

Corinne Bonnet

# Naming and Mapping the Gods in Cyprus: a Matter of Scales?

The notion of scales played an important role in the so-called “spatial turn”.<sup>1</sup> Moving from local to global, from micro- to macro-contexts,<sup>2</sup> the historians paid more attention to the interplay between different scales in terms of continuity or discontinuity in time and space. These challenging issues may be applied to the study of religious practices in the ancient Mediterranean, conceived as a big and a small world, characterised by different kinds of connectivity, localism, and idiosyncrasy. Naming the gods is part of these practices; it is an historical process embedded in specific socio-political dynamics, which involves different levels of agency, from the *polis* or any form of social collectivity to the individual, with many intermediate scales of “lived religion”.<sup>3</sup> I will basically argue that naming processes are a major aspect of a communication system between complex networks of gods and people.

I will adopt the perspective of an entangled Mediterranean space, where circulations of people, things, techniques, knowledge and gods are common. However, in this middle sea, if not middle ground, open to interactions and exchanges, the weight of constraints and permanences should not be underestimated. An important proportion of people lived in a limited space, anchored to a narrow territory, with restricted social interactions. When dealing with religious habits, it is crucial to take into account the diversity of social profiles. The comparative approach between the Greek and the Semitic area, inherent to the MAP project,<sup>4</sup> is a precious antidote to the risk of an anachronic description of ancient societies as international hubs, always and everywhere. Ancestral traditions, rooted in a sanctuary, a village, or a region, leave a deep mark on the religious landscape, although, as H. Beck brilliantly illustrated, local does not mean isolated nor simplistic.

With this premise in mind, I will examine the corpus of divine names in Cyprus, both in Greek and in Phoenician, and focus on the spatial elements they convey. Through the study of divine names referring to places, I aim at mapping the spaces involved in the interactions between gods and men. To what extent do they mention or allude to toponyms or topographic features? Do they refer to micro- or macro-spatial contexts? What do we learn by comparing the spatial settings of the gods and those of the humans? The interplay between different spatial scales helps grasping

---

1 I warmly thank Sylvain Lebreton for his precious suggestions.

2 Revel/Lepetit 1996; Bertrand 2013.

3 On this paradigm, see recently Gasparini 2020.

4 On the MAP project and its conceptual framework, see Bonnet *et al.* 2018; Bonnet *et al.* 2019, and Lebreton/Bonnet 2019.

contextual *and* structural aspects of religious systems and human agencies, which is the scope of the MAP project. The big data approach of MAP, with thousands of Greek and Semitic onomastic sequences registered in the database, enables to gain intelligibility and to promote a “small-scale global history”,<sup>5</sup> making it possible to renew our understanding of the relation between naming and mapping. The database shows an incredible creativity in constructing divine names, but also permanencies and resilience, with a high degree of complexity and unpredictability.

In this paper, I will first concentrate on the global scale of the naming system, by extracting all the onomastic elements connected to space from the MAP database. I will clarify how they are distributed in time and space, according to different criteria. In the second part, I will propose a preliminary typology of the spatial onomastic elements and I will compare the Greek and Semitic ways of assigning the gods to spatial settings. Finally, I will focus on the Greek and Semitic onomastic sequences from Cyprus and the different scales they mobilise.

## 1 Exploiting the Database: An Overall View of Spatial Onomastic Elements

At the end of June 2021, when I wrote this contribution, the MAP database contained over 6700 sources, including more than 8600 testimonies of divine onomastic sequences. More than 2300 different elements are combined in these sequences. This is only part of the huge epigraphic stock of divine names, and the work will be ongoing until June 2023, when the ERC Grant will come to an end. The “global view” that I will present and analyse now is, in fact, only a partial view, since different regions remain unexplored. Nonetheless we can assume that 8600 onomastic sequences represent a solid foundation for a preliminary reflection on naming and mapping the gods.

Each single onomastic element<sup>6</sup> is registered in the database with different metadata.<sup>7</sup> One of these is a field called “category”, which aims to characterise the semantic scope covered by the element, regardless of the context in which it is used. Due to the polysemy of the elements a maximum of three categories may be chosen. For example, the Greek adjective *komaïos*, “of the village, of the *komos*”, is associated with three categories, or “tags”: Political, Space, Social. The selection of one, two or three categories is undoubtedly debatable, but ultimately this is something for which the author of the data sheet is responsible.<sup>8</sup> As far as spatial issues are concerned, four main

---

<sup>5</sup> For this concept, see Trivellato 2015.

<sup>6</sup> The database has a 3-table architecture: 1. Sources, which contain 2. Testimonies (of divine names), which are made up of minimum two 3. Elements (the basic “bricks” of the system).

<sup>7</sup> <https://base-map-polytheisms.huma-num.fr/element>.

<sup>8</sup> For a different taxonomy, see Alvar 2019 and the EPIDI project.

categories out of the forty-one that are available are particularly relevant: 1. “Limit/Passage”, 2. “Mobility”, 3. “Space”, and 4. “Toponym”. Other categories may imply a spatial dimension, like agriculture, trade, netherworld, etc., but the more categories I select for my request, the less clear my results will be. Of the whole stock of elements, approximately 650 elements, i.e. almost 30% pertain to the four selected categories. It is by far the most frequent ones, before “Perception”, “Protection/Beneficence”, “Cult/ritual”, “Political”, “Title”, “Praise”, “Kinship/Relational”, “Temporality”, etc. Since each element may be connected to more than one category, the analysis must take into account possible overlaps. Nonetheless, the pre-eminence of the four spatial markers (limit/passage, mobility, space and toponym) is unquestionable.

The numerous spatial elements are used in a significant number of testimonies, amounting to 55% of the total, a proportion which confirms the centrality of space as a characteristic of divine names. When looking at the proportion of Greek and Semitic testimonies, a strong bias appears, since, among Semitic testimonies, almost 2000 refer to Baal Hammon, the second element of which, *hmn*, may be connected with the Amanus mountain or with a cultic space (a kind of chapel).<sup>9</sup> When the whole corpus of inscriptions from the so-called Tophet of Salamambo in Carthage will be registered in the database (approximately 6000 texts), there will be an even stronger disproportion due to the massive and repetitive presence of dedications to Baal Hammon. This kind of documentary bias is unavoidable, but it must be gauged in the quantitative results and consequently in the qualitative interpretation.

If we compare the Greek and Semitic data, we find 543 different spatial elements used in 2350 Greek testimonies and 111 different spatial elements used in the 2610 Semitic ones. The proportion between the different elements and their use in testimonies is significantly different and reveals a far greater diversity in the Greek spatial elements than in the Semitic ones.

If we analyse this further, we see that 81 Semitic and 305 Greek elements are toponyms (most of them are exclusively classified as “Toponym”). Few elements refer to “Mobility” and “Limit/Passage” both in Greek and Semitic. As far as the chronological distribution of toponyms is concerned, the toponymic element *gbl*, for Byblos appears in the Semitic corpus as soon as the tenth century BCE and spatial markers are present until the third century CE, at least. In the Greek evidence, spatial markers are attested from the seventh century BCE until the fourth century CE. All in all, spatial elements appear frequently and regularly throughout the whole evidence. Naming and mapping the gods is thus a conspicuous and continuous phenomenon across all areas and periods studied by the MAP project.

Another criterion that could be relevant is gender. Masculine and feminine elements are both connected with spatial markers. They are almost equally distributed in the Greek inscriptions, whereas, in the Semitic area, masculine elements are more

---

<sup>9</sup> Xella 1991.

frequent than feminine ones. Again, we must pay attention to the weight of the many references to Baal Hammon, possibly located in the Amanus or in a chapel, in contrast to Tanit who is not connected to a specific space but to Baal (Hammon) himself (“Tanit Face of Baal”).<sup>10</sup> Nonetheless, the balance between masculine and feminine spatialized elements in Greek and Semitic could be a relevant observation, which needs further exploration. The overall ratio between testimonies with masculine or feminine elements in the whole database is 6820 Masculine / 4630 Feminine. This is only a general trend because, in many cases, masculine and feminine elements are associated in a single onomastic sequence, like the famous Carthaginian “To the Lady to Tanit Face of Baal and to the Lord to Baal Hammon”. All in all, these statistics seem to indicate that gender is not a highly significant variant for the spatial characterisation of the gods.

The typology of the sources may be a more interesting criterion. Spatial elements are used in a large range of inscriptions (in decreasing order): dedications, honorific inscriptions, decrees, inventories, ritual norms, calendars, *proskynemata*, funerary texts, ownership inscriptions, prayers, boundaries, letters, building inscriptions, laws, *defixiones*, blessings, acclamations, etc. We must bear in mind that one same source can be labelled as more than one type, which produces overlaps (for example: dedication and honorific). It is nonetheless quite clear that the spatial elements are used in many different types of documents, with an expected predominance in votive texts.

## 2 Moving towards a Typology of Spatial Onomastic Elements and a Comparative Approach of Greek and Semitic Mental Maps

We observed so far a massive recourse to spatial categories in the construction of composite divine names. Let us now take a closer look at how space is expressed in the onomastic elements and which kind of space is involved. A preliminary typology of spatial elements may be based on their grammatical nature. In the MAP database we offer eight possibilities: adjective, adverb, clause, preposition, pronoun, substantive, verb, undetermined. Adjectives are far more present in Greek than in Semitic, where substantives are largely predominant. To indicate the god of one specific town, region, or land in Greek, an adjective is frequently used (*Paphios*, *Golgios*, *Surios*, etc.), whereas in Semitic, a substantive, basically a toponym is more common (*Baal Šr*, *Baalat Gbl*, etc.). Alternative constructions, like Aphrodite *en Kepois*, Zeus *epi Palladiou*, *’lh’ zy byb byrt’*, “the god who is in Yeb the fortress”, or participle + toponym (*medeon/medeousa*),<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> On this combination, see Bonnet 2009.

<sup>11</sup> See in this volume, Lebreton, 289–309.

which are quite numerous, may convey specific nuances, maybe a closer relationship to the territory, but it needs further analysis, when the database will be exhaustive.

If we attempt to refine the large “Toponym” category, regardless of the grammatical nature of the element, it is clear that a toponym may refer to different spatial scales: cities (Golgoi, Paphos, Claros, Sidon, Tyr . . . ), sites within a city (Cadmea), regions (Achaïos, Paniônios, Samaria, Syria . . . ), islands (Alashiya/Cyprus, Crete, Malta . . . ), mountains (Hammon, Lebanon, Anchesmos, Parnes, Kasios/Saphon . . . ), rivers (Inachos, Acheloos, Nile . . . ), and springs (Ydal), capes (Sounion, Kenaion, Zoster . . . ). Imaginary locations are also attested (Tartaros, Phaeacia, Hades, Lethe, Olympus . . . ).

In approximately 80% of cases, a toponym is exclusively classified as such, but polysemy is nonetheless present in some cases. Is Apollo *Lukeios* a god associated with Lycia, or with the wolf – his mother Leto turned herself into a she-wolf –, or even with the light – he is born in Delos, the bright island? It seems plausible that *Lukeios* evokes all of these connections,<sup>12</sup> a kind of semantic network which depicts Apollo through various aspects: family ties, places, animal, qualities, modes of action, memory, etc. Similarly, the Semitic element *lbn* may refer to mount Lebanon, but also to any “white” mountain, and finally to incense. Thus, when Tanit, together with Ash-tart, is called *blbnn*, “in the *lbn*”,<sup>13</sup> in a Punic inscription from Carthage, does the onomastic sequence refer to the Phoenician roots of the goddesses, or to a Punic white mountain, maybe called as such to evoke the ancestral Phoenician landscape?

The spatial elements profusely describe the gods’ environment as one and many, fix and changing at the same time. They possess a place, take care of it, they reside in a specific space and occupy it, but they also roam, fly, go through, lead, guide or command, return or land, etc. As mentioned before, divine mobility is more frequently expressed in Greek than in Semitic. The “Limit/Passage” category, with 24 elements, is so far exclusively Greek and is almost always combined with “space” or “mobility”. Door, street, access, gate, bridge, threshold are liminal spaces sometimes included in the onomastic sequences because they are put under the protection of the gods. The “Funerary/Netherwold” category, with 45 elements (42 Greek, 3 Semitic) provides further information on a specific passage, i.e. death.

Different kinds of spatial reality are reflected in the stock of onomastic elements, from a global natural element, like the sky or the sea, to very specific places, like a spring located in a sanctuary or a promontory which hosts a cult place. The “city” scale (*polis*, small kingdom, tribal entity) is by far the most frequently attested to fix a god in a specific place. This is not surprising at all: the topic dimension of cults is predominant everywhere during the whole Antiquity.<sup>14</sup> This is the most “natural” way of appropriating the divine and of creating the conditions of durable interactions. “Mobility” logically

<sup>12</sup> And maybe also other connotations: Nagele 1984; Jameson 1980; de Roguin 1999.

<sup>13</sup> *KAI* 81 ; DB MAP Source #3504. Date: 400–200 BCE. See Bordreuil 1987.

<sup>14</sup> Beck 2020.

provides a more dynamic image of the power of the gods, whereas “Limit/Passage” expresses the gods’ ability to provide protection in dangerous spaces and experiences. Among the many spatial elements registered so far in the MAP database, few refer to “the world” as a whole, the *kosmos*. In one inscription from Maad in Lebanon, a Holy Lord and Master of the whole Universe is addressed,<sup>15</sup> while in Philae, Isis is the one “who is able to save the world”.<sup>16</sup> In Semitic, the element *ʾlm*, which means “eternity” and “universe” is used in several Palmyrene dedications to the “Master of eternity/universe”, who is twice referred to as Baal Shamim, “Baal of the Sky”.<sup>17</sup> In Karatepe (Turkey), Shamash, the Sun god is called “of eternity/the universe”.<sup>18</sup> Basically, the cosmic dimension of the gods, brought to the forefront by mythological narratives, especially theogonies, starts to blur when adopting the point of view of everyday cultic practices.

A case-study, i.e. the exhaustive corpus of divine names attested in Cyprus, will provide the opportunity to have a closer look at the relevant scales of space involved in the interactions between gods and people. It may be useful to remember that, in the period that we study, nobody had in mind a database of the divine onomastic. Since the stock of onomastic elements available *hic et nunc* was relatively narrow, the perspective offered by the MAP database corresponds to some sort of Augmented Reality, that is, a virtual experience where the objects, that reside in the real world and are experienced by people, are enhanced by computer-generated “perceptual” information. When using the MAP database, we are immersed in an artificial divine world that never existed as such, but which sharpens our cognition and understanding of the complexity of religious systems and practices. It allows us to observe how the many, if not infinite, resources of plurality and polysemy are mobilised in different historical and social contexts.

### 3 Exploring Plurality and Polysemy as Resources in a Complex System of Gods

Let us move on to Cyprus.<sup>19</sup> The (almost) whole corpus contains 665 Greek testimonies, from 447 sources, including 2 bilingual inscriptions with Latin, 4 bilingual inscriptions

15 DB MAP, Testimony #5090. Cf. Chausson / Nordiguian 1996, n°1. Date: 200–300 CE.

16 DB MAP, Testimony #682; *I.Philae* 159. Date: 30 BCE and 100 CE.

17 For example *IGLS XVII*, 343, 344; *PAT* 0332, 0335, etc.

18 *KAI* 26 A; Helios is also the god of the *kosmos* (*kosmou*) in *IGLS XVI*, 30.

19 When I wrote this paper, the Kafizin inscriptions were not yet registered. In the meantime, among the 305 inscriptions from the sanctuary, about 200 sources and 250 attestations were added to the database. I decided to keep them separated from the rest of the corpus used for the statistics. In the Kafizin inscriptions, the topographic element “on/in the pointed hill” is used more than 100 times. Other topical elements also appear less frequently, such as *en toi epikaloumenoi emboloi*, *oreonomos* and *oreon despotis*.

with Phoenician, 1 bilingual inscription with Eteocypriot, and 52 testimonies in Phoenician from 34 sources, including the 4 bilingual inscriptions with Greek. The whole set of testimonies contain 317 different elements: 286 in Greek and 31 in Phoenician. Proportionally, the variety of elements is higher in Phoenician: 31 elements for 52 testimonies, opposed to 286 elements for 655 testimonies in Greek, but the Phoenician sample is too restricted to draw reliable conclusions.

The four spatial categories “Toponym”, “Space”, “Mobility”, “Limit/Passage” are attested, for an amount of 93 elements out of 317, constituting almost 30%. Among the 317 elements used in the Greek and Phoenician testimonies in Cyprus, 55 belong to the “Space” category, 40 to “Toponym”, 5 elements are categorised as “Mobility”, 4 as “Limit/Passage” in Greek.<sup>20</sup>

If we focus on the elements *exclusively* classified as “Toponym”, they are 28 (out of 40). In the list (Tab. 1), the elements common to Greek and Semitic are shown in small caps. Bold is used for toponyms referring to Cyprus.

17 toponyms out of 28 refer to Cyprus: more than 60%. The spatial horizon of the divine names is mainly local and regional. In Greek, the other spatial references are Rome as a political centre, and also Argos and Delphi, two main “panhellenic” cult-places. It is interesting to observe that *Puthios* and *Argeios* are used together in Kourion,<sup>21</sup> in a sequence relating to a priesthood: [Ἀπόλλωνος Ὑλάτου] καὶ Ἀπόλλωνος Πυθίου καὶ Ἡ[ρας Ἀργείας], “Of Apollo Hulates, of Apollo Puthios and of Hera Argeia”, if the hypothetical restitution for Hera is correct. To this panhellenic dimension belongs also Zeus Olumpios, the god residing in Olympia and living on Mount Olympus, attested 9 times in Cyprus (6 in Salamis). In Phoenician, the Baal *lbn* either refers to the mount Lebanon in Phoenicia or to a “white” Cypriot mountain (the Troodos?). It is also worth mentioning the fact that the name (or heteronym) *Kypris*, so frequent in Homer for Aphrodite, is not attested in Cyprus.

The MAP search interfaces allow for many other queries that delve deeper into the issue of mapping the gods from many different perspectives. For example, it might be interesting to check if and to what extent the “local” or “regional” elements connected with Cyprus are used outside Cyprus. Let us carry out a quick survey of three specific areas: Attica, Egypt and Nubia, Syria. Only the element *Paphios* is attested six times: twice in Egypt, once in Huzirina (Sultantepe in North Syria), most probably as a designation of Aphrodite, and twice in Athens where Deo (Demeter) receives an offering with Kore *Paphia* in the second century CE and where two red-figure *lekaneis* depicts (Aphrodite) *Paphia*.<sup>22</sup> The other Cypriot elements are never

<sup>20</sup> The final amount is more than 93 because of the possible use of more than one category for each element. See *supra*, p. 90–91.

<sup>21</sup> *I.Kourion* 41 dated between 221 and 205 BCE. DB MAP, Testimony #70.

<sup>22</sup> DB MAP, Testimonies #429, 3788, 3909, 8524, 8823, 8974; see also DB MAP, Testimony #4980 (Chios).

**Tab. 1:** Comparison between the Greek and Semitic Spatial Elements Used in the Testimonies of the MAP Database.

Greek Elements labelled as “Toponym”	Phoenician Elements labelled as “Toponym”
1. <b>ALASIÓTAS (Cyprus)</b>	1. <b>ʾDYL [Idalion] (Cyprus)</b>
2. Amuklaïos (Laconia) <sup>23</sup>	2. <b>ʾLHYTS [of Alashya] (Cyprus)</b>
3. Amphipolis (Macedonia)	3. <b>Gbl [Byblos] (Phoenicia)</b>
4. Argeïos (Argos)	4. <b>Kty/Kt [Kition] (Cyprus)</b>
5. Asôphônios (Judea)	5. <b>Lpš [Lapethos] (Cyprus)</b>
6. Acheron (imaginary)	6. <b>NRNK [Narnaka] (Cyprus)</b>
7. <b>Chutrios (Cyprus)</b>	7. <b>Pp [Paphos] (Cyprus)</b>
8. <b>Golgiôs (Cyprus)</b>	
9. <b>IDALION (Cyprus)</b>	
10. Kapetôlios (Rome)	
11. <b>Kourieus (Cyprus)</b>	
12. <b>Kuprios (Cyprus)</b>	
13. <b>Kupros (Cyprus)</b>	
14. <b>NARNAKIOS (Cyprus)</b>	
15. <b>PAPHIOS (Cyprus)</b>	
16. <b>PAPHOS (Cyprus)</b>	
17. Puthios (Delphi)	
18. Rôme (Rome)	
19. <b>Tamassios (Cyprus)</b>	
20. Tartarouchos (imaginary)	
21. Thasios (Northern Aegean)	

used outside Cyprus. Conversely, the element *Puthios*, which refers to a “global” and shared horizon, is present in 42 testimonies in Attica, Egypt/Nubia, and Syria, a number which will undoubtedly increase in the coming months and years.<sup>24</sup> Onomastic

<sup>23</sup> The Phoenician element *mkl*, which sometimes qualifies Resheph, has to do with the Greek *Amuklaïos*, but the question remains unclear. This is why *mkl* is not considered here as a Toponym.

<sup>24</sup> See Davies 2007.



elements can move and be appropriated in different contexts, but most of them are forged and used for the purposes of a specific community within its closest environment. In this perspective, the long Phoenician inscription from Lapethos, known as Lapethos III, engraved on the base of a statue in the second half of the fourth century BCE, when Cypriote kingdoms were still under Persian rule, deserves some attention. The dedicant makes several offerings to different gods: Melqart *bnmk*, “in Larnaka (tis Lapithou)”, who is probably the same as Poseidon *Namakios*, in a Greek inscription from the early third century BCE, an equivalence that puts an emphasis on Melqart’s connections with maritime activities; Ashtart *blpš*, “in Lapethos”; Osiris *blpš*, “in Lapethos”; and finally “the gods of Byblos who are in Lapethos” (*ʿl gbl š [bl]pš*). The only Phoenician divine onomastic element which does not refer to Cyprus, *Gbl*, Byblos, is explicitly placed in a local context with a brief relative sentence “who are in Lapethos”, which deliberately stresses the local appropriation of the Gibilite gods. Melqart, although he is known as the Tyrian Baal, is not explicitly connected with Tyre, nor is Ashtart named after Sidon or Osiris as the Lord of Abydos. We ignore why the dedicant chooses to address the gods of Byblos, presumably Baal and Baalat, together, recalling their origin and their integration in a Cypriote cultic framework, while evoking other addressees in a different way. Naming and mapping are closely related, but the many parameters of human agency entangle them in various ways.

In the huge archipelago of deities’ networks, clusters or hubs, to use the vocabulary of the social network analysis, two or more gods sometimes share one or various spatial elements in their onomastic sequences. For example, the element “Kitian” or “Kition” in Phoenician is common to Baal and Ashtart. Is this phenomenon frequent in Cyprus and what does it reveal in terms of structural organization of the “pantheon”? The co-occurrence of elements characterized as “Toponyms” will illustrate the hermeneutic potential of such an approach (Tab. 2).

First, we must admit that the diversity of toponymic elements is misleading and distorted by the nature of the evidence. *Acheron*, *Thasios*, *Amphipolis* and *Tartarouchos* all appear only once in a long *defixio* which uses odd divine elements, real and imaginary, the significance of which is not easy to determine.<sup>25</sup> On the other hand, with 100 testimonies, the toponymic element *Paphios* largely overwhelms the others.

This element, also attested as *pp* in Phoenician, is shared by Aphrodite and Ashtart, with only one testimony in Phoenician. Ashtart is never Cypriote, nor Gorgian, while Aphrodite is never Kitian. No Greek god is called Kitian. Zeus is only localized twice, but not in Cyprus: in Rome and in Judaea. On the contrary, Apollo and Reshef are both Alasiotas, with a parallel for Ἐλείτης / *ʿlyt* (Apollo of the marsh) and Ἀμυκλαῖος / *mk*.<sup>26</sup> The shared toponymic element “in Larnaka” suggests a process of *interpretatio* between Melqart and Poseidon, whereas in Idalion, Athena is

25 DB MAP, Testimony #658 (SEG 44, 1279), from Amathus (third century CE, or even later).

26 On this element, see *supra*, p. 00.

Tab. 2: Sources, Testimonies, and Elements in the Greek and Semitic Corpus of Cyprus.

Greek “Toponyms”	Number of Attestations / Divine entities	Phoenician “Toponyms”	Divine entities
Alasiôtas	1 / Apollo	ʾdyl [Idalion]	2 / Resheph Mikal
Amuklaios	1 / Apollo	ʾlhyts [of Alashyia]	1 / Resheph
Amhipolis	1 / Chthonian Amhipolis <sup>27</sup>	Gbl [Byblos]	1 / The gods
Argeios	1 / Hera (uncertain)	Kty/Kt [Kition]	2 / Ashtart; Baal
Asôphônios	1 / Zeus	Lpš [Lapethos]	3 / Osiris; Ashtart; The gods of Byblos
Acheron	1 / Chthonian Acheron	Nrnk [Narnaka]	1 / Melqart
Golgios	6 / 3 alone (the <i>Golgia</i> ); 2 Aphrodite; 1 <i>theos</i>	Pp [Paphos]	1 / Ashtart
Thasios	1 / Chthonian Thasian		
Idalion	2 / Athena		
Kapetôlios	1 / Zeus		
Kourieus	1 / <i>Theos</i> (Apollo?)		
Kuprios Kupros	5 / 2 Aphrodite; 2 the <i>Kupria</i> ; 1 Apollo 3 / Aphrodite		
Narnakios	1 / Poseidon		
Paphios	100 / 79 Aphrodite; 7 <i>theos</i> ; 14 alone ( <i>Paphia</i> )		
Paphos	1 / Tyche		
Puthios	2 / Apollo		
Rôme	1 / Eternal Rome		
Tamassios	1 / The <i>Tamassios</i>		
Tartarouchos	1 / Chthonian Holder of the Tartarus		

qualified as a topic goddess, but not Anat. Resheph Mikal is located in Idalion, but Apollo of Idalion is not attested so far.

<sup>27</sup> The elements “Chthonian Amhipolis” and “Chthonian Thasian” appear in the long list of a *defixio* from Amathous (DB MAP, Source #515). An alternative version is attested in a *PGM*, where, instead of Amhipolis, the text has ἀμφίπολοι, which makes more sense. See Jordan 1994, 142, note f.

All in all, the mapping of the toponymic co-occurrences shows a strong fragmentation, a kind of balkanization of the cults much more than a dense and dynamic network. What is more, even within a single place, the toponymic elements are rarely shared. In Paphos, for example, there is only one divine power called *Paphia* (with the adjunction of the late Tyche of Paphos); the same is almost true in Golgoi (with only one “Golgian” *theos*). The qualification of “Cypriot”, in Cyprus, is common to only two divine powers, Aphrodite and Apollo. In Phoenician, “Kitian” qualifies both Ashtart and Baal, while the element “in Lapethos” refers to three divine entities (Ashtart, Osiris, the gods of Byblos). These elements provide us a picture of a restricted plurality, a “small/narrow/local polytheism”, with limited networking between the gods.

If we adopt a larger point of view and check all of the onomastic elements, spatial and non-spatial, connected with Aphrodite and Ashtart on one hand, Apollo and Resheph on the other hand (Tab. 3), we find that there are only two common elements

**Tab. 3:** Comparison of the onomastic elements of Aphrodite and Ashtart, Apollo and Resheph in Cyprus.

<b>Aphrodite</b>	<b>Ashtart</b>	<b>Apollo</b>	<b>Resheph</b>
1. Akraia	1. 'l	1. Aguates	1. 'dn
2. Epekoos	2. blpš	2. <b>Alasiotas</b>	2. 'l
3. Epi tois Akrois	3. kty	3. <b>Amuklaios</b>	3. 'lhyts
4. Euergetis	4. <b>pp</b>	4. <b>Eleites</b>	4. 'lyyt
5. Gorgia	5. rbt	5. Hulates	5. b'dyl
6. Kupria		6. Kaiser	6. ḥṣ
7. Kupron Philousa		7. Kenuristes	7. <b>mkl</b>
8. Megale		8. Keraiates	8. šd
9. Oreia		9. Kuprios	
10. Par' hemin		10. Lakeutes	
11. <b>Paphia</b>		11. Lukios	
12. <b>Theos</b>		12. Mageirios	
		13. Megistos	
		14. Melanthios	
		15. Murtates	
		16. Proegoumenos	
		17. Puthios	
		18. Phoibos	
		19. <b>Theos</b>	

between the pair of goddesses, and four between the pair of gods. Within the whole “family” of Greek gods, only two elements are common elements, and within the Phoenician one, one single element is shared. Finally, the element “god” (*theos* / ’l) is the only one shared between Greek and Phoenician divine onomastic sequences.<sup>28</sup> In the comparative table, the elements in bold are shared.

The portrait of Apollo seems richer and more complex than that of Aphrodite. The same is true of Resheph if compared with Ashtart. The Greek onomastic elements are far more numerous than the Semitic ones, which predominantly refer to a spatial horizon. This is too limited an observation to constitute a general trend, but it is undoubtedly an indication that needs to be explored more thoroughly in the future research.

To conclude, I will focus on seven main points.

1. The MAP database is thought to be a heuristic tool which brings to light regularities and singularities in the use of divine onomastic sequences. These data need to be interpreted paying attention to different criteria, such as the typology of sources, the chronology, the gender of gods and humans, etc.
2. Two biases are particularly relevant: first, the database only contains the onomastic sequences with a minimum of two elements. All the inscriptions mentioning Hestia alone or Shadrappa without any qualification are discarded; second, the analysis is so far based on an uncomplete set of data. At the end of the MAP project, in June 2023, the amount of information provided by the database will be much more. Some regions and typologies of inscriptions partially lack (*defixiones*, funerary, etc.); solid conclusions will come later.
3. Space is a massive category when characterising divine powers, both in Greek and Semitic. It is the most frequently used and reveals that space is crucial in the communication process between men and gods, as well as in the social imaginary.
4. Space is expressed through a relatively large set of diverse notions. Toponyms, referring to the local scale of cults, are the most attested elements. In light of this observation, gods seem to be conceived as more stable than mobile, even if the global scale of interconnected gods and sanctuaries is not fully absent. Combined spatial elements efficiently express the interplay between local, regional, and global appropriations of divine powers. An inscription from Paphos, for example, contains the oath of the Paphian people to Tiberius in 14 CE:<sup>29</sup> “By our own Aphrodite Akraia, our own Kore, our own Apollo Hulates, our own Apollo Kenuristes, our own Dioscuri Soteris, the Hestia Boulaia common to the island, the theoi patrioi common to the island, the offspring of Aphrodite, the god Augustus Caesar, Roma Aeterna, and all the other gods and goddesses”. This is a sophisticated

---

<sup>28</sup> In a vast majority of testimonies the onomastic sequence contains only two elements; 230 elements with more than two elements are attested out of a total of 765 testimonies.

<sup>29</sup> DB MAP, Testimony #510 (*I.Paphos* 108).

articulation between different scales of reality, with the Eternal Rome connected with all gods and goddesses, beyond the Paphian horizon.

5. The variety of spatial qualifications is not overly developed. For example, the elements referring to “Limit/Passage” are quite rare. In order to better understand this phenomenon, we should pay more attention to the types of inscriptions, occasions and agencies involved in the naming processes.
6. The comparative approach between the Greek and Semitic areas is a very promising tool. The spatial dimension is expressed and mobilised differently in Greek and Phoenician inscriptions. The Phoenician elements rarely refer to landscapes or “natural” features; they basically connect gods and territories. Designed as “lords”, “masters”, or “kings” of a place, the gods rule over a land, like the kings. The Greek gods are more frequently associated with an environment that determines their mode of action: a marsh, a cape, a garden, a grove . . .
7. With the MAP database, one request leads to another: the MAP team hopes that this digital tool will trigger a creative process of exploration of the available data and generate new questions, results, and perspectives on the religious systems of the Mediterranean world.

## Abbreviations

<i>I.Kourion</i>	Mitford, Terrence B., <i>The Inscriptions of Kourion</i> , Philadelphia, 1971.
<i>I.Paphos</i>	Cayla, Jean-Baptiste, <i>Les inscriptions de Paphos. La cité chypriote sous la domination lagide et à l'époque impériale</i> , Lyon, 2018.
<i>I.Philae</i>	Bernand, André / Bernand, Etienne, <i>Les inscriptions grecques de Philae. I. Époque ptolémaïque. II. Haut et bas empire</i> , Paris, 1969.
<i>I.Priene B-M</i>	Blümel, Wolfgang / Merkelbach, Reinhold †, <i>Die Inschriften von Priene I-II (IGSK 69)</i> , Bonn, 2014.
<i>IPT</i>	Levi della Vida, Giorgio / Amadasi Guzzo, Maria Giulia, <i>Iscrizioni puniche della Tripolitania (1927–1967)</i> , Rome, 1987.
<i>KAI</i>	Donner, Herbert / Röllig, Wolfgang, <i>Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften I-III</i> <sup>2</sup> , Wiesbaden 1966–1969 (III <sup>5</sup> 2002).
<i>PAT</i>	Hillers, Delbert R. / Cussini, Eleonora, <i>Palmyrene Aramaic Texts</i> , Baltimore, 1996.
<i>PVS</i>	Thomas, Christine M. / Drew Bear, Thomas / Yildizturan, Melek, <i>Phrygian Votive Steles. The Museum of Anatolian Civilizations</i> , Ankara, 1999.
<i>SEG</i>	<i>Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum</i> , Leiden, 1923-.

## Bibliography

- Alvar, Jaime (2019), “Le projet EPIDI : *Epítetos divinos. Experiencia religiosa y relaciones de poder en Hispania*”, in: *Anabases* 30, 198–202.
- Beck, Hans (2020), *Localism and the Ancient Greek City-State*, Chicago.

- Bertrand, Romain (2013), “Histoire globale, histoires connectées, un “tournant” historiographique ?”, in: *Le « tournant global » des sciences sociales*, Paris, 44–66.
- Bonnet, Corinne (2009), “Le visage et le nom. Réflexions sur les interfaces divines à la lumière de la documentation proche-orientale”, in: Lydie Bodiou *et al.* (eds.), *Chemin faisant: mythes, cultes et société en Grèce ancienne : mélanges en l’honneur de Pierre Brulé*, Rennes, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2009, 205–214.
- Bonnet, Corinne *et al.* (2018), “«Les dénominations des dieux nous offrent comme autant d’images dessinées» (Julien, *Lettres* 89b, 291 b). Repenser le binôme théonyme-épithète”, in: *Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni*, 84/2, 567–591.
- Bonnet, Corinne *et al.* (2019), “Mapping ancient gods: naming and embodiment beyond “anthropomorphism”. A survey of the field in echo to the books of M.S. Smith and R. Parker”, in: *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 34/2, 207–220.
- Bordreuil, Pierre (1987), “Tanit du Liban (Nouveaux documents religieux phéniciens III)”, in: Edward Lipiński (ed.), *Studia Phoenicia V. Phoenicia and the East Mediterranean in the First Millennium B. C.*, Leuven, 79–85.
- Chausson, François / Nordguian, Levon (1996), “L’église de Maad et ses inscriptions”, in: *Syria* 73, 37–46.
- Chiai, Gianfranco (2020), *Phrygien und seine Götter: Historie und Religionsgeschichte einer anatolischen Region von der Zeit der Hethiter bis zur Ausbreitung des Christentums*, Rahden.
- Davies, John K. (2007), “Pythios and Pythion: The spread of a cult title”, in: *MHR* 22, 57–69.
- de Roguin, Claire-Françoise (1999), “Apollon Lykeios dans la tragédie : dieu protecteur, dieu tueur, « dieu de l’initiation »”, in: *Kernos* 12, 99–123.
- Gasparini, Valentino *et al.* (eds.) (2020). *Lived Religion in the Ancient Mediterranean World*, Berlin, Boston. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110557596>.
- Jameson Michael H. (1980), “Apollo Lykeios in Athens”, in: *Archaïognosia*, 1, 213–236.
- Jordan David R. (1994), “Late feasts for ghosts”, in: Robin Hägg (ed.), *Ancient Greek Cult Practice from the Epigraphical Evidence*. Proceedings of the Second International Seminar on Ancient Greek Cult, Stockholm, 131–143.
- Lebreton, Sylvain / Bonnet, Corinne (2019), “Mettre les polythéismes en formules ? À propos de la base de données *Mapping Ancient Polytheisms*”, in: *Kernos*, 32, 267–296.
- Nagele, Marghareta (1984), “Zum Typus des Apollon Lykeios”, in: *JÖAI* 55, 77–105.
- Revel, Jacques / Lepetit Bernard (1996), *Jeux d’échelles, la micro-analyse à l’expérience*, Paris.
- Trivellato, Francesca (2015), “Microstoria/Microhistoire/Microhistory”, in: *French Politics, Culture & Society*, 33, 122–134.
- Xella, Paolo (1991), *Baal Hammon. Recherches sur l’identité et l’histoire d’un dieu phénico-punique*, Rome.