examination of this archaeological context will make it possible to present a specific example of the material traces of those transitional cultural changes in production and local artisanal practices, as well as in local commercial strategies and even the consumption patterns of the population of the Bay of Cadiz. In sum, a contribution whose main goals

1. García and Ferrer 2001, pp. 26-27; Sáez 2010, pp. 906-912.
2. Sáez 2008.

focus on stimulating the scientific discussion on conceptual issues about the so-called “Late Punic stage”, about the historical/archaeological terminologies intimately connected to the concept and, finally, about the potential of archaeological research (material culture studies) to explore specific essential aspects to supplement the wide-ranging historical outlines.

TERMINOLOGICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES ABOUT THE “LATE PUNIC” CONCEPT

Spanish and Italian historiographies regularly use the term “Late Punic” to refer to or define a continuation or persistence of Punic culture after the Roman conquest³. This terminology was originally created to refer to the transformations of the Punic language after 146 BC⁴, but it was quickly considered more adequate to define the material culture characterized by the continuity of some Punic features during the Roman Era⁵. In the case of the specific study of amphorae, the Late Punic term has been presented as a tool to classify some specific amphoric productions⁶, those which belong to the Punic artisanal tradition but that were produced during the Roman period. To identify this material only as “Roman amphorae” seems a contradiction, as they mainly match with morphological Punic features, and also because some of them are derivative profiles of amphorae types of the Punic *Gadir*. Referring to them as “Punic amphorae” also seems to be inadequate, as their production was developed in territories controlled by Rome. As such, the late Punic terminology has become a possible answer to the challenge this material represented. Later on, Spanish historiography adopted this Late Punic expression to allude to a transitional phase, between Punic and Roman times, and its characteristic material culture. However, although the term has gained some historiographical weight it still needs to be more clearly defined, mainly regarding its chronological and historical framework. Both, the initial and final hiatus of this period are still in dispute. The initial moments of this period change depending on the advance of the Roman conquest of the

3. Ramón 2014, p. 137; Muscuso and Pompianu 2012, p. 2044; Van Dommelen and Gómez 2008, pp. 3-4; Arévalo 2010, pp. 15-22; Arévalo and Moreno, forthcoming.
4. Díaz 1978, pp. 264-270; Zamora 2012. On the basis of graphic criteria the term “Neopunic” was created by epigraphists (Schröder 1869) to characterize graphical symbols and documents, but it does not refer to a chronological, cultural or geographical phase of the Punic language. On the contrary, the term “Late Punic” was in first place used to characterize linguistic, chronological and cultural issues of the formerly Punic territories conquered by the Roman Republic from the 2nd c. BC to the 1st c. AD. Thus, the term “Late Punic” is more versatile than “Neopunic”, which should be used only in an epigraphical manner.
5. Moscati 1993, pp. 89-95.
6. Ramón 2008, pp. 71-80; Sáez 2008, pp. 527-598.

central and western Mediterranean. Nevertheless, the end of this cultural persistence is even more difficult to define, as some Punic aspects remain perceptible even during the 1st-2nd centuries AD, as seen in context as traditionalist as the necropolis. A question far more complicated than it seems, namely if we take into account that the “Punic World” was not as culturally homogeneous as we may suspect⁷.

Going back on the specific study of amphorae, we should emphasise that many other terminologies have been applied to the same material, including the term “Neo-Punic”⁸. This expression is nowadays more frequently used in northern European historiography, perhaps as a result of J. H. Van der Werff’s work on the subject⁹. Although this scholar mainly worked on the Roman productions from northern Africa, he has opportunely highlighted the inadequacy of a Roman classification for some of the types that he was dealing with in the Tunisian area. The production of those amphorae groups had taken place during the Roman period (after 146 BC) but their shape was definitely derived from the regional Punic tradition. The term “neo-Punic” also found part of its roots in earlier studies made in North African contexts, particularly linked to the study of ancient coinage and epigraphic evidences¹⁰. A French military officer and scholar, J. Baradez, identified the continuity of Punic forms and traditions within contexts clearly dating to Roman times¹¹. He presented such material continuity in relation to the epigraphic one, constructing a relationship on two clearly different dimensions. As presented, the two cited terminologies are based in differentiated assessments of the relationship between Roman and Punic cultures. Although they mostly refer to the same archaeological material, they imply two very different phenomena.

The “Neo-Punic” term refers to a form of revival of the Punic tradition, or it was –at least– the main sense that could be outlined by the first uses of this same adjective during the nineteenth century¹². Nevertheless, a noticeable transformation of its semiotic has begun to arise in the last decades. The actual use of the term generates confusion and mix-up between different aspects of the same cultural environment (between language and artifacts). Conversely, the “Late Punic” term alludes to a possible continuation of certain Punic traditions during the Roman era. It translates the idea of a dif-

7. Prag 2006. Van Dommelen and Gómez 2008, pp. 3-4; Arévalo and Moreno forthcoming.

8. Van Dommelen 1998, pp. 35-41.

9. Van der Werff 1977-78, pp. 175-186.

10. Amadasi 2006, pp. 19-22.

11. Baradez 1969, pp. 86-98.

12. Bendala 2012, pp. 15-18.

ferential, yet progressive, cultural integration of the Punic population into the Roman sphere (including every aspect, from economy to religion, politics, language, etc.). From our point of view, the scientific use of one term or another implies very specific assumptions. Even if this kind of debate regarding terminology could seem superficial in relation to the study of a specific pottery context, as the one analyzed in this paper, its relevance should not be downgraded and it can be included in a wider discussion about the gradual process of integration of the former Punic areas of the central and western Mediterranean within the Roman world.

As mentioned before, the use of the “Late Punic” term has become more frequent in recent studies, mainly in the case of Sardinian contexts¹³. The interest in the transition between Punic and Roman times was developed early in the island¹⁴. Even aside from Spanish and Italian historiographies, the persistence of the Punic culture has been a recurrent subject of interest for many scholars. The long continuation of the “Punic” epigraphy and way of life, centuries after the fall of Carthage, called into question the traditional conception of the supremacy of the Roman culture after the conquest of Northern Africa. Such persistence has been interpreted in various ways, one of them defining it as an active resistance against Roman culture¹⁵. Nowadays, this Punic cultural continuity is still a major focus regarding this area, a trend well illustrated by the development of recent research on this topic¹⁶.

Led by the difficulty of the historical understanding of the transition between Punic and Roman cultures, researchers have explored alternative paths to deal with its definition. In this regard, it can be illuminating to emphasize the recent reflections of A. Campus, introducing the “post-Punic” concept¹⁷. With this term, this scholar tried to explicitly isolate the peculiar cultural environment (composed of a mixture of some Punic and Roman features) that characterized many Punic communities under the Roman rule. Campus remarked on the necessity to define these features and put them into a chronological frame, studying a specific evidence set dated between the 2nd century BC and the 4th century AD. The contribution of A. Campus is, from our point of view, one of the more substantial on the subject. Firstly, it illustrates that the debate regarding Punic persistence should be extended in many areas

13. Bondi 1990; Ledda 2009, pp. 12-14; Mallica 2012, pp. 2003-2006; Van Dommelen 1998. Many other examples of the “late-Punic” terminology in recent Italian historiography could be cited, but it is not the prior subject of our work.
14. Rowland 1977; Vismara, 1990.
15. Bénabou 1978, pp. 87-88; Bénabou 2005.
16. Le Bohec 2013, pp. 255-258.
17. Campus 2012, pp. 5-33.

around the Mediterranean. Secondly, it underlines the fact that the Roman conquest had a significant impact on the Punic culture, which, accordingly, produced a particular cultural environment of an unprecedented nature.

Nonetheless, despite its brilliant presentation, this study may have highlighted some of the possible flaws of the archaeological and historical study on the subject. Firstly, that the “Punic World” is often analyzed as a homogeneous and consistent area, both politically and culturally, but it seems not to have been the case during Antiquity¹⁸, and the historical situations that marked the various Punic areas diverge. In his study, Campus approaches the persistence of Punic culture in the same way for cases from Sardinia and from North Africa. However, these two areas had distinctive history and relations with Rome, as there was more than a century between their respective conquests. Moreover, there are various evidences showing that the population we define as Punic, following in this a Greek and Roman conception, was in fact quite heterogeneous. Politically, they were characterized by various civic entities, which kept different degrees of autonomy even under the supremacy of Carthage. Such an idea is illustrated by the differential reactions of the “Punic” communities to the Roman presence during the Second Punic War¹⁹. For example, previous research has suggested that it was the case for the strait of Gibraltar region, as the “Circle of the Strait” may have been partially apart from the direct influence of Carthage²⁰. Focusing on the case of *Gadir*, one of the main centers of the western Punic culture, recent research has provided numerous evidences of a progressive but wide-ranging integration within the Roman culture. Politically the city remained as a close ally of Rome during the uprising of 197 BC, first becoming an autonomous *foederata ciuitas* and long after that a Roman *municipium*²¹. The characteristics of its transitional process from Punic *Gadir* to Roman *Gades* and the availability of a growing set of archaeological evidences linked to this period turns this city as a major case-study among the cities of the so-called Circle of the Strait.

Otherwise, the study of cultural change is often considered in isolation from one set of data. A. Campus followed this method, by proposing a cultural interpretation focused on epigraphic and literary sources. As such, he generalized his analysis, based on a very specific set of data, to a quite diverse

18. Prag 2014, pp. 20-23; Bondi 2014, pp. 60-68.

19. Some remained loyal to Carthage during all the conflict, but others decided become allies with the Romans; the ancient Cadiz could be one of the best examples of the second group (López 2007; Padilla 2010, pp. 262-265).

20. Tarradell 1960, p. 61; Callegarin 2008, pp. 289-299.

21. Padilla 1985, pp. 307-311.

cultural, economic and social environment. One of the key issues here would be that the material sphere is not a passive component of such a system. It is a central and essential component of it²², an active systemic input that could even have influenced other dimensions that are not directly related with it. This same idea has been developed by other scholars regarding the change in material culture implied by the traditional Romanization concept²³.

Beyond these epistemological issues, we think that the material culture studies and particularly amphorae production could be a relevant source of data for a better understanding of cultural change. As active input within the social phenomenon, daily-life artifacts could have directly participated in such process. Thus, the evolution of typologies, esthetics, stamps, *tituli picti*/epigraphy and even of commercial networks could altogether provide essential information concerning cultural change in the formerly Punic coastal cities of the West during Roman rule. In a broader point of view, studies that take into account the productive environment and its connection to an economic model, focusing on the technical issues of the ceramic production, could shed light on the various interaction processes and technological transfer which took place in this transition. Thus, they would help answering the crucial questions of how and why cultural change developed. In the case study we are discussing, such a study would be even more relevant as *Gadir* seems to have been deeply engaged in long distance trade and the production of its amphorae was a reference for the whole western area.

Results of the Area 4 of 1995 season at Torre Alta

From the last decades of the 6th century BC, the Phoenician colony in the Bay of Cadiz turned into a prosperous city with a broad insular territory dedicated to maritime and commercial activities. The urban space identified with Punic *Gadir* was one of the main ports of the western Mediterranean, connecting the Atlantic Ocean and the southwest of the Iberian Peninsula with the most important Mediterranean commercial networks. Fishing and related fish by-products industries were one of the central axes of this urban transformation²⁴, a solid pillar for the upgraded maritime economy, generating the urgent need of producing a massive quantity of amphorae for that fishy business. Thus, from the 5th century BC a lot of pottery workshops were created around *Gadir*, which produced not only amphorae but also other

22. Latour 2005, pp. 70-82.

23. Freeman 1993, pp. 439-445.

24. Sáez 2014a; 2014b.

products required for commerce and the daily life of the settlement, like red slip, grey and plain wares, storage and cooking pottery and cultic terracottas.

Torre Alta is one of the most excavated and published pottery workshops. The settlement was placed upon a north-facing hill, commanding the northern side of the marshland and the inland of the bay, with a direct visual connection with the city of *Gadir*. The kiln-sites were placed beside an immense clay outcrop and in a very fertile agricultural area, both of them being intensely exploited until the first decades of the 20th century. Excavations overlapped after its discovery in 1987²⁵, with partial salvage campaigns in 1993-1995, 1997²⁶ and 2001-2003 that brought to light an important group of kilns and dumping pits. The structures and items uncovered suggest a peak phase of this kiln-site developed between the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC²⁷.

THE CONTEXT AND THE SEQUENCE OF TORRE ALTA WORKSHOP

The area studied in this paper is located in the core of the archaeological site, beside a pair of kilns (Kiln 1 and Kiln 2) excavated in the 1987/1988 campaign (FIG. 1). This part of the workshop was more widely excavated again in 1995, including four main areas at the south-east of the kilns, where it was possible to identify a large pit (Area 2, also named Sector I) that could be used for clay quarrying and that was finally filled up with residues from the kiln-site activities during the final stretch the 3rd century BC.

Not far away, about fifteen meters to the northeast of this pit another two more excavation areas (3 and 4) were explored, almost in contact with the 1987-1988 Kiln 2. These extension of the areas excavated made it possible to document new structures excavated in the clayish soil, filled up with ceramic sherds and other residues from the kiln-site. Specifically, the stratigraphy of these two areas (FIG. 2) revealed ditch sized pits with about two meters of maximum height and one meter of depth, southeast-northeast oriented, very close to the kilns. In the case of Area 3, items were less abundant, but some evidence related to potter activities from the 5th-4th centuries BC were documented. It seems possible that the remains of the recognizable structures in these excavation sectors could be connected to the vestiges of a kiln partially preserved (excavated in 2001), being the irregular ditch part of the underground "working pit" located in front of the entrance to the kiln's air corridor.

25. Frutos and Muñoz 1994; García 1998; Muñoz and Frutos 2006.

26. Arteaga *et al.* 2001.

27. For a full report of the excavation results see Sáez 2008.

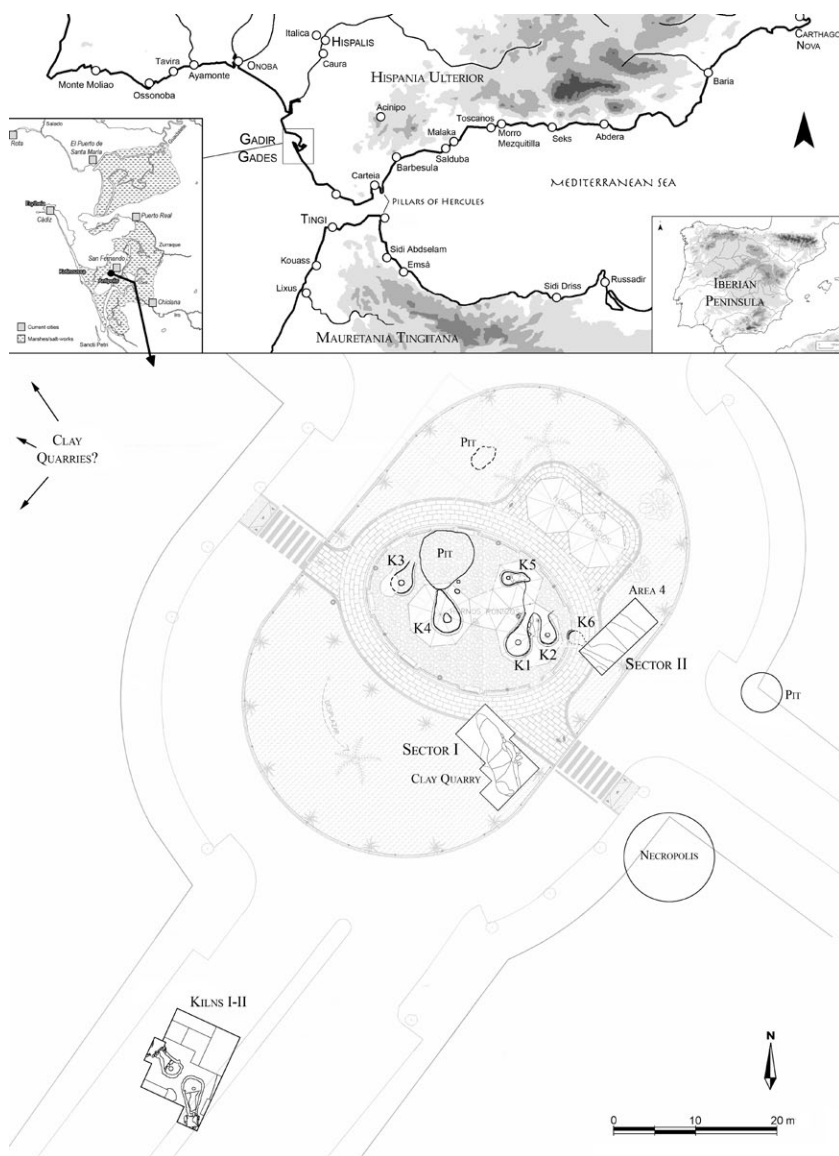


FIG. 1. Location of Cadiz Bay and the site of Torre Alta in the Iberian Peninsula and the region of the Strait of Gibraltar, with main sites cited in the text (above); also, general plan of the pottery workshop remains (after Sáez 2014a).

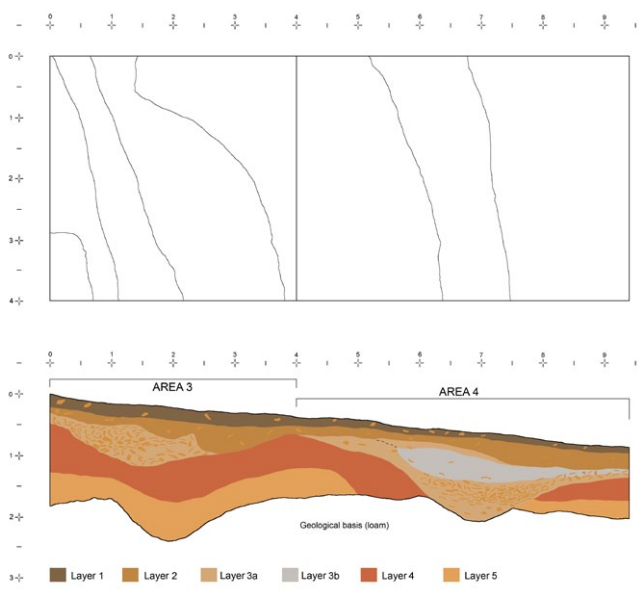


FIG. 2. Plan and stratigraphic section of Sector II (including Areas 3-4) (A) and picture of the ceramic finds of the deposit from Area 4 studied in this work (B) (images kindly granted by Prof. V. Castañeda, UCA).

The context that focuses our attention in this contribution was registered in Layer 3a/b of Area 4, a uniform stratum where, besides discarded ceramics (or discarded as waste), a large amount of grey ash was found (probably

as the result of the cleaning of some nearby kiln). The reduced size of the digging area, as well as the characteristics of the pit (ditch-shaped) do not make it possible to define the specific function of the structure or if it was connected to other nearby cases. Anyway, it is possible to speculate about its relation with an area devoted to clay quarrying for further kilns, which after being abandoned was filled up with various waste and discarded vessels. As we will see, Kilns 1 and 2 can be linked to the same phase of activity of the atelier, whose business seems to continue until the beginning of the last third of the 2nd century BC²⁸. Likewise, Kilns I-II have been also dated during the same period²⁹ and seem to have been operating during the two first thirds of 2nd century BC. In summary, the pit in Area 4 could be interpreted as a structure that was working in the final stages of the kiln-site, probably being the quarry of the mentioned group of kilns (1-2 and perhaps I-II).

THE CERAMIC EVIDENCE

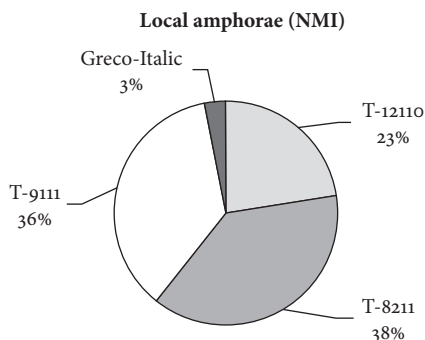
Generally, the ceramic material documented in the pit of Area 4 from the 1995 campaign in Torre Alta is quite shattered, but in good condition to identify the typology of most of the recovered items. One should note the presence of a large amount of vitrified waste, most of it not linked to any typological group/category in particular, even though in some cases some of the individuals have made it possible to verify the production at the kiln-site of some groups or even some stamped productions. As well, it is important to outline as one of the main characteristics of the context the large number of wasters and the fact that it is not a “closed deposit”. As will be explained later, it may have been formed by different items thrown preferentially at the final moment of the clay exploitation of this sector but also by other ceramics removed during the excavation of the pit itself. Even so, the available set of evidence suggests some of the key characteristics of the changes of ceramic production in *Gadir/Gades* during the initial stages of the assimilation within the Roman Republic.

Typological frame and quantifying approach

Local amphorae clearly dominate the context, with a total amount of 222 individuals. Only one fragment could possibly represent an import (but there are still doubts about the assignation of its fabric and determining its origin).

28. García 1998; Muñoz and Frutos 2006.

29. Arteaga *et al.* 2001; Sáez 2014a.



Among the productions of *Gadir*³⁰ (which is 51.63% of the total amount of local pottery) one of the most important groups is the one comprised by types T-12110³¹, a traditional Punic family whose early profiles go back to the archaic period. Some of the individuals identified can be clearly classified as residual, like those rims with simple edges tending to triangular shapes (FIG. 3, 1-2) typical of the 4th century BC or the earlier decades of 3rd century BC³². There are a relatively abundance of rounded rims, shoulders with very sharp edges and with a characteristic incision at the exterior side of the rim. These later variants that can be linked to type T-12111/2 (FIG. 3, 3-8), frequent in the production of the workshops of *Gadir* during the better part of the 3rd century BC and beginning of the 2nd century BC. But the most common type in this context are the T-12112 vessels, an evolved variant of its predecessor, typical of the last two thirds of the 2nd century BC and characterized by a fattened rim, a very vertical wall in rim/upper part of the body, a less marked edge on the shoulders and a cylinder-shaped upper half. In many cases, especially in the central decades of the century, features like the external incision seem to continue (FIG. 3, 9-12) although in many individuals this detail is not present at all (FIG. 3, 13, with a non-graphematic post-firing graffito). The presence of different but clearly identifiable wastes verifies the production of T-12111/2 and T-12112 in the surroundings of the deposit attested in Area 4 (FIG. 3, 14-17), otherwise thoroughly recorded in other contexts of the workshop³³. From a quantitative perspective the T-12110 is the third group among the amphorae, with a minimum of 50 individuals (23% of the total of amphorae).

30. Updated additional information about typological and chronological details, commercial distribution and contents of the types recorded in this deposit can be found online in the papers hosted in the website of Project *Amphorae Ex Hispania* (<http://amphorae.icac.cat/tipol/geo/map>).

31. Ramón 1995.

32. Sáez 2008; 2014a.

33. Muñoz and Frutos 2006; Sáez 2008.

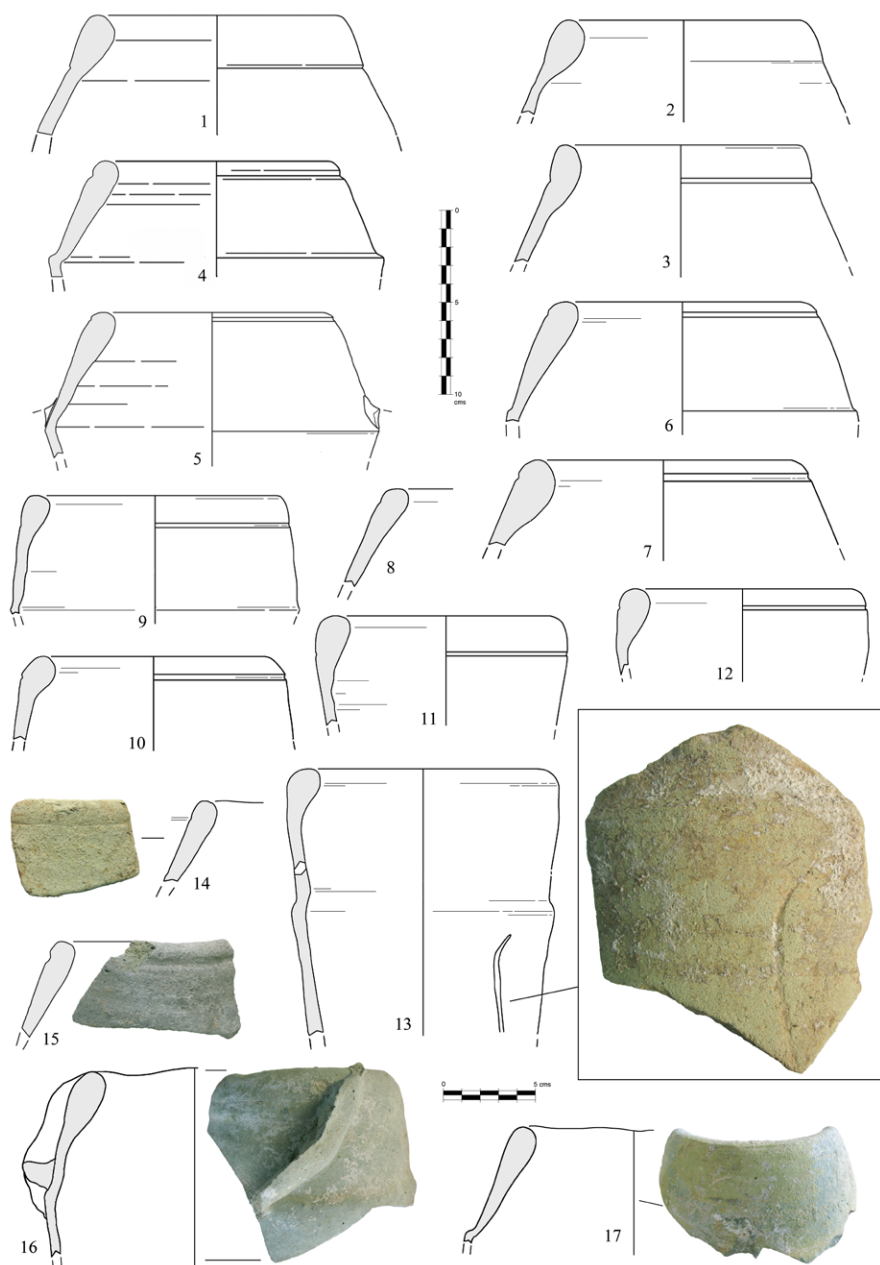


FIG. 3. T-12110 amphorae from Area 4 deposit.

However, the most abundant in the context are the variants of T-8211 type³⁴, with a minimum of 84 individuals that results in the 38% of the total amphorae of the context. As in the previous case, also in this group it is noticeable the presence of sherds with typical characteristics of the 4th-3rd century BC variants, such as wide diameters, edges only slightly distinguished from the body, incisions to reveal this separation of the rims or to indicate the height of the handle location (FIG. 4, 1-4). Within this presumably residual group some of the individuals seem to be a little more evolved, typologically simpler and with a narrower diameter of the mouth (FIG. 4, 5-8), most likely dating to the middle or second half of the 3rd century BC. Nevertheless, the most numerous group is once more the one formed by late variants with narrow mouths, short rims separated from the body with a slope, with simplified lines characteristic of the 2nd century BC productions (FIG. 4, 9-13). The abundance of deformation but typologically identifiable waste makes it possible to assure that this type was fired in kilns close to Area 4 of 1995 (Fig. 4, 15-19). Although it is not an *unicum* in the workshop, two of these amphorae must be highlighted because of the presence of scratches of little clawmarks attested in the inner surface (Fig. 4, 10 and 16), probably a trace of the usage of this recipients as a refuge by small canids or rodents during the process of drying developed before firing.

Almost equal in number to the preceding group (80 individuals, 36% of the total amphorae), the different variants of type T-9111 uncovered suggest a similar duality regarding the coexistence of residual sherds with others belonging to the later phases of the industrial activity of Torre Alta. Those correspond mostly to individuals with large diameter, generally slightly vertical rims turned to the exterior and with the presence of incisions at the outer side of the upper area of the body (FIG. 5, 1-6). This variant finds formal parallels in contexts at the same workshop (Kiln 5³⁵) or at the abandonment layers at the fortified settlement of Castillo de Doña Blanca (El Puerto de Santa María, Cadiz)³⁶, helping to date these productions during the second half or last third of 3rd century BC. The rest of the material is very fragmented and makes it difficult to precisely identify the chronology, with a prevalence of the typical fattened round rims to the external side characteristic of all the 2nd century BC individuals (with some variations about the diameter and the wall inclination) (FIG. 5, 7-21).

34. Ramón 1995, pp. 225-226.

35. Sáez 2008.

36. Niveau 1999.

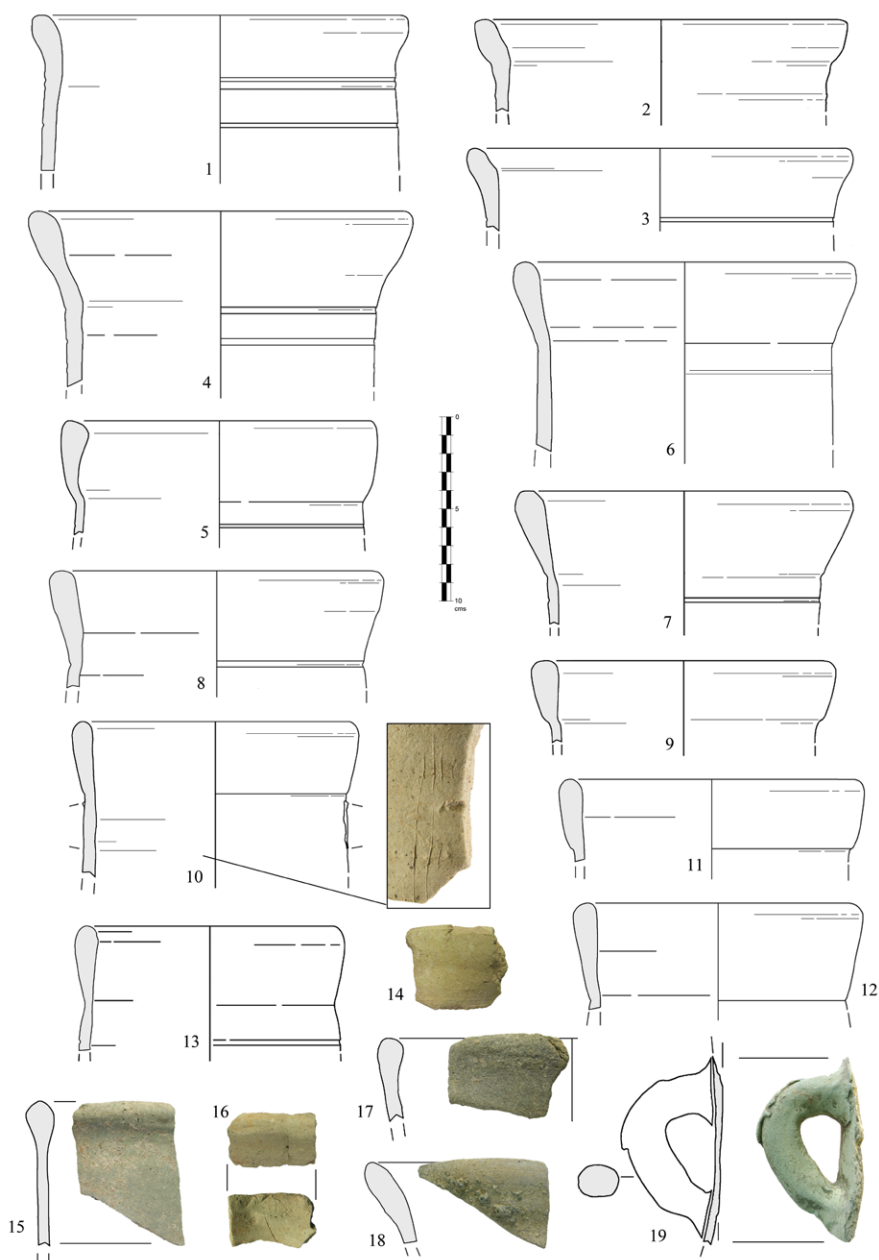


FIG. 4. T-8211 amphorae from Area 4 deposit.

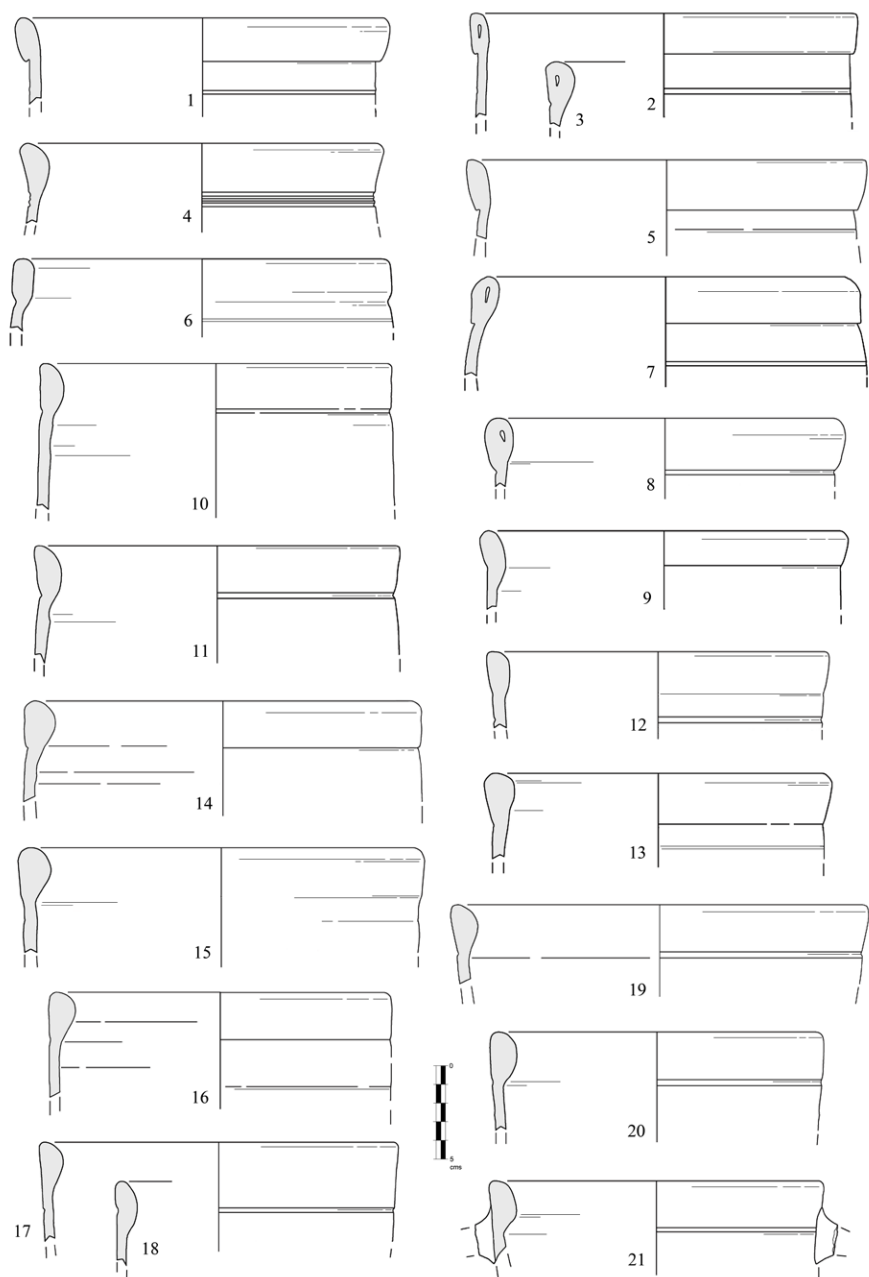


FIG. 5. T-911 amphorae from Area 4 deposit.

The identifiable vitrified or misshaped sherds corresponding to the late variants of this group are significantly numerous (FIG. 6, 1-10) and certify that the production of this form was developed in the surroundings of Area 4 (possibly, in Kilns 1-2). Some of the most interesting items of the context are included in this group of deformed and discarded vessels. In particular, attention should be drawn to the presence of stamped T-9111 individuals, one well-fired example (FIG. 6, 11) and another one vitrified and slightly deformed (FIG. 6, 1), which together provide a priceless testimony about the relation of Torre Alta with these stamped iconographies.

The first of the stamps (FIG. 6, 11) is only partially preserved close to one of the handles, showing what it seems to be a dolphin inscribed inside a pseudo-rectangular frame, a shape barely attested in other amphorae stamps from *Gadir's* ateliers (as we will see, just another two unpublished examples). Unfortunately, the stamp is only partially preserved. Therefore, it is only possible to appreciate the snailed and ictioform end of a figure that might have represented a dolphin. This motif was inscribed inside a frame with an elliptic module (its shape does not remain complete either). Although it tends to a circle, as the rest of the figurative amphoric seals recorded in local industrial contexts³⁷ do, possibly imitating the form of the monetary dies.

Moreover, it is especially interesting to ponder the relation between coins and the dolphin motifs attested in the seals of the amphorae from the local pottery workshops. Several amphorae stamped with dolphins have been recovered in other contexts dated in the 2nd century BC, such as the fish-salting factory of San Bartolome³⁸ or the Cuarteles de Varela area³⁹ (both in Cadiz). The dolphin iconography was widely appreciated all around the ancient Mediterranean and can be attested in numerous artistic representations⁴⁰. It was frequently used as a principal motif in sigillary rings, as suggested by examples from Casa del Obispo⁴¹ (Cadiz) or La Algaida sanctuary⁴² (Sanlúcar de Barrameda, Cadiz), and also it can be found on many coinages of Antiquity. In this sense, it should be underlined that the coinage of *Gadir* started showing the motif of the dolphin as a principal icon on their lower denominations, as a fishing/maritime icon related mythologically with the main god of the city (*Melqart-Heracles*).

37. Frutos and Muñoz 1994, pp. 393-414.

38. Sáez 2014a; 2014b.

39. López and Ruiz 2011.

40. Moreno 2009a; Moreno 2011.

41. Perea *et al.* 2004.

42. López and Ruiz 2010, p. 447, Fig. 7.

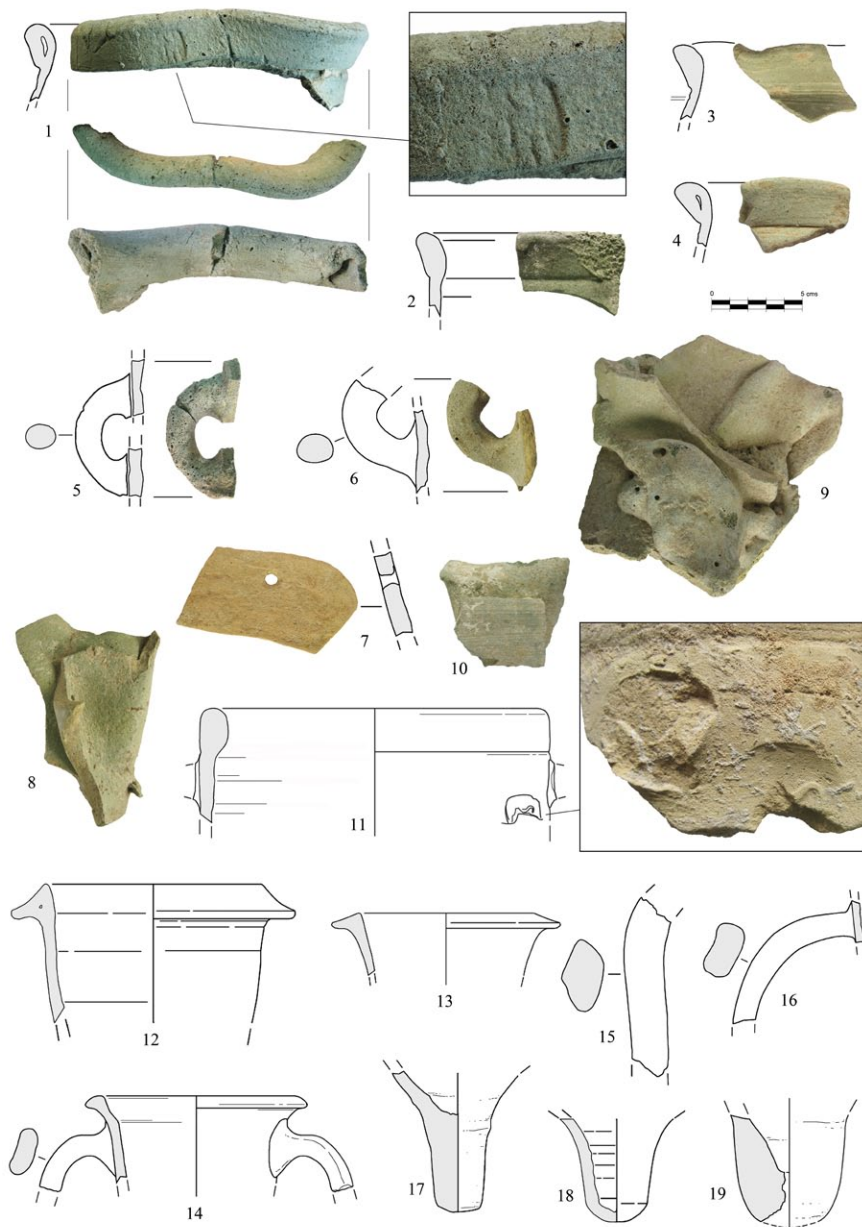


FIG. 6. T-911 amphorae (1-11), Greco-italic local imitations (12-18) and unidentified amphora fragment (19) from Area 4 deposit.

The reduced volume of coinage of *Gadir's* first monetary series, as well as their common presence in pottery workshops and fish-salting industrial contexts⁴³, results in an explanation of how *Gadir* could have become incorporated into the monetary economy. It has been proposed that the temple of *Melqart* could have minted the first bronze series of the city, perhaps in an effort to improve the control of the flourishing fish-salting business. The iconographic meaning of the monetary emblem chosen by the city (the image of the god *Melqart* escorted by two tuna fishes) may support this elucidation, as well as the finding of coins in ritual deposits within the industrial environments⁴⁴. Nonetheless, what is interesting here is to underline that the iconographic motif of the dolphin was strongly linked with the monetary and fish-salting economy of the city at least from the 3rd c. BC. This close relation would have remained in later periods, not just by the uninterrupted inclusion of the dolphin in the local monetary iconography but also by the usage of amphorae stamps as the one analyzed here.

Thus, the link between the dolphin and *Gadir's* industrial sphere could be extended further, if we take into account that the most widely used motif for resealing the local coinage was the dolphin. As already underlined by Arévalo⁴⁵, it is also worth emphasizing the linkage between the meanings of these resealing marks and the industrial ambients, reinforced by these new testimonies stamped on local amphorae. Monetary resealings are difficult to explain, as they are marks made after the official mintage. The main reason of this resealing remains uncertain in most of the cases, although present research proposes their use as an indicator of property of specific monetary shipments or, more specifically, in their restriction within a particular mine, industrial, agricultural or fishing facility⁴⁶. In the case of *Gadir*, Arévalo⁴⁷ studied the link between the dolphin-type resealing marks and the late-Punic industrial contexts, concluding that the more frequent mark made on local coins was the dolphin, attested in 136 individuals of Alfaro's VI series⁴⁸. These coins were in use mainly during the 2nd and 1st century BC, although the use of the dolphin-shaped mark is not verified before the 1st century BC.

43. Arévalo 2010, p. 188; Arévalo and Moreno 2011, pp. 345-346.

44. Arévalo 2004, p. 517.

45. Arévalo 2006; Arévalo 2010.

46. Arévalo 2000, pp. 37-55; Chaves 1987-88, pp. 613-617; Chaves and Otero 2002, pp. 163-230; García-Bellido 1982; García-Bellido 1986; García-Bellido 1999, pp. 55-70.

47. Arévalo 2006.

48. One bronze coin of this series was also uncovered in the context studied in this work (see below). For general classification of *Gadir's* coinage, see Alfaro 1988.

Dolphin monetary resealing marks have been attested in findings mostly connected to fish-salting and pottery workshops, as well as in funerary contexts of the insular necropolis of *Gadir*⁴⁹. It seems that resealed bronze coins barely circulated abroad, and they have been only discovered in the Bay of Cadiz and isolated individuals in Tarifa, Villamartín and La Algaida (all of them in the current province of Cadiz). The analysis of the distribution of the dolphin-shaped marks in the coinage of *Gadir* supports that its functionality would have been linked to denote property on specific monetary shipments to prevent those marked sets from getting away from the production contexts where they were discovered.

Moreover, it is interesting to underscore that this resealing was always made in the reverses of the coins, the place reserved normally for the inclusion of the official authority that minted the coinage series⁵⁰. The allusion to the authority in charge of the minting is reinforced through an identity iconography sometimes accompanied by epigraphy, as remarked by the well-known bywords *mp'l 'gdr* ("minted by *Gadir*") or *pl't 'gdr* ("by the citizens of *Gadir*") written in the reverses of local coins together with the two tuna fishes. On one hand, this could help to support the idea of dolphin-shaped marks used as a certification of the property of specific monetary shipments by the owners of the industrial facilities, whether they were religious, statal or private. On the other hand, it also strengthens the possibility of the implantation of innovative models of property or administration in those Gadiritan workshops aside the statal/civic organization, or at least not completely dependent of it⁵¹ (a private activity particularly noticeable for the 1st century BC).

Getting back to the amphorae stamp, it is obvious that this data set regarding the relation between monetary marks and amphorae stamps is thoroughly suggestive, as was pointed out some years ago⁵². Many different interpretations have been discussed about the function of local amphorae stamps⁵³. At this point, the analysis of the new stamp examples with dolphin motifs and their cited connection with the monetary resealings can contribute to clarify this issue. On the basis of these data, it can be proposed that this motif could have been closely linked to the pottery and fish-salting facilities of Cadiz Bay and, in general terms, to the industrial and commercial spheres of *Gadir*.

49. Arévalo 2006.

50. Moreno 2014.

51. Sáez 2008; Moreno and Sáez forthcoming.

52. Arévalo 2004.

53. Frutos and Muñoz 1994, pp. 393-414; Ramón 1995; Sáez 2014a; Sáez 2014b; Moreno and Sáez, forthcoming. See additional reflections in note 35.

This link could have started with the first coinage series of the city (since early 3rd c. BC), in which the dolphin was used as a principal emblem. During the 2nd century BC, in a context of fully monetarized regional economy, the dolphin remained as the emblem on the quarters of *Gadir's* VI series at the same time that some local amphorae were sealed with dolphin-type stamps.

Leaving behind the iconographic analysis, and also the economic implications of the dolphin motif in the local amphorae production, some more remarks can be added regarding typological issues. Thus, it is the first time that this position of the stamp is documented for the case of T-9111 amphorae of the workshop. This new information suggests that this type of amphora in Torre Alta was stamped at least on the outer surface of the rims, next to the handles and on the handles (the later, recorded only in a context of the late-3rd century BC). Thereby the evidence from Torre Alta insinuates that the position of the stamps was not a decisive fact regarding functionality and interpretation. Hitherto the only known parallel for this stamp is on another sample of T-9111 documented in an underwater context at La Caleta (Cadiz), dating from the 2nd century BC (and still unpublished). This individual presents a circular frame impressed close to the lower attachment of the handle, showing a dolphin-shaped motif with a complicated iconographic lecture due to its poor preservation⁵⁴.

The second of the sealed individuals represents the definitive confirmation of the attribution of a stamp to the production of Torre Alta, making possible to connect this context with the in-operation and abandonment processes of Kilns 1 and 2, excavated in 1987-1988. In both kilns and its nearest surrounding area were found fourteen stamps on discarded or vitrified fragments, corresponding most of them to rosettes impressed on the body of individuals of T-12112 amphorae⁵⁵. Besides them, at least two cases correspond to rims of the type T-9111 (one of them also over-fired) with impressed stamps on the outer surface, one of them representing the “symbol of Tanit” (2177) and the other two representing a human figure packaging within an amphora and a fish hanging on his back (2179 and 2180). The stamp present in the context of Area 4 of 1995 can be clearly identified as an impression of the same die of number 2179 from the campaign of 1987-1988, in this case on a completely vitrified and deformed rim (FIG. 6, 1). As these set of data suggest, it seems that this stamp could be a late variant of a motif recurrently used at the work-

54. Higuera-Milena and Sáez 2014.

55. Muñoz and Frutos 2006, pp. 758-759, Fig. 9-13.

shop during a few decades⁵⁶, from the final years of the 3rd century BC⁵⁷ to the central decades of the 2nd century BC.

The rosette, representation with clear heliac and divine allusion, and the so-called “symbol of Tanit” (linked to fecundating properties) are typical symbols largely used in the Punic and Gadiritan imaginary and goldsmithing. This fact could help to justify why they were some of the motifs of amphoric stamps in Torre Alta workshop. Nevertheless, the iconography of the “type 2179 die” makes it possible to focus on another interesting iconographic discussion.

The stamp reveals a sketching and coarse picture of a worker of the workshop. This possible artisan was wearing a circular hat and introducing something inside an elongated recipient (placed beside his feet and reaching to his waist), which could be identified as a local amphora. It seems to be a ‘photograph’ of a daily-life scene that would reflect the artisanal activity in which the stamped amphorae was produced and filled. Behind the figure, an ichthyomorphic motif was drawn and, next to the amphora, three globules that represent a branch in other examples. These globules could possibly be alluding to spices or additives (as oil or wine) that would garnish the final product. This iconography was documented in more than fifty discarded or misfired amphorae in Torre Alta dumping pit of Sector I⁸, dating from the late-3rd c. BC, so it seems that it was used both during the Barcid and the early Roman stages. On the other hand, it is worth insisting in the originality of this motif, which reflects an artisanal daily-life activity that is not documented in other artistic or literary evidence. The closer parallels of this motif can be found in the coins of other major fish-salting production center in the Mediterranean, the city of Cyzicus⁵⁹.

Coming back to the analysis of other pottery finds in the contexts, these three main groups of local amphorae were supplemented by other minor types, as demonstrated by the presence in the context of some fragments of local versions of Greco-italic amphorae. Some of these are profiles with triangular

56. The function of these stamps in the local workshops is still unclear. Some authors have speculated about their possible connection with administrative procedures of bookkeeping and accounting of the amphorae production of the city ateliers (Frutos and Muñoz 1994). At present the most supported interpretation of these marks points to a possible use as part of a system to distinguish between shipments or groups of vessels, but it cannot be excluded that the stamps might have referred to a particular potter/potters squad, to a oligarchic family involved in the ‘fishy business’ or even to the recipient of the shipment (Sáez 2014a).

57. Sáez 2007; Sáez 2008.

58. Sáez 2007; Sáez 2008. For a more complete analysis of the assemblage, see Sáez 2014a.

59. As example, Von Fritze 1910, Fig. 27.

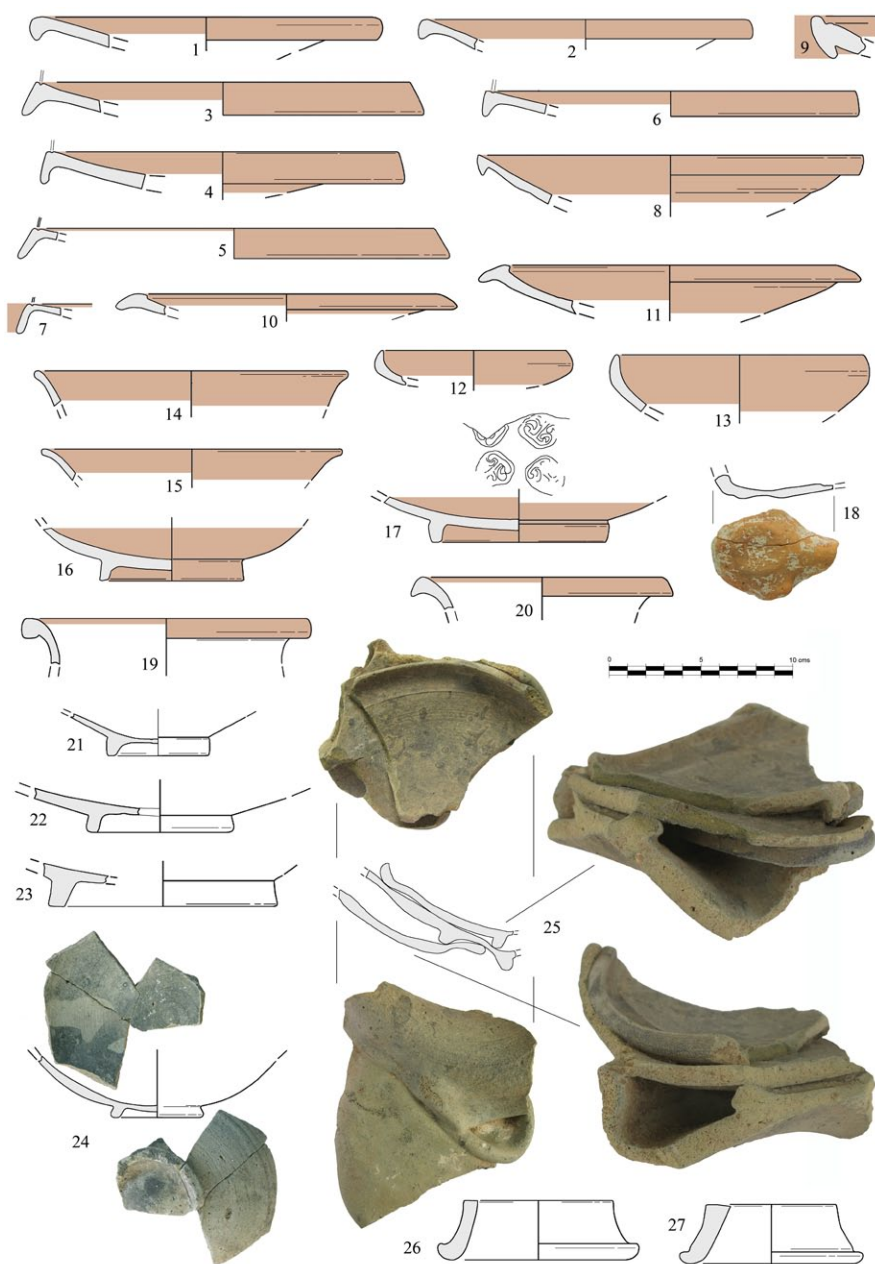


FIG. 7. Local red slip tablewares, including misfired bowls (24-25); also, ring-shaped supports (26-27).

rims that could be a residue from previous production phases (FIG. 6, 12); the small size of fragments of rims (FIG. 6, 13), handles (FIG. 6, 15-16) and feet (FIG. 6, 17-18) illustrates a remarkable diversity of sizes and final morphologies of these imitations. Another individual (FIG. 6, 14) is very difficult to classify due to its size, and it could be identified either as a medium-sized transport amphora or as a table amphora variant with two handles. In any case, it is a minority group, with a minimum of seven individuals (a 3% of the total amount of amphorae). We must add to them only a few fragments with an undetermined typology that illustrate artisanal processes difficult to define accurately, including a wall fragment with a post-firing borehole (maybe as a result of a reparation or the transformation of the amphorae into another secondary tool) (FIG. 6, 7). Also, it is noticeable the presence of a very rounded feet fragment (FIG. 6, 19), with a solid structure, whose fabric suggests that it could be an import (maybe a residual Greek amphora?).

The remains of local red slip finewares documented in this context (17 individuals, a 4.2% of the total of local ceramics) also provides a similar perspective about the presence of residual material and the combination of traditional typological features with new ingredients added after the Roman annexation. At least two red slip fishplates only varnished in the inner surface and on the rim correspond to productions from the 4th-3rd centuries BC (FIG. 7, 1-2), possibly coming from the same pottery activities indicated by the aforementioned amphorae developed next to Area 3 and Kiln 6⁶⁰. The rest of the items can be included into the group traditionally known as “Kuass Pottery”, that is, the Hellenistic red slip fineware produced in *Gadir/Gades* from the final stretch of the 4th century to late 2nd century BC⁶¹. The most considerable group is the one of the fishplates or Niveau’s type II⁶², all of them with hanging rims with long hanging tabs, incisions at the top and totally covered with red slip (FIG. 7, 3-7). It is possible that other plates, some with stemmed rims of Niveau’s form I (FIG. 7, 8-9) with clear parallels in context of the late-Punic necropolis in Cadiz⁶³ and also local imitations of the form Lamboglia 36 (FIG. 7, 10-11), could be a reflection of the introduction of Italic profiles in the local repertoire from the last years of the 3rd century BC and the initial decades of 2nd century BC. The rest of red slip vessels can be summarised as bowls of Niveau’s group IX (*incurving rim bowls*; FIG. 7, 12-13), wide carinated cups (*outturned rim bowls*; FIG. 7, 14-17, the later with four palmettes stamped inside) and a very worn and probably residual Hellenized lamp (form Niveau

60. Sáez 2008.

61. For a very recent update of types and chronologies, see Niveau and Sáez 2016.

62. Niveau 2004a.

63. Niveau 2009, pp. 150-152.

XVII; Fig. 7, 18). Overall, and despite of these residual elements, is clear that the tableware of the context illustrates a moment in which the local repertory started to experiment with significant transformations as a result of the influence of the Italic black-gloss wares, which had started to increase among the imported products to the West and the Atlantic after the Second Punic War.

However, perhaps the most interesting evidence regarding these local red slip finewares are the vitrified and deformed over-fired pieces along some artisanal tools. Specifically, we must emphasize the presence of some bowls or plates showing the characteristic ring-shaped feet, smoothed surfaces and very uniform finishes that apparently could have been used as test-pieces or simply they were not varnished and were discarded before its commercialization (Fig. 7, 21-23). Some discarded vitrified vessels certify the production *in situ* of the “Kuass pottery”, as in the case of one deformed bowl (maybe Niveau’s forms IX or X) vitrified and with some traces of burned varnish inside and outside (Fig. 7, 24). Without any doubt, from a technological point of view one of the most interesting items registered in Area 4 is the accumulation of over-fired bowls, similar to the previous one in type and size; this exceptional piece is formed by three individuals which were stacked one on the others, and that have been united by a faulty firing process that partially melted them (Fig. 7, 25). Besides the fact that this constitutes further evidence of the fabrication in Torre Alta of these finewares, the piece verifies the simple stacking system of these items inside the kilns during the first decades of the 2nd century BC. In addition, the presence of ring-shaped supports in the same context (Fig. 7, 26-27), with appropriate diameters for its use at the process of optimization of ware firing (even when they don’t show varnish traces), suggests to us that both techniques could coexist at the workshop at least during the first half of the 2nd century BC⁶⁴.

64. Together with similar refused red slip plates and bowls, another ring-shaped support with the same features (but still keeping spots of local red slip as a result of its use) was documented in the nearby of Kilns I-II of 1997 campaign (Arteaga *et al.* 2001). From our current perspective, besides attesting a significant importance of the local production of red slip tablewares in Torre Alta during the 2nd century BC the presence of this type of kiln furniture suggest an early Italization of the artisanal methodologies regarding the loading processes of the kilns towards a more standardized stacking and mass-production orientation, as it was being developed in the coeval Italic workshops with black-gloss wares. It must be emphasized that there is no local evidence, direct (ring supports) or indirect (traces of different colours in the inner side of slipped vases), in earlier stages of the production of Torre Alta that suggest an use of this kind of kiln furniture before 206 BC, as was previously proposed by J.-P. Morel (1986) as a general trend in the Punic western ateliers. Thus, these fragments are the first evidences of this type of supports documented in the Gaditan workshops, in which the use of those artisanal tools (and connected ones, such as ceramic prisms or wedges) was not regular until long after the Roman conquest of the region (Gutiérrez *et al.* 2013).

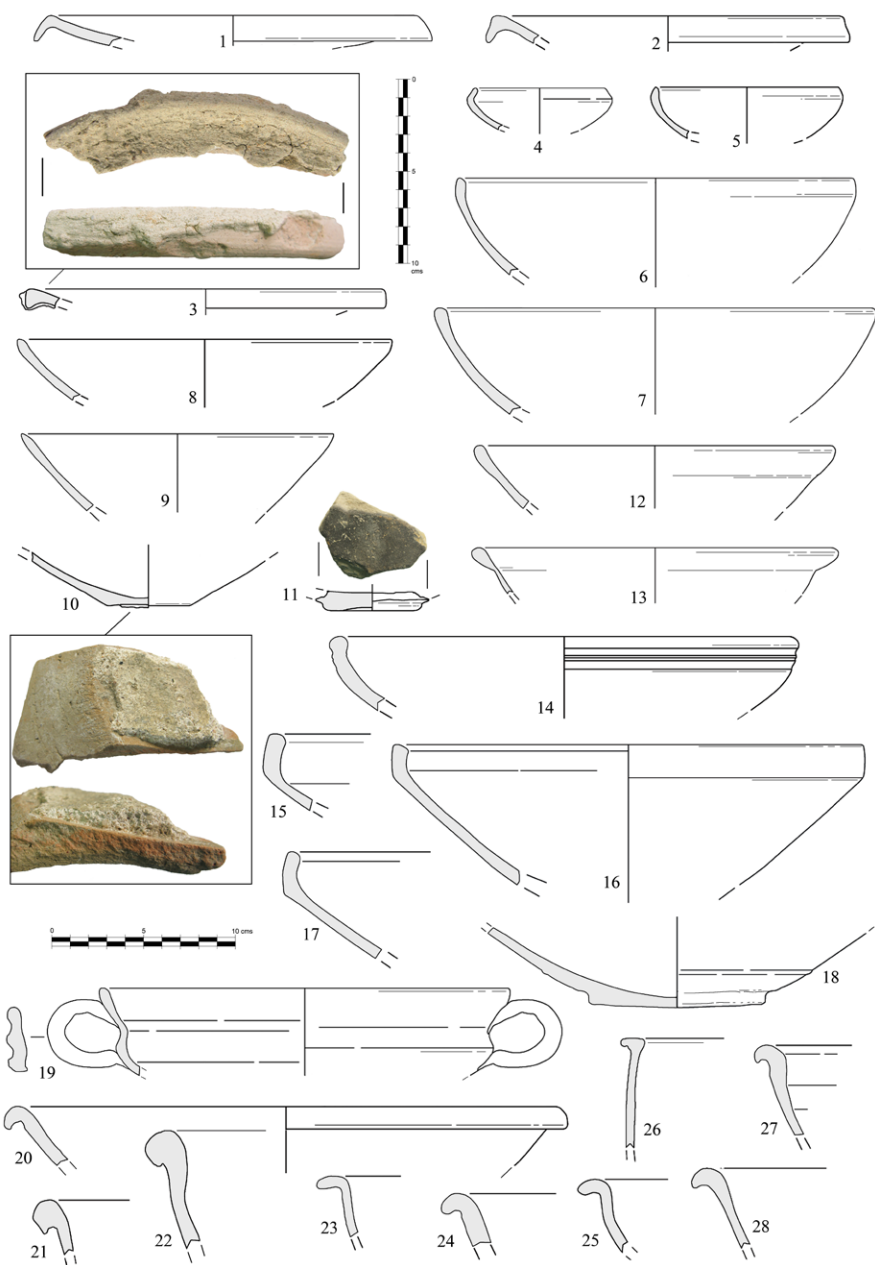


FIG. 8. Local plain wares (fish-plates, bowls, carinated bowls and lekane).

Painted vessels are an almost anecdotal group in the context, as usual in this period in Cadiz Bay ateliers, limited to only two rims of painted medium-sized storage jars (FIG. 7, 19-20) and a wall fragment, the 0.7% of the total of the local productions. However, the plain coarse wares are the second main group after the transport amphorae, with a minimum amount of 173 individuals (40.42% of the local pottery), showing a quantitative trend regarding the minor presence of residual materials in the context and a clear dominance of items linked to the latest phases of the workshop. Among the open forms, the presence of fishplates stands out (FIG. 8, 1-2), and particularly one individual completely covered inside with a white cracked barbotine –also on the rim– that solidified over the piece when it was still in use (FIG. 8, 3). It was probably a plate that could have been used for any artisanal purpose developed at the workshop, maybe during the application of that diluted clay to other products. Thus, the plate was a marketable piece that was selected by the artisans as part of their daily equipment.

Concerning the rest of the plain wares the predominant group is the one composed by bowls, and particularly the simplest quarter of sphere forms included in type GDR-1.2.0 (FIG. 8, 8-11), versions possibly derivative of GDR-1.4.1 (FIG. 8, 12-13, with thickened rims to the outside) or deeper profiles almost hemi-spherical of type GDR-1.3.0⁶⁵ (FIG. 8, 6-7). Together with these bowls, less plentiful local versions of small saltcellars or *small bowls* of type GDR-1.1.0 (FIG. 8, 4-5), a group also apparently usual in these deposits of late 3rd and 2nd century BC⁶⁶. Some vitrified pieces and burned bowls (as FIG. 8, 11) certify the production of this types at the kiln-site; other vessels with adherences attached on the flattened feet of lime/sand mortar suggest the utilization of some elements for artisanal or productive activities that cannot be clarified (FIG. 8, 10: in this case, the flat plane defined by the mortar suggests that the bowl was added to a regular surface, maybe made of organic material and therefore non-preserved).















The rest of the open forms are divided among carinated bowls of type GDR-2.1.0 (FIG. 8, 15-18), “archaic” versions of the same profile with wide incisions in the outer side of the rim (FIG. 8, 14), and above all, deep bowls with different sizes and morphologies of the rims (FIG. 8, 20-28). The first aforementioned group of bowls are very common, present in all kinds of late-Punic contexts from 3rd and 2nd centuries BC around Cadiz Bay and massively produced at its kiln-sites⁶⁷; on the contrary, the grooved individual – very

65. Sáez 2008, pp. 624-626, Fig. 30.

66. For instance, at the late Punic necropolis of *Gadir* (Niveau 2009, pp. 144-145).

67. Sáez 2008, pp. 626-630, Fig. 31.

likely a residual sherd in this case- is frequently found in pits of the ateliers from the 4th century BC, as pointed out for example by various contexts from the kiln-site of Villa Maruja-Janer⁶⁸. The evolved bowls present in the context, classifiable as part of the late-Punic groups GDR-4.2.0 and 4.4.0⁶⁹, could be identified with western Punic versions of *lekane* similar to Rotroff's groups 2-4⁷⁰ or even with some variants of the Hellenistic *deep bowl* from the Athenian Agora excavations⁷¹, verifying a process of adoption of Hellenic forms initiated in earlier periods and specially perceptible among tablewares and kitchenwares⁷².

Local Coarse Ware			
	MNI		%
Large jar	51		29.50
Bowl	46		26.59
Lekane	44		25.43
Small jar	10		5.77
Carinated bowl	8		4.62
Plate-mortar	8		4.62
Vase	5		2.86
Fish-plate	3		1.71
Mortar	3		1.71
Small bowl	2		1.14
Others	2		1.14
Globular jar	1		0.57
Plate-lid	1		0.57
Lamp	1		0.57

The repertoire of open plain wares also includes some evolved mortars linked to type GDR-3.1.2 (FIG. 9, 1 and 7(?)), but mostly plates-mortar of the popular group GDR-3.2.1 provided with projected rounded rims and flat-bottom bases, in some cases with incised concentric grooves in its outer surface (FIG. 9, 2-6). Both groups have been broadly attested to late Punic local pottery production⁷³, but another variant registered in the context maybe also linked to deep-mortars group (FIG. 9, 8) and identified as a prototype or test-piece of the workshop. Moreover it is worth noting that this set of mortars points

68. Bernal *et al.* 2003; Sáez and Belizón forthcoming.

69. Sáez 2008, pp. 632-636, Figs. 33-34.

70. Rotroff 2006, pp. 111-113, Figs. 42-49.

71. Rotroff 2006, p. 114, pl. 40, Fig. 50.

72. Sáez 2015.

73. Sáez 2008, pp. 630-632, Fig. 32.

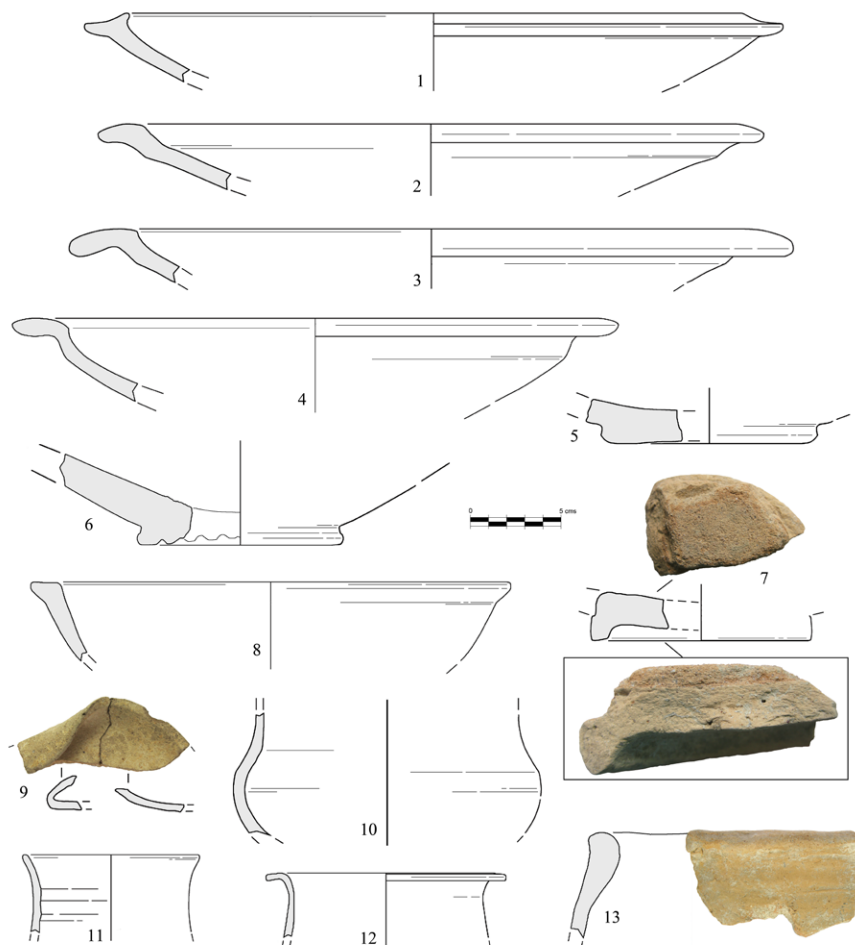


FIG. 9. Plain wares, including mortars and plate-mortars (1-8), lamps (9), vases (10-12) and large recipients (13).

to the introduction of new artisanal procedures: one of the base fragments recovered (FIG. 9, 7) presents a raspy inner surface as a result of the addition to the fabric of a thin layer of diluted clay mixed with quartz sand most likely before firing. The examination of the section of the vessel reveals a “stratigraphy” characterized by the overlapping of both types of local clays. Even though this kind of rough surfaces is not rare among local mortars at least from the 4th c. BC, the artisanal techniques used in this case constitute a novelty for

Torre Alta, and may be linked to other innovations already mentioned such as the utilization of ring-shaped supports for stacking/firing red slip tablewares.

Concerning the bigger recipients we must note the presence of a rim of *lekane* or cauldron-shaped vessel with irregular thick walls (FIG. 9, 13) that could have been an item used by potters for production tasks developed in the workshop (especially if we take into consideration the poor quality of the outer surfaces). Other minor coarse ware types attested by only one individual have been not included yet in the available typological corpora, such as a carinated bowl provided with flattened-section handles (FIG. 8, 19) that might find close parallels in some late central Mediterranean Punic productions⁷⁴. Among this minority group of items we must include a storage jar possibly linked to a late evolution of a *chardòn* profiles, with a globular body and a cylindrical neck with a slightly projected rim⁷⁵ (FIG. 9, 12); likewise, a lamp with two spouts and clear traces of usage (FIG. 9, 9), a lightning tool produced in this atelier in earlier stages and widely attested in 3rd c. BC deposits⁷⁶.

A few drinking vases of small and medium size were found in the context, of types GDR-7.1.0 (FIG. 9, 11) and GDR-7.2.1 (FIG. 9, 10), both massively attested to the 3rd century BC production stages⁷⁷ but with an extended continuity after 206 BC. Much more abundant are the medium-sized storage jars without handles, essentially linked to “domestic” or multi-functional tasks, with a clear predominance of the “classical” variants of group GDR-8.1.1 with triangular rims and without outer ring feet (FIG. 10, 5-11, including some explicit wasters such as 10). Besides, other variants of medium-size storage vessels have been identified, such as one GDR-9.1.1 (FIG. 10, 1), one GDR-8.3.1 (FIG. 10, 4), a globular profile of type GDR-12.2.2 (FIG. 10, 3), and also a residual rim of a larger *pthos* (FIG. 10, 2) dating from earlier stages of production. In all cases these were types quite abundant during the 3rd century BC, particularly in the second half, and almost all seem to have continued to be produced for a significant part of the 2nd c. BC. Among these coarse jars, perhaps the most noticeable find could be the GDR-12.2.2 sherd, which can be identified with a local version of Carthaginian jars of types Cintas 224-227.

In the same sense, the presence in the context of some other forms inspired in Central Mediterranean Punic types must be highlighted, including medium-

74. Lancel 1987.

75. A type attested in the late Punic local necropolis (Niveau 2009, p. 127, Fig. 89).

76. The late production of these lamps was highlighted in previous work, see Sáez 2014c.

77. Sáez 2008, pp. 639-641, Fig. 35.

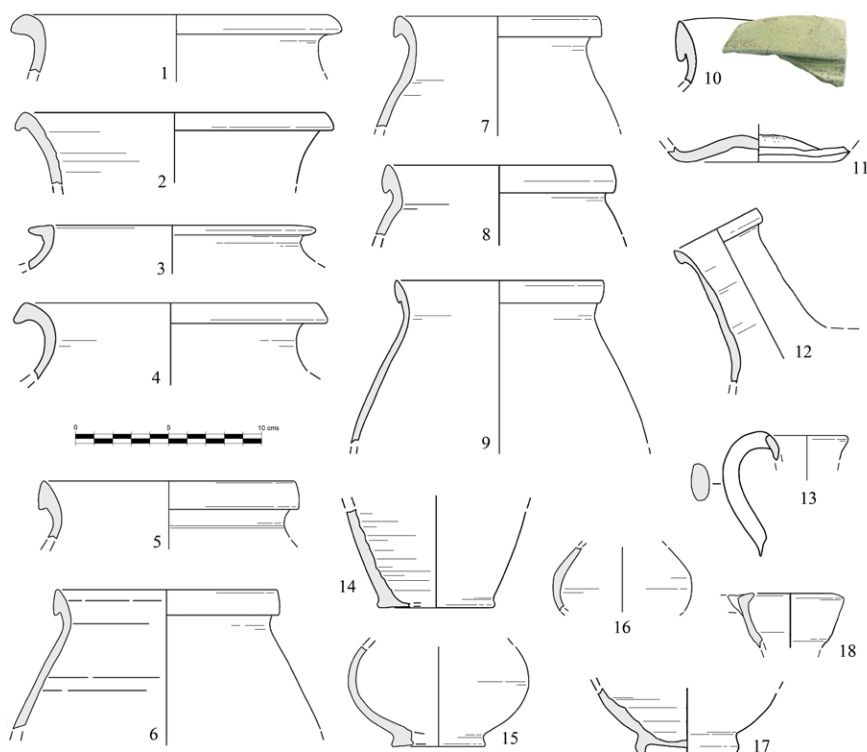


FIG. 10. Plain wares (medium-sized storage jars, little jugs and askos).

sized jars (FIG. 10, 17-18) also attested in Kilns 1-2 and I-II filling deposits⁷⁸, and *askoi*-shaped jars (FIG. 10, 12) similar to the coeval production of Ibiza except for the complete lack of painted designs⁷⁹. The rest of vessels linked to the drinking set can be identified as common late-Punic local broadly produced during the 3rd-2nd centuries BC, such as the *olpe*-shaped group classified as GDR-10.2.0 (FIG. 10, 13-14) or the little globular jar of type GDR-10.3.0/10.4.0 (FIG. 10, 15-16), both ubiquitously present in almost every type of context of Cadiz Bay from at least the central stretch of the 3rd c. BC⁸⁰.

The cooking wares barely represent a 2.57% of the total of local production items (MNI 11), including in this deposit some widely attested Hellenized

78. Muñoz and Frutos 2006.

79. Ramón 2012.

80. Sáez 2008, pp. 645-648.

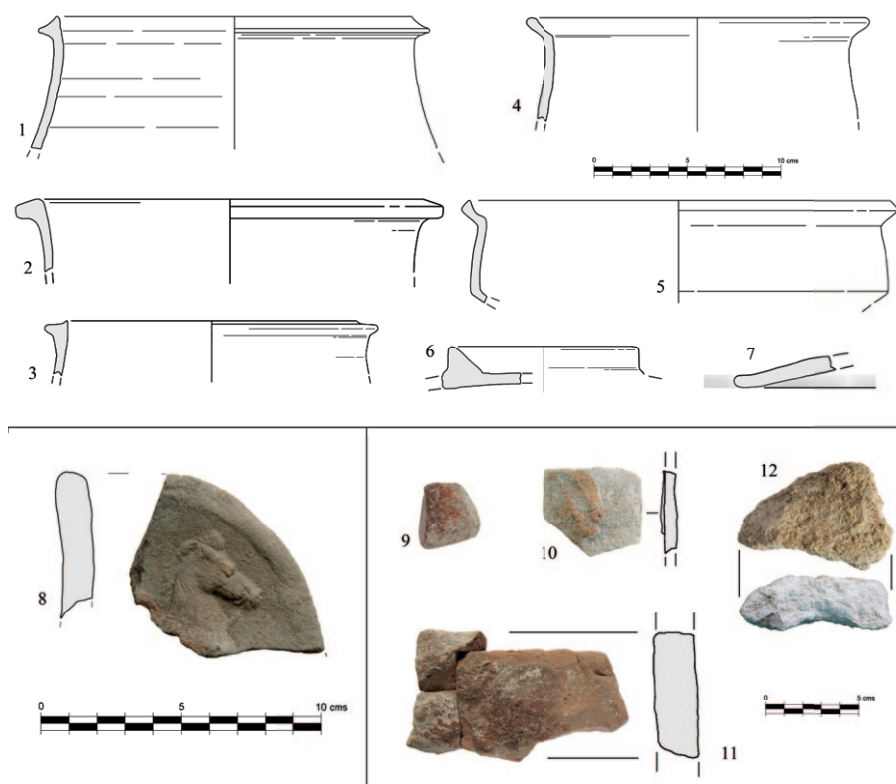


FIG. 11. Cooking wares (1-7), terracotta disc (8), stone (9), clay fragment (10), kiln plaque (11) and lime nodule (12).

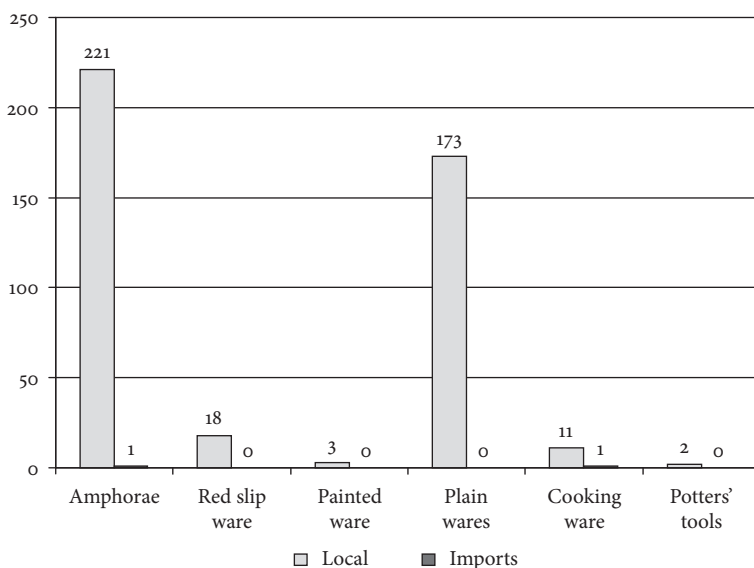
groups of the Gaditan repertoire from the 3rd century BC⁸¹. On one hand, cooking pots of group GDR-12.3.0 (FIG. 11, 1-3), a derived type classified in the Athenian Agora as baggy profile *chytrai*⁸²; and on the other hand, more or less deep lopades of type GDR-11.2.1 (FIG. 11, 5) and GDR-11.5.1 (FIG. 11, 4) with bifid rims to support the lids. It is illuminating the presence of an individual with -vesuvian- Italic fabric (FIG. 11, 7) and a local version (FIG. 11, 6) of the plate-lids so-called type Burriac 38.10⁸³, that generally were items used together with the large plain Italic pans type Vegas 14 (the production of these imitations is attested in another areas of Torre Alta, such as Kilns 1-2). The imported vessel show evident traces of usage, so it seems probable that

81. Sáez 2008, pp. 649-659.

82. Rotroff 2006, pp. 167-169.

83. Aguarod 1991.

it could have been used as a model for local imitations besides as part of the cooking paraphernalia of the artisans. Thus, the pot should be interpreted as another sign of hybridization of culinary patterns and local cooking pottery, a Romanizing feature of the cultural and economic changes initiated after 206 BC. Nevertheless, these lids produced in central Italian workshops during the 2nd century BC, were successfully exported together with the Italic black-gloss tablewares and Dr. 1 amphorae, so this early arrival to the Bay of Cadiz' secondary settlements is not surprising.



Finally, we must underline the presence of sun-dried rectangular brick bars, shattered in all cases, as well as smaller wall tiles (FIG. 11, 13), basic building materials for the walls and the grid flooring of local late-Punic kilns. The deposition of these elements inside the ditch together with abundant amounts of ashes, discarded vessels and vases showing traces of its usage as artisanal gear can be explained only by the close location of the workshop core and the cleaning and repair of nearby kilns. It is very likely that the processing of raw clays would not have been developed in a distant area from Area 4, at least if we take into account that some of the pottery recorded have not-fired clayish adherences (FIG. 11, 11), or the presence in the context of items perhaps connected to the mineral adds used to obtain the final poured-clay mix⁸⁴, such as broken quartzite pebbles or lime nodules (FIG. 11, 9 and 11).

84. Concerning the characteristics and chemical-physical composition of the fabrics of this workshop some preliminary archaeometric approaches have been published in the



FIG. 12. Bronze coin of series VI of *Gadir* found in the context of Area 4 from 1995 Torre Alta excavations (above) and coin of the same type of Museo Arqueológico Nacional (MAN, Madrid).

The terracotta mouldmade disc

Although fragmented, one of the more interesting items recovered in this context is a quarter of a circular terracotta disc (FIG. 11, 8) in which a protome of a flanged horse is represented. Even considering that the portion preserved is little, it can be said that possibly in the disc was represented a complete figuration of a horseman drawn trotting or galloping, looking to the right. Given the size and disposition of the head of the horse with respect to the size of the fragment, it seems that this iconography approaches the one largely typified since the coinage of Hieron II of Siracuse (c. 265-215 BC), where the king was heroized through his equestrian representation.

This type of equestrian performances is quite frequent among the Punic terracotta discs with possible votive or cultural function. Some remarkable examples can be cited, such as the so-called 'horseman' of *Tamuda* (Tetouan, Morocco; uncovered by Tarradell in the early Forties⁸⁵) or the several indi-

last decade (Dominguez *et al.* 2004). This research makes it possible to verify that the loam outcrops rich in lime nodules that constitute the geological base of the area were the main source of raw materials for the pottery production developed in the Punic atelier; this clayish loam soil, which present characteristic foraminifera that allows to trace this Gaditan productions around the Mediterranean, was usually mixed with quartzite grains (sand) and calcite/ferric particles (see also De Francesco *et al.* 2012; Johnston and Sáez forthcoming).

85. Tarradell 1960.

viduals found in *Kerkouanne*⁸⁶ (Tunisia). Also, it must be highlighted its recurrent use in the monetary Punic iconography in southern Iberia⁸⁷ or in Sicily⁸⁸. On the other hand, it should be underlined that equestrian figurations had an important funerary sense in the tombs of *Tyre*⁸⁹ and *Carthage*⁹⁰, as well as in some Iberian funerary contexts⁹¹, where the transit of the dead to the *Hades* was represented using the motif of the horseman or the *quadrige* (evoking a mundane and terrestrial journey or trip).

Other similar fragments of moldmade terracotta discs were found in the filling layers of the clay quarry located nearby in Sector I. Because of that, it is possible that this fragment could be a residual item produced in an earlier stage of the workshop, before the first quarter of the 2nd c. BC. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the finding in this artisanal context of this terracotta fragment verifies, even in this later period under Roman rule, the production in the workshop of items connected to the Punic cults still practiced in the city⁹².

Local bronze coin

Archaeological excavations in Sectors I and II in Torre Alta have provided a total amount of five coins, four corresponding to bronze individuals of ancient *Gadir* and one dating from the 19th century (minted by Alfonso XII), all of them already discussed in diverse works by Arévalo⁹³. In the large pit of the Sector I was recovered, on top of the filling layers, a bronze half of Alfaro's series I. During the archaeological campaign of 2003 two more coins of the first series of *Gadir* were found, next to some ceramic offerings (miniaturized amphora, jars, vases, and potter's tools) deposited for the ritual abandonment of Kiln 4. These finds verified that local coins were used in industrial contexts, and added more arguments to support the hypothesis that the local coinage emerged linked to state/cultic ownership of the fish-salting industries of the city. As well, the cultic purpose of the Kiln 4 deposit certified the ritual usage of the local coinage since the earlier stages of its production.

86. Fantar 1966; Fantar 1977.

87. Moreno 2014; Moreno forthcoming a.

88. Moreno forthcoming b.

89. Elayi 2010.

90. Benichou-Safar 1982.

91. Ramos 1986, p. 128.

92. Another significant example can be found in the pottery workshop of Calle Troilo, at Cadiz, where female terracotta perfume-burners and other Punic-type cultic items were produced during the 2nd-1st c. BC (Niveau 2010).

93. Arévalo 2004; Arévalo 2006; Arévalo 2010.

Nonetheless, the coin found in the pit of the Sector II of Torre Alta points to a very different context of how coinage functioned. In this case it matches with an isolated and unplanned loss of coinage in an industrial ambient that does not imply ritual connotations, as it seems to reflect the usual circulation of bronze coins in the local workshops. The coin is a unit of the VI.A.1 series (FIG. 12), for which detailed cataloging has been finally accomplished only very recently⁹⁴. It is a bronze of 26 mm (8, 35 g) that shows on the obverse *Melqart-Heracles* (looking left) wearing the skin of the *Nemean* Lion after the coinage of Alexander. Its special relief in the eye socket makes it possible to catalogue it as the “classic style” and therefore to link it to the first emission of the three that compose the VI local series. Thus, it can be dated in the earlier decades of 2nd century BC, which perfectly agrees with the dating proposed for the whole context. On the reverse, the coin shows two tuna fish (with heads to the left), and among them were struck a crescent with a globule and a graphem *aleph*. Over and beneath the tuna, the inscription that refers to the property of the monetary production and the identification of the city can be found: *m'pl 'gdr* (i.e. “minted by *Gadir*”).

Summing up, the coin found in the context belongs to the VI series of *Gadir*, produced by the city without significant iconographic changes during the 2nd and 1st centuries BC (which makes it quite difficult to develop a chronological division of its emissions). Contrary to the first five series, which had a distribution constrained around Cadiz Bay, the VI series multiplied the total volume of minted coins and had major geographical distribution in Iberia and all around the western Mediterranean (in areas such as Numidia, Mauretania, Sicily, the southern French coast or even the British Isles⁹⁵). The VI series coins have been found in most cases in the same areas of the main distribution of local amphorae and red slip tablewares, suggesting a close link between both archaeological evidence and the integration of *Gadir* in a fully developed monetary economy during the 2nd century BC. Regarding the “late-Punic” cultural and terminological discussion it is worth noting that this series experimented with an accentuated metrological change of local coinage that facilitated exchange with other economic-cultural Punic and Roman areas⁹⁶.

All this data verifies the important economic/cultural changes linked to the manufacturing and trade of fish by-products carried out in *Gadir* since the early 2nd century BC. Nonetheless, these economic alterations may not have implied a parallel and radical cultural change, and for instance the iconog-

94. A few preliminary remarks in Arévalo 2004, p. 516.

95. Alfaro 1988; Alfaro 1998; Alfaro 2000.

96. Arévalo and Moreno, 2011; Moreno 2014.

raphy of this monetary series kept Punic traditional symbols of the city. Thereby, the Hellenistic image of *Melqart-Heracles*, the tuna and the Punic epigraphy were not substituted by a “Romanized” iconographical program until the times of Balbo, Agrippa and Augustus (during the last third of the 1st century BC). In this sense, it can be admitted that the VI series of *Gadir* could be the clearest example of the “Late-Punic period”, reflecting the maintenance of the Punic culture and personality while ensuring the adequacy to the Roman economic production and distribution models on a large scale⁹⁷.

CHRONOLOGICAL FEATURES AND GENERAL ASSESSMENT OF THE CONTEXT

The presence in the context of a significant quantity of individuals dating from the 4th/3rd centuries BC makes sense if we consider the vicinity of the possible kiln uncovered in Area 3 and the amount of ceramic material linked to that ditch (including many T-11210, T-12111 and T-8211 amphorae fragments). In any case, the major portion of our material seems to be closely related with the peak stage of the production at the site, dated during the last moments of the 3rd and the first half of the 2nd c. BC, and in particular to the later part of that long period. Either way, apparently all along the chronological frame represented in the context the production of amphorae was quantitatively dominant, a common feature noticed in most of the workshops excavated in the insular territory of *Gadir/Gades*.

A key aspect that must be considered is the coexistence in this context of traditional local (Punic) shapes and technical characteristics together with some others, on a smaller scale, that were gradually introduced after the inclusion of the Bay of Cadiz in the Roman Republic. The case of the amphorae could be illuminating on this point. The archaeological record shows a clear predominance of Punic profiles such as T-12112, T-8211 and T-9111 over the local imitations of Greco-italic containers. To the same extent it must be emphasized that the local red-slip tablewares still show during this stage a remarkable closeness to the traditional Punic-Hellenistic repertoires, with only a few samples of the introduction of profiles inspired by the coeval Italic black-glazed tablewares. The local manufacture of lid-plates (connected to cooking pots type Vegas-14) could be another piece of evidence of this timid but early adoption of Italic forms within the local kitchen pottery repertoire and consumption patterns. Almost the same can be stated regarding the artisanal stacking modalities of the pottery inside the kilns due to the presence of two examples of ring-shaped supports, items commonly found in

97. Moreno 2009b; Moreno 2009a; Moreno 2014.

the Republican Italic workshops but not documented in the local pottery-making artisanal practices. In sum, a “hybrid set” from a technical and typological perspective, probably as a direct response to major changes operated in the consumption patterns and the economic strategies of the western city even in these early decades of the 2nd century BC.

The pottery assignable to the 2nd century BC suggests clear analogies with several contexts already published from Torre Alta. On the one hand, with the filling deposits of the nearby Kilns 1 and 2, and particularly, with the contexts linked to the abandonment of Kiln II of the 1997 campaign; the latter is a context that may be dated in the first third of the 2nd century BC, characterized by ceramic materials very similar to those found in Area 4 of 1995 from typological and quantitative point of view. Kilns 1 and 2 were linked to slightly later pottery contexts, in which it can be noticeable the presence of evolved types of the ‘Italicized’ local red slip tablewares, imitations of Greco-Italic profiles close to Dr. 1A, and also some rim fragments attributable to the earliest examples of T-7430 amphorae⁹⁸. It is also worth noting the presence in this last context of some stamps linked to local amphorae production; the iconographies, functions and stratigraphical location of such stamps were already revised⁹⁹, including the so-called ‘sign of Tanit’, rosettes and diverse variants of the same die showing a human figure packaging into an amphora and with a fish next to the back. As has been already pointed out, this motif constitutes a close parallel to a refuse example found in the context studied in this paper. This relation suggests that the waste and refuse pottery linked to the production of Kilns 1-2 could have ended up inside the ditch uncovered in the Area 4 of 1995 campaign, perhaps during the decades of activity of those structures.

The absence of imports makes it difficult to establish an accurate chronological frame for our deposit, although the lack of certain elements of local productions could constitute significant signs to determine the dating. First, the scarcity of local red slip wares imitating the typical repertoire of Campanian A tablewares¹⁰⁰; Secondly, there are no traces of local Dr. 1A amphorae or of the initial stages of production of the pseudo-Carthaginian T-7430 amphorae (which manufacture would have started in the third quarter of the 2nd c. BC). Therefore, it seems that the completion of the filling process of the ditch of Area 4 can be dated in the transition between the first and the second quarter of the century, possibly not far from 180-150 BC. In any case, it is further evidence of the artisanal activities developed in Torre Alta during the initial decades of

98. Muñoz and Frutos 2006.

99. García 1998.

100. Niveau 2004b; Sousa 2009.

adaptation to the new setting caused by Roman annexation of southern Iberia (*Gades* signed a *foedus* with Rome in 206 BC). The local political stage was settled by the failure of the 'Lybio-phoenician revolt' of 197 BC and, mainly, by the beginning of the Roman expansion to Celtiberia, northern Andalusia, the mining districts of Sierra Morena and Lusitania (in this case, both by land and by the so-called "Atlantic route" leading to the Tagus-Sado estuary or even northwestern Iberia, as exemplified by the expedition conducted by *Decimvs Ivnivs Brutvs* in 136-132 BC with Gaditan maritime support).

In brief, regarding functional issues we must conclude that the ditch may have been not a proper waste area but the result of continuous overlapping discharges (for a period that cannot be determined) and also the occasional addition of other items fallen into the ditch because of distinct causes, including the close location of the pit to the area devoted to the maintenance and loading of the kilns. It is possible that the profusion of refused sherds, ashes and adobe fragments could be fitting with a regular cleaning of the nearby kiln structures, such as Kilns 1-2, with which a connection has already been established based on the pottery typology and the presence in both contexts of the same amphorae stamps. Additionally, it seems pretty obvious that the industrial activities of the 2nd century BC that originated in both the ditch and the accumulation of materials inside it disrupted layers linked to an earlier phase of pottery production activity developed in the surroundings during the 4th-3rd centuries BC.

Between two worlds: old pottery for never-ending methodological debates

Torre Alta workshop was just one spot inside a vast specialized area in ceramic production (the so-called *Antipolis* insular area). Dozens of disperse workshops were distributed in this sector, organized rationally in plots following a regular pattern. Presumably, this organized settlement pattern was a response to a specific economic strategy of *Gadir*¹⁰¹, which would have been first developed in the Late Archaic period, linked to the raise of salt-fish product trade as a main resource for the city. Concerning the continuity of the Punic economic models in the amphorae production, as already mentioned, this transitional stage is distinguished by the growth of Italian-inspired forms that had a very secondary role in earlier periods. It is also characterized by

101. Luaces 2015, pp. 254-257.

the introduction of some artisanal techniques, such as ring-shaped supports used for the stacking and loading processes. These minor changes should be included in a general scenario characterized by a first continuation of most of the main features of the previous production (kiln types, building material, organization of workshops, amphorae typologies, etc.) and commercial organization (routes, general urban planning, etc.).

The permanence of the industrial landscape suggests that the political integration of *Gadir* in the Roman World did not directly result in major transformations in the economic activities and infrastructure, at least in the first decades after the annexation. In any case the Gaditan society, and particularly its oligarchic elites who were closely linked to maritime trade, constituted a malleable outfit in a permanent state of transformation. The traditional system collapsed just a few decades after that, as can be exemplified by the abandonment of Torre Alta and most of the workshops on *Antipolis* during the second half of the 2nd century BC.

These archaeological data describe a scenario characterized by a substantial conservatism regarding the main economic pillars of Punic *Gadir* (e.g., maritime trade, fish by-products, pottery manufacture, etc.). Nonetheless, the studied assemblage from Torre Alta reflects a first phase of adaptation and change to the new political circumstances. The final abandonment of Torre Alta, and many other similar installations, could be another important sign of a second stage of change: a major re-organization of the previous economic infrastructures headed by more Romanized local elites¹⁰². These overlapping stages evolved during a long-term process, over at least four/five generations, and as a result emerged a partially Romanized productive schema¹⁰³, a hybrid infrastructure that still kept many features of the former Punic local economy at the beginning of 1st century BC. This process may be considered in relation to the *foedus* signed with Rome in 206 BC, an agreement that resulted in a strong link between the two communities and that was strengthened by the clever activities of local elites (as exemplified by the Balbus family, getting closer to Roman power but maintaining some independence for local administration and their own businesses).

These reflections on the historical dimensions of our modest archaeological context from Torre Alta highlight the importance of the debate regarding the definition of “late-Punic” concept and its utilization for material culture studies. In the case of *Gadir*, the available archaeological data clearly indi-

102. Mattingly 2013, pp. 38-42.

103. *Ibid.*, pp. 249-252; Chic 2004, pp. 17-25.

cate the existence of a phase marked by the gradual transformation of the production contexts. These changes took place during a long-term period extended between the late 3rd and the 1st century BC. At the beginning of this interval, *Gadir* was not strictly Roman from a cultural or economic perspective, but it was not entirely Punic either, as the material culture analyzed in this paper suggest. Given this situation, it can be assumed that the adjective “Roman” could hardly be applied to the local coinage or to the amphorae, red slip or cooking wares produced in its workshops. Some specific amphora types appeared during this early-Roman stage, such as T-12112 and T-7433, but both clearly can be included in the later evolution of local Punic artisanal and economic tradition.

One of the amphora group produced in the former western Punic cities can be exceptionally helpful to define the “Late Punic” debate as it applies to the classification and historical interpretation of material culture, in this period and geographical setting. So far, most of the typological studies developed until present have focused essentially on morphological issues, not taking into enough account some technical data (artisanal details and trends) such as fabrics or manufacturing skills. Local versions of Greco-Italic and Dressel 1 amphorae should be included among the late-Punic types, because they were manufactured in the same workshops by the same potters, and with the same clays and firing techniques as all the other “late-Punic” groups cited above (T-9111, T-8211, T-12112, etc.). In this sense, it is worth noting that not only the workshops of the Bay of Cadiz were involved in the production of those imitations of Italic amphorae, as it seems that the regional ateliers concerned included a long list of coastal major ports in both sides of the Strait of Gibraltar region (but also Ibiza or north-eastern Hispania¹⁰⁴). The Bay of Cadiz has provided numerous examples of local production of Dr. 1A and 1C amphorae¹⁰⁵, a group that from a quantitative perspective was increasing its importance until reaching a primary position in the initial decades of the 1st century BC. In brief, as well as the local production of Italian Campanian tableware, the production in the “late-Punic West” of these Italizing amphorae groups cannot be considered a residual epiphenomenon, but a full-fledged commercial strategy developed by western Punic elites to facilitate access to the Roman Republic commercial networks¹⁰⁶.

104. López and Martín 2006, pp. 441-44.

105. García 1996, pp. 53-59; Bustamante and Martín-Arroyo 2005, pp. 442-446; Sáez and Díaz 2007, pp. 196-204; López 2008, pp. 46-67.

106. Cibecchini and Capelli 2013, pp. 424-426.

Obviously, this transitional stage did not only take place in the case of *Gadir/Gades* and many other areas formerly Punic, including Tunisia, Sicily and Sardinia, experienced similar processes of changeover from the Punic to the Roman sphere¹⁰⁷. We should emphasize the complexity of the cultural crossroad for various Punic sites and the relevance of the debate about “cultural hybridity” for these areas, but also that the ancient Cadiz provide plenty of information regarding this transitional moment. From our current perspective, these multiple sources, such as archaeological data related to technical features, consumption patterns, iconography and coinage, need to be considered together in order to generate complete historical inferences about cultural persistence and hybridization¹⁰⁸.

This contribution does not intend to put an end to this enriching debate about the terminological and methodological approach of this interesting transition period. But some key proposals can be drawn and added to the discussion, even taking into account the specific case study analyzed. Torre Alta is currently one of the most studied and relevant contexts for the analysis of the economy of *Gadir/Gades* (and a reference of this type of industrial installation in the regional historiographical context). Moreover, the former Phoenician and Punic city of *Gadir* was a major political and economic center during the Classical period, and it became one of the main economic centers of the Western Mediterranean during the late-Republican period. The context used in this pages as case study for the discussion of the “Late Punic” conceptual and methodological frame, dated around 180-150 BC, constitutes a helpful example of the first stages of the integration of the city (and the rest of the region) in the Roman Republic economic and cultural sphere. This is just one of the first published examples outlining the progressive change of the cultural setting of the Bay of Cadiz, not an *unicum*, and it should be connected with other sites of this area such as the workshop of Pery Junquera¹⁰⁹, in the vicinity of Torre Alta, or the well stratified context of Calle Durango¹¹⁰. These various contexts evidence early minor changes in the material repertory during the Roman time, adjustments that consistently transformed the local cultural background.

The archaeological data obtained suggests that this transition to the Roman rule was not subject to a real upheaval. On the contrary, the continuity of the

107. Van Dommelen 2005; Van Dommelen 2006, pp. 135-139.

108. Salvi 1990; Webster 2001, p. 214-223.

109. González *et al.* 2001; Arévalo 2004, pp. 517-521; Arévalo 2005; Bustamante and Martín-Arroyo 2005.

110. Niveau 2003, pp. 202-203, fig. 15, dated in the first decades of the 2nd c. BC.

previous economic model is recognizable in the material remains of artifacts and production centers, perhaps including the organization of productive spaces in plots in the southern insular territory. The context includes numismatic evidence, amphorae and other types of ceramics, such as plain and cooking wares, and also red slip tablewares (almost all of them locally produced). The local pottery of the assemblage is clearly characterized by a typological and functional continuity of the Punic tradition. However, as already pointed out, some evidence indicates the presence of forms and artisanal techniques that can be connected with the Roman economic practices and procedures. The analysis of this group of items allows noticing clear signs of cultural and economic hybridization, both in forms and techniques, between the Roman and the local Punic traditions. These material data seem to reinforce the idea reflected by the historiography, via the “Late-Punic” concept, about a continuity of the Punic tradition long after the Roman annexation. In short, Torre Alta’s context suggest that most of the population of southern Hispania, included in the Roman Republic since the end of the 3rd century BC, remained close to the previous cultural, economic and social practices and to the material expression of such trends; but as well suggest that some Italic ingredients gradually added, as it is noticeable in this context with the production of red slip or cooking wares, or even the Greco-Italic amphorae imitations.

The discussion about the use of “late-Punic” term, or other terminologies such as “neo-Punic” or “post-Punic”, should reach in the near future a ‘pole position’, as it could provide a common conceptual and methodological scenario to define transition and cultural hybridization during the early Roman expansion. However, besides encouraging the terminological debate, the main goal of this archaeological approach has been to emphasize the existence of complex cultural and economic phenomena that can be identified (at least, partially) through the material culture studies. These transitional phases have been overshadowed by a sometimes rigid use of the historical cultural envelopes and chronologies and the heavy weight of classical historiography that sharply separated the Roman and Greeks from other coeval Mediterranean cultures. Quite often, historians had analyzed the ancient Mediterranean as a string of strictly defined periods and cultures, with only slight mutual links. Archaeological finds have provided us facts that suggest a much more complex cultural and social diversity and interaction.

Our contribution about the “Late-Punic” Mediterranean and its conceptual background can be included in a deeper debate, already initiated in this jour-

nal, about “the simultaneous coexistence of diverse culture-systems”¹¹¹, a major topic that exceeds the aims of our modest archaeological approach. Although different in their methods, the interaction between History (understood as a “classical” and theoretical discipline) and Archaeology is as relevant as it is necessary. Cases such as the one discussed in these pages draw attention on the importance of archaeological discoveries, even minor contexts or isolated vessels, to push forward this intricate conceptual and epistemological debate about the interpretation of ancient items and their cultural-historical meaning. In general, artifacts have tended to be used as a passive mirror of historical facts and processes by modern historiography, but it could be more fruitful to use material culture as an active result from its historical environment.

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