

HANNO

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Fortuna.

Bibliography.

I. Hannonis Periplus.

Translation.

1. Conradus Gesnerus.

Commentary.

a. Conradus Gesnerus.

Fortuna

The voyage which Hanno, a native of Carthage, took along the coast of West Africa “when the power of Carthage flourished” (i.e., before 200 B.C.) is known to us through two categories of independent sources.

To the first category belongs the Hannonis Periplus, an undated Greek text, describing the voyage from beginning to end. The complete title, Ἀννώνος Καρχηδονίων βασιλέως περιπλοῦς τῶν υπέρ τὰς Ἡρακλείδεις στῆλας Αιμυκῶν τῆς γῆς μετώ, ὅν καὶ ἀνέβηκε ἐν τῷ τοῦ Κρόνου τεμένει δηλοῦντα τάδε (“The Sea-Voyage of Hanno, King of the Carthagians, around the Libyan Regions of the Earth beyond the Pillars of Heracles, which he also set up in the shrine of Cronos, stating as follows”) indicates that this work is a Greek translation of a Punic text, composed by Hanno himself, which was engraved and kept inside the temple of Baal-Cronos in Carthage. At present only two manuscript witnesses are known: Heidelberg, Universitätsbibliothek, Pal. gr. 398, s. IX, fols. 55r–56r and its fourteenth-century apograph, Mount Athos, Vatopedon Monastery, 655 + London, British Library, Add. ms. 19391 + Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, suppl. grec 443A.

The second category of sources consists of al-


2. Pal. gr. 398 remained in Byzantium until the fifteenth century. It then formed part of the collection of Greek manuscripts acquired in the 1430s by Cardinal Johannes Stojković of Ragusa (modern Dubrovnik) and bequeathed by him in 1443 to the Dominican Convent of Basel. Hieronymus Froben, the famous Basel printer, obtained from the convent several manuscripts which he used for his editions. Those manuscripts which were not returned to the convent were presented by Froben to Otto Heinrich, Palatine Elector and founder of the Palatine Library in Heidelberg. Pal. gr. 398 was listed in the Palatine Library catalogue attributed to Friedrich Syburg (d. 1596). In 1623 this codex was brought by Leo Allatius to the Vatican Library; from there it went in 1798 to the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris and returned in 1816 to Heidelberg.

The apograph was discovered in 1838 by E. Zacharià in the Vatopedon Monastery on Mount Athos where the main portion of the manuscript is still preserved. In the 1840s a number of leaves were detached and came into the possession of the British Museum, now the British Library (21 folios, among them Hannonis Periplus), and of
lusions made by several Greek and Latin authors to various episodes and accounts of Hanno’s voyage. The oldest testimony concerning a district outside the Pillars of Heracles, part of which burns continuously and part only at night, is cited in De mirabilibus auscultationibus 37, a pseudo-Aristotelian treatise composed ca. 150 B.C. (?). In the first century A.D., Pliny the Elder (Naturalis historia 2.169, 5.8, 6.200) and Pomponius Mela (De chorographia 3.90, 93) include Hanno as a source in their descriptions of the coast of West Africa, as does Solinus (Collectanea rerum memorabilium 24, 56), a geographer of the third century A.D., who relied heavily on Pliny. Arrianus (second century A.D.) gives in his Ἰνδικῇ 43.12 a fairly long extract concerning the end of the expedition, and Athenaeus of Naucratis (third century A.D.) provides in Deipnosophistae 3.83c some ironical reflections on Hanno’s wanderings. There is also a corrupt text by Palaiphatos (150 B.C.?) with a mention of a “river Hanno” (Περὶ ἀποστῶν 31).

The Hannonis Periplius and these indirect sources reveal diverse traditions. Although they agree on the reality of Hanno’s voyage along the coast of West Africa and his discovery of extraordinary places, they are opposed on several points and leave some problems unsolved. Thus, there are discrepancies concerning the termination of the expedition. Accordingly, in some instances Hanno is forced to retrace his course because of a shortage of supplies (Periplius 18; Pomponius Mela, De chorographia 3.90) or unbearable traveling conditions (Arrianus, Ἰνδικῇ 43.12); other authorities, however, credit the Carthaginian admiral with the circumnavigation of Africa (Pliny, Naturalis historia 2.169). It should also be noted that the indirect testimonies cite elements pertaining to the marvelous, e.g., Gorgons, Amazons, Goat-Pans, and Satyrs, which are lacking in the text of the Periplius. Finally, the sources disagree on the geographical location, the identity, and the inhabitants of some of the ports of call. Given, then, such conflicting views, it is easy to understand why Pliny the Elder (Naturalis historia 5.8) had his doubts about the authenticity of the entire account of Hanno’s trip which circulated during his own lifetime.

In the Middle Ages Hanno’s voyage was known only through the influence of Pliny the Elder on the encyclopedic tradition. The information which Pliny had gathered about Africa from Hanno’s account on the Gorgades Islands (Naturalis historia 6.200) was reproduced, sometimes without reference to Hanno, by Isidore of Seville (ca. 560–636), Dicuilus (fl. 825), Hugh of St. Victor (ca. 1096–1141), Vincent of Beauvais (ca. 1190–1264), Petrus Alliacus (1350–1420), and Domenico Silvestri (ca. 1335–1411).

Not until the Renaissance did attention come to be focused directly on Hanno’s voyage and the account of his travels. At first they were referred to and commented on through the indirect tradition: in fact, the first allusions to Hanno in the Renaissance are to be found in connection with the study of Pomponius Mela and Solinus in the 1520s. In 1533 Sigismundus Gellenius published at Basel a volume containing a number of geographical writings, including the editio princeps

5. Pomponius Mela, ibid. 3.93.
6. Pliny, Naturalis historia 5.7; Pomponius Mela, ibid. 3.90–93.
8. See J. Camers, In C. Iuli Solini Polyhistora Enarrationes, Additus eiusdem Cameritis Index, tum literarum ordine, tum rerum notabilium copia percommodus studiois ([Vienna, ca. 1520]), 335; J. Vadianus, Pomponii Melae De orbis situ libri tres, accuratissimé emendati, una cum commentariis J. V. Helvetii castigationibus, et multis in locis auctioribus factis (Bazel, 1522), 214.
of the *Periplus* based on Heidelberg Pal. gr. 398 (which was available at that time in Basel). Giambattista Ramusio’s Italian translation of Gelenuis’ Greek text of the *Periplus* was published (Venice, 1550) in his collection of travel accounts dealing with Africa. This translation, accompanied by Ramusio’s comments (also in Italian), had a wider influence than did the *editio princeps*. In its turn, the Italian version was translated into French by Jean Temporal in 1556 and into English by Samuel Purchas in 1625. Furthermore, Ramusio’s Italian commentary was also translated by Temporal, summarized by Purchas, and used in later analyses of Hanno’s voyage.

Prior to the seventeenth century there is only one Latin translation of the *Periplus* and only one Latin commentary. Both are the work of Conradus Gesnerus, and they were published in 1559 at Zurich in the same volume by his cousin Andreas Gesnerus. Conradus Gesnerus’ translation and commentary owe nothing to the Italian translation and commentary. Abraham Berkelius and John Hudson included the text of the 1559 edition in their respective editions of Stephanus Byzantinus (Leiden, 1674) and the minor Greek geographers (Oxford, 1698). The 1559 edition was also frequently referred to in studies dealing with the geography of Antiquity.

Seventeenth-century Latin translations and commentaries devoted to Hanno include an unfinished translation and commentary undertaken by Lucas Holstenius ca. 1630 (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Barb. gr. 107, pp. 213–241) as well as Johannes Jacobus Müller’s translation and commentary prepared as a dissertation under the supervision of Johannes Henricus Boecler and submitted to the University of Strassburg (1661). Samuel Bochart’s Latin commentary on a large part of the Greek version of the *Periplus* comprised part of his *Geographia sacra* (1646). Isaac Vossius also intended to write a commentary (*Observationes*), to judge from copious remarks which he made in his other works about Hanno’s voyage, and it is to be regretted that he could not carry out his project. Finally, mention must be made of a dissertation by Henry Dodwell published in 1698, in which the question of the authenticity of the various versions of the account that have come down to us is systematically and thoroughly discussed.

These editors, translators, and commentators of the sixteenth and seventeenth century used the same texts and documents that are available to us today. They studied the *Periplus* and the indirect tradition with great attention and submitted both to critical evaluation. They were aware of the difficulties raised by the disparity and the unreliability of the sources; they found it difficult to draw the itinerary on a map; they were unable to agree on the date and on the final stage of the journey; they were aware of the particular color the Greek version had given to the account and in the end expressed their doubts about the authenticity, if not of the voyage itself, at least of the texts which related it.

Some geographers, chroniclers of the Great


Discoveries (i.e., the discovery of the New World and the exploration of the African coasts), and intellectuals closely related to political circles and the business world had an interest in Hanno’s voyage and account and viewed them in an exclusively contemporary perspective. They (e.g., Alvise Cadamosto, Luis del Mármol y Carvajal) saw in Hanno the remarkable predecessor of Vasco da Gama, Pedro Álvares Cabral, and other Portuguese discoverers, or they (e.g., François de Belleforest, Abraham Ortelius, Giovanni Antonio Magini) resorted to the *Periplus* as a source of information on the ancient state of Africa, or they (e.g., Hugo Grotius, Jan de Laet, Georg Hornius) involved Hanno’s voyage and the other navigations made in Antiquity in the controversies that the colonization of America and the African coast had aroused. In these controversies the fact of ocean navigations in Antiquity and the presence of Greek and Roman sailors along the African coast might deprive the Portuguese and the Spaniards of their title to occupancy of the African or American coast, or they could be used to prove the European origin of the American Indians.

Scholars involved in the colonial venture discussed the navigations of Antiquity in a way appropriate to individual circumstances. But this was no longer the case after the allotment of the new colonies among European States. On the other hand, from the eighteenth century to the present day, editions, translations, and commentaries of the *Periplus* have steadily grown in number; the most recent translation (in Spanish) was published in 1996. Moreover, Hanno’s account continues to attract a varied audience including philologists, historians of Antiquity, sailors, and experts in African matters who devote regular attention to the problems already encountered by many scholars of the Renaissance and the seventeenth century. Such persistent interest reveals how people’s imagination, both past and present, has been quickened by the powerful dream of an antique adventurer, whose epic achievements still convey a sense of mystery.

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II. Textual Transmission


III. Studies of Hanno’s Voyage and Account


I. HANNONIS PERIPLUS

Translation

1. Conradus Gesnerus

In 1559 Andreas Gesnerus published at Zurich in the same volume, without an epistola ad lec-torem, two unrelated works about Africa: the Latin translation by Johannes Florianus of Johannes Leo Africanus’ treatise Africæ descriptio and the Latin translation by Conradus Gesnerus of the account of Hanno’s voyage.

The Africæ descriptio was completed in 1526
by Johannes Leo Africanus (John Leo the African, actually al-Hasan ibn Muhammad al Wazzān), a Muslim native of Granada, who had traveled in North Africa and in the Near East. The original text, written in Arabic or in Italian (there is no consensus on this point), is lost. It was first published in Italian by Giambattista Ramusio in his collection of travel accounts dealing with Africa (Venice, 1550). The Latin translation by Johannes Florianus, rector of the college of Antwerp, was first published in 1556 at Antwerp. Neither the text nor the dedication addressed to Melchior Schetus Corvinus, treasurer of Antwerp, was altered in the 1559 edition. There are, however, some minor changes: the Index rerum memorabilium was amplified and titles were revised. (On Johannes Leo Africanus and his Africæ descriptio, see O. Zhiri, L'Afrique au miroir de l'Europe: fortunes de Jean Léon l'Africain à la Renaissance [Geneva, 1991].)

Conradus Gesnerus’ translation of the Hannonis Periplus appears, with separate pagination, at the end of the 1559 edition. The dedicatory letter is addressed to Johannes du Choul, a French naturalist, whose Pilati Montis in Gallia descriptio was published by Conradus Gesnerus together with his own treatise De raris et admirandis herbis (Zurich, 1555). In this letter Gesnerus explains that he undertook the translation at the request of his cousin Andreas Gesnerus who wished to complement the edition of the Africæ descriptio. Conradus Gesnerus chose Hanno since there was no time for a larger task, and he worked with haste on both the translation and the commentary. Despite such difficult conditions, Gesnerus’ translation of Hanno is accurate and contains only a few minor mistakes. The Latin prose is clever, perhaps too elegant in comparison with the original text.

Dedication (ed. of Zurich, 1559). Inclito genere et virtutibus viro Johanni du Choul Conradus Gesnerus s. p. d. [Inc.]: (p. 3) Cum his diebus patruelis meus Andreas Gesnerus Johannis Leonis Africam suis typis cuderet eique auctarium aliquod novum a me addi contenderet, nec otium ad maiora mihi suppperet, subito Hannonis Navigationem, qua is maximam libycæ orae partem lustravit, dieculæ fere opera, latinam feci, et simul scholia quaedam, nimos quidem festinanter conscripta, adieci. Hunc vero tantillum libellum, vir inculite, in praestantiae tuae nomen veluti tute-lare inscribere non dubitavi... Accipe igitur quicquid hoc et quantulumcumque est libelli, meae erga te observantiae pignus perpetuæ et amoris monumentum summı..... [Expl.]: (p. 4) Vale cum magnifico amplissimoque viro Guilielmo du Choul, regio senatore et Allobrogum praefecto, cuius incomparabilis doctrinae ac diligentiae lucubrationes partim iam vidi, partim summo desiderio expecto, et mecum omnes cultioris literaturæ studiosi, quemadmodum etiam tuas. Iterum vale quam felicissime et me ama. Tiguri Helvetiorum urbe primaria tertio Calend. Februarii. Anno salutiferi partus M. D. LIX.

Hannonis Periplus (ed. of Zurich, 1559). [Inc.]: (p. 5) Placuit Carthaginensibus ut Hanno navigaret extra columnas Herculis, et <urbes> Libyphaenicum (sic) condeter. ... / ... [Expl.]: (p. 9) Feminas tamen cepimus tres quas, cum morden-do et lacerando abducturis reniterentur, occidimus, et pelles eis detractas in Carthagenem rectimus. Neque enim ultra navigavimus, cum anonnadeficeret. Finis.

Editions:
1559, Tiguri (Zurich): per Andream Gesnerum. VD H.532. NUC. BNF; BAV; (CrY; DLC; MnU; RPJCB).
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1698, Oxoniae (Oxford): e Theatro Sheldoniano. With the works of the other minor Greek Geographers, the Greek text of the Periplus, and Conradus Gesnerus’ Latin translation and commentary (with some orthographical changes). BL; BNF; Louvain-la-Neuve, Bibliothèque Générale et des Sciences Humaines.

Biography:
COMMENTARY

a. Conradus Gesnerus

Conradus Gesnerus' short commentary on the Hannonis Periplus was published at Zurich in 1559 together with the translation described in I.1 above. It deals essentially with vocabulary and geographical realia. Gesnerus identifies Hanno, explains the meaning of words and sentences by resorting to other ancient texts (from Herodotus, Pliny the Elder, Arrianus, Ptolemaeus, etc.), and brings together diverse occurrences of the names of places visited by Hanno. Occasionally he is also interested in comparing the Periplus with the indirect tradition: he relies entirely on the text of Heidelberg, Universitätsbibliothek, Pal. gr. 398 and blames Pliny the Elder for departing from its readings.


Editions:
See I.1 above.

Biography:
See I.1 above.