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# Greek elements in Hannibal's military education\*

## Introduction

The definition of fidelity became relativized when A. Momigliano demonstrated that the concept of *Punica fides* can be conflated with *Graeca fides*<sup>1</sup>. The annalists who described Hannibal's history contributed to the Roman narrative which aimed to attach a pejorative meaning to the concept of Greek fidelity. In his insightful essay, G. Brizzi further explores this proposition by analyzing whether the Hellenistic roots of Hannibal's alleged *perfidia* prompted at least some Romans to mistrust Greeks, and whether this mistrust gave rise to anti-Hellenistic sentiments that became entrenched in conservative Italian circles until the rise of the Antonine Dynasty<sup>2</sup>. These deliberations compel debate on the presence of Greek components in Hannibal's actions, in particular his military education.

The Carthaginian general, the main hero of the Second Punic War (218–201 BCE) and one of the greatest leaders in ancient history, is remembered mainly for his military conquests, whereas his political, diplomatic, and propaganda achievements<sup>3</sup> (including

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<sup>1</sup> A. Momigliano, *Alien wisdom. The limits of Hellenization*, Cambridge–London–New York–Melbourne 1975, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> G. Brizzi, *Carthage et Rome: quelles prises de contact avec l'Hellénisme?*, „Pallas” 2006, No. 70 [L'hellénisation en méditerranée occidentale: au temps des guerres puniques (260–180 av. J.-C.)], „Actes du Colloque international de Toulouse” 31 mars – 2 avril 2005], p. 241: „Si bien qu'on peut même se demander si les racines helléniques reconnues à la »perfidia Hannibalis« n'ont pas éveillé auprès d'eux – d'une partie d'entre eux, au moins – une quelconque méfiance à l'égard des Grecs, et si de cette méfiance n'est pas né l'antihellénisme enraciné ensuite, jusqu'à l'époque des Antonins, dans les milieux les plus conservateurs de l'Italie profonde”.

<sup>3</sup> D. Briquel, *La propagande d'Hannibal au début de la deuxième guerre punique: remarques sur les fragments de Silénos de Kalèaktè*, in: *Actas del IV congreso internacional de estudios fenicios y púnicos*,

those that delve into matters of religions<sup>4</sup>) are regarded as corollary to his role as military commander. There is no doubt that Hannibal was strongly influenced by the Punic culture. The social environment of North Africa<sup>5</sup>, where Hannibal was born and raised, had a decisive impact on his personality traits<sup>6</sup>. However, a broad analysis of his lifetime achievements casts certain doubt on Hannibal's actual military skills<sup>7</sup>. Multiple and often ambiguous opinions on the matter have been voiced, and the ever-growing body of literature prevents an easy interpretation<sup>8</sup>. This study was not, however, undertaken to evaluate Hannibal's military skills, but merely to identify recurring motifs that could shed some light on Greek inspirations and elements in Hannibal's military career.

### Historical context for the evolution of military concepts in Carthage

The significance of the foundation of Carthage, a Phoenician city-state in North Africa, has been well established in the literature<sup>9</sup>, and Punic culture influenced the evolution of Western culture in the Mediterranean Region until the end of antiquity<sup>10</sup>. The Phoeni-

Cádiz, 2 al 5 de Octubre de 1995, vol. I, Cádiz 2000, pp. 123–127; R. Miles, *Hannibal and propaganda*, [in:] *A companion to the Punic wars*, ed. D. Hoyos, Malden 2011, p. 272.

<sup>4</sup> M. Wolny, *Wyróżnienie bogini Tanit przez Barkidów (237–201 p.n.e.)?*, „Echa Przeszłości” 2022, vol. 23/2, pp. 9–29.

<sup>5</sup> Livy 27.21.2; 30.35.10, 37.9; 35.19.6 commented on Hannibal's long absence from North Africa, cf. O. Meltzer, *Geschichte der Karthager*, vol. II, Berlin 1896, pp. 592–593; F.W. Walbank, *A historical commentary on Polybius*, vol. I, Oxford 1957, p. 214; M. Wolny, *Hannibal's oath before expedition to Gades (237 B.C.) – functions and way of reception*, „Antiquitas” 2005, No. 28, p. 28.

<sup>6</sup> For a detailed description of these traits in Roman historiography, refer to M. Wolny, *Homosexuality in the Barcid family?*, „Eirene. Studia Graeca et Latina” 2019, No. 55, pp. 217–230.

<sup>7</sup> K. Christ, *Zur Beurteilung Hannibals*, [in:] *Hannibal (Wege der Forschung)*, ed. K. Christ, Darmstadt 1974, pp. 361–407; G. Brizzi, *Annibale: esperienze, riflessioni, prospettive*, [in:] *I Fenici: ieri, oggi, domani. Ricerche, scoperte, progetti (Roma 3–5 marzo 1994)*, Roma 1995, pp. 65–76.

<sup>8</sup> Hannibal's long-term strategic skills play an important role in this assessment. Hannibal dealt a blow to the Roman defense system by preventing the enemy from recruiting soldiers in the Apennine peninsula, cf. W. Hoffmann, *Hannibal*, Göttingen 1961, pp. 73–82; L. de Ligt, *Roman manpower and the recruitment during the Middle Republic*, [in:] *A companion to the Roman army*, ed. P. Erdkamp, Blackwell 2007, pp. 114–131; D. Hoyos, *Hannibal Rome's greatest enemy*, Exeter 2008, pp. 62–67; L.M. Günther, *Hannibal ein biografisches Porträt*, Freiburg im Breisgau 2010, p. 72 ff.; K. Lomas, *Rome, Latins and Italians in the second Punic war*, [in:] *A companion to the Punic wars*, ed. D. Hoyos, Blackwell 2011, p. 344; M. Wolny, *Wolność według Hannibala. Historiograficzna wizja polityki kartagińskiej wobec miast Italii (218–210 p.n.e.)*, „Echa Przeszłości” 2022, vol. 23/1, pp. 9–28.

<sup>9</sup> S. Gsell, *Histoire ancienne de l'Afrique du Nord*, [in:] *Les conditions du développement historique, les temps primitifs, la colonisation phénicienne et l'empire de Carthage*, Paris 1920, pp. 374–401; V. Ehrenberg, *Karthago. Ein Versuch weltgeschichtlicher Einordnung*, [in:] *Polis und Imperium*, Zürich 1965, pp. 549–586; M. Fantar, *Carthage. La prestigieuse cite d'Elissa*, Maison Tunisienne 1970; E. Acquaro, *Cartagine. Un impero sul Mediterraneo*, Roma 1978; W. Huss, *Geschichte der Karthager*, München 1985; F. Mazza, *Wie die alte Welt die Phönizier sah*, [in:] *Die Phönizier*, ed. S. Moscati, Hamburg 1988, pp. 548–568; S. Lancel, *Carthage*, Paris 1992; W. Ameling, *Karthago. Studien zu Militär, Staat und Gesellschaft*, München 1993; M. Wolny, *Fondation de Qarthadasht en Afrique du Nord – comme problème dans les recherches sur la chronologie de la plus ancienne histoire de Carthage*, „ΣΧΟΛΗ” 2022, vol. 16/1, pp. 88–99.

<sup>10</sup> É. Lipiński, *Dieux et déesses de l'univers phénicien et punique*, Leuven 1995.

cian civilization developed on the territory of modern-day Lebanon, and the Phoenicians' prowess in seafaring and navigation<sup>11</sup> became a landmark of their culture that was preserved in both local traditions and the oldest historical sources relating to ancient Greek traditions<sup>12</sup>. The establishment of Carthage was one of the main long-term consequences of west-bound migration<sup>13</sup>, and the creation of a flourishing trade center in Africa was an example of a strategy that aimed to build lasting relations based on commerce rather than military conquest. The Phoenicians established an expansive maritime trade network, which is why wars did not last long, and military efforts were quickly abandoned by the Carthaginians if they were deemed unprofitable<sup>14</sup>. Therefore, Carthaginian policies were largely pragmatic in nature<sup>15</sup> – wars required the mobilization of a large part of the population and a specific approach to social organization, where many inhabitants would be forced to abandon their families, careers, and interests for the sake of the state's nebulous expansion plans<sup>16</sup>.

Obviously, this is a rather simplistic view because the development of Carthage as a trading hub, in particular its rivalry with Greek merchants in Sicily<sup>17</sup>, could imply that an imperial mentality had begun to evolve at a certain point<sup>18</sup>. Imperial attitudes were absent in early stages of Carthage's evolution as a center of commerce, but rapid growth probably contributed to the awareness that offensive measures would have to be incorporated into the state's political repertoire at some point to achieve long-term goals<sup>19</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> Phoenician trade routes were later used by the Greeks, cf. G. Bunnes, *L'expansion phénicienne en Méditerranée*, Bruxelles–Rome 1979. Phoenician cities established long-lasting trade relations with territories in the western parts of the Mediterranean Region, cf. M. Delcor, *La fondation de Tyr selon l'histoire, l'archéologie et la mythologie. Le problème de l'identité d'Usu*, [in:] *Actes du IIIe Congrès International des Études Phéniciennes et Puniques*, éd. M.H. Fantar, M. Ghaki, Tunis 1995, pp. 333–346; H.J. Katzenstein, *The history of Tyre*, Jérusalem 1973; M. Wolny, *Fondation de Qarthadasht en Afrique du Nord...*, pp. 88–91.

<sup>12</sup> J. Latacz, *Die Phönizier bei Homer*, [in:] *Die Phönizier im Zeitalter Homers*, ed. U. Gehring, Mainz 1990, p. 11–21.

<sup>13</sup> N. Carayon, *Les ports phéniciens et puniques. Géomorphologie et infrastructures*, Strasbourg 2008 (Diss.), pp. 128–129.

<sup>14</sup> G. Brizzi, *Carthage et Rome...*, p. 232.

<sup>15</sup> A. Erskine, *Encountering Carthage: Mid-Republican Rome and mediterranean culture*, „Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies” (Supplement: Creating Ethnicities & Identities in the Roman World) 2013, No. 120, pp. 113–129.

<sup>16</sup> G. Brizzi, *Carthage et Rome...*, pp. 232–233.

<sup>17</sup> L.-M. Hans, *Karthago und Sizilien. Die Entstehung und Gestaltung der Epikratie auf dem Hintergrund der Beziehungen der Karthager zu den Griechen und nichtgriechischen Völkern Siziliens (VI.–III. Jahrhundert v. Chr.)*, Hildesheim–New York 1983, pp. 61–63, 91–102; P. Barceló, *Mercenarios hispanos en los ejércitos cartagineses en Sicilia*, [in:] *Atti del II Congresso internazionale di studi fenici e punici* (Roma, 9–14 novembre 1987), vol. I, Roma 1991, pp. 21–26.

<sup>18</sup> After the Carthaginian army had suffered a massive defeat in the Battle of Himera, the magnanimity displayed by the Greek forces under Gelon [FGH 566 (fr. 20); Diod. 11.24.4, 26.1–3; H. Berve, *Die Tyrannis bei den Griechen*, München 1967, p. 602] was regarded as noble act (cf. J. Bremmer, *Gelon's wife and the Carthaginian ambassadors*, „Nemrosyne” 1980, vol. 33/3, pp. 366–368), and it influenced Carthaginian ambitions.

<sup>19</sup> G. Brizzi, *Carthage et Rome...*, pp. 233–234.

Imperial attitudes probably emerged long after Hamilcar's defeat in the Battle of Himera (480 BCE) and culminated only on the eve of or during the First Punic War<sup>20</sup>.

According to G. Brizzi, Carthaginians' contribution to the development of terrestrial warfare remained limited for a long time. In his opinion, the reconstruction and reorganization of Carthage's military forces took place in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE, and these processes accompanied the gradual Hellenization of Carthage<sup>21</sup>. This fact could explain why the Carthaginian army was modeled on Greek solutions<sup>22</sup>. The adopted military concepts lacked originality because, as G. Brizzi notes, the Carthaginians were not emotionally engaged in the process<sup>23</sup>. Above all, Carthage was a maritime power, which is why it faced difficulty in achieving defensive and offensive military goals. However, the Sicilian Wars clearly indicate that Carthage had also large and well-trained ground forces<sup>24</sup>. According to D. Hoyos, there is some irony in the fact that Hannibal participated in a terrestrial war that was waged in stages under difficult terrain conditions and posed a significant challenge<sup>25</sup>.

The clash between Carthage and the Roman civilization, which culminated in a series of events known as the Punic Wars, convinced the Romans that Carthage was a blood thirsty monster that had to be conquered at any price and that its downfall was a historical necessity<sup>26</sup>. Rome's negative image of Carthage was fueled by its fear of the Punic state, but it also justified the Romans aggressive plans to assert dominance over the entire world<sup>27</sup>. The concept of *metus Punicus* was one of the key factors that drove military aggression against Carthage, but it also played an important role in the Republic's ef-

<sup>20</sup> G.K. Tipps, *The defeat of Regulus*, „The Classical World” 2003, vol. 96/4, pp. 378–379.

<sup>21</sup> C.G. Wagner, *Critical remarks concerning a supposed Hellenization of Carthage*, „Reppal” 1986, No. 2, pp. 357–375.

<sup>22</sup> W. Ameling, *Karthago. Studien zu Militär...*, pp. 114–116.

<sup>23</sup> G. Brizzi, *Carthage et Rome...*, p. 231.

<sup>24</sup> S. Vassallo, *Guerre e conflitti nella Sicilia centro-settentrionale tra la metà del VI e la fine del V sec. a.C.: una prospettiva archeologica*, [in:] *The fight for Greek Sicily. Society, politics, and landscape*, ed. M. Jonasch, Oxford 2020, pp. 6–9. For more information about the mythology surrounding the Greek-Carthaginian rivalry that led to the Battle of Himera (480 BCE), refer to M.S. Trifirò, *La battaglia di Himera (480 a.C.) nelle interpretazioni storiografiche antiche e nelle moderne riletture G. Grote ed E.A. Freeman*, „Anabases” 2014, vol. 20, pp. 11–31.

<sup>25</sup> D. Hoyos, *What kind of genius?*, „Greece & Rome” 1983, vol. 30/2, pp. 171–172. According to Hoyos, Carthage was unable to fully utilize its naval potential because the Carthaginian commander and his troops had considerable expertise in terrestrial combat, but no experience in maritime warfare. Paradoxically, despite Hannibal's extraordinary talent in terrestrial warfare, the Carthaginian general should have gone down in history as the greatest admiral of Carthaginian naval fleets.

<sup>26</sup> M. Wolny, *Fondation de Qarthadasht en Afrique du Nord...*, p. 88–89: „L'affrontement civilisationnel avec Rome, qui est entré dans l'histoire comme les guerres puniques, a conduit à la formation d'un certain nombre de convictions, qui, malheureusement, sont survenues principalement du côté du participant victorieux au conflit, perpétuant l'image standard de Carthage en tant que mastodonte sanguinaire dont l'appropriement est devenu une nécessité historique”.

<sup>27</sup> G. Brizzi, *Metus Punicus. Studi e ricerche su Annibale e Roma*, Bologna 2011.

forts to establish a dominant narrative in ancient historiography and justify its actions in 146 BCE<sup>28</sup>.

The Barcid family significantly contributed to the emergence of *metus Punicus* because Hamilcar and his son Hannibal were largely responsible for the creation of a professional army and the implementation of military strategies based on the Greek model. The experiences of the Second Punic War clearly demonstrated that Carthage posed a significant threat to the Imperium Romanum, and these fears became deeply embedded in literary constructs in Roman historiography. In the light of the above premises, it seems reasonable and necessary to trace the Greek elements in Hannibal's military education.

### The role of Greek intellectuals in Hannibal's upbringing

Hellenistic-era philosophers argued that rulers' and commanders' character traits are shaped largely by their environment, and this observation well describes king Philip V who was susceptible to manipulation<sup>29</sup>. According to Polybius, royal advisors played the most important role in a monarch's milieu<sup>30</sup>. Hannibal's military education was undoubtedly influenced by Greek intellectuals. Nepos' biography of Hannibal<sup>31</sup> accentuates the presence of Greek elements in the Carthaginian general's education and upbringing<sup>32</sup>. Silenus and Sosylus, Greek intellectuals and historians, campaigned alongside Hannibal for "as long as fate allowed" (*quamdiu fortuna passa est*)<sup>33</sup>. Silenus' role in Hannibal's life is not clearly explained by Nepos, whereas Sosylus taught Hannibal Greek literature (*atque hoc Sosylo Hannibal litterarum Graecarum usus est doctore*)<sup>34</sup>. Cassius Dio also reported on the presence of Greek intellectuals in Hannibal's life, and he attributed Hannibal's talents to natural predispositions and thorough Phoenician education based on native influences and Greek science<sup>35</sup>. According to Cassius Dion, Hannibal's education relied on three main elements: Phoenician scholarship (Φοινικικός), native Punic influences (πάτριος), and Greek science (Ἑλληνικός). The characters described by Nepos deserve closer examination to explore the impact of Greek intellectuals on Hannibal's education.

<sup>28</sup> B. Kiernan, *The first genocide: Carthage 146 BC*, „Diogenes” 2004, vol. 203, pp. 27–39; R. Miles, *Carthage must be destroyed. The rise and fall of an ancient mediterranean civilization*, Allen Lane 2010.

<sup>29</sup> Plb. 9.23.9.

<sup>30</sup> G. Weber, *Interaktion, Repräsentation und Herrschaft. Der Königshof im Hellenismus*, [in:] *Zwischen „Haus” und „Staat”: antike Höfe im Vergleich*, ed. A. Winterling, Munich 1997, pp. 27–31.

<sup>31</sup> Nep. *Hann.* 13.3: „Huius belli gesta multi memoriae prodiderunt, sed ex eis duo, qui cum eo in castris fuerunt simulque vixerunt, quamdiu fortuna passa est, Silenus et Sosylus Lacedaemonius. atque hoc Sosylo Hannibal litterarum Graecarum usus est doctore”.

<sup>32</sup> D. Hoyos, *Hannibal's dynasty. Power and politics in the Western Mediterranean 247–183 B.C.*, London 2003, p. 249.

<sup>33</sup> Nep. *Hann.* 13.3.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>35</sup> Cass. Dio 13.54.3: ἐδύνατο δὲ ταῦθ' οὕτω πράττειν, ὅτι πρὸς τῇ τῆς φύσεως ἀρετῇ καὶ παιδείᾳ πολλῇ μὲν Φοινικικῇ κατὰ τὸ πάτριον πολλῇ δὲ καὶ Ἑλληνικῇ ἤσκητο.

Most researchers believe that the epithet *Sosylus Lacedaemonicus* (Sosylus of Lacedaemon) describes the Greek historian's place of origin<sup>36</sup>, but there is evidence to suggest that this claim is not entirely true. Diodorus Siculus wrote that Sosylus' *Deeds of Hannibal* was a historical work of seven volumes<sup>37</sup>. Polybius undermined the value of this work<sup>38</sup>, but his criticism was based more on a sense of superiority than factual integrity<sup>39</sup>. The papyri from the Würzburg Collection, which are ascribed to Sosylus, paint a picture of a historian who was well versed in his profession and familiar with military matters. Four columns of this document have survived to this day, but two of them were seriously damaged, and only two columns containing around sixty lines of standard text are legible<sup>40</sup>. The surviving text describes an episode in a naval struggle during which the Romans won a victory over the Carthaginian forces, most probably the Battle of Ebro River in 217 BCE<sup>41</sup>. According to G. Zecchini, Sosylus was born to a family of Lacedaemonian motacks, and he was granted citizenship rights in Ilion only in later years of his life<sup>42</sup>. Sosylus' involvement in Hannibal's education indicates that certain attempts had been made to establish scholarly collaboration between Lacedaemon and Carthage<sup>43</sup>. Sosylus wrote in Greek and interpreted the history of Hannibal's motherland from the Greek perspective, which significantly influenced the way Carthage was portrayed in the literature.

Most of our knowledge about Silenus is based on the work of Coelius Antipater<sup>44</sup>. According to Cicero, Coelius was not only a historical narrator, but also an *exortnator* who provided his historical narratives with literary depth<sup>45</sup>. Livy had a great appreciation for Coelius' work, and he sometimes valued it more than the historical accounts authored by Polybius<sup>46</sup>. The annalist reported on improbable or even miraculous events<sup>47</sup>, which

<sup>36</sup> Nep. *Hann.* 13.3.

<sup>37</sup> Diod. 26.4.

<sup>38</sup> Plb. 3.20.5. See also: M. Wolny, *Motywy zdeprecjonowania dzieła Sosylosa przez Polibiusza* (*III*, 20, 5), [in:] *Studia nad kulturą antyczną III*, ed. J. Rostropowicz, Opole 2007, pp. 83–87.

<sup>39</sup> M. Wolny, *Polybius' contempt. A case of criticism of the achievements of Chaereas and Sosylos* (paper presented at a scientific conference: 15th Celtic Conference in Classics Cardiff University/Prifysgol Caerdydd, on the panel: „Polybius: His Writings and His World” on 10 July 2024 [manuscript due for completion in 2025]).

<sup>40</sup> U. Wilcken, *Zu Sosylos*, „Hermes” 1907, vol. 42/3, pp. 510–512.

<sup>41</sup> M. Wolny, *Sosylos – historia wyprawy Hannibala*, [in:] *Oblicza starożytności. Z badań nad historią starożytną w Polsce*, ed. M. Wolny, Olsztyn 2012, pp. 41–54.

<sup>42</sup> G. Zecchini, *Ancora sul Papiro Würzburg e su Sosilo*, „Archiv für Papyrusforschung” 1997 (Akten des 21. Internationalen Papyrologenkongresses, Berlin 1995), pp. 3:1066. For an opposing view, refer to D. Hoyos, *Hannibal's Dynasty...*, p. 249.

<sup>43</sup> M. Wolny, *Studia nad statusem i kompetencjami dowódców kartagińskich w okresie przewagi Barkidów (237–201 p.n.e.)*, ed. 2, Oświęcim 2016, p. 73.

<sup>44</sup> Coelius gave significant credit to Silenus' work Cic. *De div.* 1.49: „Hoc item in Sileni, quod Coelius sequitur, Graeca historia est (is autem diligentissime res Hannibalis persecutus est)”.

<sup>45</sup> Cic. *De orat.* 2.54; M. Wolny, *Silenus of Kale Akte and the propaganda process of building Hannibal's image*, „Echa Przeszłości” 2023, vol. 24/1, pp. 11–25.

<sup>46</sup> The above applies mainly to the events that unfolded between the siege of Saguntum and the Battle of Cannae, cf. R. Jumeau, *Un aspect significatif de l'exposé livien dans les livres 21 et 22*, [in:] *Hommages à Jean Bayet*, ed. M. Rennard, R. Schilling, Brüssel 1964, pp. 309–333.

<sup>47</sup> HRR, fr. 39 (Coelius).



could have attracted his attention to Silenus' work as a formal source of knowledge about the Second Punic War<sup>48</sup>. The possibility that Silenus had written a history of Hannibal's life cannot be ruled out<sup>49</sup>. This work was probably laden with political propaganda, and Hannibal could have been portrayed as a mythological hero<sup>50</sup>. This concept makes a reference to Livy's account, where Hannibal was depicted as an arrogant character who had no respect for the gods<sup>51</sup>.

Hannibal's entourage, which also included the distinguished diplomat Carthalo<sup>52</sup>, had a significant influence on Carthaginian policy. These influences had deep historical roots – the Hellenistic court culture was based on traditions that had been developed and promoted by the Argead dynasty, including Philip II and Alexander the Great. Over the years, these traditions were exposed to various influences, mostly Greek and Iranian<sup>53</sup>. Therefore, Alexander's court had long remained the key point of reference for successors who wished to emulate the Macedonian king's successes. The fact that Silenus and Sosylus were a part of Hannibal's milieu suggests that Hellenistic influences had been successfully assimilated. Traditional Greek concepts flourished during the Hellenistic era, and the research conducted by S. Luria<sup>54</sup> and I. Hahn<sup>55</sup> suggests that the first seeds had been sown on Carthaginian soil already long before Hannibal's rise to power.

Hannibal's relationship with Sosylus, who was mentioned by Nepos as the second Greek intellectual and the general's teacher of Greek literature, seems to have been modeled on the example of Alexander who had received his education from Aristotle, one of the greatest minds in Western history<sup>56</sup>. Hannibal sought to improve his public image by

<sup>48</sup> Silenus' work makes a clear reference to Greek literary traditions, cf. M. Wolny, *Silenus of Kale Akte and the propaganda process...*, pp. 11–25. The snake motif appears in Silenus' narrative about Hannibal's dream, which was preserved in Roman literature by Coelius. In Homer's *Iliad*, a snake was an omen that heralded the fall of Ilium (*Il.* 2.299 et seq.); cf. Paus. 8.8.4–6; D. Ogden, *Drakōn: dragon myth and serpent cult in the Greek and Roman worlds*, Oxford 2013.

<sup>49</sup> F. Jacoby, *Silenos no. 1*, *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft II*, Hlbd. 50, Stuttgart 1927, cols. 54; According to A. Klotz, *Livius und seine Vorgänger*, Leipzig–Berlin 1941, p. 190, the story can be also traced in Polybius' description of a stone tablet in Lacinium; for a contrary view, refer to M. Wolny, *Silenus of Kale Akte and the propaganda process...*, and M. Wolny, *Commemorando di grandi successi al momento della sconfitta – Annibale in Capo Colonna*, [in:] *Marciano con Annibale. L'itinerario italiano delle truppe cartaginesi dal Trasimeno a Capo Colonna*, eds. L. Manfredi, G. Mandatori, F. Ceci, serie: Mediterraneo punico. Supplementi alla Rivista di Studi Fenici, Roma 2023, pp. 205–211.

<sup>50</sup> M. Wolny, *Silenus of Kale Akte and the propaganda process...*, pp. 13, 17–19.

<sup>51</sup> Liv. 21.4.9; M. Wolny, *Inhumana crudelitas wodza Hannibala*, „Echa Przeszłości” 2014, vol. 15, p. 10.

<sup>52</sup> M. Wolny, *Studia nad statusem i kompetencjami dowódców kartagijskich...*, pp. 227–228, 434.

<sup>53</sup> R. Strootman, *Court, Hellenistic*, [in:] *The encyclopedia of ancient history* (first edition), eds. R.S. Bagnall, K. Brodersen, C.B. Champion, A. Erskine, S.R. Huebner, Blackwell 2013, p. 1818.

<sup>54</sup> S. Luria, *Zum Problem der griechisch-karthagischen Beziehungen*, „Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae” 1964, No. 12, p. 53–75.

<sup>55</sup> I. Hahn, *Die Hellenisierung Karthagos und die punisch-griechischen Beziehungen im 4. Jahrhundert v.u.Z.*, [in:] *Hellenistische Poleis II*, ed. E.C. Welskopf, Berlin 1974, pp. 841–854.

<sup>56</sup> A.-H. Chroust, *Was Aristotle actually the chief preceptor of Alexander the Great?*, [in:] *Aristotle: new light on life and on some of his lost works. Some novel interpretations of the man and his life*, ed. A.-H. Chroust,

merging state power with the intellectual prowess of great philosophers<sup>57</sup>. The knowledge imparted by these intellectuals contained elements that were vital for the general's military career. These sources could be responsible for Hannibal's familiarity with the Greek war ethos and the concept of *agon*<sup>58</sup> denoting the most destructive form of military competition, where victory is decided by the outcome of a single battle<sup>59</sup>. A teacher who was an expert in Greek literature could not disregard these issues in the educational process, and Hannibal's views on war and military confrontation indicate that he was familiar with these concepts. Cassius Dio's account of Hannibal's talents suggests that the Carthaginian general assumed superiority (*πλεῖστος*) over others by using words and actions that were most appropriate under specific circumstances<sup>60</sup>. Rhetoric, namely the act of mastering the spoken word (*λόγος*), was regarded as the key to success. Attention in this regard focuses primarily on the figure of Sosylos, due to the apposition in Nepos' work (*litterarum Graecarum usus est doctore*), which is different from that of Silenos who was responsible mainly for shaping Hannibal's image for the needs of political propaganda. Hannibal was portrayed as a mythological hero, and various methods were used to reinforce this image, including the special coinage that was minted for the Carthaginian forces under Hannibal<sup>61</sup>.

### Greek and Hellenistic models – Hannibal's military theory and practice

D. Hoyos emphasized the intellectual gravitas of the arguments made by G. Charles-Picard. According to the pompous theory formulated by the French historian, Hannibal was a genius of the Hellenistic era, an unrivaled state and military strategist, and a leading

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Notre Dame 1973, pp. 125–132; M. Bocker, *Aristoteles als Alexander Lehrer in der Legende*, Bonn 1966 (Diss.); M. Plezia, *Aristoteles gegenüber der Monarchie Alexander der Großen*, [in:] *Studien zur Geschichte und Philosophie des Altertums*, Budapest 1968, pp. 84–89; M. Wolny, *Działalność urbanizacyjna Pyrrusa w Epirze – cassus Beronikidy i Antigonei*, „Echa Przeszłości” 2019, vol. 20/1, p. 56.

<sup>57</sup> M. Wolny, *Korespondencja pomiędzy Antygonem II Gonatasem a Zenonem z Kition – przyczynek do rozważań nad tworzeniem kręgu intelektualnego na dworze Antygonidów*, „Echa Przeszłości” 2021, vol. 22/2, pp. 23–44.

<sup>58</sup> *Agon* also had important ethical implications. According to Aristotle, *agon* was a process of achieving moral virtues. In *Nichomachean Ethics*, Aristotle argued that moral perfection can be attained only by overcoming increasingly difficult obstacles, cf. S.M. Kershner, A.L. Anton, *The ancient Hellenic virtue of success*, [in:] *Conflict and competition: Agon in Western Greece. Selected essays from the 2019 Symposium on the Heritage of Western Greece*, eds. H.L. Reid, J. Serrati, T. Sorg, Aretusa 2020, p. 145.

<sup>59</sup> G. Brizzi, *Il guerriero, l'oplita, il legionario. Gli eserciti nel mondo classico*, Bologna 2002, pp. 10–18.

<sup>60</sup> Cass. Dio 13.54.3: „καὶ τοῦτου καὶ τοῖς καιροῖς ἐπὶ πλείστον ἀνθρώπων καὶ τοὺς λόγους καὶ τὰς πράξεις ἐφήρμοζεν”.

<sup>61</sup> G.K. Jenkins, R.B. Levis, *Carthaginian gold and electrum coins*, London 1963, passim; E.S.G. Robinson, *Punic coins of Spain and their bearing on the Roman Republican series*, [in:] *Essays in Roman coinage presented to H. Mattingly*, Oxford 1956, pp. 34–53; L. Villaronga, *Las monedas hispano-cartaginesas*, Barcelona 1973, pp. 121–122; A. Burnett, *The coinage of Magna Graecia from Pyrrhus to Hannibal*, [in:] *La Magna Grecia ad Pirro ad Annibale* (Atti del Cinquantaduesimo Convegno di Studi sulla Magna Grecia, Taranto 27–30 Settembre 2012), Taranto 2015, pp. 753–824.



force in the efforts to unite the Mediterranean world as a confederation of states under Carthaginian rule<sup>62</sup>. Hoyos argued that Hannibal had never formulated such far-reaching goals, and Charles-Picard's research is more eloquent than convincing<sup>63</sup>.

Paradoxically, a different theory postulates that Greek and Hellenistic elements in Hannibal's education<sup>64</sup> had little or no impact on his military achievements. According to Hoyos, although Hannibal was an outstanding commander during the Second Punic War, his military strategies were largely devoid of originality. He relied mainly on attrition warfare, despite the fact that this tactic was not financially feasible for Carthage<sup>65</sup>. The above could be attributed to a specific interpretation of the Hellenistic warfare model. This "military philosophy" was described by Polybius who remarked that the fate of wars fought in Greece and Asia was usually sealed by the outcome of the first and, rarely, the second battle (τοὺς γὰρ κατὰ τὴν Ἑλλάδα πολέμους καὶ τοὺς κατὰ τὴν Ἀσίαν ὡς ἐπίπαν μία μάχη κρίνει, σπανίως δὲ δευτέρα)<sup>66</sup>. In turn, the outcome of the battle was determined by the first offensive move and military engagement (καὶ τὰς μάχας αὐτὰς εἷς καιρὸς ὁ κατὰ τὴν πρώτην ἔφοδον καὶ σύμπτωσιν τῆς δυνάμεως)<sup>67</sup>.

Hannibal adhered to these principles during his invasion of Italy, in particular at the beginning of the conflict<sup>68</sup>. The Carthaginians initiated offensive operations aimed at direct confrontation in all battles that were fought on Italian territory<sup>69</sup>. According to G. Brizzi, encirclement was Hannibal's main tactic<sup>70</sup>. This strategy had originated during the reign of the Argead dynasty, including Alexander<sup>71</sup>. Obviously, Macedonian rulers were able to build a professional army by closely monitoring the situation in Greece. A. Chaniotis rightly noted that the most important military innovations occurred in the

<sup>62</sup> G. Charles-Picard, *Hannibal hegemon hellénistique*, „Rivista Storica Antichita” 1985, No. 13–14, pp. 75–81.

<sup>63</sup> D. Hoyos, *What kind of genius?*, p. 172.

<sup>64</sup> G. Brizzi, *Il guerriero, l'oplita, il legionario...*, pp. 79–83.

<sup>65</sup> D. Hoyos, *What kind of genius?*, pp. 174, 179.

<sup>66</sup> Plb. 35.1.2.

<sup>67</sup> Plb. 35.1.2. D. Hoyos, *What kind of genius?*, p. 176: „In the Hellenistic world, grand strategy at the highest level had become comparatively straightforward: if you could invade your enemy's heartland and win a couple of set-piece battles, your enemy collapsed and sought terms. The Carthaginians were used to this: more than once a promising expedition against Greek Sicily had been undone in a single day. They had come close to collapse themselves forty years before when Regulus invaded Africa and crushed their army. It remained the norm in the eastern Mediterranean – that was how Rome overthrew Macedon, Syria, and Achaea in the next century, though the first two at least were states not less populous and wealthy than she was. It was the norm Hannibal expected of Rome”.

<sup>68</sup> E.T. Salmon, *The strategy of the second Punic war*, „Greece & Rome” 1960, No. 7, pp. 131–142; M. Wolny, *Hannibal w Italii (218–217 p.n.e.)*. *Studia nad uwarunkowaniami początkowych sukcesów kartagińskich*, Olsztyn 2007, pp. 281–284.

<sup>69</sup> A. Punzi, *Annibale in Italia I. Da Sagunto a Canne*, Napoli 1971; G. Zecchini, *Annibale prima e dopo il Trasimeno: alcune osservazioni*, „Rivista Storica Antichita” 2003, No. 33, pp. 91–98.

<sup>70</sup> G. Brizzi, *Carthage et Rome...*, p. 232.

<sup>71</sup> G.T. Griffith, *Alexander's Generalship at Gaugamela*, „The Journal of Hellenic Studies” 1947, No. 67, pp. 77–89.

4<sup>th</sup> century BCE, i.e. before the Hellenistic period<sup>72</sup>. These involved the tactical solutions implemented by Epaminondas in the Battle of Leuctra (371 BCE)<sup>73</sup>, as well as light infantry units (peltasts, archers, and slingers) which were reformed by the Athenian general Iphicrates. Chaniotis also emphasized the importance of new types of weapons in Philip II's Macedonian army and successive tactical innovations that were introduced during Alexander the Great's campaign. The developments in artillery, fortifications, and siege tactics made Hellenistic warfare a highly professional matter<sup>74</sup>.

Hellenistic warfare was modified during battles fought in the west, and the Battle of Bagradas River, which involved a change of military tactics, was a source of inspiration for Hannibal<sup>75</sup>. Instead of organizing the army around a massive phalanx, the defensive formation in the center consisted of infantry units that were well trained in retreating and were able to avoid pressure from the enemy. Brizzi rightly noted that this military tactic was most highly valued by Hannibal (as demonstrated during the Battle of Cannae) because the infantry in the center could maneuver freely without breaking rank, and troops could be additionally placed on the wings<sup>76</sup>. The Romans had learned from their enemies, including Samnites<sup>77</sup> and Hannibal<sup>78</sup>, but they were completely overwhelmed by the Carthaginian tactic during the Battle of Cannae. The only strategy was to avoid direct engagement whenever possible and to counter the threat with a war of maneuver. This strategy was successfully deployed by Fabius Maximus<sup>79</sup>.

The Battle of Cannae demonstrated that Hannibal was not a highly skilled diplomat. Having won the battle, Hannibal was expecting the enemy's emissaries with an act of

<sup>72</sup> A. Chaniotis, *War in the Hellenistic world. A social and cultural history*, Malden 2005, p. 79.

<sup>73</sup> V. Hanson, *Epaminondas, the battle of Leuctra (371 B.C.), and the „revolution“ in Greek battle tactics*, „Classical Antiquity“ 1988, vol. 7/2, pp. 190–207.

<sup>74</sup> A. Chaniotis, *War in the Hellenistic world...*, p. 79.

<sup>75</sup> W.E. Thompson, *The Battle of the Bagradas*, „Hermes“ 1986, vol. 114/1, p. 113, emphasizes Hannibal's maneuvering tactics during the battle, in particular quarter-turns. Military units with different combat potential were placed in specific positions, and this approach was modeled on Greek practices, cf. J.K. Anderson, *Military theory and practice in the age of Xenophon*, Berkeley–Los Angeles 1970, pp. 99–100. The attempt to envelop the enemy was also an innovative strategy during the Battle of Bagradas, cf. Plb. 1.34.1–12. The last Roman troops were surrounded by the cavalry and had to turn around to engage in combat. Those who managed to avoid the elephants were confronted by the Carthaginian phalanx formation, Plb. 1.34.6: „ἐπεὶ δ' οἱ μὲν τὰς ἐσχάτας ἔχοντες τάξεις κυκλοῦμενοι πανταχόθεν ὑπὸ τῶν ἰππέων ἠναγκάζοντο πρὸς τούτους στρεφόμενοι κινδυνεύειν, οἱ δὲ διὰ μέσων τῶν ἐλεφάντων εἰς τὸ πρόσθεν ἐκβιαζόμενοι καὶ κατὰ νότου παριστάμενοι τῶν θηρίων εἰς ἀκέραιον καὶ συντεταγμένην ἐμπίπτοντες τὴν τῶν Καρχηδονίων φάλαγγα διεφθειρόντο“. The aim of the double envelopment tactic was to prevent enemy troops from retreating. This strategy was further perfected by Hannibal during the Italian campaign, cf. M. Wolny, *Hannibal w Italii (218–217 p.n.e.)...*, pp. 186–196.

<sup>76</sup> G. Brizzi, *Carthage et Rome...*, p. 232; cf. W.E. Thompson, *The battle of the Bagradas*, p. 115 points to differences in the technical terminology that was used by Polybius to describe Hannibal's equipment in the Battle of Bagradas and the Battle of Cannae.

<sup>77</sup> M.P. Fronda, *Livy 9.20 and early Roman imperialism in Apulia*, „Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte“ 2006, vol. 55/4, pp. 397–417.

<sup>78</sup> G. Brizzi, *Scipione e Annibale. La guerra per salvare Roma*, Bari 2007, pp. 18, 68.

<sup>79</sup> G.R. Stanton, *Cunctando restituit rem. The tradition about Fabius*, „Antichithon“ 1971, No. 5, pp. 49–56.

capitulation<sup>80</sup>. However, Rome refused to surrender<sup>81</sup>. This event indicates that the Carthaginian concept of war was rooted in Greek ideas and supported by Hellenistic practices. Theoretically, Hannibal could lay siege to Rome to bring the war to a speedy end, but this solution was not feasible in practice<sup>82</sup>. The above does not imply that Hannibal was not familiar with siege tactics – his Greek education had provided him with sufficient knowledge. Hannibal's march on Rome deserves closer attention because it demonstrates that his military knowledge was heavily based on Greek concepts.

The siege of a town is the last strategic act during a military campaign. A siege caused significant losses in the invader's army, and it was a tactic of last resort that was rarely implemented to gain advantage over the enemy<sup>83</sup>. The ancient military art cannot be reduced to techniques deployed in the battlefield or the number of victorious confrontations<sup>84</sup>, and success was largely dependent on an army's ability to surround and conquer a city. Tactical, operational, and strategic deficits in the invader's army had to be considered during the efforts to envelop and besiege a city<sup>85</sup>. A siege is an operational task that has to be adapted to the specific capabilities of the attacking forces.

Hannibal's gained knowledge about siege techniques not only from literature, but also through personal contact with military strategists and practitioners. As previously discussed, Hannibal's intellectual elites were well versed in the Greek art of warfare. During preparations for the Battle of Bagradas River, theoretical knowledge was combined with Carthaginian military traditions. The experience acquired by Hannibal in successive battlefields contributed to a holistic image of military activities in a period that witnessed significant changes in warfare tactics. These changes took place during the Punic wars,

<sup>80</sup> Meanwhile, Hannibal had every opportunity to march on Rome, cf. D. Hoyos, *Maharbal's Bon Mot: authenticity and survival*, „Classical Quarterly” 2000, No. 50, pp. 610–614; K. Zimmermann, *Rom und Karthago*, Darmstadt 2005, pp. 68–69.

<sup>81</sup> D. Hoyos, *What kind of genius?*, pp. 176–177.

<sup>82</sup> Hannibal's chances of besieging Rome are discussed by R. Bossi, *La guerra annibalica in Italia da Cannae al Metauro*, „Studi e documenti di storia e dritto” 1889, No. 9, pp. 303–416; L. Halkin, *Hannibal ad portas!*, „Les Etudes Classiques” 1934, No. 3, pp. 417–457; L. Laurenzi, *Perchè Annibale non assediò Roma. Considerazioni archeologiche*, [in:] *Studi Annibalici. Atti del Convegno svoltosi a Cortona – Tuoro sul Trasimeno – Perugia (ottobre 1961)*, Cortona 1964, pp. 141–152; J.F. Lazenby, *Was Maharbal right*, [in:] *The second Punic war. A Reappraisal*, eds. T. Cornell, J.F. Lazenby, P. Sabin, London 1996, pp. 39–48. For more information about Hannibal's military equipment, refer to M. Wolny, *Equitum peditumque idem longe primus erat. Uwagi o sprzęcie oblężniczym Hannibala*, „Kwartalnik Historii Nauki i Techniki” 2022, vol. 67/2, pp. 99–112.

<sup>83</sup> C. Wescher, *La Poliorcétique des Grecs*, Paris 1867; Y. Garlan, *Recherches de poliorcétique grecque*, Paris 1974; E. Will, *Le territoire, la ville et la poliorcétique grecque*, „Revue historique” 1975, No. 253, pp. 297–318; M. Launey, *Recherches sur les armées hellénistiques. Reimpression avec addenda et mise à jour en postface par Y. Garlan, P. Gauthier and C. Orrioux*, Paris 1987, pp. 202–244; D. Baatz, *Poliorcetica*, „Der Neue Pauly” 2001, No. 10, cols. 16–21.

<sup>84</sup> P. Sabin, *The mechanics of battle in the second Punic war*, [in:] *The second Punic war*, ed. T. Cornell, B. Rankov, P. Sabin, London 1996, pp. 59–80.

<sup>85</sup> J.P. Roth, *The logistics of the Roman army at war (264 B.C. – A.D. 235)*, Leiden–Boston–Köln 1999, p. 314.

and they were heavily influenced by Hellenistic warfare strategies<sup>86</sup>. However, these circumstances should be examined with great caution because many historical sources tend to exaggerate Hannibal's ability to implement military innovations<sup>87</sup>.

Siege warfare was the subject of many theoretical deliberations in antiquity, and *politikia* as a separate domain of "practical science" attracted the interest of Aeneas Tacticus. His treatise on the best methods of defending a fortified city contributed to the popularization of knowledge about siege warfare<sup>88</sup>. His work is particularly valuable because it was backed by personal experience. Aeneas' experience with warfare was described by Xenophon<sup>89</sup>. According to Hans Delbrück, Aeneas' treatise was the first comprehensive work on military theory that was free of poetic inconsistencies and focused directly on practical matters<sup>90</sup>. Dana Dinu noted that Aeneas made references to numerous historical events that are difficult to identify. Only twenty events have been dated, and they indicate that Aeneas reported on events that had occurred between 700 and 360 BCE. Aeneas focused only on siege events in Greek cities that were useful for building military theories. He analyzed the defense strategies deployed in each event and formulated specific guidelines for conducting military operations<sup>91</sup>.

Therefore, it is not surprising that Aeneas' treaties attracted the interest of Cineas, a talented and well-educated man from Thessaly who provided King Pyrrhus with advice on diplomatic and military matters<sup>92</sup>. Cineas compiled Aeneas' military manuals into a single compendium of knowledge which was probably presented to Pyrrhus. In his letter to Lucius Papirius Paetus, Cicero emphasized that his friend had extensive knowledge of military theory which he had probably acquired by studying Cineas' compendium (*Plane*

<sup>86</sup> G. Brizzi, *Carthage et Rome...*, p. 232

<sup>87</sup> The above can be attributed mainly to war propaganda, in particular Roman historians' efforts to portray Hannibal as a commander who was guided by military dishonesty, cf. E. Burck, *Einführung in die Dritte Dekade des Livius*, Heidelberg 1950, p. 75; M. Wolny, *Studia nad statusem i kompetencjami dowódców kartagińskich...*, pp. 81–95.

<sup>88</sup> E. Schwartz, *Aineias*, [in:] *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumwissenschaft* I, Stuttgart 1927, cols. 1019–1021.

<sup>89</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 7.3.1: „περὶ μὲν δὴ Φλειασίων, ὡς καὶ πιστοὶ τοῖς φίλοις ἐγένοντο καὶ ἄλκιμοι ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ διετέλεσαν, καὶ ὡς πάντων σπανίζοντες διέμενον ἐν τῇ συμμαχίᾳ, εἰρηται. σχεδὸν δὲ περὶ τούτων τὸν χρόνον Αἰνέας Στυμφάλιος, στρατηγὸς τῶν Ἀρκάδων γεγενημένος, νομίσας οὐκ ἀνεκτῶς ἔχειν τὰ ἐν τῷ Σικυῶνι, ἀναβὰς σὺν τῷ ἑαυτοῦ στρατεύματι εἰς τὴν ἀκρόπολιν συγκαλεῖ τῶν Σικυωίων τῶν τε ἔνδον ὄντων τοὺς κρατίστους καὶ τοὺς ἄνευ δόγματος ἐκπεποκκότας μετεπέμπετο”. See also: J.K. Anderson, *Military theory and practice in the age of Xenophon*, Los Angeles 1970.

<sup>90</sup> H. Delbrück, *Warfare in antiquity. History of the art of war*, vol. 1 (reprint), London 1990, p. 163. H. Delbrück's research was examined by W. Deist, *Hans Delbrück, Militärhistoriker und Publizist*, „Militär-geschichtliche Mitteilungen” 1998, No. 57, pp. 371–383.

<sup>91</sup> D. Dinu, *Ancient Greek military theory and practice. Aeneas Tacticus* (I), International Conference Knowledge-based Organization 23/2, 2017, p. 284.

<sup>92</sup> F. Stähelin, *Kineas* No. 3, RE 11.1, Stuttgart 1921, col. 473–475; P. Lévêque, *Pyrrhos*, Paris 1957, pp. 289–291; F. Sandberger, *Prosopographie zur Geschichte des Pyrrhos*, Stuttgart 1970 (Diss.), pp. 119–129; M. Wolny, *Metus Pyrrhicus. Rzeczywistość i historiografia*, „Studia Antiquitatis et Medii Aevi Inchantis” 2019, No. 4, pp. 31–33.

*nesciebam te tam peritum esse rei militaris. Pyrrhi te libros et Cineae video lectitasse*)<sup>93</sup>. Hannibal held Pyrrhus in high esteem and was inspired by his tactical skills, which suggests that the knowledge conveyed by the military compendium must have also reached the Carthaginian general<sup>94</sup>. In addition, Carthaginian commanders were exposed to Greek military concepts during formal and informal training. There is no direct evidence to indicate that Hannibal read Aenae's manuals, but Nepos' claim (*litterarum Graecarum usus est doctore*)<sup>95</sup> that Hannibal received his Greek education from Sosylus, a historian with an extensive knowledge of military strategies, suggests that Hannibal was most probably familiar with Aenae's compendium.

An important lesson that follows from observations of military operations is that siege tactics not only weakened the defense potential, but also the morale of the attacked party. This outcome could be particularly desirable for Hannibal who intended to reinforce the propaganda surrounding his image as an effective military leader<sup>96</sup>. In addition, a siege facilitated negotiations aiming to achieve a truce or conclude a treaty of surrender. The Greeks had many such experiences, including during the Peloponnesian War<sup>97</sup>.

Numerous siege strategies were developed, and the repertoire of military tactics had to be well adapted to the army's logistic capabilities and local terrain conditions. Fortified cities were attacked from the top with the use of ladders and siege towers. Massive frontal attacks were also staged to break open the masonry walls or gates of fortified cities, and special machinery, in particular battering rams, were developed for this purpose<sup>98</sup>. Fire was set to fortified walls and wooden elements, and one of the earliest flamethrowers in history was described by Thucydides in his account of the Peloponnesian War<sup>99</sup>. The enemy also dug tunnels under fortified walls to enter the city or to damage load-bearing structures<sup>100</sup>. These methods required heavy equipment that was not widely available or easily produced, which is why other tactics were more frequently deployed. Encirclement was a popular siege strategy aiming to cut off supplies to the city. The resulting hunger and internal strife would force the city to capitulate. The invaders also worked with trai-

<sup>93</sup> Cic. *Ad fam.* 9.25.1 (*ad Paetum*); F. Sandberger, *Prosopographie...*, p. 120; D. Dinu, *Ancient Greek military theory...*, p. 285.

<sup>94</sup> Liv. 34.14.9; App. *Syr.* 10.38; Plut. *Flam.* 21.1–4; G. Brizzi, *Scipione e Annibale...*, pp. 258–260.

<sup>95</sup> Nep. *Hann.* 13.3.

<sup>96</sup> According to Hellenistic military practice, a siege was a significant achievement also for reasons of propaganda, P. Wheatley, *A floruit of Poliorcetics. The siege of Rhodes 305/304 BC.*, „Anabasis. Studia Classica et Orientalia” 2016, No. 7, pp. 43–70. Urban centers were used by Hellenistic rulers and monarchies to prepare for military action, cf. J. Ma, *Antiochos III and the cities of Western Asia Minor*, Oxford 1999, pp. 82–94.

<sup>97</sup> G.L. Cawkwell, Thucydides' judgement of Periclean strategy, „Yale Classical Studies” 1975, No. 24, pp. 53–70.

<sup>98</sup> D. Baatz, *Town walls and defensive weapon*, [in:] *Roman urban defences in the West*, eds. J. Maloney, B. Hopley, London 1983, pp. 136–140; M. Wolny, *Equitum peditumque idem longe primus...*, pp. 105–107.

<sup>99</sup> Thuc. 4.100.2–4.

<sup>100</sup> Cf. Liv. 21.14.2.

tors, took advantage of the lack of unanimity in the besieged city, or simulated military retreat<sup>101</sup>.

Hannibal's military operations suggest that the Carthaginian general was familiar with these tactics. The siege of Saguntum indicates that Hannibal had mastered the use of siege towers (*turris*)<sup>102</sup> and battering rams (*aries*)<sup>103</sup> to break open fortified walls. According to Appian, Hannibal resorted to a technique known as περιτειχισμός<sup>104</sup> during the siege of Saguntum. Hannibal's forces dug a ditch (ἀποταφρεύω) and erected siege towers (φρούριοι)<sup>105</sup> around (περιθέω) the city, which clearly suggests that these military tactics were based on Greek and Hellenistic practices. The report on Hannibal's siege of the city of Casilinum was largely distorted to fit the Roman narrative. Facts were concealed, and descriptions of military operations were exaggerated. However, the conquest of Casilinum demonstrated that Hannibal was not enthusiastic about siege operations, despite that he had the required knowledge. After the Battle of Cannae, Hannibal's main goal was to weaken Rome's strategic potential and provoke the enemy to engage in open combat. Carthaginian forces practically annihilated the Roman army in the city, and this battle cemented Hannibal's reputation as one of the greatest tacticians in antiquity<sup>106</sup>.

The strategies deployed by Hannibal after his victory in the Battle of Cannae suggest that the general had a rudimentary knowledge of military tactics that enabled him to overcome logistic challenges, supply chain issues, and other problems that were essential to ensure the army's survival. The strategies and tactical operations deployed in combat situations were rooted in Greek military theory and practice, and they were supplemented with native and Hellenistic practices<sup>107</sup>. Hannibal's successive conquests also indicate that in addition to terrestrial operations, the Carthaginian general was also well versed

<sup>101</sup> Front. *Strat.* 3.11.1–5.

<sup>102</sup> Liv. 21.11.7: „Ipse Hannibal qua turris mobilis omnia munimenta urbis superans altitudine agebatur hortator aderat”.

<sup>103</sup> Liv. 21.12.2. Mahrabal used such tools (*tribus arietibus*) to break down fortified walls, cf. M. Wolny, *Mahrabal – poddowódca kartagiński w wojsku Hannibala (219–216/15 p.n.e.)*, „Echa Przeszłości” 2005, vol. 6, pp. 10–11.

<sup>104</sup> App. *Ib.* 10.39: „καὶ τῆς ἐπιούσης νυκτὸς παντὶ τῶ στρατῶ τὸν Ἴβηρα διαβάς τὴν χώραν ἐπόρθει καὶ τῇ πόλει μηχανήματα ἐφίστη”. These strategies and techniques were not described in great detail by Appian, cf. L.V. Pitcher, *Appian, [in:] Space in ancient Greek literature. Studies in ancient Greek narrative*, ed. I.J.F. de Jong, Leiden–Boston 2012, pp. 219–233, including during the Roman conquest of Jerusalem in 70 BCE, cf. Joseph. *BJ* 5.51–135, 258–361, 446–524; 6.5–32, 54–80, 149–168; Cass Dio, 65.4.1–7.2; Tac. *Hist.* 5.11–13; D.B. Campbell, *Aspects of Roman siegecraft*, Glasgow 2002 (Diss.), p. 101.

<sup>105</sup> For more information about strategies that were used to break down fortified walls, see App. *Ib.* 87.375–380; G.L. Cheesman, *Numantia*, „Journal of Roman Studies” 1911, No. 1, pp. 180–186.

<sup>106</sup> M. Wolny, *Kartagińskie oblężenie Kasylinum (216/215 p.n.e.) – rzeczywistość historyczna a arkania antycznych przekazów literackich*, „Echa Przeszłości” 2020, vol. 21/1, pp. 9–33.

<sup>107</sup> Hannibal's use of elephants in military tactics was also based on Hellenistic practices, cf. M.B. Charles, P. Rhodan, *Magister Elephantorum. A reappraisal of Hannibal's use of elephants*, „Classical World” 2007, No. 100, pp. 363–389.



in naval warfare. Historical sources provide a vivid account of Hannibal's cunning plan during a naval battle fought against King Eumenes II<sup>108</sup>.

## Conclusions

Hannibal's military activity was examined based on an analysis of Greek and Roman literature. The topic of war attracted considerable interest from Greek and Hellenistic scholars. In Greek historiography, military conflict was the key motif in the work of numerous historians and annalists, including Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon. In the Hellenistic period, the history of military events was narrated by Polybius who relied on the reports of other Greek historians and Roman annalists<sup>109</sup>, many of whom had a hostile attitude towards Hannibal. Livy and Roman historical avant-gardes adopted a similar approach. Hannibal's portrayal in historical annals and literature was largely based on Greek models, and historians relied on historiographic instruments to paint a portrait of a figure with certain features of a Greek leader. Hannibal's ideas and bold decisions testify to his intellect and ingenuity, and historical accounts clearly demonstrate that his military strategies went beyond the Roman concept of *bellum iustum*. For this reason, the term *Punica fides* was equated with the concept of *Graeca fides* in the historical narrative. The fact that these concepts were relativized indicates that Hannibal was not entirely free of the negative attributes that were generally associated with the Greeks and whose perception gradually changed due to Rome's experiences gained during the Second Punic War.

The potential routes of transfer of Greek warfare theories, which continued to guide Hannibal's operations during his military career, were described in this study. Hannibal's education and early experiences were supervised by Punic intellectual elites in North Africa, but Greek influences also left a visible mark on the state policy of Carthage and Carthaginian commanders. There is no doubt that Greek military theories were planted on Carthaginian soil through contact with powerful dynasties, including the Ptolemaic Kingdom, the Antigonids, and the Seleucid Empire, in the Hellenistic period. The conveyed knowledge had many practical applications, and it was expanded in an era of rapid military advancements.

The article also demonstrated that Hannibal's military command received substantial personal support from the members of Greek intellectual elites who provided the general with professional advice. Hannibal's views on the art of war were significantly influenced by Silenus and Sosylus, and an analysis of historical sources revealed clear differences between these figures. Silenus was responsible for the political propaganda, and he re-

<sup>108</sup> Iust. 32.4.6; Nep. Hann. 10.2.

<sup>109</sup> J. Bonquet, *Polybius on the critical evaluation of historians*, „Ancient Society” 1982–1983, vol. 13–14, pp. 277–291.

lied on Greek literary traditions to build Hannibal's image and present his heroic achievements to a broader audience. In turn, Sosylus imparted theoretical knowledge to Hannibal by making skillful use of his erudition and intellectual upbringing. These differences clearly indicate that Hannibal's intellectual milieu was diverse and served multiple functions. Hannibal probably also obtained knowledge and skills through self-education by following the example of his role models. The general's relations with Greek intellectual elites suggest that Hannibal was familiar with the literature on the art of war. It appears that in line with Greek military standards, attempts were made to educate and train Hannibal so that he could eclipse other commanders in terms of ingenuity and, above all, military success. Greek traditions also served as a tool for creating a heroic image of the Carthaginian general.

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### Greek elements in Hannibal's military education

**Summary:** The aim of this article was to identify Greek elements in Hannibal's education which influenced the military strategies and tactics deployed by the hero of the Second Punic War (218-201 BCE). The present analysis was conducted on the assumption that Hannibal's portrayal in historical sources was consistent with the Greek historiographic canon, which is why the Carthaginian general was depicted as a figure who possessed certain attributes of a Greek commander. However, literary descriptions of Hannibal were not entirely free of the negative attributes that were generally associated with the Greeks. These narratives served a specific political purpose, and Hannibal's negative character traits were hyperbolized as a result of Rome's experiences gained during the Second Punic War. For this reason, the term *Punica fides* was conflated with the concept of *Graeca fides* in the historical narrative. Greek military theories had been planted on Carthaginian soil through contact with powerful dynasties in the Hellenistic period. The imparted knowledge had many practical applications, and it was expanded in an era of rapid military advancements. As a result, the representatives of Greek intellectual elites, including Silenus and Sosylus, played an important role in Hannibal's military education. The fact that Greek intellectuals advised Hannibal indicates that the general's intellectual milieu was diverse and served multiple functions. Hannibal probably also obtained knowledge and skills through self-education by following the example of role models such as Alexander the Great and King Pyrrhus. The general's relations with Greek intellectual elites suggest that Hannibal was familiar with the literature on the art of war. It appears that in line with Greek military standards, attempts were made to educate and train Hannibal so that he could eclipse other commanders in terms of ingenuity and, above all, military success. Greek traditions also served as a tool for creating a heroic image of the Carthaginian general.

**Keywords:** Hellenistic period, Carthage, Greek historiography, Hannibal, military issues

### Griechische Elemente in Hannibals militärischer Ausbildung

**Zusammenfassung:** Ziel des Artikels ist es, den Transferweg des griechischen Denkens zu finden, der sich später in den konkreten militärischen Handlungen des Feldherrn Hannibal, des Helden des Zweiten Punischen Krieges (218–201 v. Chr.), widerspiegelt. Der Autor des Artikels geht von der These aus, dass die Konzeption des Bildes von Hannibal den Gesetzmäßigkeiten der griechischen Geschichtsschreibung nahe kommt und der Karthager daher als eine Figur erscheint, die in gewisser Weise die Eigenschaften eines griechischen Feldherrn aufweist. Darüber hinaus nimmt Hannibal die negativen Eigenschaften der Griechen an. Diese Art der Stigmatisierung ist nicht zufällig, und die pejorativen Züge des Karthagerbildes wurden durch die Erfahrungen der Römer während des Zweiten Punischen Krieges hyperbolisiert. Auf narrativer Ebene hat dies wahrscheinlich zur Folge, dass die vielsagende *Punica fides* mit dem Begriff der *Graeca fides* gleichgesetzt wird. Die hellenistische Periode und die Kontakte Karthagos mit den dortigen Mächten sorgten für die Einübung und den Fortbestand der griechischen Militärkunst, die angesichts der Dynamik der Epoche auch praktisch nützlich und kreativ bereichert wurde. In der Praxis drückte sich diese Situation in der Anwesenheit von Vertretern der griechischen Elite in Hannibals Gefolge aus, wofür die Figuren von Silenos und Sosylos beispielhaft sind. Die exemplarische Darstellung ihrer Anwesenheit in Hannibals intellektuellem Kreis verdeutlicht die Vielschichtigkeit und den Facettenreichtum des unmittelbaren Umfelds des Karthagens, ohne jedoch den Prozess der Selbsterziehung durch die Nachahmung der Vorbilder des punischen Anführers – wie Alexander der Große oder Pyrrhus – auszuschließen. Außerdem scheinen Hannibals Verbindungen zum griechischen Gedankengut, die in seinem intellektuellen Umfeld vermittelt wurden, die Wahl der Lektüre einschlägiger Schriften mit militärischem Inhalt durch den Feldherrn beeinflusst zu haben. Die Vorbereitung Hannibals, der anderen Männern in seinen Ideen überlegen sein und diese Überlegenheit vor allem im Handeln zum Ausdruck bringen sollte, scheint aus der Nachahmung griechischer Maßstäbe für militärisches Handeln resultiert zu haben. Eine solche Koinzidenz dient überdies dazu, ein heroisches Bild des karthagischen Feldherrn zu schaffen.

**Schlüsselwörter:** Hellenistische Zeit, Karthago, griechische Geschichtsschreibung, Hannibal, militärische Fragen

### Greckie elementy militarnej edukacji Hannibala

**Summary:** Celem artykułu jest próba odnalezienia drogi transferu myśli greckiej, znajdującej późniejsze odzwierciedlenie w konkretnych działaniach militarnych podejmowanych przez dowódcę wojskowego Hannibala – bohatera drugiej wojny punickiej (218–201 p.n.e.). Autor artykułu wychodzi od tezy, że koncepcja portretu Hannibala jest bliska prawidłom historiografii greckiej, dlatego też Kartagińczyk jawi się jako postać do pewnego stopnia wykazująca cechy dowódcy greckiego. Poza tym Hannibal zyskuje negatywne cechy Greków. Tego rodzaju napiętnowanie nie jest przypadkowe, a pejoratywne cechy wizerunku Kartagińczyka ulegały hiperbolizacji w związku z doświadczeniami Rzymian podczas drugiej wojny punickiej. Prawdopodobną implikacją tej sytuacji na płaszczyźnie narracyjnej jest zrównoważenie

wymownej frazy *Punica fides* z pojęciem *Graeca fides*. Okres hellenistyczny i kontakty Kartaginy z tamtejszymi potęgami zapewniały zaszczerpianie i komfortowe trwanie militarnej nauki greckiej, która była również praktycznie użyteczna i twórczo wzbogacana z uwagi na dynamikę epoki. W praktyce sytuacja ta przekładała się na obecność przedstawicieli elit greckich w otoczeniu Hannibala, czego przykładem są postaci Silenosa i Sosylosa. Egzemplifikacja ich obecności jako części intelektualnego kręgu Hannibala uwidacznia wielowątkowość i wielozadaniowość najbliższego otoczenia Kartagińczyka, nie wykluczając jednocześnie procesu samokształcenia poprzez naśladowanie wzorów postaci, które pozostawały autorytetami dla punickiego wodza – jak Aleksander Wielki czy Pyrrus. Poza tym związki Hannibala z myślą grecką transmitowaną w otaczającym go kręgu intelektualnym wydają się wspierać dokonywaną przez dowódcę lekturę adekwatnych pism podejmujących treści militarne. Przygotowanie Hannibala, który z zamiarem ma przewyższać w swoich pomysłach innych ludzi, a nade wszystko dawać wyraz tej wyższości w działaniu wydaje się wynikać z imitowania greckich standardów aktywności militarnej. Taka koincydencja służy nadto kreowaniu heroicznego wizerunku kartagińskiego dowódcy.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Czasy hellenistyczne, Kartagina, historiografia grecka, Hannibal, kwestie militarne