

# **Tyre, Temple, and Trade: Social Imaginaries, Universal Infrastructure and the Emergence of an Archaic Maritime Identity**



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## **Abstract**

Alfred T. Mahan reflected back upon history in his search for the principles underlying the nature and role of sea power. This paper takes the same approach by looking at Tyre, a small Phoenician city on the coast of Lebanon that emerged from the collapse of the Bronze Age (1200-1000 BCE) to become a significant maritime power in the ancient world. Tyre sat at the geographic, economic, cultural, temporal, and cosmic pivot of the Mesopotamian and Nile river civilizations and, through trade and temple, spread a universal infrastructure of literacy, religion, and technology throughout the Mediterranean Sea. Tyre became a crucial link between the Ancient Near East and the Greco-Roman world that would emerge through interaction with those civilizations. This paper takes an interdisciplinary approach. It combines Mahanian strategic thought, social imaginaries, sources of social power, relevancy theory, and Biblical exegesis in the service of historiography. The question is why Tyre developed a maritime identity. The answer is found in her cosmogony, sacred geography and belief and the contrast that drew with her neighbor, and regional power, of the tribes of Israel.

Tyre was a maritime archetype, emerging from a world of mythos into a world of logos, or our contemporary world of logic and reason. An important link binding past to present, she bound her maritime world with her gods, and began the process of stitching together the modern western world. Tyre was an early archetype of the Mahanian vision of sea power.

## Introduction

Tyre, the archaic city-state, is the focus of this paper. Tyre emerged as a maritime power in the shadow years of an archaic period—between the end of the catastrophic collapse of the Bronze Age (Early and Middle Iron Age, 1050-700s B.C.E.) and her forced Hellenization at the hands of Alexander the Great (c. 332 BCE). Tyre was not only a temporal pivot linking the Bronze Age empires to the Greco-Roman world; she was also a geographic pivot, connecting the ancient near east to the Mediterranean world. In pursuit of maritime trade, her sailors, ships, colonies, and temples wove a civilizing thread across the seas.

Alfred T. Mahan, the leading American naval theorist, wrote the seminal *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History*. In this work, he divided sea power into naval (military) and maritime (commercial) power. While remembered in military circles for his naval strategic thinking, Mahan wrote forcefully and abundantly on topics of maritime interest throughout his literary career. He examined the character of peoples and governments and the conditions needed to establish maritime power. He combined them into the six elements of sea power and:

“enumerated as follows: I. Geographical Position. II. Physical Conformation, including, as connected therewith, natural productions and climate. III. Extent of Territory. IV. Number of Population. V. Character of the People. VI. Character of the Government, including therein the national institutions.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Captain A. T. Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History 1660-1783* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1890), 28-29.

Mahan wrote to develop principles and argued that history is where we should look to find specifics. In ancient history we find prototypes, archetypes and beginnings. Chester G. Starr, in his *The Influence of Sea Power on Ancient History*, referred to this period as the “prelude to thalassocracy,” where a “new framework of life...was almost unconsciously arising.”<sup>2</sup> The history of Tyre then, reveals patterns of the present modern world.

The sociologist Michael Mann discussed another aspect of power, in his case, the sources of social power; he developed ideas on types of power and how societies distribute and maintain power. He looked at the role of ideology first before examining political, military, and economic power. This paper agrees; ideology—the binding faith—drives economic, political/diplomatic, and military power and choice. This paper uses *idearial*—a neologism—to combine ideology, religious belief, and faith in contrast with the material. People mediate between *idearial* and material strength; when they separate, the sources of social power dissipate. Tyre's ideology—her gods—bound the mother city to her colonies and maintained her maritime domain as regional and great powers rose and fell around her. Tyre was an archaic example of modern ideas.

Tyre is the petri dish this paper examines; we will apply theories and principles through the pipette of forensic history. Sea power identity is a constructed choice, “a work of art best understood through the lens of national culture.”<sup>3</sup> Tyre's maritime power was the temporal,

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<sup>2</sup> Chester G. Starr, *The Influence of Sea Power On Ancient History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 15.

<sup>3</sup> Andrew Lambert, *Seapower States: Maritime Culture, Continental Empires and the Conflict the Made the Modern World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), 43.

geographic, and cosmic pivot from the Bronze Age to the Classical Age and the Greco-Roman civilization beyond.

### Prelude

"What the hell just happened," you ask yourself. You are a Scribal-Historian of the energetic King Hiram, Priest of Melqart, and he has sent you to transcribe the Biblyian royal archives as the basis of Tyre's new royal archives. Byblos was the oldest of the cities of Canaan, and her records the most precise; did not the great El, Kronos and king of the gods found the city himself? In her sacred writings are the history of our people. And her more mundane writings tell of recent regional change, of invasions and disruptions; the worthlessness of bronze now that iron abounds; the end of one age and the beginning of another. Your eye is caught by these invasions of Canaanite lands. Yes, you nod to yourself. There were two important invasions, both gradual and incremental, but unequal in destruction.

From the north and the western great green sea came these people, probably fleeing the collapse of the many Mycenaean states, brought about by their long war before Ilium. When they reached our lands, much of their invasion had slowed. They began to intermingle in the north and establish the Philistine Pentapolis in the south.

The invasion from the south was altogether different. It was a tribal eruption—by a people of our language—who referred to their god as El Elyion (God, the Most High), rejected the equality El/Kronos, Melqart, and the Lady of Heaven Astarte, and moved north with a ferocious ideological fury. Gone from the record are the Amalekites, Amorites west of the Salt Sea, Kenites, Jebusites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Girgashites. The Judahites destroyed their kingdoms, their languages are now gone, and their people slaughtered or scattered. The Judahites did this under their Soffets, their Judges, but recently anointed a King, whom they call DVD or David. His throne is at the old Jebusite stronghold of Jerusalem.

The Israelite tribe Asher touches on and intermingles with all that remains of coastal Kan'an, from Hiram's Tyre in the south, through Sidon and Byblos. The old trade routes now flow through their lands. We are surrounded, with only the great green sea to our backs. They have seized the Ladder of Tyre, sit upon the Mountains of Lebanon, and control the River Adonis' headways.

Egypt survived the collapse, and there are distant rumors of Assyria stirring. We absorbed the Sea People and made do. But to our south, the Israelites now overshadow our hinterlands. We used to feed from the granaries of the Girgashites, Perizzites, and the Jebusites; now we must provide from the granaries of the House of David. And this David has alien ideas.

## The Pivot of Tyre

In his article, "Beyond Frontiers: Ancient Rome, and Eurasian Trade Networks," Marco Galli described the trade between the Chinese named *Ta-Ch'in* (Roman Empire) in the west and the Roman named *Seres* (Han Chinese) in the east. Galli illustrated his article with a twentieth-century map of the trade networks by Albert Von Herrmann (figure 1.). *Ta-Ch'in* and *Seres* appear as inkblot states almost, but not quite, connecting in the middle of the Eurasian landmass. Trade networks ran across land and associated seas. In this period, The Latin word *Seres* became the word for silk, and from the east came the *serici*, the "merchants of silk."



Figure 1. Albert Von Herrmann map of east-west trade links.

Spices, textiles, and other luxuries flowed into Roman lands as a trade deficit of 100 million *sesterces* flowed outward. Those Roman manufactured products that moved east into China came from micro Asiatic states like Tyre. Galli cited this trade by Marinus of Tyre, a



cartographer whose work survived through the famous geographer Claudius Ptolemy.<sup>4</sup> Marinus, with corrections, would form the basis for the development of fixed longitudes and latitudes. Tyre's role as a west-east pivot between Rome and China had an earlier antecedent in her role as an east-west pivot between the river valley civilizations and Mediterranean world.

Armies sustained Roman and Han continental powers, and their ideas ebbed and flowed with those armies. A quote frequently attributed to Stalin noted that armies demarcated the limits of social systems. Tyre was different. Unlike the Romans and Chinese, Tyre was a maritime power with limited land capability. Before Rome and the Han, before Alexander the Great tore down her walls and Persia took away her independence, Tyre's maritime power flowed west through and out of the archaic world of the Mediterranean. Tyre's merchant seamen built a second Pillars of Herakles and then bravely sailed past them.<sup>5</sup> In the writings of the prophet Isaiah, Tyre was a city "whose merchants were princes, whose traders were the honored of the earth."<sup>6</sup>

Tyre's ideas, her ideologies, were integral to the spread of her maritime micro-empire. The naval power of Tyre—and the broader Phoenician world—wielded by the Persians against the Greek world would come later. Tyre crossed the waves in sailing *gauloi*—round-bottomed merchant vessels—and two-tiered rowed Greek *biremes*.<sup>7</sup> The mighty *trireme* and its descendants, which would be the foundation of later Athenian imperial naval power and

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<sup>4</sup> Marco Galli, "Beyond Frontiers: Ancient Rome and Eurasian trade networks," *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, 8 (2017): 4, 5, 6, accessed 05 May 2021, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.euras.2016.12.001>

<sup>5</sup> Piero Bartoloni, Ships and Navigation, in *The Phoenicians*, ed Sabatino Moscati, (New York: Abbeville Press, 1988), 74-75.

<sup>6</sup> Isaiah 23:8 (English Standard Version)

<sup>7</sup> Alan B. Lloyd, "Were Necho's Triremes Phoenician?" *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 95 (1975): 55.

dominate almost two millennia of warfare in the Mediterranean before fading after the Battle of Lepanto, were not a part of her expansion. Ships bracketed the independent history of Tyre from the mythical Tyrian Ousōos who "seizing a tree trunk and removing its branches, was the first to dare embark upon the sea," to the *gauloi* and *biremes*.<sup>8</sup> But while the ships moved the people and material of the Tyre's micro-empire, it was the non-material ideology, ideas, which provided the binding agent to hold them all together.

We only grasp ideologies with the mind; they are non-material. Ideologies as ideas sit somewhere above the brain and enter the world through human activity. Ideologies pour into a grand strategy from above and become real through a sifting process of choice, policies, actions, and activities. This paper will maintain a thread that ideologies drive economics, providing options in diplomatic and military arenas. A strong ideology binds a people; a weak ideology looses a people. Tyre was an ideologically socio-spatial *transcendent* state combining ideological, economic, military, and political power "to generate "a 'sacred' form of authority, set apart from and above more secular authority structures."<sup>9</sup> Their ideology was the idea of sacred authority. Ideological power gave them a distinct method "of dealing with emergent social problems," and formed the core of the "universal infrastructure" they would diffuse across the seas.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Philon of Byblos, *Phoenician History* quoted in Eusebios of Caesarea, *Evangelical Preparation [Vide: Africanus (Julius), Diodorus Siculus. Plutarchus & Porphyrius apud Eusebium Caesariensem]*, 1.10.10 in Kaldellis, Anthony and López Ruiz, Carolina, "Philon (790)", in: *Brill's New Jacoby*, ed. Ian Worthington, accessed on 30 April 2021 [http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1873-5363\\_bnj\\_a790](http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1873-5363_bnj_a790).

<sup>9</sup> Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power, Volume I: A History of Power from the Beginning to AD 1760*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 23.

<sup>10</sup> Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, 24, 23.

From a preliterate time of stone, copper, and myth and on through the Bronze Age, Tyre emerged to bridge this preliterate world from the archaic to the classical world. Tyre was not only a geographic pivot in the material trade of the ancient world; she was also a cosmic pivot in the non-material exchanges of that ancient world. Examining those roles together is the purpose of this paper.

### **Tyre's Significance in the History of Maritime Power**

Tyre of the archaic period was a Phoenician city located along the coast of modern-day Lebanon. In Phoenician mythologies there was a brother, "Chna whose name was changed to Phoenix."<sup>11</sup> For their Hebrew contemporaries, they were known as Canaanites or merchants. The Greeks would later call them Phoenicians, which could variously mean reddish-purple or palm trees. Romans brought the Greek exonym into their language and referred to the Carthaginians (a colony of Tyre) as the Punic (Poeni in Latin). For themselves, the Phoenicians identified themselves as Canaanites or by their city of origin.<sup>12</sup>

The chief cities of the Phoenician heartland were Byblos, Arwad, Sidon, and Tyre. Homer's *Iliad* praised the metalwork of Sidon and the textiles of Sidonian women.<sup>13</sup> The expensive Phoenician purple dye—which would one day unsettle the economics of the Roman

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<sup>11</sup> Philon of Byblos, *Phoenician History* quoted in Eusebios of Caesarea, *Evangelical Preparation*, 1.10.39

<sup>12</sup> Maria Eugenia Aubet, *The Phoenicians and the West: Politics, Colonies and Trade*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 6-13.

<sup>13</sup> Irene J. Winter, *On Art in the Ancient Near East, Volume I, Of the First Millennium BCE* (Lieden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2010), 598.

empire—was likely first worked in Sidon.<sup>14</sup> The Phoenicians replaced the crude mercantilism of the Bronze Age and encouraged a new division of labor and state-building. They developed pegged mortise-and-tenon joints, invented transport amphorae (jugs) that standardized volumes, identified the North Star for use in navigation, and pioneered mass production.<sup>15</sup> The decline of Sidonian preeminence and the transition to the rise of Tyre occurred around the Bronze Age Collapse. Tyre as an ideological power emerged from the collapse under Hiram I, King of Tyre and High Priest of the god Melqart (969-936 BCE).<sup>16</sup>

The telling of Tyre's founding was in a fog between mythos and logos. In sacred myth, the goddess Astarte, wearing a bull's head like a crown, found a fallen star in the air and used it to consecrate the holy island of Tyre.<sup>17</sup> In a later telling, from 5<sup>th</sup> century Hellenized Egypt, it is the star-clad Herakles—that earth-shaker—who awakens the minds of the men and guides them to the two ambrosial rocks floating just offshore. There, they sacrifice an eagle and mark the foundation of Tyre<sup>18</sup>. Perhaps this later myth of Herakles finds inspiration in the tale of the two quarreling Tyrian brothers Samemeroumus and Ousōos.<sup>19</sup> Samemeroumus, representing insular Tyre and Ousōos, representing continental Tyre, provided us with a Phoenician archetype of maritime and continental powers (figure 2).<sup>20</sup> Tyre was old and inextricably tied to the beginning

<sup>14</sup> Lloyd B. Jensen, Royal Purple of Tyre, *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, Vol. 22, No.2 (1963): 105, 115, accessed 06 September 2020, JSTOR.

<sup>15</sup> John C. Scott, "The Phoenicians and the Formation of the Western World," *Comparative Civilization Review*, Vol. 78, No. 78, Art. 21 (2018): 29, 30, accessed on 30 April 2021, <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2047&context=ccr>

<sup>16</sup> J Josephus Flavius, *Against Apion*, in Barclay, John M.G., "Against Apion I, Whiston 1.18, Niese 116-127" in: Flavius Josephus Online, Steve Mason, accessed 30 April 2021.

<sup>17</sup> Philon of Byblos, *Phoenician History*, 1.10.31

<sup>18</sup> Nonnos, *Dionysiaca*, Vol. III, Books XXXVI-XLVIII, trans. W. H. D. Rouse (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1942), 185-191.

<sup>19</sup> Philon of Byblos, *Phoenician History* quoted in Eusebios of Caesarea, *Evangelical Preparation*, 1.10.9-10.

<sup>20</sup> Albert I. Baumgarten, *The Phoenician History of Philo of Byblos: A Commentary* (Lieden: E.J. Brill, 1981), 160-161.

and end of Phoenician history. According to archeological accounts, Tyre's foundation stretched back to approximately 3,000 B.C.E.<sup>21</sup> Tyre was a "city in the form of a continent and the image of an island."<sup>22</sup> It is this ancient city of bronze age myth that entered the age of iron history.

Writing on Greek presocratic thought, Robin Waterfield notes:

"Anthropologists have shown time and again that so-called primitive people—people governed by mythos rather than logos—do think systematically; it is just that they use different systems....They have different ideas about what constitutes cause and effect, and about the nature of reality; they think more metaphorically and analogically, more imaginatively and loosely."<sup>23</sup>

These "different systems" not only distinguished these peoples from moderns but also from each other. These systems of thought described the beginnings of the world, the creation of the gods and man's place within the world and relationship to the gods. With respect to the peoples of the ancient near east and Mediterranean world, Tyre's foundational system --- her cosmology --- was within the mainstream. But when compared to the Tribes of Israel, her neighbor and regional power, we can detect a difference.

Scholars used two dominant theories to explain Tyre's colonial expansion: an early expansion based on a search for metals (tenth century BCE) or pressure from Assyrian imperial expansion (eight to seventh century BCE).<sup>24</sup> But the Phoenician role of finding Cypriot copper to mix with Afghan tin to make the key trade good of the eponymous Bronze Age receded as iron became the metal of choice in the region. And Assyria went into a period of decline and internal

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<sup>21</sup> H. Jacob Katzenstein, *The History of Tyre From the Beginning of the Second Millennium B.C.E until the Fall of the Neo-Babylonian Empire in 539 B.C.* (Beersheba, IL: Ben-Gurion University of the Negev Press, 1997), 5.

<sup>22</sup> Nonnos, *Dionysiaca*, 185.

<sup>23</sup> Robin Waterfield, *The First Philosophers: The Presocratics and the Sophists* (New York: Oxford University Press 2000), xxii.

<sup>24</sup> Maria E. Aubet, "Political and Economic Implications of the New Phoenician Chronologies," in *Beyond the Homeland: Markers in Phoenician Chronology* (Leuven: Peeters, 2008), 181.

strife between the reigns of Shalmaneser III (858-824 BCE) and Tiglath-pileser III (744-727 BCE).<sup>25</sup> Finally, new archeological findings suggest an earlier colonial expansion forcing a reconsideration of the theory that Tyre's expansion was driven by "policy adopted by the Assyrian Empire in the East."<sup>26</sup>

Understanding Tyre's colonial expansion means understanding her source of social power: her gods, their genealogy but ultimately their cosmogony. Tyre's cosmogony and sacred geography must be placed alongside the political geography and cosmogony of the Tribes of Israel. Tyre's expansion is best understood by the impact Israelite difference and the newness this brought to the region.



Figure 2. Winged hippocampus—a mythical horsefish—ridden by diety. Melqart rides the beast of the sea, land, and air above a sea in which swims a dolphin. Owl with flail and crook on the obverse.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Shana Zaia, "How To (Not) Be King: Negotiating the Limits of Power within the Assyrian Hierarchy," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, Vol. 77, no. 2, (2018), 207.

<sup>26</sup> Maria E. Aubet, "Political and Economic Implications of the New Phoenician Chronologies," 179.

<sup>27</sup> Coin Archives, accessed 02 May 2021,

<https://www.coinarchives.com/a/lotviewer.php?LotID=1824719&AucID=4241&Lot=306&Val=805b2288d1e3e44eal58886c227ef2a0> . Maria Eugenia Aubet, *The Phoenicians and the West*, 154.

## With Apologies to Alfred T Mahan: The Six Elements of Maritime Power

For Alfred T. Mahan, sea power was an inclusive term that combined maritime and naval power. While many viewed Mahan's influences as primarily in naval strategy development, his book—and later body of work—emphasized the maritime—economics and trade—aspects of sea power. The naval history of Tyre under the Persians is out of scope, but Mahan's six elements of sea power help with the understanding of Tyre's maritime power. Below, we'll examine the first four elements of maritime power—geography, physical conformation, the extent of territory, and population.<sup>28</sup> Mahan's last two elements—the character of the people and the character of the government—underly this paper's analysis.

### Geography

A critical insight of Mahan was that maritime states developed when not pressed with neighbors. This lack provided a focus on the development of maritime power. Maritime powers—like England in his example—were not exposed to the temptations of continental wars.<sup>29</sup> Tyre's insular and continental microstate lay almost entirely within the 33<sup>rd</sup> latitude. Tyre consisted of two parts. The insular city of Tyre used to lay approximately 700 to 800 meters off the coast of present-day Lebanon. Alexander the Great's conquest of Tyre in 332 B.C. created a mole that joined present-day Tyre—Sur—to the land. Insular Tyre, whose 30-meter walls pressed to the sea, was wholly dependent on the continent for water and agricultural products.

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<sup>28</sup> Alfred T. Mahan, *Influence of Sea Power on History* in *Mahan on Naval Strategy: Selections from the writings of Rear Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan, with an Introduction by John B. Hattendorf*, ed. John B. Hattendorf (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2015), 31.

<sup>29</sup> Alfred T. Mahan, *Influence of Sea Power on History*, 31.

On the continent, Tyre had a city of Ushu, later Palaetyros. Ushu was the “original Tyre” of the Bronze Age record.<sup>30</sup> To the north, the Litani river demarcated the territory of Tyre from Sidon. In the west, the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon mountains created a barrier to direct east-west travel while creating a north-south corridor through the Baalbek valley. Tyre's southern border expanded and contracted from the Ladder of Tyre towards the plain of Akko and into Galilee. Her southern neighbor was the regional power of the Biblical United Monarchy and later the Kingdoms of Omrid Israel and Judah.

Tyre, therefore had two neighbors. Sidon, over which she may have sometimes ruled, was another Phoenician city. Omride Israel and Judah were not only key trading partners, particularly in highland agricultural products, but also crucial powers Tyre's leaders needed to manage. Tyre's continental possession put her at the vital intersection of the north-south running Via Maria along the coast and King's Highway, which turned and entered into the Baalbek Valley. Both highways were essential in the cultural, economic, and sometimes military interchanges between the great powers of the Nile and Mesopotamian river valleys. Israel and Judah controlled Tyre's full use of those critical inland road networks.

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<sup>30</sup> Maria Eugenia Aubet, “Tyre before Tyre,” in *Nomads of the Mediterranean: Trade and Contact in the Bronze and Iron Ages, Studies in Honor of Michael Artzy*, ed. Ayelet Gilboa and Assaf Yasur-Landau (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 22.



### Physical Conformation

While Tyre had a continental hinterland, it was not enough to support the city's needs; Mahan would argue that this lack of continental resources drove people to the sea. The main agricultural product available for exports were the trees of the "cedar-gods" located in the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon mountains.<sup>31</sup> Surrounding powers prized these cedars for shipbuilding and temple construction, and they were a source of wealth and prestige for Tyre.

### The Extent of Territory and Population

Insular Tyre had two harbors, an Egyptian one facing south and a Sidonian one facing north. Her seacoast continued south past the city of Hammon 19 km south, and, when in possession of the plain of Akko, Tyre's usable seacoast expanded greatly. The population around Tyre ranged from estimates of 13,000 to 22,000.<sup>32</sup> Tyre may likely have seen a population expansion earlier as southern tribal co-religionists, displaced by the Israeli tribal incursion in the south, moved north. Her population was small compared to the estimated several hundred thousand Israelites and several million in each river valley empire.

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<sup>31</sup> Hittite *Evocatio*, trans. L. Luntz, *ANET*, 352, lines 50-55.

<sup>32</sup> Yifat Thareani, "The Empire and the 'Upper Sea:' Assyrian Control Strategies along the Southern Levantine Coast," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, No. 375 (May 2016), 84.

## The Character of the People and Character of the Government

Mahan observed that the above elements of sea power are necessary but not sufficient. In doing so, he brings to light this paper's central challenge. Mahan wrote that the people's character drives the character of the government, and maritime powers seek "riches not by the sword but by labor." A "nation of shopkeepers," becoming maritime, required business, trade, manufacturing, and negotiation skills. They also needed an "intelligent direction by a government fully imbued with the spirit of the people and conscious of its true general bent."<sup>33</sup> Mahan's observations bring this paper to an inflection point.

### **Tyre Shining Forth: The Emergence of an Archaic Maritime Power**

This paper opened with the question of why did Tyre emerge as a maritime power? What factors caused the development of its maritime identity? And what features allowed for the prosperous expansion west while maintaining the independence and centrality of Tyre from c. 900 BCE until their eventual incorporation into the Persian Empire (c ~ 539 BCE).<sup>34</sup> Tyre's unique physical, political, and cosmic geography pushed her into the sea; literacy, religion, and portable *techné* provided the universal infrastructure to bind the overseas possessions to the mother city. Temple and trade sustained Tyre as a maritime power. Tyre's Kings and oligarchs needed to manage the neighboring regional powers while expanding into the seas.

## The Character of the Government: 'The Exercise of Intelligent Willpower'

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<sup>33</sup> Alfred T. Mahan, *Influence of Sea Power on History*, 62

<sup>34</sup> H. Jacob Katzenstein, *The History of Tyre*, 346.

Mahan wrote that in the development of maritime power, "the most brilliant successes have followed where there has been intelligent direction by the government fully imbued with the spirit of the people and conscious of its true general bent."<sup>35</sup> He further notes that despotic governments, while capable of force development, lack perseverance. Unlike the river valley's authoritative great powers, with their god-kings, Tyre's government enabled the development of diffused maritime power. Hiram I initiated the growth of Tyre's influence by physically uniting those "ambrosial rocks" and his rededication of the temples of the gods.<sup>36</sup>

Tyre's government consisted of a King, who served as High Priest, alongside an oligarchy known as the "men of the city." This blended government appears common among the Phoenician Levantine cities (e.g., "Men of Arwad").<sup>37</sup> This oligarchy provided the basis of Mahan's "commercial aristocracy." The kings of Tyre, then, were not absolutists or types of god-kings. This blending of power provided Tyre with social stability; Tyre suffered brief instances of tyranny but would recover her primary forms. In addition, this oligarchic arrangement may have served to underwrite risks in colonial expansion; expansion on the waves was both public and private.

Tyre became the "mother of many children" based on the restraint of her government. Tyre was not—and could never be—a significant naval or military power which compelled

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<sup>35</sup> Mahan, *Influence of Sea Power Upon History*, in *Mahan on Naval Strategy*, 62.

<sup>36</sup> Flavius Josephus, *Against Apion 1, Whiston 1.18, Niese 116-127*, in Barclay, John M.G., "Against Apion 1, Whiston 1.18, Niese 116-127", in: Flavius Josephus Online, Steve Mason, accessed 04 May 2021 <[http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/9789004320079\\_fjo\\_CA\\_1\\_00116](http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/9789004320079_fjo_CA_1_00116)>

<sup>37</sup> Jordi Vidal, "The Men of Arwad, Mercenaries of the Sea," *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, LXV No. 1-2 (Januari-April 2008), 5. Maria Eugenia Aubet, *The Phoenicians and the West*, 145, accessed 05 May 2021, [10.2143/BIOR.65.1.2030875](https://doi.org/10.2143/BIOR.65.1.2030875)

others. Tyre did not have the population, resources, or geographic position to become a great land power; she drew from her strengths to become a maritime power. Tyre's strength was in her ability to convince. Tyre's mythos—the ambrosial islands, consecrated by the gods, in the land of the gods—became the mythos, the crucial part of her universal infrastructure, by which she managed her hinterlands and outer lands. The wealth that flowed into Tyre was the indication of the gods' favor.

The Character of the People: "Felt wants and Natural Impulses."

The gods are real, or perhaps they are not. The United States is the land of the free and home of the brave, or maybe it is not. Social imaginaries matter; they operate pre-reflexively in the minds and provide a substrate upon which people build their social realities. The intersubjective ideas and social structures that emerge are surface phenomena. When social imaginaries fade—as they did in the Soviet Union—the structure will linger on, but collapse is inevitable. What is true for modern man is true for the archaic man because it is true for man. Social imaginaries as ancient religions or modern ideologies are interchangeable because they are ideas that bind us.

Hiram's renewal of Tyre's ideas brought about Mahan's "felt wants and natural impulses" of the people leading to the establishment of healthy colonies, united by material and idearial connections.<sup>38</sup> The people of Tyre were fishermen, artisans, manufacturers of luxury goods, producers of dye, and commercial aristocrats. They remained in the homeland or boarded ships

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<sup>38</sup> Mahan, *Influence of Sea Power Upon History*, in *Mahan on Naval Strategy*, 59.

for distant emporia and colonies. Their identities, like all identities, were variable and relative. But they all rode on a uniting social imaginary of belief. Their belief was not in the sun, weather, or the power of mountains; those were symbols and stand-ins. Instead, they worshipped the forces of creation itself. Like the Hubble Telescope of logos, Tyre peered into the dark and windy mists of mythos to find the origin of all. And like the scientism of today, they worshipped what they found.

A restrained government, and an assured faith, combined with a favorable geographic position, marked Tyre's development into a maritime power. Blending diffusive power—which allowed for independent action—allowed Tyre to dominate the archaic maritime space in a way her land-bound neighbors did not. Tyre's government and her people—thoroughly imbued with the same spirit—managed both her continental hinterlands and overseas outer lands. As opposed to naval or military material strength, Tyre displayed a supple *idearial* strength. Tyre's “power organization of temples” established “forms of long-distance economic and political regulation.”<sup>39</sup> Her power flowed with the gods and through the temples.

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<sup>39</sup> Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, 21

## Tyre's Hinterlands

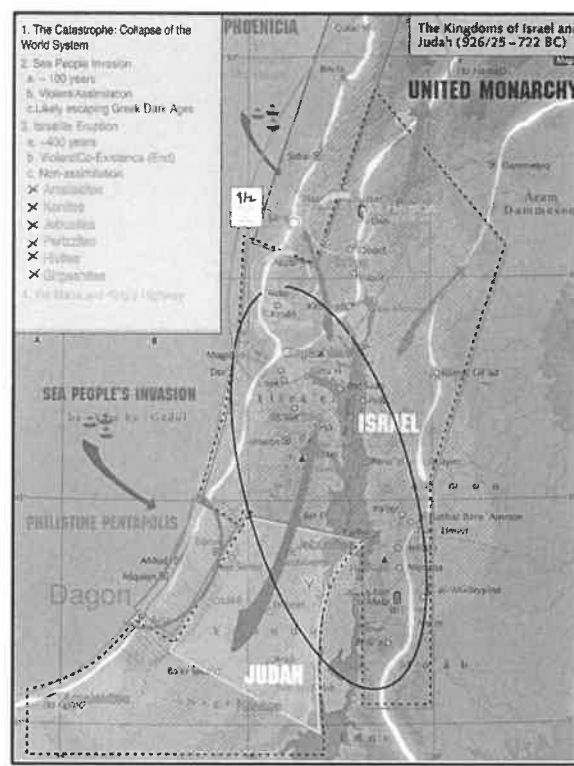


Figure 3. Tyre and the regional powers of the Philistines and United Monarchy, later the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah.

Movement between The Nile and Mesopotamian river valleys—home to the great powers of the ancient near east—was not possible east to west; the desert made communication impractical. Instead, communication moved in a north-south axis along the Levantine coast.

Exchanges would emerge out of the north of the Mesopotamian valley, proceed across present-day Syria, down the coast (by land or sea), and into the Nile valley.

The tribes of Israel—from the United Monarchy thru the separate Kingdoms of Israel and Judah—lay along Tyre's southern and western borders. A hostile Israelite presence could have blocked Tyre's inland access to the great markets of the recovering river valley powers. The Israelites, under successive Zadokite priests, had an oppositional view. Ezekiel, condemnatory towards Tyre's people, princes, and cherubic king, praised the Zadokite tradition.<sup>40</sup> Managing the Israelites was a key concern for Tyre's leaders. Deft management by the kings Hiram I (969-936 BCE) and later Ethbaal I (887-856 BCE) transformed Israel from an adversary into a granary.

Of course, the relationship between Tyre and Jerusalem was economical but needed to overcome Zadokite opposition to Tyre's beliefs and practices. Hiram I, in the biblical account, initiated friendly relations with King David and his successor Solomon. Technologically more advanced, Hiram assisted Solomon in the building of the temple at Jerusalem. Hiram combined his material strengths in support of Solomon's *idearial* concerns.<sup>41</sup> Ethbaal and his house would later expand this approach by marrying his daughter Jezebel to the King of Israel and granddaughter Athaliah to the King of Judah. Both sought to advance Tyre's power by importing Tyre's faith—biblically the Baals—and religious practice into Israel and Judah. Unfortunately for Tyre's interest, both invoked a Zadokite like counter-reaction. The Israelites threw Jezebel from a

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<sup>40</sup> Ezekiel 44:15 (English Standard Version).

<sup>41</sup> 1 Kings 5 (English Standard Version)

window and killed five hundred of her priests. The Judahites later cut down Athaliah by the sword.<sup>42</sup>

Despite these setbacks, Tyre's merchants were still found in the City of David as late as the time of Nehemiah (5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E.) and likely beyond that time.<sup>43</sup> Tyre's faith lacked translatability with the religion found in Jerusalem. In matters of faith, Tyre and Jerusalem were an oppositional pair. But they were also the grinding gears that would lead to the production of western civilization, each in their turn. That first turn went to Tyre.

### Tyre's Outerlands

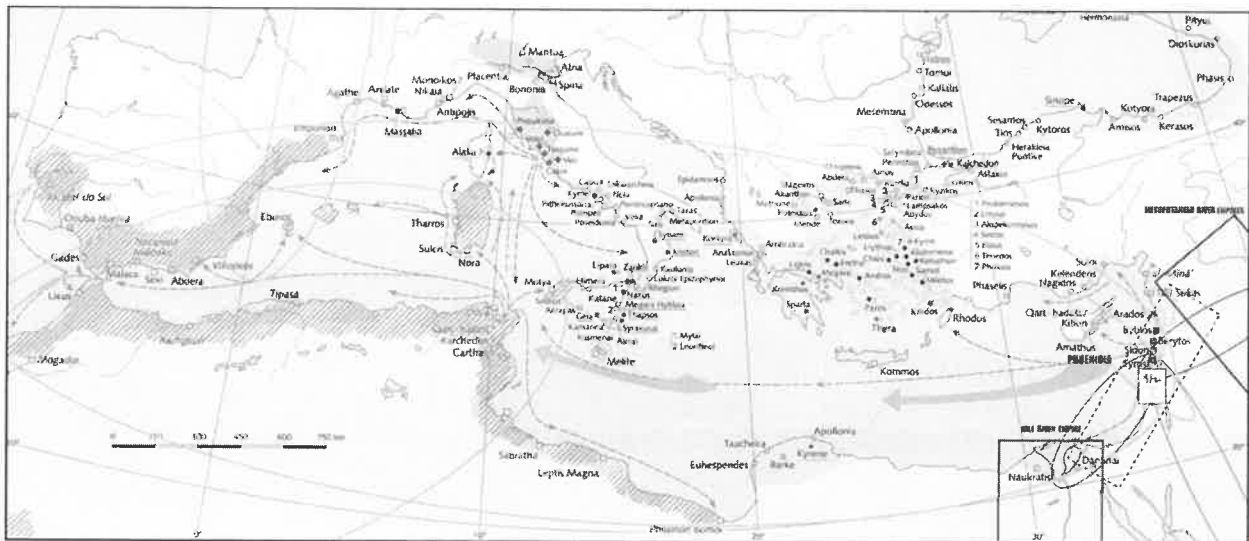


Figure 4. Tyre's expansion along the south of the Mediterranean. Map derived from Brill's New Pauly.

The Mediterranean became a single geographic and political unit when the Romans took control of the sea by the end of the first century B.C. and declared "mare nostrum." Before this,

<sup>42</sup> 2 Kings, 21:22-23. 2 Kings 10:25-27. 2 Kings, 11:16. (English Standard Version)

<sup>43</sup> Benjamin J. Noonan, "Did Nehemiah Own Tyrian Goods? Trade between Judea and Phoenicia during the Achaemenid Period," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 130, No. 2 (2011): 298, accessed 06 September 2020, JSTOR.



the Mediterranean consisted of politically, culturally, and geographically separated spaces. The Mediterranean includes the Levantine Sea, Aegean Sea, Adriatic Sea, Tyrrhenian Sea, and other smaller subdivisions. Through the south runs a connecting "river" along the north coast of Africa. The Mediterranean Sea itself is a network of networks, with advantageous ports, key chokepoints, and anchorages defining the movement of archaic and later peoples through the sea. At the beginning of the archaic age, the northern seas of the Mediterranean were host to diverse civilizations; Greek, Etruscan and Spanish tribes developed from east to west. Along the southern bend, the coast of North Africa (outside of Egypt), the Sahara Desert provided a barrier to north-south communication between the peoples of inland Africa and the Mediterranean Sea. Tyre expanded into the Mediterranean along this southern axis.

Tyre's maritime network conformed to the geography of the Mediterranean. While a single ship might spend a season circling the Mediterranean, they complemented local "sea" trade based on the various divisions of the larger Mediterranean. Much later, Mediterranean powers would develop extractive, authoritative, type trade networks. Imperial Spain of the 16<sup>th</sup> century C.E. would become the premier example of this type of trade. Spanish ships would depart the homeland on an annual or biannual basis, collect silver in the new world, and return. As threats of piracy or hostile powers increased, Spanish bullion fleets came under armed escort and Spain's expression of maritime power diminished. By contrast, Tyre's maritime network was transactive.

Under a transactive network, there is no single primary good—like silver—that provides the bulk of the material wealth. Instead, maritime powers generated wealth through the constant

transaction of mineral and manufactured goods.<sup>44</sup> Instead of departure from the home city to a distant port and return, Tyre's seaman ventured into the varied seas of the Mediterranean seeking increasing value-added transactions to make a profit. The advantage of transactional networks was an increase in the depth of maritime experience based on the need to crew and construct ships for maritime trade. Transactional networks explain Tyre's—and the Phoenician's—fame as seamen; their skill in navigation; and the frequency of their goods found as archeological remains across the Mediterranean.<sup>45</sup> Archaic land trade required walking along with draft animals, and continental military power required marching. By contrast, ships were—and are—the technological marvels of the day. Constant maritime transactions provide a breadth and depth of experience. According to Philon, the Tyrian Ousoos was the first to lop the branches off a tree and dare to set out to sea. Remaining on the sea required experience.

Tyre's spatial and temporal expansion was faith and temple-based. She not only founded new colonies but also drew in older Phoenician colonies. From boats docked, beached, and conducting trade to emporia, enclaves, and whole colonies, Tyre's network expanded across the Mediterranean. The temples were both economic and ideological centers; the founding of a colony required building a temple to bind the colony and the metropolis.<sup>46</sup> Viewing the gods as inputs and outputs, the economist Morris Silver saw the temple as guaranteeing and protecting trade, fostering trusts, and acting as storehouses for valuables and documents.<sup>47</sup> Through "geographic" gods, Tyre maintained itself as the ideological center of its maritime holdings.

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<sup>44</sup> Mahan, *Influence of Sea Power Upon History*, in *Mahan on Naval Strategy*, 56, 54.

<sup>45</sup> Mahan, *Influence of Sea Power Upon History*, in *Mahan on Naval Strategy*, 56

<sup>46</sup> Maria Eugenia Aubet, *The Phoenicians and the West*, 155.

<sup>47</sup> Morris Silver, *Economic Structures of Antiquity*, (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press 1995), 18, 23.

Tyre's religion also provided her with translatability—ranking and relating gods in treaty-making—in dealing with foreign cultures.<sup>48</sup>

Tyre's temples at Gadir, on the far west coast of Spain, recapitulated the city and its worship of Melqart. According to classical sources, the Gaditanians related that their city was founded by the direction of an oracle, recalling Tyre's divine founding.<sup>49</sup> Gadir mirrored Tyre's three temples to El/Kronos, Melqart, and Astarte.<sup>50</sup> They conducted the same annual festival to Melqart, usually held in spring. During this festival, the colonist would ask foreigners to leave the city—one of Tyre's few marks of exclusivity. There are indications that the worship services included human—but not child—sacrifices, but little else is known. While much of the information about Gadir and its temple structure come from classical sources, there remains a certain consistency in practice. The temple linked distant Gadir to the homeland of the gods and the political capital of Tyre.

Tyre's most famous colony was Carthage, in modern-day Tunisia. Carthage became the anchor of Tyre in the west and would emerge as a military and naval power in its own right. But even as its military, naval, and maritime capabilities outgrew Tyre's, Carthage maintained a subordinate cultural and financial position to Tyre. Carthage, unlike Gadir, sent its leaders to Tyre to participate in the annual spring rights to Melqart, with a tribute of ten percent of their yearly earnings. According to classical sources, when Carthage experienced military reversals,

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<sup>48</sup> [Treat]y of [Esarhaddon], king of Assyria, eldest son of [ ... ], with Baal, king of Tyre, *ANET*, 533.

<sup>49</sup> Strabo, III, 5, 5 in *Strabo Geography, Books 3-5*, trans Horace Leonard Jones (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1923).

<sup>50</sup> Natalia López-Sánchez, Ana Ma Niveau-de-Villedary y Mariñas, Juan Ignacio Gómez-González, "The Shrines of Gadir (Cadiz, Spain) as References for Navigation. GIS Visibility Analysis," *Open Archeology*, 5 (2019), 284, Accessed 05 May 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1515/opar-2019-0019>. Two (Kronos and Melqart) described in Strabo III, 5, 3. H. Jacob Katzenstein, *The History of Tyre*, 89.

she attributed that to the displeasure of the homeland gods and conducted an aristocratic holocaust through the sacrifice of 500 elite children.<sup>51</sup>

The men of Carthage were at another celebration of the gods when Alexander the Great approached Tyre in 332 BCE. Tyre, at this point, had lost her political independence to the Persian Empire. But she retained her central place at the heart of her maritime network. In *The Anabasis of Alexander*, Arrian related that Alexander requested that Tyre allow him to make a sacrifice at the temple of Herakles-Melqart, which was "the most ancient of all those which are mentioned in history."<sup>52</sup> Tyre refused for practical political considerations, not wanting Greeks or Persians to enter the city while their war was unsettled. While enraged, Alexander began a lengthy assault on insular Tyre to seize the Phoenician homeland. Alexander built a mole to the island and finally took Tyre with the help of a navy drawn from Phoenician cities already in his control. In all, Alexander's forces killed eight thousand Tyrians and sold 30,000 into slavery. He spared the king, magistrates, and Carthaginian envoys, all of who had taken refuge in the temple of Herakles.<sup>53</sup> Tyre's rise as an ideological maritime force began and ended in the temple of Herakles-Melqart.

### Tyre and Jerusalem, The Grinding Gears

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<sup>51</sup> Maria Eugenia Aubet, *The Phoenicians and the West*, 217, 249.

<sup>52</sup> Arrian, *The Anabasis of Alexander*, trans. E. J. Chinnock (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1884), 117.

<sup>53</sup> Arrian, *The Anabasis of Alexander*, 119-120.

Why did Tyre go to the sea while neighboring "Asher sat still at the haven of the sea, and abode by his creeks?"<sup>54</sup> Why did Byblos, Arwad, or Sidon not leave a record of colonies and maritime trade? Why did the materially more powerful United Monarchy of King Solomon not simply commandeer Tyre, as Persia would in a few hundred years? Why not Omri's Israel to the east or the Philistines to the south? What was unique about the men of Tyre that pushed them to found Qart Hadāsts (New Cities) in Cyprus and Tunisia and press into the Atlantic to found Gadir on the west of Spain. Physical and political geography pressed them against the sea, but what was unique about the "exercise of intelligent willpower" and "intelligent direction" that moved them to the sea?<sup>55</sup> In answering these questions, the paper will seek to put sociology to historical use to examine the *techné* that fueled the Tyrian expansion.

Tyre was at once—in miniature—a continental and sea-faring power. Tyre was an island in possession of a hinterland which distinguished her from the insular Phoenician city of Arwad and the otherwise land-bound states along the Levantine coast. Tyre, geographically, was an archetype of later emerging sea powers. This arrangement provided Tyre with an expansive trade and cultural exchange network. This network reached deep into the old Nile and Mesopotamian river civilizations and spread that rich civilizing loam across the Mediterranean Sea and out into the Atlantic. Tyre represented another version of the German Cartographer Heinrich Bunting's map of the entire world in a cloverleaf (figure 5.). Tyre—instead of Jerusalem—sits in the center of the map in this imagined version, while Asia, Africa, and Europe radiate out as cloverleaves. The key to Tyre's success was not merely geographic. Tyre's success was in her idearial strength.

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<sup>54</sup> Judges 5:17 (English Revised Version)

<sup>55</sup> Alfred T. Mahan, *Influence of Sea Power Upon History*, 58.

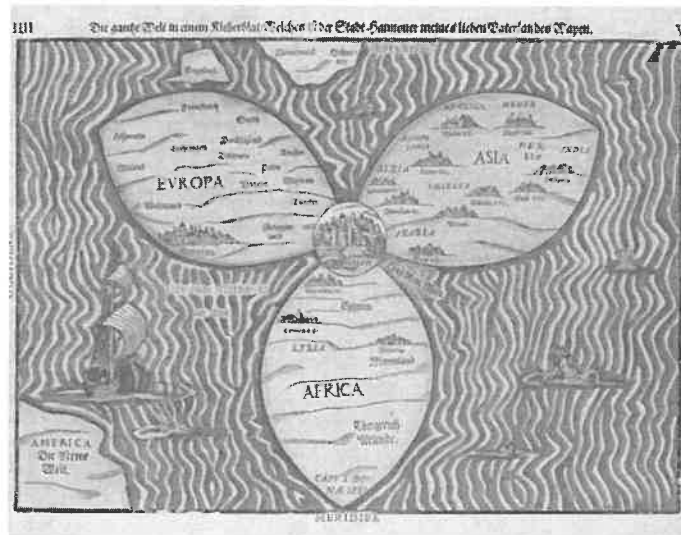


Figure 5. Colorized reconstruction of Heinrich Bunting's 1581 The Whole World in a Cloverleaf.<sup>56</sup>

### Methodological Approach: Relevancy Theory and the Sources of Social Power

It is necessary to discuss the methodology to make sense of the reasoning behind subsequent sections. A paper of this length does not allow for a complete discussion of the hermeneutics of relevancy theory, the construction of our social realities, or the sources of social power, as articulated by the sociologist Michael Mann. What follows is a thumbnail sketch of those concepts.

#### Relevancy Theory

<sup>56</sup> Heinrich Bunting, *Itinerarium Sacrae Scripturae*, (Magdeburg, 1581), 4-5. Barry Lawrence Ruderman, *Antique Maps, Die gantze Welt in einem Kleberblat / Welches ist der Stadt Hannover meines lieben Vaterlandes Wapen* [Clover Leaf World Map], accessed 02 May, 2021, <https://www.raremaps.com/gallery/detail/60698/die-gantze-welt-in-einem-kleberblat-welches-ist-der-stadt-buenting>

"The gods were real," wrote Carolina Lopez-Ruiz, a prolific author on Phoenician studies.<sup>57</sup> Her statement is a variation on what is known, in Biblical exegesis, as *sitz im leben*. *Sitz im leben* is a difficult to translate German phrase which denotes "the social context or 'life setting' in which a narrative emerged."<sup>58</sup> Biblical scholar John W. Hilber suggested the use of relevancy theory. Relevancy theory broadens meaning beyond the written or spoken word and searches the "cognitive environment and context." Hilber indicated that understanding the text requires understanding the broader argument consisting of "echoes."<sup>59</sup> In searching for echoes, he recommended assessing the cognitive environment and assessing the availability, volume, and recurrence of this echoing conversation. Taking the gods as real does not mean finding the physical tail of some cosmic dragon or the thighbone of some semi-divine hero. Searching for the gods means inferring an echo from a wide scattering of literary, epigraphic, numismatic, and iconographic sources. The ancient echo examined below was more than a prayer for the fecundity or a decent rain and good crops. The echo was an appeal to power.

### The Sources of Social Power.

In *The Sources of Social Power*, Michael Mann wrote that societies as organized power networks consisting of an interrelationship between ideological, economic, military, and political power.<sup>60</sup> For Mann, the central problems of power "concern *organization, control, logistics, communications*—the capacity to organize and control people, materials, territories, and the

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<sup>57</sup> Carolina López-Ruiz, *Gods, Heroes and Monsters: A Sourcebook for Greek, Roman and Near Eastern Myths in Translation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), XIX.

<sup>58</sup> *Sitz im Leben*, *A Dictionary of the Bible*, Oxford Biblical Studies Online, accessed 02 May 2021, <http://www.oxfordbiblicalstudies.com/article/opr/t94/e1778>

<sup>59</sup> John W. Hilber, *Old Testament Cosmology and Divine Accommodation: A Relevance Theory Approach* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2020), 10, 22.

<sup>60</sup> Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, 2.

development of this capacity throughout history."<sup>61</sup> He described *authoritative* and *diffused* power networks. As opposed to authoritative networks, diffused power:

"spreads in a more spontaneous, unconscious, decentered way throughout a population, resulting in similar social practices that embody power relations but are not explicitly commanded."<sup>62</sup>

Mann's diffused power relied on "enabling facilities like markets, literacy, coinage and the development of class and [or] national culture," or a "universal infrastructure."<sup>63</sup> Mann links diffused power to ideological organizations, further noting, "The social organization of ultimate knowledge and meaning is necessary to social life." Finally, Mann asserted:

Thus a religiously centered culture provided to people who lived in similar conditions over a broad region with a sense of collective normative identity and an ability to cooperate that was not as intense in its powers of mobilization but that was more extensive and diffuse than state, army, or mode of production provided.<sup>64</sup>

We float on a sea of imaginaries as we search for meaning. From a constructivist perspective, people weave together identity and purpose by sharing intersubjective ideas; these ideas become the rules, norms, and even structures that construct our social realities. These intersubjective ideas exist in a reflexive place—we discuss them, debate them, and need be change them. These

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<sup>61</sup> Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, 2-3.

<sup>62</sup> Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, 8.

<sup>63</sup> Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, 10.

<sup>64</sup> Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, 21



ideas ride on top of another set of ideas called social imaginaries, and it is through these imaginaries we can find insight into the foundations of social identities. These imaginaries are pre-reflexive and exist in non-contested space.<sup>65</sup> Social imaginaries consist of a mental background of images, stories and legends, and conceptions of time and space.<sup>66</sup> In a rough sense, social imaginaries are true because everyone knows they are true. Social imaginaries are where we locate ultimate meaning.

The social organization of ultimate meaning was at the heart of Tyre's universal infrastructure, enabling her markets, literacy, and the development and binding of her culture. In keeping with archaic religious traditions, the questions Tyre asked and answered were, "Who created the world? Who gives power?"

## **The Burden of Tyre**

### Voice and Violence

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<sup>65</sup> Heikki Patomaki, Steger, Manfred B., "Social Imaginaries and Big History: Towards a new planetary consciousness?" *Futures*, 42 (2010): 1056-1057, accessed 02 May 2021, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.futures.2010.08.004>

<sup>66</sup> Patomaki and Steger "Social Imaginaries," 1060. Guido M. Vanheeswijck, "The Philosophical Genealogy of Taylor's Social Imaginaries: A Complex History of Ideas and Predecessors," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 78, No. 3 (July 2017), 473, accessed 20 April 2021 [10.1353/jhi.2017.0026](https://doi.org/10.1353/jhi.2017.0026)

Power. Etymologically, the English word power derives from the Latin *posse*, or "to be able." At its root, power is the ability to translate will into action. The will derives from ideas that emerge in the consciousness—the mind. The location of the mind is subject to debate but largely unknown.<sup>67</sup> So, we have the non-material mind mediating through the material self, engaged in some purpose. Through the material self, we express the ideas of the mind to shape the outer world around us. Voice is how we express ourselves to human others; with our voices, we reason or inflame passions, shout and cry out. With our hands, we do violence, where violence is merely changing some physical aspect around us. Violence, of course, also includes war. We enter the world with the use of voice and violence resident; the skill to which we develop them varies and is usually the work of a lifetime.

In the modern view, man is at the bottom, projecting his social realities up; small units, states, and the social world proceeds from him.<sup>68</sup> From an archaic view, man was in the middle. Cosmogonies, theogonies, and genealogies existed before man. Man sat at the pivot of the non-material and material worlds. Conscious of himself and capable of reflection, he pulled ideas from "out there, somewhere," mediated them, and turned them into purposeful action. But the voice and violence man used to shape the world before him had a precedent behind him; in the archaic writing of cosmogonies and theogonies, we can extract the same patterns of voice and violence. Ancient man was deeply concerned with—if not religion—the approaches to the divine world. In reaching into the divine world then, as now, men returned with different answers.

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<sup>67</sup> Thomas Nagel, *Mind in the Cosmos: Why the Materialist Neo-Darwinian Conception of Nature is Almost Certainly False* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 6, 12-14.

<sup>68</sup> Peter Ludwig Berger and Luckmann, Thomas, *The Social Construction of Reality* (New York: Penguin Books, 1966), 17-19.

## The Cosmogenic Analysis Problem

All cosmogonies are not created equal. They tell the same basic story, the creation of the world, the heavens, the earth, or the universe. Where they differ is in emphasis. There is an upper-level god, in some stories active, in others not. Then there is the mechanical act of creation. Following the voice and violence discussion above, this paper divides the cosmologies into narrative and mechanical levels of creation. At each level, different gods are active. The cosmogenic accounts differ in their emphasis. In the below accounts, we have three basic gods: the gods that are, the gods who step back, and the gods who step forward.

Plato's *Timaeus*, the New Testament *Book of John*, Old Testament Biblical and Jewish Tanakh and Aggadah – or wisdom literature -- accounts all include discussion of both narrative and mechanical levels. In the Mesopotamian *Enuma Elish*, the Phoenician cosmogony of Philo's *Phoenician History*, Hesiod's *Theogony*—and the Big Bang Theory of the moderns—focus on the mechanical level. The Apostle John's poignant "In the beginning was the word" is one bookend of these accounts.<sup>69</sup> The epic *Enuma Elish*, where the monstrously shaped cosmic dragon Tiamat assembles her creatures and battle units, armed with unfaceable weapons, against the noisome gods, represents another bookend.<sup>70</sup>

## Narrative and Mechanical Levels of Creation

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<sup>69</sup> John 1:1 (English Standard Version).

<sup>70</sup> *Enuma Elish*, trans S. Dalley, *Myths from Mesopotamia: Creation, The Flood, Gilgamesh and Others*, in *God's Heroes and Monsters*, ed. Carolina López-Ruiz (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 10-11.

Plato's work *Timaeus* is known primarily for Critias's description of Atlantis, a mythical city with a literary description not dissimilar to the naturally occurring Richat Structure of Mauritania.<sup>71</sup> The titular character Timaeus's description of creation is more relevant for this paper. Timaeus began in the eternal, asking, "What is and always *is* and has no becoming; and what is it that comes to be and never *is*?"<sup>72</sup> Here Timaeus distinguishes between the eternal god and sets it apart from the created. His god or craftsman had an existence not bounded by beginnings or ends. Critical here is the setting of the eternal craftsman outside of creation itself. Timaeus's craftsman, the "poet and the father of all," is narrative in nature.<sup>73</sup> In his description of the mechanical crafting of the universe, Timaeus invoked the triadic combination—a theme we will see repeat—in his description of the four primordial elements with water and air mediated with fire/earth. From this Platonic account, we have both levels of creation directly present: a craftsman who sits outside the rough forms of primordial matter, muses, and then enters into the mechanical creative act from which the souls, gods, animals, and earth proceed.

The account of the Apostle John is the shortest of the narratives surveyed here and is dependent on the creative accounts in the Old Testament. The Apostle John simply noted, "In the beginning was the Word" and that "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything that was made."<sup>74</sup> John was speaking of Jesus, who, in the Christian view, is the "only-begotten" Son of God. On one level, John was saying before God created the universe, he was a father. What is significant for our survey is his placement of narrative—the word—before the

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<sup>71</sup> Richat Structure, Mauritania, NASA, accessed 02 May 2021, [https://www.nasa.gov/multimedia/imagegallery/image\\_feature\\_528.html](https://www.nasa.gov/multimedia/imagegallery/image_feature_528.html)

<sup>72</sup> Plato, *Timaeus*, trans and ed. Peter Kalkavage (Indianapolis: Focus, 2016), 13.

<sup>73</sup> Plato, *Timaeus*, 14.

<sup>74</sup> John 1:1-3 (ESV)

creative act. The Gospel of John's act of creation depended on the Old Testament. The Book of Genesis begins with the earth as a formless void and darkness covering some deep when a "wind from God swept over the face of the waters."<sup>75</sup> The Genesis account is primarily god and human-centered, describing the formation of the physical heavens, plants and animals, and the genealogy of man. Intermediate gods appear later.

Taken in isolation, the Hebrew Tanakh only locates God outside the primordial material of creation with the above noted "wind from God swept over the face of the waters" while remaining clear that God created the heavens and the earth. Earlier, we discussed Jewish Aggadah or narrative. These are writings that are not part of the Hebrew Torah, nor are they part of the legal traditions of the Talmud. These Aggadah, however, hint at a layer of orality, and an examination—while not central to the argument—is nevertheless fascinating. In the Aggadah *Legends of the Jews*, we see a pre-creative narrative arc:

"THE ALPHABET: When God was about to create the world by His word, the twenty-two letters of the alphabet descended from the terrible and august crown of God whereon they were engraved with a pen of flaming fire."<sup>76</sup>

These letters entreat God to create the universe through them; in the end, the Holy One chooses *bet*, the second letter of the alphabet—which, in this telling, is why the Bible begins with "*Bereshit* (In the beginning)." The second example of this narrative arc is in the mystic book *Sefir Yetzirah*, the Book of Formation (c.550 BCE~ c.1050 CE). The earliest mention of the book

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<sup>75</sup> Genesis 1:2, *Hebrew Bible, New Revised Standard Edition*, in *God's Heroes and Monsters*, ed. Carolina López-Ruiz, 30.

<sup>76</sup> *Legends of the Jews*, ed. Louis Ginzberg, trans. Henrietta Szold (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication of America, 1913), 5, 8.

is in the Babylonian Talmud (c. 450-550 CE).<sup>77</sup> The book opens with Yah, the Lord of Hosts creating "this universe by the three derivatives: Writing (SePHer), Numbers (SePHor), and Speech (SiPur)." In this account, "the Holy Spirit is his Voice, his Spirit, and his Word."<sup>78</sup> These short texts provide additional examples of what we are describing as the narrative level of creation. The use of Aggadah and mystic literature requires caution—questions of dating and provenance make it challenging to fit them within a historical context. Their use in this paper only serves to flesh out a narrative arc in the cosmologies.

This survey of several cosmogenic stories demonstrates the presence of two arcs in their accounts. This emphasis on both the narrative and mechanical creative act stands in contrast to the mechanical act of creation discussed below; understanding the difference will deepen our understanding of the archaic conversation.

### Mechanical Level of Creation

This section will examine Babylonian, Greek Hesiodic, and the two Phoenician accounts found in Damaskios's *De principiis* and Philon of Byblos's *Phoenician History*. The first three accounts will establish a baseline for the emphasis on the mechanical description of creation. Philon's version will add to that and create a plausible explanation of Tyre's religious belief, the heart of their universal infrastructure, and connection to the sea. An interpretation of Philon's

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<sup>77</sup> *Sanhedrin 65b:18*, The William Davidson Talmud, in *Sefaria*, accessed 02 May 2021, <https://www.sefaria.org/Sanhedrin.65b?lang=bi>

<sup>78</sup> *Sefir Yetzirah Gra Version 1:1*, in *Sefaria*, accessed 02 May 2021, [https://www.sefaria.org/Sefer\\_Yetzirah\\_Gra\\_Version.1?lang=bi](https://www.sefaria.org/Sefer_Yetzirah_Gra_Version.1?lang=bi)

work will then take us from the world of the gods and lead us back into the world of history. Philon will take us from creation—allowing a discussion of the common motif of the gods among man—down the mountains of Laban, through the cedars of the gods, and out to the sea where Tyre awaits.

The Babylonian *Enuma Elish* (approximately from the Late Bronze Age) was an account of creation told from the perspectives of the gods. *Apsu*, the begetter of the gods, appeared alongside *Tiamat*, a cosmic dragon of monstrous shape. Apsu sought to do away with the noisome gods inside Tiamat. A descendant god Ea slew Apsu. Tiamat then planned against the gods. Ea is unable to withstand her creatures and battle units. Ea had a son Marduk described as "Four were his eyes, four were his ears; when his lips moved, fire blazed forth," and "likewise the eyes; they perceived everything."<sup>79</sup> This four-fold motif will repeat in Philon's account. Using winds and an arrow, Marduk engorged and constipated Tiamat before killing her with an arrow. From Tiamat's corpse, he fashioned the physical sky and world.

Chaos pops into being, as told by Hesiod in his *Theogony* (~ eighth to seventh century B.C.E.). Hesiod omits a god that is and begins within chaos. Earth, the Underworld, and Love existed in chaos. Darkness and Night mated to produce the Day. The Earth beget starry Sky, the high mountains and "Pontos, the barren sea, raging with swell."<sup>80</sup> Sky and Earth mate, creating Ocean, monstrous off-spring and, most notably, "crooked-minded Kronos."<sup>81</sup> Sky took to concealing the children of Earth inside her, which caused her to groan and bloat. She convinced

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<sup>79</sup> *Enuma Elish*, in *God's Heroes and Monsters*, 9.

<sup>80</sup> Hesiod, *Theogony* in *God's Heroes and Monsters*, 35.

<sup>81</sup> Hesiod, *Theogony* in *God's Heroes and Monsters*, 36.

Kronos to avenge her, and he castrates his father, Sky, earning the name Titans for his generation of gods. A war of succession ensues between Kronos and his Titans opposed by Kronos's son Zeus and his Olympians. After a long war, the Olympians limit the prerogatives of the Titans, and Zeus, on the advice of Earth, became king of the gods.

Damaskios's *De principiis* is chronologically recent (fourth to fifth century C.E.).

Damaskios related a simple Phoenician cosmology he ascribed to the Phoenician hierophant Mochos. Two principles of Aither and Air unite and produced Oulomos, the intelligible god, or the peak of intelligence. Oulomos mates with himself and produces the opener Chousoron, the intelligible force, and a separate egg. Oulomous is the first to differentiate the undifferentiated. The intelligible force splits the egg into Ouranos (Sky) and Ge (Earth). This account maintained a creation hierarchy of wind, intelligible god, intelligible force, cosmic egg, and differentiated sky and earth.<sup>82</sup> In contrast to *Enuma Elish* and *Theogony*, the mechanical act of violence—the splitting and differentiation—is less martial and more Platonic.

Interwoven in the narrative and mechanical accounts of creations are similar motifs.

Wind and desire yield to the working of some primordial matter. The mechanical working of this first matter can take on martial or philosophical descriptions. Still, they describe, really, the differentiation of the primordial chaos into elements and their development into a created earth. Lopez-Ruiz warns against methodological traps warning that:

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<sup>82</sup> Damaskios, *De principiis* 125c, trans C. López-Ruiz, BNJ-FGrh 784 F4 in *God's, Heroes and Monsters*, 63.



"as authors jump from Mesopotamian to Egyptian to Hebrew to Hittite examples for a given type of motif, we are left with the question of what glues together, in their mind, examples from such distinct and dispersed literary corpora."<sup>83</sup>

Scholars have noted the classical Greek rhetorician Gorgias's influence on Thucydides' analytical style of historiography.<sup>84</sup> Gorgias was from the presocratic school of philosophers known as the sophists, a group focused on argument expressed through rhetoric. Dealing with fragmented sources, separated in space and time, requires a statement of the argument.

The Mesopotamian accounts flowed along the cultural interchanges through the Phoenician worlds (Egyptian creation accounts omitted due to a lack of representative samples)<sup>85</sup>. The biblical narratives are adjacent to the Phoenician accounts. And as part of the interchanges of Tyre moving through Greek spaces, the Greek accounts reflect those influences.<sup>86</sup> The argument underlying them all is the source of power; from whom do we derive power? Their answer was the creator. It was an argument that echoed through time in its basic form. The question informed Grotius' natural law approach to maritime history in service to the Dutch East India Company. Layered under culture, language, and differences in time are some form of intelligibility. No one attempts to put a shoe on a fish. The archaic peoples were asking the same questions. For the archaic, this naturally turned to the gods. The cosmogenic mythos was their way of engaging with the question; from there flowed ritual, practice, wisdom, and all

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<sup>83</sup> Carolina López-Ruiz, *When the Gods Were Born* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 14.

<sup>84</sup> Ian M. Plant, "The Influence of Forensic Oratory on Thucydides' Principles of Method," *The Classical Quarterly*, Vol 49, No. 1(1999), 63.

<sup>85</sup> López-Ruiz, *God's Heroes and Monsters*, 23.

<sup>86</sup> López-Ruiz, *When the Gods Were Born*, 28-29.

the other "great advances in religion."<sup>87</sup> Tyre's religion was the basis of their universal infrastructure, and a key to their distributive power, and directly related to their identity as a sea power. Their religion also created a point of friction between Tyre and the Israelites to their south. Reconstructing their faith is key to understanding their development as a sea power.

### The Ancient Source of Philon of Byblos

Philon (Philo in older translations) of Byblos provided a fuller account of the Phoenician cosmogony compared to Damaskios's *De principiis* account of Mochos, discussed above. Philo's *Phoenician History* comes to us as a fragmented account. Biblical scholar James Barr divided Philon's History into a cosmogony, a technogony of first inventors, a theogony of the gods (Life of Kronos), and a short section on child sacrifice and snakes.<sup>88</sup> According to Eusebios, Philon translated the work from a polymath named Sanchouniathon of Beirut, who lived around the Trojan War, near contemporaneously with Moses. Sanchouniathon used as his sources the priest Hierombalos, the records of each city, temple registers, and Tautos, the "secretary of Kronos," who was the first to "conceive of the invention of writing."<sup>89</sup>

The problems with Philon's *Phoenician History* are known. Philon's account of his history is a matter of scholarly debate. One issue is Porphyry's (quoted by Eusebios) dating of Sanchuniathon to around the Trojan War (~1100s B.C.E.).<sup>90</sup> Philon's use of Euhemerist

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<sup>87</sup> William Edwin Mierse, "The Architecture of the Lost Temple of Hercules Gaditanus and Its Levantine Associations," *American Journal of Archaeology* 108 (2004): 551, accessed 02 May 2021, JSTOR.

<sup>88</sup> Barr, James, "Philo of Byblos and His 'Phoenician History,'" *Bulleting of the John Rylands Library Manchester*, 57, no.1. (1974): 1, accessed 02 May 2021, JSTOR. Albert I Baumgarten, *The Phoenician History of Philo of Byblos* (Lieden: E.J. Brill, 1981), 244.

<sup>89</sup> Philon, *Phoenician History*, 1.19.20-21, 24, 1.10.30.

<sup>90</sup> Albert I Baumgarten, *The Phoenician History of Philo of Byblos*, 48.

philosophy—the idea that the ancients deified great men as gods—came much later in Greek traditions (4th-century B.C.E.).<sup>91</sup> There are also transmission issues related to how we received Philon's ancient source. In addition to the literary lineage above, Philon's work survived through Eusebius of Caesarea's *Praeparatio evangelica*. Eusebius was writing against the pagans, and he quoted from—to at least establish the credibility of Philon—from Porphyry of Tyre. Porphyry wrote *Against the Christians*, a work which did not survive in its entirety. In debating the source of power, Porphyry and Eusebius continued the archaic “great conversation.” Their use of Philon's fragments (ordering, arrangement, omission) requires caution. The recovery in 1929 of the Ras Shamra tablets from Ugarit—a city abutting and in cultural communication with Phoenician lands—and the linguistic sympathy with Philon brought about a scholarly reassessment of the value of Philon's fragments.<sup>92</sup>

Despite these and other issues, scholarship generally accepts the ancient source of Philon's account.<sup>93</sup> Scholarship naturally moves stepwise through Philon's account, although some suggest a reordering.<sup>94</sup> In López-Ruiz's book, the author reads Philon's Cosmogony together with the Life of Kronos, as Barr suggested labeling the Life of Kronos as a theogony, or birth of the gods. The approach below goes further by splicing the Life of Kronos with the Cosmogony; doing so allows for identifying the god that is, the god who steps back and the gods who act. Using the previously established framework of a narrative and mechanical arcs of creation, we can suggest a reordering of Philon consistent with archaic cosmogonies. The

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<sup>91</sup> Albert I Baumgarten, *The Phoenician History of Philo of Byblos*, 76-77.

<sup>92</sup> Albert I Baumgarten, *The Phoenician History of Philo of Byblos*, 2-6.

<sup>93</sup> Albert I Baumgarten, *The Phoenician History of Philo of Byblos*, 3. For a view that these claims are exaggerated, see Harold W. Attridge and Robert A. Oden, Jr., *Philo of Byblos The Phoenician History: Introduction, Critical Text, Translation, Notes* (Washington DC: The Catholic Bible Association of America, 1981), 1.

<sup>94</sup> López-Ruiz, *When the Gods Were Born*, 95-97.

reordering splices Philon's Cosmogony with the later Life of Kronos, uniting the narrative and mechanical arcs. With the reordering, Philon's source becomes intelligible and fits within the other cosmogenic stories.<sup>95</sup> Unless otherwise noted, the reconstruction follows the translation of Kaldellis and López-Ruiz in "Philon (790)", *Brill's New Jacoby*, which collects fragments of many Greek works which no longer survive intact.

This reordering starts with a creator god (Most High, Philo's Eliuon, or biblical El Elyon)<sup>96</sup> at a well or source (Berouth)<sup>97</sup> on a presumably holy mountain (using the original Phoenician GBL, or mountain, in place of Byblos)<sup>98</sup>. The Zophasēmins (Watchers) are with the god in this primordial state. Chaos here is the union of earth and heaven—an undifferentiated mass. Philon describes this using marriage term with Ouranos (heaven) "married" to his sister Ge<sup>99</sup> (earth). Within this "marriage," the El (god) Kronos and other primordial forces come into being. Kronos is similar to the intelligible god in the telling of Damaskios's *De principiis*. The intelligible force splitting chaos is the primordial sun or the active principle. The intelligible force is the active or male principle. The source, the well of life, is the passive or female principle.

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<sup>95</sup> Appendix I. Unless otherwise noted, the reconstruction follows the translation of Kaldellis and López-Ruiz in "Philon (790)", *Brill's New Jacoby*, which collects fragments of many Greek works which no longer survive intact.

<sup>96</sup> Albert I Baumgarten, *The Phoenician History of Philo of Byblos*, 184-185. Contra G. Levi Della Vida, "El 'Elyon in Genesis," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 63, No. 1 (1944), 9, accessed 04 February 2021, JSTOR.

<sup>97</sup> Albert I Baumgarten, *The Phoenician History of Philo of Byblos*, 186. Berouth as source, well or power: Kaldellis, Anthony, "Hestiaios (786)", in: *Brill's New Jacoby*, ed. Ian Worthington, accessed 04 May 2021, [http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1873-5363\\_bnj\\_a786](http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1873-5363_bnj_a786)

<sup>98</sup> G.J. Thierry, "Gebál, Byblos, Bible: Paper," *Vetus Testamentum*, Vol. 1, Fasc. 2 (1951): 1, accessed 21 April 2021, JSTOR.

<sup>99</sup> Albert I Baumgarten, *The Phoenician History of Philo of Byblos*, 188.

Ouranos (heaven) and Ge (earth) separate, but Ouranos keeps returning to "rape her at will."<sup>100</sup> Because of this, Kronos makes war on Heaven. Hermes [Tautos]—Kronos' secretary—used "magic on Kronos' allies and instilled in them the desire to fight against Ouranos on behalf of Earth."<sup>101</sup> In his fight against Heaven, "the allies of Elos, that is of Kronos, were called Eloim, just as those who were called after Kronos were the Kronians."<sup>102</sup> Kronos drives heaven away and succeeds in a kingship over the earth. Later, as in Hesiod's *Theogony*, Kronos castrates heaven—symbolizing a breaking of the connection, or union, between heaven and earth. Kronos's time on earth is tumultuous; he throws his brother Atlas under the ground, kills his son Sados and beheads his daughter.

Later, in response to famine and disease, "Kronos immolated his only begotten son . . . as a sacrifice to Ouranos, his father and circumcised his own genitals, forcing his own allies to do the same."<sup>103</sup> With the goddess Astarte, he creates seven daughters called the Titanids. To his brother is born "To Demarous was born Melkathros, who is also Herakles." Tautos returns to engrave "the sacred forms of the letters," recapitulating a narrative arc in the end. Tautos also:

"...devised Kronos' insignia of kingship, four eyes on both the front and the back, two awake and two quietly closed; and on the shoulders four wings, two in flight and two folded. For the rest of the gods he made two wings on the shoulders of each, inasmuch as they flew alongside Kronos. And to him he also gave two wings on the head, one for the most hegemonic mind and one for perception."<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Philon, *Phoenician History*, 1.10.17.

<sup>101</sup> Philon, *Phoenician History*, 1.10.18.

<sup>102</sup> Philon, *Phoenician History*, 1.10.20.

<sup>103</sup> Philon, *Phoenician History*, 1.10.33.

<sup>104</sup> Philon, *Phoenician History*, 1.10.36-38.

Kronos is said to have established the first Phoenician city of Byblos. From there, "Greatest Astarte and Zeus, Demarous and Adodos the king of the gods, were ruling the land with the consent of Kronos."<sup>105</sup> Philon complained that the hierophant Thabion allegorized the story. But perhaps Philon's *Euhemerism*—anthropomorphizing and sexualizing the creative forces—is the allegory.

The gods don't have sex. The gods don't have anything—they are forces, perhaps conscious but not saddled with life. Philon's account of the Life of Kronos, separated from the cosmogony initially, is difficult to place; and the frequent reference to the gods in the text indicates an incomplete excision.<sup>106</sup> The gods began as indescribable forces or intellects. Their wet environs and cosmic battles are analogies concealing, presumably, some more profound understanding. Anthropomorphism and sexualization were an archaic peoples attempt at sensemaking.<sup>107</sup>

Tyre's approach to physical and political geography problems was to reach into the primordial cosmic seas and appeal to the gods. Five hundred years later, Tyre's child colony of Carthage—shocked by military reversals in Syracuse—would repeat this pattern by changing their government and striking rededications to the gods, even inventing a god of Memory.<sup>108</sup> Tyre was a template for later colonial practices.

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<sup>105</sup> Philon, *Phoenician History*, 1.10.31.

<sup>106</sup> Barr, James, "Philo of Byblos and His 'Phoenician History,'" 34.

<sup>107</sup> Edward. Lipinski, *Dieux et Deesses De L'Universe Phenicien et Punique* (Leuven: Peeters Publishers, 1995), 65.

<sup>108</sup> J. Brian Peckham, *Phoenicia: Episodes and Anecdotes from the Ancient Mediterranean* (Winona Lake Indiana: Eisenbrauns 2014), 541-542, 558..

### Some Generalized Comments on Phoenician Religious Practice

Phoenician religious practices fell into two general categories: sexual and sacrificial. The sexual component was of two types. The first was a form of transgenderism practiced by a group called the Galli in the later classical source. Galli reportedly engaged in the castration of part or all their male members and did so in honor of Astarte (at least at Tyre's Kition), or the female principle.<sup>109</sup> Speculatively, it may have also brought them closer to Kronos, the El, who, undivided, precedes the differentiation of creation. The second sexual practice was sacred prostitution and orgies.<sup>110</sup> The sacred prostitution of "nubile girls" and "young men and twinkins" was primarily in the female principal's service or Astarte.<sup>111</sup> Sacred prostitution may have led to unwanted offspring, which leads to a discussion of the third practice.<sup>112</sup>

The sacrifice of children was part of Phoenician religious practice, although the frequency and conditions remain a question of debate. Like the El, Kronos, who offered his only begotten son as a burnt offering to Heaven, or Ouranos, and the people of Tyre and her colonies offered their children as burnt offerings—through a process of *MLK*. or *Moloch*—to the male principle or the Baals. The Phoenician holocaust of the children is well attested in the graves and Tophets of Tyre's colony of Carthage in modern Tunisia.<sup>113</sup> Insular Tyre leaves no such record,

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<sup>109</sup> George Rawlinson, *History of Phoenicia* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1889), 349-350.

Will Roscoe, Priests of the Goddess: Gender Transgression in Ancient Religion, *History of Religions*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (Feb, 1996): 218, accessed 04 May 2021, JSTOR.

<sup>110</sup> Paola Xella, "Religion," in *The Oxford Handbook of The Phoenician and Punic Mediterranean*, ed. Carolina López-Ruiz, and Brian R. Doak (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 287. Edward Lipinski, *Dieux et Deesses*, 486.

<sup>111</sup> Edward Lipinski, *Dieux et Deesses*, 487-8.

<sup>112</sup> Richard J. Clifford, "Phoenician Religion," *Bulletin of the Schools of Oriental Research*, No. 279 (August 1990): 279, accessed 05 May 2021, JSTOR.

<sup>113</sup> Edward Lipinski, *Dieux et Deesses*, 432. Paola Xella, "Religion," 287-289.

but for much of its history, Tyre was a crowded island. E. Lipinski notes the use of natural sanctuaries—such as the entirely sacred Mt. Hermon—in Phoenician religious practice. It is possibly the site of many of Tyre's practices for profane—as a matter of space—and sacred reasons.<sup>114</sup>

Where the gods and demigods walk, the land is holy. Tyre's land was among holy land. In his "Discoverers" section, Philon speaks of "sons who in size and eminence were greater [than their fathers]" and had mountains ranges over which they ruled named after them.<sup>115</sup> He lists Lebanon, Anti-Lebanon (Mt. Hermon), Kassios, and Brathy. Mount Hermon abutted Tyrian territory. Mountains as the abode of the gods are well attested in the ancient near east. From the Bronze Age, the Egyptians referred to the land Djahi (Egyptian for Canaanite) as "God's land."<sup>116</sup> In the Egyptian story *Tale of Two Brothers*, the protagonist meets the Egyptian *Ennead*—the major gods—walking through the Baalbek/Beqaa valley and ruling over the land.<sup>117</sup> They had their "ships of cedar built on the mountains of God's Land near the Lady of Byblos."<sup>118</sup> The Hittite *Evocatio* refers to "the cedars of the gods."<sup>119</sup> In the Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic, Gilgamesh and his lover Enkidu go to "the Cedar Land, the dwelling of the gods."<sup>120</sup> Shalmaneser III, an Assyrian king, cut cedar and pine timbers from Amanus and set up shrines on the nearby mountain region of Atular.<sup>121</sup> Egyptian and Mesopotamian historical texts agree

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<sup>114</sup> Edward Lipinski, *Dieux et Deesses*, 421. For a late antiquity view see Eusebius, *Life of Constantine III.55*, trans. Averil Cameron and Stuart G. Hill, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 199): 144-145.

<sup>115</sup> Philon, *Phoenician History*, 1.10.9.

<sup>116</sup> The Hymn of Victory of Thutmose III, *ANET*, 288.

<sup>117</sup> Noga Ayali-Darshan, "The Background of the Cedar Forest Tradition in the Egyptian Tale of Two Brothers in Light of West Asian Literature," *Ägypten und Levante/Egypt and Levante*, Vol. 27 (2017): 182, 185.

<sup>118</sup> The Asiatic Campaigns of Thutmose III, *ANET*, 239.

<sup>119</sup> *Evocatio*, *ANET*, 657.

<sup>120</sup> A. R. George, *The Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh: Introduction, Critical Edition and Cuneiform Texts*, quoted in Noga Ayali-Darshan, "The Background of the Cedar Forest," 188. Footnote 21 further elaborates on cedar trees.

<sup>121</sup> *Shalmaneser III (858-824): The Fight Against the Aramean Coalition*, *ANET*, 278.



with the mythological texts in assigning cosmic significance to these mountains. Additionally, Baumgarten connects these mountain giants with the Jewish mythos of fallen angels and Nephilim.<sup>122</sup> Whichever is the correct interpretation, the archaic world viewed these lands around Tyre as holy lands or lands of the gods.

### The El Who Stepped Back, Locating Kronos

A literature review shows attempts at equivalency between the Els, Koronoses, and Ea as the upper-level creator gods. Using the distinction described above, we can categorize the gods by their placement in the narrative and mechanical phase of creation (figure 5). Yahweh, *Elioun*, the three winds, and *Apsu* are the gods who are. The Phoenician *El-Kronos*, *Oulomos*, the Greek Kronos, and the Mesopotamian *Ea* are the gods who step back. And the Phoenician Ba'al/Astartes, Chousoron, the Mesopotamian Marduk led, and Greek Zeus led pantheons are the gods who step forward. Our Tyrian El, the Kronos, is a god who stepped back and yet still ruled with his Ba'als and Astartes.

Classes of gods	Creation Stories	Philon	Damaskios's <i>De principiis</i>	Hesiod's <i>Theogony</i>	<i>Enuma Elish</i>	Plato's <i>Timaeus</i>	Mosaic
	The gods who are	Elioun	The three winds	N/A	Apsu	Poet/Constructor	Yahweh
	The gods who step back	Kronos	Oulomos	Kronos	Ea	N/A	N/A
	The gods who act	The Baals	Chousoron	Zeus	Marduk	Poet/Constructor and the gods.	Yahweh
	<i>Intermediate classes of gods</i>						
	Zophasēmin (Watchers)	N/A	Pantheon	The gods	The gods	The sons of god.	

Figure 6. Comparison of the gods in the examined creation accounts.

<sup>122</sup> Albert I Baumgarten, *The Phoenician History of Philo of Byblos*, 156.

Tyre, leader of the Phoenician world, and the Israelite tribes were linguistic and geographic neighbors. They were vital trading partners. There is also a curious material relationship. Tyrian wealth flowed from the sea snail, the *murex trunculus*, from which the Tyrians extracted the royal purple dye. Tyrian Purple was an expensive and highly prized luxury good—associated with the dress of royalty and gods.<sup>123</sup> The *murex trunculus*, when exposed to the sun in manufacturing processes, also produced the lesser-known biblical blue or *tekhelet*. The Israelites used the *tekhelet* to dye the fringes of their prayer shawls.<sup>124</sup> Around this snail, the temple to God and temples of the gods orbited. These were cultures in communication with each other, and they left an echo. Using relevancy theory, we search for the echo.

In a vision, the Israelite prophet Isaiah looked up and saw the Lord sitting on a throne. Above "stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with two he covered his face and with two he covered his feet, and with two he did fly."<sup>125</sup> While this paper associates the seraphim, in keeping with a narrative level of creation, with the Writing (SePHer), Numbers (SePHor), and Speech (SiPur) mentioned above, a detailed description is beyond the scope of this paper. What Isaiah provides is an upper-level description of holy creatures separate from God in the Israelite tradition.

While Isaiah prophesizes against the "burden of Tyre," the prophet Ezekiel's "Lamentation to Tyre" is generally more widely known. The Lamentation is descriptive and

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<sup>123</sup> Lloyd B. Jensen, "The Royal Purple of Tyre," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (April 1963): 104, accessed 06 September 2020, JSTOR.

<sup>124</sup> Gadi Sagiv, "Notes on the Jewish Snail Fight," *Contemporary Jewry*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (October 2015), 292, 286, accessed on 30 April 2021, JSTOR.

<sup>125</sup> Isaiah 6:2 (English Standard Version)

provides scholars with insight into Tyre's sources of wealth, her maritime and continental trading empire (networks?). Ezekiel lyrically describes Tyre as situated "at the entry of the sea, merchant of the peoples to many coastlands" and "of perfect beauty."<sup>126</sup> Later, God commands Ezekiel to take up a lamentation to the King of Tyre, who was in Eden, covered with every precious stone, and the "anointed guardian cherub" and was on "the holy mountain of God," walking up and down "in the midst of the stones of fire."<sup>127</sup> This cherub Ezekiel speaks of is a divine being.

Earlier, in Ezekiel's vision of God, he describes four heavenly creatures. His description was lengthy, but the critical element was that they "but each had four faces, and each of them had four wings."<sup>128</sup> Further, "Each creature had two wings, each of which touched the wing of another, while two covered their bodies."<sup>129</sup> Ezekiel described these heavenly creatures as cherubs. Earlier, we noted how Tautos "formed the sacred figures of the letters." He also devised for Kronos "symbols of royalty." The symbols of royalty were "four eyes, front, and rear, two quietly closed; also, four wings on his shoulder, two as if flying and two as folded." The similarity between the embodied appearance of Kronos and that of Ezekiel's cherub is remarkable, doubly so when Ezekiel's Lamentation mentions the cherub as the penultimate ruler of Tyre. Ezekiel's cherub, or living being, is the Kronos, the El of Tyre.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Ezekiel 27:3 (English Standard Version)

<sup>127</sup> Ezekiel 28:14 (English Standard Version)

<sup>128</sup> Ezekiel 1:6 (English Standard Version)

<sup>129</sup> Ezekiel 1:11 (English Standard Version)

<sup>130</sup> Raanan Eichler, "Cherub: A History of Interpretation," *Biblica*, Vol. 96, No. 1 (2015), 27.



Figure 7. Byblian coin c. 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE. City goddess on front crowned with the walls of the city. Obverse, Kronos, the El, with four wings radiating from his body.<sup>131</sup>

The gods have nine hundred and ninety-nine different names. Astarte will become Tanit in Carthage and Urania in North Africa before yielding to further permutations. But the primary forms are in the El-Kronos, Astarte, and the Baals, or for Tyre, Melqart. El is variously the "lord of the earth," or the creator of the earth. The Astarte is a primordial source of fecundity—she is the stuff of creation. And Melqart's "egersis" as "The one who makes the god(s) awaken"<sup>132</sup> recalls the "crash of thunder"<sup>133</sup> which awoke the Zophasemin or the opener Chousoron, the intelligible force in Damaskios's *De principiis*. Melqart was a bestriding god, a lord of sailors.<sup>134</sup> El was an underlying reality of Melqart, comparable to the Old Testament Yahweh/Angel of Yahweh hypostasis Lipinski discusses.<sup>135</sup> The Phoenician new gods "embodied their aspirations to immortality or divinity, urged them to risk and dare and wager, made life an adventure, and

<sup>131</sup> Text at source says six wings, but that is incorrect. Coin Archive accessed 02 May 2021. <https://www.coinarchives.com/a/lotviewer.php?LotID=1831581&AucID=4248&Lot=1454&Val=d0ae44df5f3d0386eaf58cbbf8310176>

<sup>132</sup> Corrine Bonnet, "Melqart," in *Encyclopedia of Religion Vol. 9*, ed. Lindsay Jones (Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2005), 5846.

<sup>133</sup> Philon, *Phoenician History*, 1.10.5.

<sup>134</sup> Corrine Bonnet, "Melqart," 5847.

<sup>135</sup> Edward Lipinski, *Dieux et Deesses*, 272.

assured them a constant return on their investment."<sup>136</sup> This use of the gods was not without parallel. Responding to a resurgent Assyria, Egypt "moved the capital of Egypt back to Tanis in the Nile Delta in the tenth century B.C., emphasizing the sea-conquering god Seth."<sup>137</sup>

Tyre was at the beginning of "seapowers as knowledge state" and "profoundly conscious of precedent," weaving mythos into a cultural narrative to bind her colonies.<sup>138</sup> Tyre engaged in the "social organization of ultimate knowledge," emerging from cosmogenic and foundational mythos to become an archaic type.<sup>139</sup> Thucydides used maritime Minos and continental Agamemnon to frame the Peloponnesian war. Thucydides relates the tradition that Minos was the first to have a navy and ruled over the Cyclades islands. Minos's innovation led to the development and increase of wealth among the Hellenes by suppression of piracy. Among the pirates suppressed were the Carians and the Phoenicians.<sup>140</sup> The Peloponnesian War was fought between the "Red" Greek alphabet using Spartans and the "Blue" Greek alphabet using Athenians; both the red and blue descended from the Phoenician purple.<sup>141</sup> We are talking archaic archetypes. Tyre was the emerging maritime power hemmed in by Israelite continental power. Relations between Tyre and the Israelites were largely friendly. But there remained a lack of translatability between the God of the Israelites and the gods of Tyre. Tyre's "Baal shamen and El, creator of the Earth and the Eternal Sun" and the Israelite "El Elyon, creator of heaven and

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<sup>136</sup> J. Brian Peckham, *Phoenicia*, 83.

<sup>137</sup> Andrew Lambert, *Seapower States*, 64.

<sup>138</sup> Andrew Lambert, *Seapower States*, 48.

<sup>139</sup> Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, 21.

<sup>140</sup> Thucydides, 1.4-6, 8.

<sup>141</sup> Madadh Richey, "The Alphabet and Its Legacy," in *The Oxford Handbook of The Phoenician and Punic Mediterranean*, ed. Carolina López-Ruiz, and Brian R. Doak (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 287.

earth"<sup>142</sup> were at a different level of creation, incompatible. Tyre attempted to overcome that incompatibility, even as she turned to the sea and became a maritime power.



Figure 8. Incense burner from La Caleta, Cadiz, a Phoenician colony in Spain, c. 7<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. Above, sun riding a boat motif; center, line separation joined by a fleur de Lis; below, human figures are bracketing a repeating smaller sun riding a boat.<sup>143</sup>

### Grotius and the New Gods of the Sea

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<sup>142</sup> Richard J. Clifford, "Phoenician Religion," 59.

<sup>143</sup> "Thymiaterion," Museo de Cadiz, Arts and Culture Google, accessed 04 May, 2021, <https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/thymiaterion-phoenicia-unknown/RgHmlKD8TusmPQ?hl=en>

Like Tyre before it, the Dutch Republic grew to be a maritime state through the deft combination of state and business interests. The Republic's location at the Rhine, North Sea confluence and the Baltic gave the new Republic a favorable geographic position.<sup>144</sup> The Dutch Republic was a small power with a strange new faith: Protestants on the northern flanks of Catholic powers. Like Tyre, the Republic improved its fortunes by turning to the oceans. Additionally, in the middle of a war with Spain, the Dutch Republic laid the basis of the modern multinational company. The Dutch East India Company rose to dominate long distance trade, with large numbers of *fluyts*, the Dutch version of the Phoenician *gauloi*, importing the spices of East Asia into the markets of Europe.

For over one hundred years, a treaty existed between Spain and Portugal that divided the world into two separate spheres of influence. This Treaty of Tordesillas had the imprimatur of God's representative on earth, the Pope at Rome. The Spanish Pope Alexander drew a line three hundred and seventy leagues west of the Cape Verde Islands; Portugal received all new lands to the east while Spain received the land to the west.<sup>145</sup> Spain extracted silver from the Americas while Portugal transacted the spice trade in the Indian oceans and beyond. The Dutch, at war with Spain, went after the Portuguese spice trade.

Hugo Grotius had a problem. The emerging Dutch Republic had a political issue that was inherently religious, given the fractured faiths of Europe. Spain and Portugal represented powerful commercial interests aligned to the Catholic world. The Dutch and English were

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<sup>144</sup> Johnathan I. Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade, 1585-1740*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 14.

<sup>145</sup> *Treaty between Spain and Portugal concluded at Tordesillas; June 7, 1494*, The Avalon Project, Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy, accessed 20 April 2021, [https://avalon.law.yale.edu/15th\\_century/mod001.asp](https://avalon.law.yale.edu/15th_century/mod001.asp)

emerging maritime powers at the periphery of Europe. In his treatise *Mare Liberum*, Grotius appealed to natural law—law derived from nature, or God—to defend the Dutch East India Company's movement into the Portuguese trading sphere. Through his legal writings and opinions, he became an "ideologue of empire" and a lifelong defender of Dutch commercial interests.<sup>146</sup>

Hugo Grotius invented a body of law, drawing on his observations of natural law. The English—until later conflict—adopted his theories and ideas as a basis of their commercial empire. Dutch power grew and eventually waned, but Hugo Grotius's impact as the father of international law remains. His ideas outlived the empire he served and helped to shape the world that emerged after. The international liberal order and free trade that many nations defend today—as natural, as accepted—flowed from the mind of Hugo Grotius.

Archaic people's magical systems of thought and modern sociology oppose each other at the edges, but they meet in the middle with social imaginaries. The ideas which surround us have an origin somewhere. Our modern conceptions of maritime trade, the basis of sea power, are found in Grotius rummaging around in natural law, appealing to the gods, or in a Christian sense, through the gods and to God. These ideas become social imaginaries—true because we all say they are true—that shape the societies we are born into; pre-reflexive, seemingly ancient in days, these ideas are the substrate upon which we construct our social realities. We ignore them

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<sup>146</sup> Martine Julia van Ittersum, "The long goodbye: Hugo Grotius' justification of Dutch expansion overseas, 1615-1645," *History of European Ideas* 36, (2010): 387, accessed 02 May 2021, JSTOR.



because they are a given as we pursue our material needs. But even as the material goods we seek fade into disuse, the ideas we use continue—animate—to shape future worlds.

### Conclusion

Musing on the soul, Aristotle wrote that "Thales thought everything was full of gods." Thales of Miletus was, according to Diogenes Laertius, a "Thelidae who are Phoenicians, and among the noblest of the descendants of Cadmus and Agenor." Laertius continues, "His doctrine was that water is the universal primary substance and that the world is animate and full of divinities."<sup>147</sup> In a very Phoenician way, Thales left no works, and we only see him in the references of others. But Thales was working his way towards a cosmogenic understanding, positing water as the source of life, suggesting mechanisms for motion. He was taking up the work of his ancestors. Moderns see Thales as a naturalist, as someone who began the long process of developing scientific methodologies in the presocratic world. Thales, first of the Seven Sages of Athens, can thus serve as a classical pivot between archaic Tyre and our modern world.

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<sup>147</sup> Diogenes Laertius, Chapter 1. Thales (floruit circa 585 B.C., the date of the eclipse), *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, ed R.D. Hicks, accessed 20 April 2021.  
<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0258%3Abook%3D1%3Achapter%3D1#notea>

Ideas are what we are pushing into each other's heads—letters, alphabets, and languages are mediums. Archaic gods or modern social imaginaries form the basis of our ideological substrates. They become powerful by pointing towards some ultimate meaning. The gods of Tyre, to the king, oligarchs, and people of Tyre were that ultimate meaning. In Philon, we see the creation of the universe and the consecration of Tyre as a holy land. From the literary remains of her river valley neighbors, we see a similar belief. Tyre was not only geographically privileged; she was cosmically privileged.

Tyre's ships stitched together the archaic Mediterranean and influenced the Greek and Roman civilizations that would follow. Her sailors carried raw and manufactured materials in the bottoms of their boats, and those goods faded with time. However, Tyre's *idearial* goods, her faith, endured. The universal infrastructure—the language and the religion—provided a basis upon which our modern world would later emerge. Classical writers often referred to Tyre's philosophers, thinkers, hierophants, and physicists. The great thinker Pythagoras, in addition to Egypt, is said to have studied at Tyre. Tyre's role as merchants in physical goods is significant, but her role as a merchant of ideas is the one that endures.

## Appendix I



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