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Hannibal's March and Roman Imperial Space in Livy, *Ab urbe condita*, Book 21

Abstract: Livy's account of Hannibal's march from Spain to Italy in 218 BCE (Liv. 21,21–38) contains well-known geographical inconsistencies. However, the representation of space makes sense in narrative terms, which was, after all, what especially mattered to an audience that did not normally use maps as support for the reading of history. This paper attempts to investigate, first of all, how narrative structure and space interact, and to ask which are the main spatial landmarks which shape the account of the events. Secondly, it examines the symbolic representation of the space crossed by Carthaginians as universal space, through the repeated allusion to Hercules' travels. Moreover, it studies how landscape description, and the re-use of literary *topoi* about places, contribute to single out the Alps as an especially significant, and symbolic, landmark. Finally, it shows how concepts about space can be renegotiated through speeches delivered by characters inside the text, and how this is connected to a meditation on the relationships between space and empire.

Keywords: Livy, space, Second Punic War, Hannibal, landscape

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1 Introduction

Livy's geographical inaccuracy has long been lamented in scholarly research.¹ His vagueness in describing not only distant countries, but also some parts of Italy, as well as his mistakes in the placing of towns or battle sites, have been connected to his lack of first-hand experience, and to his status as an 'armchair historian'

¹ Girod (1982) 1191–1192 quotes some examples of this negative assessment, some of which will be cited in the following footnotes. See also Burck (1971) 37–38.

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who based his own research on previous historiographical accounts.² Especially in the past, such lack of interest in rigorous geographical investigation was seen as one of his main flaws as a historian.³

One of the typical instances of Livy's imprecision in the fields of geography and topography – arguably the best-known instance of all – is the account of Hannibal's march from Spain to Italy in 218 BCE (*Ab urbe condita* 21,21–38).⁴ This long narrative section, placed at the beginning of the so-called Third Decade of the *Ab urbe condita* (i.e. Books 21–30, devoted to the Second Punic War), is as famous for its literary elaboration and emotional impact as it is notorious for the problems it raises for scholars trying to identify the actual route followed by the Carthaginian army. If some problems – like the question of which Alpine pass Hannibal used – were already debated in Antiquity,⁵ Livy's account further complicates the matter because of its serious geographical inconsistencies. It is impossible to arrange the information provided by the historian into a coherent itinerary, and scholars have tried to make sense of it by assuming conflation between different sources and/or misunderstanding of previous accounts.

The spatial development of the journey, however, makes sense on a different level: that of the literary representation of the events. As D. S. Levene has recently pointed out in his study of the Third Decade, what generally mattered for Livy was narrative consistency, not the possibility of recognizing the precise position of a character at a given moment.⁶ If one reads the journey-narrative without looking at a map, and without precise knowledge of the places mentioned, there is no glimpse of anything wrong about the way Livy speaks of the route: an image of space is created in the reader's mind that is coherent on its own terms and in which the different elements stand in precise relationships to each other. Now, it is very important to keep in mind the fact that Livy's audience, in all likelihood, had only a vague notion of the geography of lands they did not know directly and, what is more important, did not use maps as support for the reading of history.⁷

In this paper I aim to investigate some aspects of the particular image of space formed by Livy's narrative of Hannibal's march. The choice of this episode

² Walsh (1963) 138–139 and 157; Girod (1982) 1197–1198. On Livy's working methods and his use of sources cf. e.g. Luce (1977) 139–229; Tränkle (1977); Briscoe (2009); Oakley (2009), with further bibliography.

³ See e.g. Walsh (1963) 157: "Livy's geographical vagueness was a weakness."

⁴ See e.g. Walsh (1963) 154–156; Burck (1971) 37–38; Girod (1982) 1204–1208.

⁵ Cf. Liv. 21,38,5–9.

⁶ Levene (2010) 71–72; cf. Horsfall (1985).

⁷ Levene (2010) 64 and 71–73; Pausch (2011) 130–131. For the limited use of maps in the ancient world cf. Janni (1984); Brodersen (1995).

as an object of investigation is due, first of all, to its abovementioned problematic character in terms of geography: precisely because it diverges from our modern idea of objective and scientific geography, it offers an interesting case-study for observing which different concerns and criteria could govern the arrangement of literary space in a Roman historiographical work so embedded in literary and rhetorical tradition as was Livy's. There is, however, another crucial reason, i.e. the place Hannibal's march occupies in the Third Decade (and in the *Ab urbe condita* as a whole).

The march narrative, taken in its entirety, extends for 18 chapters, from 21,21 to 21,38, with two interruptions at 21,25,1–26,5 and 21,32,1–5.⁸ It is a remarkable example of those narrative units which have been described by, among others, E. Burck as the building blocks with which Livy constructed his history.⁹ Its position in the very middle of Book 21 is connected to one of Livy's recurrent compositional methods, pointed out by T. J. Luce¹⁰ some decades ago: Luce defined this method as "architectonic", and described it as consisting in "placing important and carefully developed episodes at certain preferred points within books or pentads",¹¹ in particular at the beginning, middle and end of each book. Luce's analysis focused, above all, on the Fourth and Fifth Decades, where he was able to identify a tripartite form as the most common structure.¹² Although things are different in the Third Decade (where a tripartite structure seems rather to be the exception),¹³ this kind of narrative arrangement is clearly operating in Book 21, which presents the motives of the war and the capture of Saguntum in its first part (1–20), Hannibal's journey in the middle (21–38), and the two great battles of

8 I have included chapters 21,1–22,4, on the preparations made by Hannibal in Spain, in the narrative, because there is no narrative break after Livy shifts his attention from the Romans to Hannibal in 21,21,1, and because I regard the preparations as being closely connected to the march proper (cf. below, 129–136). For a detailed summary of the narrative, see below, 123–126.

9 The importance of individual episodes ("Einzelzählungen") as the structural units of the *Ab urbe condita* was first pointed out by Witte (1910), who, however, was thinking of shorter, self-contained episodes, marked by a beginning and an end: for example, in the account of Hannibal's crossing of the Alps, he identified four "Einzelzählungen" of this kind (Witte 1910, 398–408). Livy's structuring of his narrative through single episodes was then given extensive treatments by Burck (1962) 53–56 and (1964) 182–190. Both he and Walsh (1963) 178–181 have distinguished between self-contained episodes (inspired by the principle of Aristotelic unity) and more extended events: the latter are usually structured as a sequence of scenes, which constitute the "acts" of an artistic unity. Hannibal's march can be seen as belonging to the second category.

10 Luce (1977) xxvi, 27–28, 33–38, 74, 112–113, 137.

11 Luce (1977) 27.

12 A similar tendency has been identified by Vasaly (2002) 275–290 in the First Decade (although she speaks of a division of books into "two or three major parts", 284).

13 Levene (2010) 25–26.

the Ticinus and Trebia in the last third (39–56, with an insert of events in Sicily at 39–51).¹⁴

Hannibal's march is thus singled out by its very position as one of the main narrative sequences of the book – probably, I would add, *the* main narrative sequence. I here slightly diverge from Levene's analysis, according to which the battle of the Trebia is the “climactic episode” of Book 21, in that it constitutes the culmination of the “main narrative movement” of the book, i.e. Hannibal's attack on Italy.¹⁵ Although it is true that the Trebia constitutes a first halt in that movement, introducing a pause in the action before the renewal of hostilities the following year, the sheer length of the march narrative (compared to the five chapters on the Trebia: 21,52–56) and the uniqueness of its topic (the Trebia is, after all, immediately preceded by the other clash at the Ticinus, which somehow diminishes its force) account for its stronger impact on the reader.

If we consider the narrative function of Hannibal's march with respect to the Third Decade as a whole, we can appreciate its prominent position even better. The Third Decade – a sort of monograph on the Hannibalic War within the *Ab urbe condita*¹⁶ – is carefully arranged through a rich web of internal references, correspondences and symmetries.¹⁷ As has long been pointed out, it is divided into two pentads: the first, dominated by the figure of Hannibal, tells of the initial Carthaginian successes and the beginning of the slow Roman recovery up to a moment when the two sides are in balance (the end of 212 BCE), while the second, in which Scipio Africanus plays the main role, relates the full recovery of Rome up to the final victory at Zama. Several correspondences stress this structure: for example, not only are the first two books (21–22) and the last two (29–30) linked by internal references, but Book 21 also exhibits symmetries with Book 26, the first one of the Second Pentad. The Third Decade as a whole thus has the structure of

14 Chapters 57–63 are devoted to other military operations in Sicily, Etruria and Cisalpine Gaul, and to the end of the civil year.

15 Levene (2010) 27.

16 The “monographic” nature of the Third Decade is made clear by the fact that Livy places some short prefatory remarks at its very beginning, of the kind that, in Livy's own words, historians usually place at the beginning of a whole work; in particular, he speaks about the importance of the topic he is going to deal with: “the most memorable war of all that have ever been fought”. (21,1,1). In this way, the Third Decade is clearly singled out as a well-defined and separate unit in the wider context of Livy's work. This is confirmed by the opening remark of Book 31, which marks the end of the Decade: *Me quoque iuvat, velut ipse in parte laboris ac periculi fuerim, ad finem belli Punici pervenisse* (31,1,1).

17 On the structure of the Third Decade see e.g. Burck (1962) 11–26 and (1971) 22–26; Kraus (1997) 59–61; Levene (2010) 1–81.

an “arc”,¹⁸ which extends from Hannibal’s early victories to the final Roman triumph; Book 21 is one extremity of the narrative arc.

It is especially interesting, for the purposes of this paper, to recognize how this arc is also a spatial one. The First Pentad starts with Hannibal’s invasion of Italy and is dominated by the extension of Carthaginian power. The situation slowly evolves toward a point of balance, which is reached around the end of Book 25;¹⁹ after the Carthaginians’ failed attempt to march on Rome at the beginning of Book 26, Rome regains ground in southern Italy and Spain, then eventually strikes the final blow by moving the war to Africa. It is not chance that some of the abovementioned correspondences between books concern the geographical movement of characters and armies within the space of the narrative. Most importantly, Hannibal’s invasion of Italy in Books 21–22 is balanced by Scipio’s invasion of Africa in 29–30; Hannibal’s march from Spain to Italy in Book 21 corresponds both to Scipio’s journey from Italy to Spain in 26,19,10–14 and to Hannibal’s unsuccessful march on Rome in 26,7–11.²⁰

This spatial movement is closely tied to a recurring motif of the Decade. Livy, following a prominent tradition in Roman thought and literature, represents the Second Punic War as the decisive conflict for world domination.²¹ Accordingly, the Third Decade is the first section of Livy’s work in which the scope of the narrative becomes truly global,²² and in which settings as different as Italy, Africa, Spain, Gaul, Sicily and the realm of Macedonia are to be taken into account at the same time.²³ Hannibal’s march, with its review of different lands and peoples, is a clear signal of that major change in the scope of the narrative.

It thus appears not to be by chance that in *Ab urbe condita* 21,16,4–6, in which the historian relates the reactions in the Roman Senate on receiving news of the approach of the enemy army, he has the *patres* realize that “The Romans would have to fight the whole world, and do so in Italy and before their city walls” (*cum*

18 Cf. Kraus (1997) 59; Levene (2010) 21.

19 Cf. Burck (1962) 18.

20 For a detailed treatment of these correspondences cf. Levene (2010) 15–25.

21 Cf. e.g. 21,16,4–6, quoted below; 29,17,6; 30,32,2. This notion, which one can find in various authors (cf. e.g. Lucr. 3,832–837; Verg. *Aen.* 1,17–20) probably went back to Ennius’ *annales* (cf. my observations in Fabrizi 2012, 153–155, with further bibliography).

22 Although some of the events narrated in the lost Books 11–20 (e.g. the First Punic War) already represented a significant enlargement in the geography of Livy’s work, the scope of the Third Decade, which ranged from Gaul in the north to Africa in the south and from Spain in the west to Greece in the east, was unparalleled in Livy’s previous narrative.

23 For the interactions between annalistic structure and the alternation of the theatres of war cf. Burck (1962) and (1971) 21–46 and Levene (2010) 1–81.

orbe terrarum bellum gerendum in Italia ac pro moenibus Romanis esse).²⁴ “The world” is, in this case, represented by Spain, where the Carthaginians have victoriously fought to impose their own power, and Gaul, whose people will supposedly rally to Hannibal’s side. Obviously, this is not “the world” *stricto sensu*, as the eastern part of the Mediterranean is not yet involved in 218 BCE (although, of course, Livy’s readers know that Philip of Macedonia will join the Carthaginians later, thus creating another military front for Rome); what matters here, however, is the symbolic universal dimension of the conflict. From this point of view, the journey-narrative, placed, as it is, in a prominent position in Livy’s literary construction, represents the moment at which a significant part of “the world” is brought to the reader’s attention and the political implications of it are first outlined.

In all of these respects, I believe that Hannibal’s march can be viewed as an anticipation of some of the main notions concerning space that will figure prominently throughout the Third Decade. Starting from these premises, the remaining part of my paper will investigate the ways in which space is represented in this narrative section.

The analysis will be divided into four parts. First of all, after sketching a brief summary of the events related by the historian, I will enquire into the narrative structure of the march and the way in which space and narrative structure interrelate. Secondly, I will show the presence of a mythological discourse which imbues the narrative as a whole with symbolic meanings and casts the march as a journey with a universal dimension. In the third place, I will turn my attention to the presence, features and significance of descriptions of physical terrain, or landscape descriptions. Finally, I will enquire how characters inside the text talk about Hannibal’s march and about its spatial dimension.

2 Narrative structure

The narrative can be roughly divided into three sections, separated by the insertion of accounts of the Romans’ countermoves or other events.

Chapters 21–24 describe Hannibal’s preparations in Spain and the first part of the march, up to the crossing of the Pyrenees. Livy has Hannibal go first to Gades (21,21,9), in order to fulfil the vows he has previously made to Hercules and to make new ones for the successful accomplishment of his journey.²⁵ It is in Gades

²⁴ Quotations of Livy’s Book 21 are taken from the Teubner edition (Dorey 1971). For the Third Decade I have used J. C. Yardley’s translations (from Yardley/Hoyos 2006).

²⁵ In the temple of Hercules in Gades: cf. below, 129–130.

that he attends to the necessary preparations for his march (21,21,10–22,4). He then returns to his winter camp in New Carthage, whence he departs with his army and reaches the river Ebro by a coastal route (21,22,5). Here he has a prophetic dream, in which a young man of divine aspect, allegedly sent by Jupiter, offers himself as a guide for his journey to Italy (21,22,5–9).

After crossing the Ebro (21,23,1), he proceeds through the interior in the region of the Pyrenees, where he subdues some local populations (21,23,2–3). He crosses the Pyrenees and, having won over the Gallic tribes of the area with gifts, marches past the town of Ruscino (21,23,4–24,5).

This is the end of the first section. Livy's attention then shifts to the revolt of the Boii and Insubres in Cisalpine Gaul (21,25,1–26,2) and to the arrival of the consul P. Cornelius Scipio at the mouth of the Rhône (21,26,3–5).

The second section of the march corresponds to 21,26,6–31,12, narrating the journey from the region of the Pyrenees through Gaul to the Alps.²⁶ A long subsection (21,26,6–29,4) is devoted to the crossing of the river Rhône,²⁷ during which the Carthaginians have to face the opposition of the Volcae, a local Gallic population. While the elephants are being transported across the river, a first clash occurs between Hannibal's troops and the Roman army commanded by Scipio, which ends successfully for the Romans (21,29,1–4).

Now Hannibal has to choose whether to seek a second battle against the Roman army or to proceed to Italy; on the advice of the envoys sent by his allies from Cisalpine Gaul, he decides for the latter course of action (21,29,5–7) and delivers a speech to encourage his men, who are scared by the prospect of crossing the Alps (21,30).

A single chapter is devoted to the Carthaginians' march from the Rhône to the Alps (21,31). It is now that the itinerary followed by the Carthaginians becomes more confused and problematic. Instead of advancing along the coast, and in order to avoid a second battle against Scipio's troops, Hannibal turns into the interior of Gaul and reaches a region called *Insula* (The Island), the territory at the confluence of the Rhône and another river, which has been variously identified (21,31,2–4);²⁸

26 This division of the narrative partially differs from the one usually proposed by commentators on Book 21; I explain the reasons for my choice below, 126–128.

27 On the localization of Hannibal's crossing see the useful review of the several solutions proposed by scholars in Händl-Sagawe (1995) 175–180; more recently Hoyos (2006) 409–417; Schrier (2006) 506–517.

28 The text of 21,31,4 which describes "The Island" as the region at the confluence of the Rhône and another river, is probably corrupt, and the identification of the second river is not certain. For the whole debate and the different solutions attempted see Händl-Sagawe (1995) 200–203; Hoyos (2006) 427–436.

there he settles a dynastic dispute among the Allobroges, receiving supplies and weapons as a mark of gratitude (21,31,5–8). Livy then states that he makes a further leftward diversion into the territory of the *Tricastini*, and then, crossing the edge of the territory of the *Vocontii*, reaches the country inhabited by the *Trigorii*;²⁹ he thus reaches the river Durance (21,31,9). This paragraph has long puzzled scholars, because, if one thinks of a northward march after crossing the Rhône (as Livy's text in 21,31,2–3 seems to suggest),³⁰ then a leftward turn would lead the Carthaginians west, i.e. further away from the Alps. Several attempts at explanation and/or interpretation have been made, ranging from dismissal of Livy's statement, to its integration into possible routes, up to the idea that Livy has become confused by using different sources.³¹

After a brief mention of Scipio's return to Italy, Livy introduces the third section of the march: the crossing of the Alps (21,32,6–37,6). Although, in truth, the previously mentioned countries of the *Vocontii* and *Trigorii* already lay in the Alpine region,³² Livy's account seems to acknowledge the presence of the mountains only from 21,32,6 on (*Hannibal ab Druentia campestri maxime itinere ad Alpis cum bona pace incolentium ea loca Gallorum pervenit*). This is yet another inconsistency, which might possibly be explained as a reduplication of the same stretch of the journey, or as the presence of two alternative routes of the journey, produced by Livy's drawing on two different sources at the same time.³³

The Carthaginians, arriving at the foot of the mountains, are scared by the wildness of the landscape (21,32,7–8); the army has to face hostile mountain people, who try to block their way up the steep path, but are then routed (21,32,9–33,11). A second local tribe makes a show of friendliness at first, giving Hannibal hostages and guides, but then attacks the army as soon as it reaches a narrow point on the road; only thanks to Hannibal's wise disposition of his troops can the worst be avoided (21,34). Although the mountain people continue to make occasional ambushes (21,35,1–3), the Carthaginians finally arrive at an Alpine pass (21,35,4).³⁴ Hannibal lets his men rest; then, seeing that they are discouraged and

²⁹ The right spelling of this people's name was probably *Tricorii*, as suggested by Strab. 4,1,111 (C 185) and 4,6,5 (C 203); Plin. *nat.* 3,34; Amm. 15,10,11. Cf. Walsh (1973) 182.

³⁰ Cf. Händl-Sagawe (1995) 198.

³¹ The scholarly debate is extremely rich and complex, and cannot be properly summarized here. For a detailed overview of the critical literature on the matter cf. Händl-Sagawe (1995) 199–210. The problem has recently been reconsidered by Hoyos (2006) esp. 433–439.

³² For the *Vocontii* see Barrauol (1969) 278–283; Le Glay (1975) 1316–1317; for the *Tricorii* Barrauol (1969) 325–330.

³³ Cf. Meyer (1958) 235; Barrauol (1969) 326–329; Hoyos (2006) 423–427.

³⁴ The identification of the pass was already debated in Livy's own time, as can be inferred from 21,38,5–9, and constitutes a well-known topic of modern scholarly debate; I will not treat it here,

exhausted, he tries to raise their spirits by showing them the plains of Italy lying beneath them (21,35,5–9). The descent proves even harder than the ascent, because of the steepness of the Italian versant (21,35,10–12). They are momentarily stopped by a particularly narrow rocky descent; after long and painful efforts they succeed in breaking the rocks and clearing a path by the combined use of fire and vinegar (21,36,1–37,4).³⁵ After that, they finally reach the Italian plains (21,37,5–6). Chapter 38 discusses the number of Hannibal's soldiers and the Alpine pass he used.

This brief summary allows us to advance some first general remarks about the narrative structure of the march. It can easily be observed how Livy arranges his subject matter, in its main lines, according to the great geographical landmarks constituted by the Pyrenees and the Alps. The first section, according to the division that I have proposed, brings Hannibal and his men up to the Gallic part of the Pyrenees region, the second stops shortly before the Alps (more precisely, at the crossing of the Durance), while the third concerns the Alps themselves. Between one section and the next the historian halts his narrative in order to report events occurring elsewhere. Other landmarks are constituted by rivers: the Ebro, the Rhône and the Durance. This is no surprise, if one considers that for the Romans the most common way of perceiving space was a hodological one, in which the main role in orientation was played by natural landmarks like mountains and rivers.³⁶ However, the way in which such landmarks shape Livy's text prompts some further observations.

First of all, it must be observed how the structure I have identified in the narrative is slightly different from the one usually assumed by commentators on Book 21. A tripartite structure had already been recognized by Burck,³⁷ who, however, placed the end of the second section at 21,29, i.e. immediately before Hannibal's first speech: "Es folgt als zweiter Abschnitt der Rhôneübergang (26,3–29), eingefaßt durch zwei kleine Absätze, in denen Livius von den Plänen und Unternehmungen der Römer unter dem Consul P. Cornelius Scipio berichtet (26,3–5; 29,1–6)."³⁸ Consequently, he grouped chapters 30–37 together as the third section, under the heading "Alpenübergang", which included the diversion to the Allobroges' lands and "einen glatten Vormarsch durch das Voralpengebiet

because it would go beyond the purposes of my paper. For overviews of the critical debate on the problem, cf. e.g. Walbank (1956) and (1957) 386–387; Seibert (1993) 195–200; Händl-Sagawe (1995) 224–234; Hoyos (2006).

³⁵ On this detail, which is absent in Polybius and was in the past often considered a fabulous story, cf. e.g. Jal (1988) 128–129; Walsh (1973) 194; Händl-Sagawe (1995) 238–240.

³⁶ Cf. Janni (1984); Brodersen (1995).

³⁷ Burck (1962) 65–70.

³⁸ Ibid. 66.

(31–32)”;³⁹ the reference to Scipio in 21,32,1–5 was interpreted, according to this view, as “geschicktes Ritardando”, which served to increase the emotional tension before the account of the ascent to the pass. The same division of the narrative is apparent in the commentaries on Book 21 by P. Jal⁴⁰ and U. Händl-Sagawe,⁴¹ who group together chapters 30,1–38,9 under the headings “Le passage des Alpes” and “Hannibals Alpenübergang” respectively.

However, if we focus only on Livy's text, it is hard to recognize this narrative structure. In 21,29,1–6 the narrative does not stop: the account of the first clash between Carthaginians and Romans (21,29,1–4), which is an integral part of the journey, is followed by a cursory reference to the fact that Scipio was waiting for Hannibal's next move; this, in turn, only serves to introduce the account of the meeting between Hannibal and the envoys from Cisalpine Gaul (21,29,5–6). The account of Scipio's return to Italy in 21,32,1–5, on the other hand, placed after the account of the crossing of the Durance (with which it has no logical connection), constitutes a real pause in the main narrative, which is focused on Hannibal: all of Scipio's countermoves are described, including the sending of Scipio's brother Gnaeus to Spain with most of the troops.

It may be helpful, in this respect, to compare Livy's account with the one offered by the other main source we have for the Second Punic War, viz. Polybius. The Greek historian narrates Hannibal's march from Spain to Italy in *Histories* 3,35–56. Just like Livy, he too shapes his narrative into three sections corresponding to major parts of the itinerary, and even feels the need to insert passages of detailed geographical exposition between each section. In chapters 36–38, i.e. after the brief account of Hannibal's march from New Carthage to the Pyrenees and of his victories in Spain, he introduces a description of the parts into which the earth is divided (Europe, Asia and Africa), followed, in chapter 39, by a discussion of the distances between different places along Hannibal's route: in so doing, he intends to give the reader the main coordinates in which to inscribe the subsequent narrative of events. The digression is followed by the account of the revolt of the *Boii* and *Insubres* (3,40) and of the Roman countermoves, with Scipio's arrival at the mouth of the Rhône. In 3,47–48, after the report of the events at the Rhône, Polybius stops a second time and, before beginning the account of the crossing of the Alps, offers an explanation of the geographical position of the Rhône and the Alps themselves, followed, again, by information about Scipio's return to Italy.

39 Ibid. 67.

40 Jal (1988) 37.

41 Händl-Sagawe (1995) 193.

The difference between the arrangement of the subject in Livy and in Polybius is evident. The Greek historian places a major interruption (comprising, among other things, Scipio's actions) before the diversion toward the "Island", which is thus included in the narrative of the Alpine itinerary: i.e. he groups together the events which come after the Rhône crossing. He does not give the name of the people who inhabit the "Island", but they are certainly not the Allobroges (as in Livy), because the latter are identified with the first tribe that attacks the Carthaginians during their ascent. Actually, Polybius states that Hannibal moves from the "Island" through the territory of the Allobroges, which is level ground at first (Pol. 3,50,2) and only then begins to be mountainous and steep; precisely at that point the Allobroges attack the army. The narrative then continues (just as in Livy) by reporting the encounter with the second, deceitful mountain tribe. For Polybius, then, there are no breaks between the "Island" and the Alps, neither in narrative nor in geographical terms: his account makes the Rhône, not the Alps, the most important landmark, and it recognizes the essential continuity of the Subalpine and Alpine region, which is represented as a territory gradually rising from flatland to mountains.

In Livy, the representation of the places is very different.⁴² After the departure from the Island, the Roman historian inserts the leftward turn toward the lands of the *Tricastini*, *Vocontii* and *Trigorii*; the latter two peoples, although belonging in truth to the Subalpine region, are not represented as such, as has been shown above. There is no mention of mountains; the reader is only aware that the Carthaginians are somewhere in Gaul. Then, after the crossing of the Durance (which is absent in Polybius) and after the mention of Scipio's return to Italy, the narrative resumes again in 21,32,6, this time with the mention of the Alps: *Hannibal ab Druentia campestri maxime itinere ad Alpibus cum bona pace incolentium ea loca Gallorum pervenit*. Such a statement clearly marks the beginning of a new narrative section: the "Alpine crossing" section.

So, the account of 21,30–38 can only appear as a coherent section – as it did to Burck – if we apply our own geographical categories to Livy's narrative: we can thus recognize "the journey through the Alpine region" as the specific topic of the third section, and consequently put a break where it would make sense for us. But for a reader of Livy who did not have direct geographical knowledge of these places and who discovered space through the text, the main break would be at 21,32,1–5, neatly dividing "Gaul" from "the Alps".

⁴² For observations about the difference between the ways in which Polybius and Livy saw the Alps, cf. Gärtner (1975) 158–159.

Considering what has been observed up to this point, the space of Livy's narrative appears to be divided quite clearly into three major areas: Spain and the Pyrenees region, Gaul, and the Alps (whereas in Polybius the three areas are, more properly: Spain, Gaul up to the Rhône, and the Subalpine and Alpine region including the Island). This impression is further strengthened by the fact that, while Polybius recognizes the people who attack the Carthaginians during their ascent as such a well-known Gallic tribe as the Allobroges, Livy does not name them except as *montani*, "mountain people"; the reader does not have a clear notion of their Gallic origin except for the casual observation that Hannibal's Gallic allies could talk to them because "they were not very different as far as their language and their customs were concerned" (21,32,10 *haud sane multum lingua moribusque abhorrentes*). In other words, the Alps, and their people, appear to be a quite different world, which stands apart from Gaul, and provides the setting for an especially effective literary account.

3 Travel and (universal) conquest: the Herculean connection

Although the actual march of the Carthaginian army starts with the departure from its winter camp in New Carthage, Livy inserts an important preamble: in 21,21,9 he tells of Hannibal's journey to Gades, where the Punic general fulfils *vota* to Hercules that he had previously pledged (we can guess that these *vota* referred to the capture of Saguntum, now accomplished) and makes further *vota* for a successful new campaign.

The reason for this journey is clear: in Gades there was a famous temple of Heracles, mentioned by several ancient sources.⁴³ This location was particularly fitting, because the deity originally worshipped in the sanctuary was the Phoenician god Melqart, one of the main divinities of Carthage, who came to be commonly identified with the Greek Heracles.⁴⁴ The city of Gades itself was a foundation of Tyre, and was later subject to Carthaginian control;⁴⁵ ancient writers were well aware of the syncretism between the Phoenician Melqart and the Greek Heracles.⁴⁶

⁴³ E.g. Strab. 3,5,5–9 (C 169–175); App. *Ib.* 2,8; Mela 3,6,46; Philostr. *Ap.* 5,5.

⁴⁴ Cf. Bonnet (1988) esp. 399–415 for the assimilation of the two gods and the possible grounds for it.

⁴⁵ Strab. 3,5,5 (C 169).

⁴⁶ App. *Ib.* 2,8 observes that the god worshipped in the temple was not the "Theban" Heracles, but the "Tyrian" one. Mela 3,6,46 speaks of a temple of the "Egyptian Heracles", but then affirms

Livy is the only historian we know who mentions Hannibal's journey to Gades, which is absent from both Polybius and Appian.⁴⁷ The episode later reappears in Silius Italicus' *Punica*, where it is treated at length.⁴⁸ It is very likely that a tradition like this went back to philo-Carthaginian sources,⁴⁹ which knew of interest or devotion shown by Hannibal toward Melqart/Heracles: public shows of piety toward the god could have been a political move on the part of Hannibal, who, by stressing his own attachment to the god, or favour from the god, may have aimed to strengthen his soldiers' loyalty, or to attract the sympathies of the Greeks, both in southern Italy and in the rest of the Hellenistic world.⁵⁰

A connection with the god of Gades, however, could also have other implications in Livy's account. As well as being originally devoted to Melqart, the temple at Gades also had important links to the mythical saga of the Greek Heracles. The city of Gades was commonly associated with Heracles' tenth labour, the capture of Geryon's cattle. According to a variegated set of traditions, traces of which can be found as early as Hesiod's *Theogony* – but which are transmitted in their most articulated form by Greek authors of the late Republican and imperial periods –⁵¹ Geryon was a monstrous being who lived in the far west of the world: his abode was usually placed on an island called Erytheia, identified by some authors with Gades itself, or on the Spanish coast not far from Gades. According to our sources, Heracles arrived in Spain by way of Africa and, in order to leave a memorial of his deeds, he built the so-called Pillars of Heracles, which ancient writers identify from time to time with rocks on both sides of the Straits of Gibraltar, with islands, or – as attested by Strabo –⁵² with two bronze columns that could be found

that it was founded by people from Tyre. Philostr. *Ap.* 5,5 reports that in the temple in Gades “both gods” were worshipped, the “Egyptian” and the “Theban”. On the possible reasons for the confusion between an “Egyptian” and a “Tyrian” Hercules cf. Silberman (1988) 280.

47 According to Polybius, it is in New Carthage that the Carthaginian commander makes preparations for the march (3,33,5–35,1). Appian's brief account informs us only that Hannibal subdued several Spanish peoples (*Ib.* 3,13), then collected a large army and crossed the Pyrenees (*Hann.* 1,4).

48 Sil. 3,14–60.

49 Possibly to Silenus of Caleacte, on whom cf. e.g. Seibert (1993) 12–13. We cannot, however, be sure whether Livy directly read Silenus or got this information through Latin sources, e.g. Coelius Antipater.

50 For different interpretations of Hannibal's link to Melqart/Heracles and of the political implications of his devotion see De Witt (1941) 60; Picard (1963); Moeller (1975) 405–407; Huss (1986) 233–238.

51 Diod. 4,17–24; Apollod. 2,10. Cf. also Dion. Hal. *ant.* 1,39–44.

52 Strab. 3,5,5 (C 170).

precisely in the Heracles temple in Gades. The Pillars, and Gades itself, were well-known markers of the westernmost edge of the world.⁵³

After capturing Geryon's cattle, Heracles, according to our ancient sources, embarked on a long journey in order to drive the beasts to Greece. He allegedly travelled along the Spanish coast and across the Pyrenees, then through Gaul to the Alps; he reached Liguria, whence he proceeded further south to Etruria, on to the southernmost extremity of the Italian peninsula, then crossed to Sicily and finally sailed back to Greece. This roughly defined itinerary (which naturally involved variations depending on the sources) seems to have been a commonly acknowledged notion in antiquity, and a "Road of Heracles" has been identified, running from southern Spain to Italy across the Alps, which corresponded to an important route for commerce and military purposes at least as late as Republican and Augustan times.⁵⁴

Although Heracles' mythical itinerary differs in some points from the one followed by Hannibal, it is clear that it is very similar, in its main lines, as far as its first part (from Spain via Gaul and the Alps to Italy) is concerned. We cannot be sure to what extent the parallel between Hannibal's and Heracles' travels was exploited in the philo-Carthaginian sources that mentioned Hannibal's visit to the Heracles temple in Gades; but surely such a parallel is present in Livy's portrayal of the events. Actually, it is later explicitly mentioned – not by Hannibal himself, but by his enemy, the consul of 218 BCE, P. Cornelius Scipio. While addressing his own soldiers before the battle of the river Ticinus, in *Ab urbe condita* 21,41,6–7, Scipio affirms:

*Experiri iuvat (...) utrum Hannibal hic sit aemulus itinerum Herculis, ut ipse fert, an vectigalis stipendiariusque et servus populi Romani a patre relictus.*⁵⁵

The words *ut ipse fert*, almost casually uttered by Scipio, make it clear that this must have been a recognizable claim for Livy's readers: Hannibal purported to style himself as a new Hercules.

Hannibal's speeches never explicitly mention the connection between himself and Hercules, but they recall the hero's mythical travels by mentioning their most famous geographical landmark, i.e. the Pillars. Before the battle of the Ticinus, Hannibal reminds his men of their own courage:

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Cf. Ps.-Aristot. *mir. ausc.* 85; De Witt (1941); Dion (1962); Knapp (1986).

⁵⁵ "I want to see if this Hannibal really is, as he himself claims, on a par with Hercules on his travels, or rather has been left by his father as a mere tribute- and tax-payer, indeed a slave, of the Roman people".

*Vt viginti annorum militiam vestram cum illa virtute, cum illa fortuna taceam, ab Herculis columnis, ab Oceano terminisque ultimis terrarum per tot ferocissimos Hispaniae et Galliae populos vincentes hoc pervenistis.*⁵⁶

The spatial range of the journey is rhetorically defined through a slight inaccuracy: the army's march did not take its starting point "from the Pillars of Hercules" or "from the Ocean", but from New Carthage. This expression may be intended as a generalization for Spain, but a better explanation is to be found in the wish to project the symbolic significance of Hannibal's visit to the Hercules temple in Gades onto the whole of the march. The mention of "the Ocean and the furthestmost limits of the earth" gives the deed a universal dimension; this idea of universality is strengthened by the image of Hercules' journey underlying the mention of the Pillars. Hercules was, after all, the hero who had come from the edge of the world and crossed different lands, everywhere victoriously defeating several enemies and monsters, and bringing peace and civilization to the inhabitants of the countries he traversed.

Just like him, the Carthaginians have not only accomplished a successful march through a space that extends from the limits of the world, but are also *vincentes*, victorious: the march is not just an adventurous journey, but an act of taking control of a space that tends to universality. The Pillars of Hercules are, in Hannibal's words, the most powerful symbol of such universal conquest.

If this is Hannibal's claim, how do the Roman characters react to it? We have already seen how the consul Scipio dismissed it by proposing an opposite view in which Hannibal is a tributary of Rome, i.e. by superimposing a different notion of universal power (the Roman one). This is not, however, the only strategy employed by Hannibal's opponents. In *Ab urbe condita* 23,5,11, the consul of 216 BCE, M. Terentius Varro, is pleading for the Capuans' help after the defeat at Cannae:

*Non cum Samnite aut Etrusco res est, ut, quod a nobis ablatum s<it>, in Italia tamen imperium maneat; Poenus hostis, ne Africae quidem indigena, ab ultimis terrarum oris, freto Oceani Herculisque columnis, expertem omnis iuris et condicionis et linguae prope humanae militem trahit.*⁵⁷

⁵⁶ 21,43,13: "I say nothing of the twenty years you have served with the valour and success for which you are famous. Now you have come to this place, triumphant, from the Pillars of Hercules, and from the Ocean and the bounds of the earth, passing through all the most violent tribes of Spain and Gaul".

⁵⁷ "Our fight is not with Samnite or Etruscan, which would at least mean that power wrested from us would still remain in Italy. This is a Carthaginian enemy, not even native to Africa, and he brings from the farthest limits of the earth – from the waters of the Ocean and the Pillars of

The distance implied by the image of the Pillars of Hercules is interpreted by Varro as a marker of remoteness and barbarity. The consul tries to appeal to the common Italian roots of Rome and the Campani, showing them that the *imperium*, which is at stake in the war, will be taken from Italy if the Carthaginians should win: hegemony would thus pass to people who belong to a peripheral world in which even the basic rules of humanity are not fully known. What is particularly interesting here is that, while mentioning the fact that the Carthaginians do not originally come from Africa, there is no insistence on the eastern world logically implied by such a statement; all the stress is on the wild western edge embodied by the Ocean and the Pillars of Hercules. This may, obviously, refer to the Spanish soldiers who constitute part of Hannibal's army;⁵⁸ however, it is clearly, first of all, a reference to Hannibal's march. In other words, Varro seems to be consciously answering Hannibal's claim of universality by inverting that idea into one of barbarity: the logical seat of *imperium* is Italy; the journey from the edges of the earth is merely a sign of the peripheral status of the enemy; such a view, in a way, complements Scipio's depiction of Hannibal as a subject of Roman rule, a tax-payer from a very remote province.

Interestingly enough, Gades is referred to once more, later in the *Ab urbe condita*, in its sense of being the extreme edge of the world. In 36,17,15, the consul Manlius Acilius Glabrio addresses his soldiers before the battle of Thermopylae against King Antiochus of Syria (191 BCE):

*Quid deinde aberit quin ab Gadibus ad mare rubrum Oceano fines terminemus, qui orbem terrarum amplexu finit, et omne humanum genus secundum deos nomen Romanum veneretur?*⁵⁹

Here, too, the edges of the earth are taken to be symbols of the universality of power – in this case, Roman power. The fact that here the eastern extremity (the Red Sea) is added simply completes the picture of an all-encompassing rule.

This is not a matter of chance, as Livy was here engaging in a well-defined literary discourse concerning empire, in which the edges of the earth and the figure of Hercules could function as symbols of universal conquest. This dis-

Hercules – soldiers who have no knowledge of human law and civilization, and, one can almost say, of human language." Cf. 22,14,5, where M. Minucius Rufus uses a similar argument, although not explicitly naming the Pillars.

58 So Levene (2010) 221.

59 "What then will be lacking, that we shall not bound our empire by the ocean from Gades to the Red Sea, that ocean which holds the earth in its embrace, and that the whole human race will not reverence the Roman name next after the gods?" (text from Briscoe 1991; transl. Sage 1958).

course, which had its core in the notion of Roman rule over the *orbis terrarum*, has been traced in both literature and political communication starting from the years of the Late Republic, and it was particularly vital during the Augustan Principate.⁶⁰ In this context, the conventional motifs of Hercules' travels, of the Pillars and the Ocean, are present in a variety of texts across the whole chronological span of the Augustan age, and were in all likelihood significant to Livy, who probably wrote his Third Decade sometime around 20 BCE, and the Fourth Decade shortly after.⁶¹

A few examples will suffice. The most famous instances of this set of motifs are probably to be found in Vergil's *Aeneid*. In Book 1 Jupiter promises Venus an *imperium sine fine* for Rome (1,278–279) and mentions the future coming of *Caesar*,⁶² / *imperium Oceano, famam qui terminet astris* (1,286–287). In Book 6, Anchises' long prophecy in the underworld contains a celebration of Augustus, who will extend the *imperium* to the far edges of the world (6,791–805): his universal rule is stressed by the comparison with Hercules' travels, followed by the other mythical example of *Liber* (Dionysus): *Nec vero Alcides tantum telluris obivit, / fixerit acripedem cervam licet aut Erymanthi/ pacarit nemora et Lernam tremefecerit arcu* (6,801–803).

Around the same time Horace, celebrating Augustus' return from Spain in 24 BCE,⁶³ compares him to Hercules in *Odes* 3,14,1–4: *Herculis ritu modo dictus, o plebs, / morte venalem petiisse laurum / Caesar Hispana repetit Penatis / victor ab ora*. The parallel with Hercules and the adjective *victor* (one of the epithets of the Roman Hercules)⁶⁴ suggest the idea of the establishment of Roman rule on the farthest edges of the earth. The implication is made clear by the mention, at ll.

⁶⁰ Cf. Nicolet (1988) 27–68.

⁶¹ The dating of Livy's work is problematic, because of the scarcity of references to contemporary events in the *Ab urbe condita* and because of the little information we possess about the historian's life. According to a long-standing view (cf. e.g. Mensching 1986; Burck 1992, 5–6; further bibliography in Burton 2000, 430 n. 4), Livy began his work around 27 BCE and went on writing until his death (which occurred in 17 CE according to Jerome's *Chronicon*). That would give an average of 3 to 3½ books per year as the historian's rate of composition, which would lead to a dating of the Third Decade between 21 and 19 BCE (or 20 and 18 according to Mensching 1986, 574), and the Fourth Decade between 18 and 16 BCE (or 17 and 15, *ibid.*). Other scholars think of an earlier starting-point, around 33, 31 or 29 BCE (e.g. Syme 1959; Luce 1965; Burton 2000, with further bibliography): if this hypothesis is correct, the Third Decade may have been written in the late Twenties, and the Fourth Decade immediately after.

⁶² The identity of the *Caesar* mentioned here (Julius Caesar or Augustus) has long been a topic of debate: cf. e.g. Austin (1971) 109–110.

⁶³ Cf. West (2002) 126; Nisbet/Rudd (2004) 180.

⁶⁴ Cf. Nisbet/Rudd (2004) 183.

15–16, of Augustus' rule over the world (*tenente / Caesare terras*), and by the recurrence of the theme of universal empire in the *Odes*, both in general and in Book 3 in particular.⁶⁵ The idea that Rome has reached the edges of earth, for example, is most effectively expressed by the goddess Juno in *Odes* 3,3,53–56: *Quicumque mundo terminus obstitit, / hunc tangat armis*

The Ocean as edge of the world – and of Roman power – figures, years later, in the (possibly ironical) celebration of Augustus at the end of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: *quid tibi barbariem gentesque ab utroque iacentes / Oceano numerem? quodcumque habitabile tellus / sustinet, huius erit; pontus quoque serviet illi* (15,829–831; cf. 1,860 *terra sub Augusto est*). The same concept, this time with the explicit mention of the Pillars of Hercules, is to be found in the *Roman Antiquities* of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, according to whom Roman power extends even beyond such a limit: Ἡ δὲ Ῥωμαίων πόλις ἀπάσης μὲν ἄρχει γῆς ὅση μὴ ἀνέμβατός ἐστιν, ἀλλ' ὑπ' ἀνθρώπων κατοικεῖται, πάσης δὲ κρατεῖ θαλάσσης οὐ μόνον τῆς ἐντὸς Ἡρακλείων στηλῶν ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς Ἰκεανίτιδος ὅση πλεῖσθαι μὴ ἀδύνατός ἐστι, πρώτη καὶ μόνη τῶν ἐκ τοῦ παντὸς αἰῶνος μνημονευσαμένων ἀνατολὰς καὶ δύσεις ὄρους ποιησαμένη τῆς δυναστείας (*ant.* 1,3,3).

Literary examples could be multiplied, but it will by now be clear how the Ocean, Hercules and the Pillars were powerful incarnations of the notion of universal empire, and they were used as such by writers of the Augustan age.⁶⁶ What is particularly interesting is that, while such discourse is normally concerned with Roman universal power, Livy hints at it while talking about Hannibal's journey.⁶⁷ Obviously, as has been said, Hannibal's claim is overturned by his Roman enemies, who substitute for it a different notion of universal power – the Roman one. Later, I will show how the alternation of viewpoints in the interpretation of the space covered by Hannibal is an essential element

⁶⁵ Cf. West (2002) 3–4.

⁶⁶ It is interesting to observe how, years later, Augustus, in his *Res Gestae*, will begin the account of his military conquests by mentioning the Oceanic limit from Gades to the Elbe (26,2: *Gallias et Hispanias provincias, i[tem] Germaniam, qua inclu]dit Oceanus a Gadibus ad ostium Albis flumin[is], pacavi*; on the possible significance of this cf. Dion 1966; Nicolet 1988, 36–40).

⁶⁷ The episode concerning Hannibal's dream in 21,22,5–9 (cf. above, 124) could perhaps be added to this picture. The young god appearing in the dream, which Cic. *div.* 1,49 knew through Coelius Antipater (who, in his turn, had it from Silenus), has been identified by some with Hercules: cf. e.g. Huss (1986) 237–238; Seibert (1993) 185–188. However, this is far from clear: other texts identify the divine guide with different gods (e.g. Sil. 3,160–218 explicitly names Mercury as the guide), and we cannot be certain that Livy had Hercules in mind in his own version of the dream. For this reason, I have not considered it in my treatment of the Hercules theme. On the dream see also Cipriani (1984); D'Arco (2002), with further bibliography.

in Livy's presentation of that space, and I will try to understand the possible meaning of this.

Before turning to that last part of my discussion, however, it is necessary to consider an essential element in any inquiry into the literary representation of space, i.e. the ways in which space is described in its physical features throughout the narrative.

4 Physical features of space and landscape description

First of all, we should ask ourselves if and where one can find a description of the physical features of places, or a proper landscape description, in Livy's narrative of Hannibal's march. The (possibly surprising) answer is that this kind of description is virtually absent from almost all of the march narrative – except for the crossing of the Alps, where it is not only present, but even plays a central role in the development of the action.

We are told almost nothing about the landscape of the Spanish regions crossed by Hannibal; we only get hints of physical features of the Rhône, such as its sound (*cum ingenti sono fluminis*, 21,28,2) or its current (*impetum fluminis*, *ibid.*; cf. 21,28,5 *impetu ipso fluminis*), although the Rhône crossing is the subject of one of the longest and most detailed sections of the march narrative. There are only some general remarks about the physical form of “The Island” as a territory created by the confluence of two rivers (21,31,4), and, in the brief account of the crossing of the Durance, a succinct description of the features that make such a river difficult to overcome.

In the section concerning the Alps, however, landscape description is brought prominently to the reader's attention. Its richness in detail and its presentation though a prevalent focalization on the Carthaginians' perspective⁶⁸ account for what is perhaps the most emotionally charged section of the march. As soon as the Carthaginians come into view of the mountains, the sight that appears before their eyes is presented in a powerful way (21,32,7–9):

Tum, quamquam fama prius, qua incerta in maius vero ferri solent, praecepta res erat, tamen ex propinquo visa montium altitudo nivesque caelo prope immixtae, tecta informia inpositaque rupibus, pecora iumentaque torrida frigore, homines intonsi et inculti, animalia inanimaque

⁶⁸ Pausch (2011) 149–152. About variations and ambiguity in focalization in this context cf. Tsitsiou-Chelidoni (2009) 531–534 and 543.

*omnia rigentia gelu, cetera visu quam dictu foediora terrorem renovarunt. Erigentibus in primos agmen clivos apparuerunt imminentes tumulos insidentes montani, qui, si valles occultiores insedissent, coorti ad pugnam repente ingentem fugam stragemque dedissent.*⁶⁹

The first part of the description is arranged in a climactic enumeration that takes into account all the elements of the landscape: the mountains covered in snow, buildings, animals, human beings, and then, in the concluding formulae *animalia inanimaque omnia* and *cetera visu quam dictu foediora*, all of these together. The features stressed are highness and coldness, which are matched by the wildness of everything that can be found there. It is interesting to notice the very insistent use of words composed with the prefix *in-*, in its two meanings: a negative one (*informia, intonsi, inculti, inanima*), and a spatial one (*inposita, imminentes, insidentes, insedissent*). The feeling evoked in the reader is thus one of menace (in connection with the image of the rocks and the mountain people looming above) and, at the same time, of the denial of civilization – the Alps are a menacing place in that they are almost a “non-place”, i.e., the negation of the features that make places hospitable to human life.

As the chronology of the march is almost as debated a topic as its geography, we cannot be completely sure whether Livy is being slightly unrealistic here (which would be the case if Hannibal's arrival at the foot of the Alps is to be placed in September) or not (if the events took place around the end of October)⁷⁰. What truly matters, however, is the historian's aim of inscribing his narrative into a literary tradition of landscape description.⁷¹

In particular, this richly detailed, but overall conventional, depiction of the mountains allows us to recognize a set of literary *topoi* concerning unpleasant places, i.e. places that differ from the traditional image of the *locus amoenus*, of which there are several examples in antiquity. The best-known type of these

69 “The men had been given some forewarning of their nature from rumour, which usually exaggerates the unknown. But now, seen close-up, everything served to renew their dread. They saw the towering mountains with snow almost blending into the sky; ugly homesteads perched on cliffs; flocks and pack animals shrivelled with cold; human figures shaggy and unkempt; everything, animate and inanimate alike, stiff with frost; and everything else a grimmer sight than words could possibly describe. As the Carthaginians brought the column up the nearest slopes, mountain dwellers came into view, occupying the heights overlooking them. Had they instead positioned themselves in the gorges that provided greater cover, they could have suddenly sprung to the attack and caused a massive flight and loss of life.”

70 For the different solutions cf. e.g. Walbank (1957) 377; Proctor (1971) 40–42; Walsh (1973) 33; Jal (1988) XLIX.

71 We cannot be sure if Livy found something similar in one of his sources, although Coelius may be a candidate. In Polybius (3,50–53) there is nothing comparable to such a description.

literary places is the so-called *locus horridus*,⁷² a conventional type of landscape that “makes use of the same topical elements” as the *locus amoenus*, “but appropriately transformed”.⁷³ However, other “unpleasant places” exist in Latin literature, which are not strictly identifiable with the *locus horridus* proper, but which, because of their objective features, did not appeal to the aesthetic sense of the ancients. Typical examples are stormy seas, mountains (δυσχωρία) and places at the edges of the world (έσχατία). Some years ago, E. Malaspina proposed a useful distinction of such places into the categories of “Dionysian landscape” (“paesaggio dionisiaco”), characterized by a sense of mystery and terror toward the power of nature, and “heroic landscape” (“paesaggio eroico”), in which such a supernatural element is absent, and which often serves as a setting for significant literary episodes.⁷⁴

The description of the Alps in Livy is a typical example of this last category. More to the point, it can be related to the conventional representation of the Alps that can be found in several authors, both of the Republican and of the imperial period. Here, these mountains are typically characterized by their highness, their coldness and the wildness of their animals and inhabitants; such features are very often connected to the role of natural frontier which they almost always have in Roman sources.⁷⁵ The Alps are, first of all, the boundary between Italy and the barbarian world beyond them: a reassuring protection providentially put in place by the gods, but also the border from which the danger of a Gallic or German invasion could emerge. So, as has been observed, the Alps are usually present in literary texts not as a place in their own right, but as a barrier, or a connection, between places; to quote M. Tarpin’s words, “les Alpes sont surtout une frontière psychologique, sans consistance matérielle”.⁷⁶ It is precisely this literary tradition

72 On the *locus horridus* see e.g. Petrone (1988); Malaspina (1994).

73 Smolenaars (1996) 98.

74 Malaspina (1994) 13–18.

75 For a discussion of such a view of the Alps in Roman imperial authors cf. André (1988); Tarpin (1992) 101–102, with quotation and discussion of several passages. Cf. also Braccesi (1986).

76 Tarpin (1992) 100. Of course, a partial change in the attitude of Roman and Greek writers can be observed over the course of time. The Augustan pacification of the Alps, which laid a special stress on the opening of routes across the Alps and on the creation of ways of communicating between Italy and the provinces (cf. e.g. Gabba 1988; van Berchem 1992, 194–199), brought about an increased knowledge of the Alpine regions, as attested, for example, by Strabo, who devotes part of the fourth book of his *Geography* to the Alps; and Pliny the Elder later provides some examples of an interest in some specific features of the Alpine territory, such as its richness in minerals (cf. André 1988, 138–140). However, most of the mentions of these mountains in imperial authors still correspond to the traditional and conventional image of the Alps as a boundary, rather than as a place in their own right.

that we find at work in Livy's description: the abovementioned features of coldness and wildness, and the very status of "non-place" that the Alps are assigned, are closely connected to their function as a border.

In Livy's subsequent narrative, the Alpine landscape plays an active part in events, in precisely this role. During the account of the Carthaginians' difficulties in facing the mountain people (21,32,10–34,9), the most frequently recurring semantic field is that of narrowness and steepness (32,10 *per angustias*; 32,13 *angustias evadit*; 33,3 *in angustiiis*). Natural elements here – as so often in Livy's history – act in a dynamic way, almost taking on a life of their own, in opposing Rome's enemies. This has been connected by some scholars to the idea of divine protection of Rome, which is stressed in the *Ab urbe condita*, and which is embodied by nature's participation as a powerful ally of Rome.⁷⁷

Let us consider, for example, *Ab urbe condita* 21,33,5–7:

*Tum vero simul ab hostibus simul ab iniquitate locorum Poeni oppugnabantur, plusque inter ipsos, sibi quoque tendente ut periculo primus evaderet, quam cum hostibus certaminis erat. Equi maxime infestum agmen faciebant, qui et clamoribus dissonis, quos nemora etiam repercussaeque valles augebant, territi trepidabant et icti forte aut vulnerati adeo consternabantur, ut stragem ingentem simul hominum ac sarcinarum omnis generis facerent; multosque turba, cum praecipites deruptaeque utrimque angustiae essent, in immensum altitudinis deiecit, quosdam et armatos; sed ruinae maxime modo iumenta cum oneribus devolvebantur.*⁷⁸

Sounds are here added to the visual description of the place: the woods and valleys return the cries of men and animals, and this auditory idea is effectively

⁷⁷ For this aspect cf. Gärtner (1975) 618 n. 40; Doblhofer (1983) esp. 148–150. The speech delivered by the consul Scipio before the Battle of the Ticinus casts Hannibal's difficulties in crossing the Alps in precisely this light (21,40,10–11). Interesting observations can be found in McPhee (2013), who argues that Hannibal, through his fight against the Alpine landscape and his eventual mastering of it, subdues nature and turns it into his own ally against the Romans (landscape and nature, in fact, later play an important role in the Roman defeats at the Trebia and Lake Trasimene).

⁷⁸ "At this point the Carthaginians really were under pressure, both from the enemy and from the roughness of the ground, and as they all struggled to be the first out of danger there was more fighting amongst themselves than there was with the enemy. The horses posed the greatest danger for the column. Startled by the confused shouting, which was intensified by the woods and echoing ravines, they reared up, and those that chanced to be struck or wounded became so frantic as to cause severe damage to the men and all the various kind of baggage. The pass had precipitously steep cliffs on either side, and the crowding caused many to be hurled down into a sheer abyss, some of them in armour; but it was just like a building collapsing when pack animals came tumbling down along with their loads."

conveyed by Livy through the use of aural figures like the insistent alliteration of *-t-*: *terrīti trepidabant, tumultum ac trepidationem*.

There are similar features in the description of the encounter with the second local people (21,34,6):

*Ubi in angustiore viam et parte altera subiectam iugo insuper imminente ventum est, undique ex insidiis barbari a fronte ab tergo coorti comminus eminus petunt, saxa ingentia in agmen devolvunt.*⁷⁹

The use of the adjective *angustus*, together with the mention of a mountain ridge looming above, again through the repetition of the prefix *in-* (in alliteration, furthermore, with the *-i-* of *iugum*: *iugo insuper imminente*), convey once more an almost physical impression of entrapment.

After the difficult ascent, whose narrowness and steepness are once more stressed (34,8: *in angustias*; 35,3: *artas praecipites vias*), the arrival of the Carthaginians at a pass (35,4: *in iugum Alpium*) is accompanied by a widening of the view, both for Hannibal's soldiers and for the reader. In order to raise the spirits of the men, who are exhausted and scared of the impending winter, Hannibal shows them the vista of Italy (21,35,6–9):

*Fessis taedio tot malorum nivis etiam casus occidente iam sidere Vergiliarum ingentem terrorem adiecit. Per omnia nive oppleta cum signis prima luce motis segniter agmen incederet pigritiaque et desperatio in omnium vultu emineret, praegressus signa Hannibal in promunturio quodam, unde longe ac late prospectus erat, consistere iussis militibus Italiam ostentat subiectosque Alpibus montibus Circumpadanos campos, moeniaque eos tum transcendere non Italiae modo sed etiam urbis Romanae; cetera plana, proclivia fore; uno aut summum altero proelio arcem et caput Italiae in manu ac potestate habituros.*⁸⁰

79 “When the column reached a narrowing of the road, overlooked on one side by a mountain ridge, the barbarians rose up from all their hiding places. They attacked the Carthaginians front and rear, engaging hand-to-hand and from a distance, and rolling huge rocks down on the column.”

80 “The men were sick and tired of all their tribulations, and then a snowfall arrived – for it was now the setting of the constellation Pleiades – filling them with a new and terrible fear. A deep layer of snow covered the entire landscape and, when they struck camp at dawn, the column moved sluggishly, with despondency and despair written on every face. Hannibal rode ahead of the standards and ordered his men to halt on a spur that afforded a deep and broad panorama. Here he pointed out to them Italy, and the plains that surrounded the Po, at the foot of the Alps. At that moment, he told them, they were climbing the walls not merely of Italy but of the city of Rome. The rest of the way would be flat or downhill; one or at most two battles and they would have the citadel and capital of Italy in their hands and at their mercy”. I have here modified

This famous scene is almost theatrical:⁸¹ Hannibal and his army (or part of it)⁸² stand on a lofty spot from where an extensive stretch of territory can be seen, and the general points to the particular spectacle they have in front of their eyes. But what exactly does Hannibal want his soldiers to see?

It is very interesting to note the ways in which Livy's narrative of Hannibal's speech to the army diverges from the very similar account found in Polybius, *Histories* 3,54,1–3. The recurrence of the same motifs makes it evident that Polybius and Livy were either drawing on the same source(s) or else Polybius was himself a source for Livy; while the former possibility has long been held true by the majority of scholars,⁸³ the direct dependence of Livy on Polybius in the first books of the Third Decade has been recently argued in a convincing way by Levene.⁸⁴ The different ways in which Polybian motifs are used are illuminating for our understanding of Livy's literary aims.

Here is the Greek historian's account:

Τῆς δὲ χιόνος ἤδη περὶ τοὺς ἄκρους ἀθροισμένης διὰ τὸ συνάπτειν τὴν τῆς Πλειάδος δύσιν, θεωρῶν τὰ πλῆθη δυσθύμως διακειμένα καὶ διὰ τὴν προγεγενημένην ταλαιπωρίαν καὶ διὰ τὴν ἔτι προσδοκωμένην, ἐπειρᾶτο συναθροίσας παρακαλεῖν, μίαν ἔχων ἀφορμὴν εἰς τοῦτο τὴν τῆς Ἰταλίας ἐνάργειαν· οὕτως γὰρ ὑποπεπτάκει τοῖς προειρημένοις ὄρεσιν ὥστε συνθεωρουμένων ἀμφοῖν ἀκροπόλεως φαίνεσθαι διάθεσιν ἔχειν τὰς Ἄλπεις τῆς ὅλης Ἰταλίας. Διόπερ ἐνδεικνύμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ περὶ τὸν Πάδον πεδία, καὶ καθόλου τῆς εὐνοίας ὑπομινέσκων τῆς τῶν κατοικούντων αὐτὰ Γαλατῶν, ἅμα δὲ καὶ τὸν τῆς Ρώμης αὐτῆς τόπον ὑποδεικνύων, ἐπὶ ποσὸν εὐθαρσεῖς ἐποίησε τοὺς ἀνθρώπους.⁸⁵

Yardley's translation in two points: "they were climbing the walls" instead of "they were crossing the defences" and "the citadel and capital of Italy" instead of "that chief bastion of Italy".

81 Pausch (2011) 151 and n. 144 rightly speaks of "Inszenierung".

82 The implausibility of a rocky shelf so wide as to accommodate the entire army has been underlined e.g. by Hoyos (2006) 452, who thinks of the whole speech as a literary invention; one may note how Livy's handling of it is an instance of his tendency to create episodes with a strong visual impact when an important idea, or *exemplum*, is proposed (for this feature of Livy's work see especially Feldherr 1998).

83 See especially Tränkle (1977) 194–241, with discussion of further bibliography.

84 Levene (2010) 127–159.

85 "As the snow, because of the approaching of the setting of the Pleiades, was already gathering around the summits, Hannibal, observing that the troops were discouraged both because of the hardship previously suffered and because of that which they still expected ahead of them, assembled them and tried to cheer them up, having as his only resource for this purpose the view of Italy; the latter lies, in fact, at the feet of the abovementioned mountains in such a way that, if one contemplates the two of them together, the Alps appear to have the position of an acropolis of the whole of Italy. Therefore, showing them the plains which lie around the Po and briefly reminding them of the benevolence of the Gauls who inhabited them, and, at the same time, showing them the spot where Rome itself lay, he infused some courage into the men." Quotations

For Polybius, Hannibal shows his soldiers the plains of Italy lying beneath them in order to assure them that they are close to their goal, and also to let them appreciate a clear view of the position of the Po Valley, where their allies live (meaning that they will not be alone, but surrounded by friends); so that the reader may visualize the setting of the speech, he compares the Alps to the “acropolis” of Italy, i.e. an elevated point from which it is possible to have a clear view of what lies underneath.

Livy shifts the focus of attention. While naming the plains of the Po Valley, his Hannibal does not mention the importance of the allies’ presence; stress is placed on Rome alone. However, the most important difference lies in the roles that the Alps, Rome and Italy play in relation to each other. While the Alps were the acropolis of Italy in Polybius, now Rome is the *arx Italiae*. One may note that the Latin word *arx* corresponds to the Greek ἀκρόπολις,⁸⁶ but the sense of the term is totally different here: while in Polybius it was simply used to denote a high position, it now means the political centre of Italy (*caput*). Consequently, the Alps are changed into the walls of Italy: an image which went back at least to the elder Cato and which was popular among writers of the Republican and imperial periods, who often connected it to the notion of the gods’ protection of Rome.⁸⁷ In the Livian passage we are considering, the underlying image is clear: Italy is conceived as a single “city”, whose heart (*arx*) is Rome, and whose walls are the Alps; the Carthaginians are metaphorically climbing the walls of Rome.

In truth, serious difficulties still lie ahead: during the descent of the Italian versant, Hannibal and his men have to face the apparent impassability of the terrain and the presence of an abrupt rocky descent, where they can create a path only after pouring vinegar on the rocks and setting them on fire. Once again, the path is *praeceps*, *angusta* and *lubrica* (Liv. 21,35,12); as for the *rupes* which stops the Carthaginians, a recent landslide has made the natural steepness of the place even worse (21,36,2). The rocky path is *invia* (21,36,3), the alternative route attempted by the Carthaginians is *insuperabilis*, and the recent snow is *intacta* (21,36,5): once again, the Alpine landscape is defined by negative adjectives, which focus the readers’ attention on the apparent lack of a *via*.

from Polybius are taken from Buettner-Wobst (1964). I have availed myself of the translation in the Loeb edition (Paton 1954), but I have introduced changes.

⁸⁶ Cf. TLL 2,736–739.

⁸⁷ Cf. e.g. Cato *orig.* HRR I 81 fr. 85 (= Serv. *Aen.* 10,13); Cic. *prov.* 34; *Pis.* 81; *Phil.* 5,37; Strab. 285–286; Flor. *epit.* 1,38,6 (*Alpes, id est claustra Italiae*); *Paneg.* 11,2,4; for the image in Silius Italicus’ *Punica*, where it amounts to a central motif, see von Albrecht (1964). On the history and significance of the motif cf. Doblhofer (1983); Braccisi (1986).

To summarize, we can observe how the literary and emotional description of the landscape of the Alps in Livy focuses above all on the features that concern the role of barrier played by the mountains: their coldness, narrowness and steepness. These features are described in highly rhetorical language and lead to a quasi-personification of the Alpine landscape, which acts as an opponent of the Carthaginians. In that function of barrier, their role as geographical landmark is not equalled by any of the other landmarks we have considered. Hannibal's speech and the vista of Italy suggest that this is because the Alps are the frontier (the wall) that divides Italy from what lies outside it, and that, in so doing, they guarantee the close connection between Rome and Italy, or, better, the status of Italy as a larger city around its *arx*. It is precisely that connection that Hannibal means to put up for debate.

5 Talking about space: can boundaries be breached?

The consideration of Hannibal's speech at the Alpine pass, and of the words of Scipio and Varro, has allowed me to show how ideas about space can be also assessed through the words of the characters; in the last part of my paper I would like to concentrate on this aspect, and to go further by showing how the elements we have observed so far can be renegotiated and discussed through the use of speeches placed at significant points of the narrative.

We should now take a step back and start by considering the first speech in the march-narrative: the one delivered by Hannibal after the crossing of the Rhône (Liv. 21,30).

Again, the same speech is to be found in Polybius (3,44,5–13), and, again, with significant differences. In the Greek historian's account, Hannibal introduces the leaders of the Gallic tribes of Cisalpine Gaul, who have come to him in order to assure him of their friendship, and he has them speak, with the aid of an interpreter, in front of the army. The arguments most effective in inspiring courage in the soldiers are: 1) "In the first place, the actual and visible presence of the people who were inviting them to come and were promising to join them in the war against the Romans" (3,44,6: *πρῶτον μὲν ἢ τῆς παρουσίας ἐνάργεια τῶν ἐπισπωμένων καὶ κοινωνήσειν ἐπαγγελλομένων τοῦ πρὸς Ῥωμαίους πολέμου*); 2) "secondly, their trustworthy promise that they would lead them through such places that they would make their way to Italy without lacking anything necessary and in safety" (3,44,7: *δεύτερον δὲ τὸ τῆς ἐπαγγελίας αὐτῶν ἀξιόπιστον, ὅτι καθηγήσονται διὰ τόπων τοιούτων δι' ὧν οὐδενὸς*

ἐπιδεόμενοι τῶν ἀναγκαίων συντόμως ἅμα καὶ μετ' ἀσφαλείας ποιήσονται τὴν εἰς Ἰταλίαν πορείαν); 3) “moreover, the fertility and the extent of the land they would go to” (3,44,8: πρὸς δὲ τούτοις ἡ τῆς χώρας γενναιότης, εἰς ἣν ἀφίξονται, καὶ τὸ μέγεθος); 4) “and the eager spirit of the men with whom they would fight against the Roman armies” (ibid.: ἔτι δὲ τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἡ προθυμία, μεθ' ὧν μέλλουσι ποιεῖσθαι τοὺς ἀγῶνας πρὸς τὰς τῶν Ῥωμαίων δυνάμεις).

After that, Hannibal himself addresses his men (3,44,10–12), reminding them of their past actions (τῶν προγεγενημένων πράξεων), in which they have encountered “many hazardous enterprises and dangers” (πολλοῖς καὶ παραβόλοις ἔργοις καὶ κινδύνοις). For this reason, they must be of good heart, “considering that the greatest part of their task is now accomplished, because they have mastered the crossing of the river and have witnessed with their own eyes the friendly feelings and readiness to help of their allies” (3,44,11: θεωροῦντας διότι τὸ μέγιστον ἦνυσται τῶν ἔργων, ἐπειδὴ τῆς τε τοῦ ποταμοῦ διαβάσεως κεκρατήκασι τῆς τε τῶν συμμάχων εὐνοίας καὶ προθυμίας αὐτόπται γεγόνασι).

Let us now turn to the Livian passage:

30,1 *Itaque Hannibal, postquam ipsi sententiam stetit pergere ire atque Italiam petere, advocata contione varie militum versat animos castigando adhortandoque: 2 mirari se, quinam pectora semper impavida repens terror invaserit. Per tot annos vincentis eos stipendia facere neque ante Hispania excessisse, quam omnes gentesque et terrae, quas duo diversa maria amplectantur, Carthaginiensium essent. 3 Indignatos deinde quod, quicumque Saguntum obsedissent, velut ob noxam sibi dedi postularet populus Romanus, Hiberum traiecisse ad delendum nomen Romanorum liberandumque orbem terrarum. 4 Tum nemini visum id longum, cum ab occasu solis ad exortus intenderent iter; 5 nunc, postquam multo maiorem partem itineris emensam cernant, Pyrenaeum saltum inter ferocissimas gentes superatum, Rhodanum, tantum annum, tot milibus Gallorum prohibentibus, domita etiam ipsius fluminis vi traiectum, in conspectu Alpium habeant, quarum alterum latus Italiae sit, in ipsis portis hostium fatigatos subsistere – 6 quid Alpium aliud esse credentes quam montium altitudines? 7 Fingerent altiores Pyrenaei iugis: nullas profecto terras caelum contingere nec <in>exsuperabiles humano generi esse. Alpium quidem habitari, coli, gignere atque alere animantes: pervias fauces esse exercitibus. 8 Eos ipsos, quos cernant, legatos non pinnis sublimem elatos Alpium transgressos. Ne maiores quidem eorum indigenas, sed advenas Italiae cultores has ipsas Alpium ingentibus saepe agminibus cum liberis ac coniugibus migrantium modo tuto transmisisset. 9 Militi quidem armato nihil secum praeter instrumenta belli portanti quid invium aut inexsuperabile esse? Saguntum ut caperetur, quid per octo menses periculi, quid laboris exhaustum esse! 10 Romam, caput orbis terrarum, petentibus quicumque adeo asperum atque arduum videri, quod inceptum moretur? 11 Cepisse quondam Gallos ea, quae adiri posse Poenus desperet? Proinde aut cederent animo atque virtute genti per eos dies*

*totiens ab se victae aut itineris finem sperent campum interiacentem Tiberi ac moenibus Romanis.*⁸⁸

A first major peculiarity of Livy's account is that attention is focused much more on Hannibal: although the Gallic ambassadors are mentioned in 21,29,6, they do not speak in front of the troops; this task falls to the Carthaginian general alone, whose thoughts are thus more concentrated and effective. His speech is more rhetorically elaborated than the one in Polybius, climaxing in a series of emphatic questions in sections 9–11.

The crucial point, however, is that, although the same arguments as in Polybius are used by Hannibal to encourage his men, each of them is modified in two ways: first, each point in Hannibal's line of argument has a stronger connection with space and, secondly, each one touches the theme of universal power;

88 “30,1 After deciding to go ahead with his march and make for Italy as planned, Hannibal called a meeting of the men and roused their spirits with a mixture of criticism and encouragement. 2 He was shocked, he said, that hearts ever fearless could have been subject to a panic attack. They had served, and served victoriously, for so many years, and they had not left Spain before seeing all the tribes and lands between its two seas under Carthaginian control. 3 Then, vexed by the demand of the Roman people that any who had blockaded Saguntum be turned over to them, as though guilty of some crime, they had crossed the Ebro to wipe out the name of Rome and set the world free. 4 At that point it seemed to no one to be a long journey, though they were travelling from where the sun set to where it rose again. 5 Now they could see that by far the greater part of their journey was behind them. They could see that they had climbed the pass through the Pyrenees where they had been surrounded by truly fierce tribes, and that they had crossed the formidable River Rhône, where they had conquered even the violence of that waterway, in the teeth of so many thousands of Gauls. And it was only now, when they had the Alps in sight, with Italy on the other side, and when they were at the very gateway to the enemy – only now did they halt from weariness. 6 The Alps – what else did they think them but high mountains? 7 All right, they might well suppose them higher than the crests of the Pyrenees, but certainly no points of the earth reached the sky, or were insurmountable for the human race. In fact, the Alps were inhabited, and under cultivation. They bore and sustained living beings, and armies could pass through their gorges. 8 The very envoys his men saw before them had not come over the Alps flying high on wings, he said. No, even the ancestors of these men were not natives of Italy; they were foreign settlers who had safely crossed these very same Alps on many occasions and in huge numbers, taking children and wives with them on their migrations. 9 And a soldier carrying nothing but his implements of war – what is there that he cannot pass or surmount? Think of the eight months of danger and hardship they had suffered to take Saguntum! 10 Their objective now was Rome, capital of the world. Can any challenge seem sufficiently daunting or difficult to delay that enterprise? In the past Gauls had captured those very places the Carthaginians were now losing hope of approaching! 11 So, he concluded, they ought to admit that, in spirit and courage, they were inferior to a people they had so often defeated in recent days! Either that or they should expect that the end of their journey would be the plain lying between the Tiber and the walls of Rome.”

one may add that these two aspects are closely interrelated. Let us consider Hannibal's arguments one by one.

The argument concerning the past deeds of the army opens the speech (21,30,2). Where Polybius was general, Livy refers to the conquest of Spain, and depicts the latter as a complete imposition of Carthaginian rule over the whole peninsula.

Hannibal then goes on to remind his soldiers of the ultimate goal of their expedition. While Polybius simply spoke of the fertility of the Italian soil, Rome is the real goal for Livy. This is first mentioned in 21,30,3 (*Hiberum traiecisse ad delendum nomen Romanorum liberandumque orbem terrarum*), then resumed toward the end of the speech (21,30,10: *Romam, caput orbis terrarum, petentibus quicquam adeo asperum atque arduum videri, quod inceptum moretur?*). The very conclusion of Hannibal's address is a reminder that the goal of their journey is the field that lies between the Tiber and the walls of Rome. Rome is the goal precisely because it is the "capital of the world", the *caput orbis terrarum*.⁸⁹ Through these clearly anachronistic remarks, Hannibal speaks here as if Rome already had the status and power she would gain after the war was over and by means of the subsequent conflicts in the east: the image of space that the reader shapes in his or her own mind is thus clearly structured with Rome as its very centre. All the Carthaginians have done up to this moment (the crossing of the Ebro and the subsequent march) is seen as aiming to reach the "centre" and destroy its power.

Livy's Hannibal also takes over the argument by which "most of the work lies behind you". While Polybius stressed, above all, how the most difficult deeds had already been faced, Livy stresses how the greatest part of the journey (*iter*) lies behind the army (21,30,5): the accent is here on space, more than on deeds. The idea that the army is almost at the end of the journey is conveyed through the image of the Alps as the gates of the Romans (*in ipsis portis hostium*), and of Italy lying on the other side of the mountains. These remarks introduce the idea of the Alps as walls of both Rome and Italy, and consequently of Italy as a sort of a larger city around Rome, which will then be powerfully conveyed by Hannibal's speech at the pass. If we consider both speeches, we notice that a precise image of space results: Rome is the centre of "the world", and Italy is almost its extension, protected by the Alps. But is that barrier truly unbreachable?

In Polybius the argument about the feasibility of the march concerned, above all, the presence of the allies; Gallic chieftains themselves promised a safe passage. In Livy, the stress is on the feasibility of the Alpine crossing. In sections 6–8, Hannibal strives to show that the Alps are, in the end, nothing but moun-

⁸⁹ Cf. Liv. 1,16,17; 1,55,6.

tains, inhabited by men and animals: nowhere can the earth touch the sky and no land can be truly impassable. Moreover, the Alps have been crossed in the past. It is interesting to notice how Livy here attributes to Hannibal words that in Polybius are part of a rationalistic polemical remark advanced by the historian in the first person against those writers who depict the Alps as impassable and introduce an intervention by a god or hero in order to explain the Carthaginians' success in overcoming the mountains (Pol. 3,47,6–48,12). This parallel has been considered by both M. R. Girod and D. S. Levene⁹⁰ as one of the elements that suggest that Livy had direct knowledge of Polybius in this section of the Third Decade: according to Levene, in particular, Livy is consciously engaging in an intertextual dialogue with the Greek historian, with the aim of criticizing the latter's rationalistic attitude. Hannibal, in fact, just like Polybius, is trying to dismiss the rhetorical and literary depiction of the Alps as an impassable barrier; however, the first appearance of the mountains themselves (21,31,7–9, quoted above, 136–137) will refute his claim, demolishing every single point made in his argument (the heights seem to touch the sky; the animals are freezing with the cold; the men are the opposite of civilized people).⁹¹

In a way, however, Hannibal is also right, because the Carthaginians will indeed succeed in crossing the natural frontier. He is here very much aware that the Alps have been crossed by the Gauls, and not once, but many times (Liv. 21,30,8). More to the point, he is arguing that there is no border that cannot be crossed. After all, his journey started with the crossing of a border (a military one: the river Ebro) and, via the crossing of several natural frontiers (the Pyrenees, the Rhône, the Durance), it will end with the crossing of the most important border of all: the Alps.

The motif of boundaries and their permeability gets its fullest treatment in the last speech I wish to consider: that delivered by Hannibal to his troops before the battle of the Ticinus (21,43,2–44,9).⁹² I shall take this into account because, although it is not part of the journey-narrative proper, it is placed immediately after the end of that section, and contains significant references to the march: in a way, it can be seen as a retrospective view of it. As has been observed by E. Adler, this speech shows a far greater divergence, relative to the corresponding Polybian one (3,63,12–13), than the speech delivered by the consul Scipio on the same

⁹⁰ Girod (1982) 1207–1208; Levene (2010) 64–69.

⁹¹ Cf. Pausch (2011) 149–150.

⁹² This speech has been given a detailed treatment by Adler (2011) 93–98, who also compares it to the corresponding speech in Polybius (Pol. 3,63: cf. Adler 2011, 65–69); a briefer examination of the speech is in Adler (2012) 294–295.

occasion (corresponding to Pol. 3,64,2–11).⁹³ This means that Livy has here displayed his rhetorical ability in a special way in the elaboration of Hannibal's speech; I shall argue that a reason for this is that Hannibal's speech contains some key reflections about empire and its space.

Hannibal starts by showing his soldiers how the physical features of the Italian peninsula give them no choice but to fight there (21,43,2–5).⁹⁴ In the meantime, however, this fight in Italy and for Italy is something more, as Hannibal goes on to explain in 21,43,6–10:

*Si Siciliam tantum ac Sardiniam parentibus nostris ereptas nostra virtute reciperaturi essemus, satis tamen ampla pretia essent: quidquid Romani tot triumphis partum congestumque possident, id omne vestrum cum ipsis dominis futurum est. In hanc tam opimam mercedem, agite dum, dis bene iuvantibus arma capite. Satis adhuc in vastis Lusitaniae Celtiberiaeque montibus pecora consecrando nullum emolumentum tot laborum periculorumque vestrorum vidistis; tempus est iam opulenta vos ac ditia stipendia facere et magna operae pretia mereri, tantum itineris per tot montes fluminaque et tot armatas gentes emensos. Hic vobis terminum laborum fortuna dedit; hic dignam mercedem emeritis stipendii dabit.*⁹⁵

The Romans' domination of the world will pass to the Carthaginians, and they have a legitimate claim to it, precisely because they have taken control of "the world" by travelling through it. "Here" (*hic*), in Italy, is where the journey logically ends, because it is presented as a journey from the farthest edges of the world to its political centre – a centre that is going to be superseded.

Hannibal then goes on to explain why the Carthaginian army is stronger than the inexperienced Roman legions (21,43,11–18): their strength is evident in the fact that they have come all the way from the borders of the earth through

⁹³ Adler (2011) 98. It should also be noticed that Livy inverts the order of the two speeches, so that Hannibal's, which comes after Scipio's, acquires greater force.

⁹⁴ *Dextra laevaue duo maria claudunt nullam ne ad effugium quidem navem habentis, circa Padus amnis maior [Padus] ac violentior Rhodano, ab tergo Alpes urgent, vix integris vobis ac vigentibus transitae* (21,43,4).

⁹⁵ "Suppose it were merely Sicily and Sardinia, filched from our fathers, that we were going to recover. Those would be prizes great enough themselves. As it is, whatever all their many triumphs have won and accumulated for the Romans, all that is going to be yours – along with its owners! Come on, then, take up your arms to win this rich reward – the gods are with you! You have spent enough time chasing sheep on the desolate mountains of Lusitania and Celtiberia, seeing no return for all your tribulation and danger. It is now time to make your service rich and profitable and, after that enormous journey over all those mountains and rivers, and through all those belligerent tribes, it is time you earned the great rewards for all your efforts. It is here that Fortune has granted an end to your labours, and here she will give you the reward you deserve when your service is done."

different lands (21,43,13). Once again, the comparison with Polybius is illuminating. The only reference to the extent of the march that the Greek historian introduces into his speech is at 3,63,7, but its purpose is to stress that there is no hope that Hannibal's soldiers could return to their homeland, which is now so far away. That is, Polybius offers a pragmatic remark where Livy stresses conquest.

That this itinerary is intended as a march of conquest is clear not only from the participles *vincentes*, but also from the fact that Hannibal describes himself as *domitor Hispaniae Galliaeque, victor idem non Alpinarum modo gentium sed ipsarum, quod multo maius est, Alpium* (cf. 21,43,15) This definition as “the man who brought Spain and Gaul to heel, and conquered not only the peoples of the Alps but – a much greater achievement – the Alps themselves” can be held to be true as far as Spain is concerned, but not for Gaul, through which the Carthaginians have made their way in a mostly peaceful manner. However, in the image of his army's deeds that Hannibal wants to convey, the journey takes on symbolic, ideal meanings which go beyond the actual events; it can be viewed as taking possession of an ideally all-encompassing space.

The climax of the speech comes at 21,44,5–7, in which Hannibal blames Roman arrogance as the real cause of the war:

Crudelissima ac superbissima gens sua omnia suique arbitrii facit. Cum quibus bellum, <cum> quibus pacem habeamus, se modum inponere aequum censet. Circumscribit includitque nos terminis montium fluminumque, quos non excedamus, neque eos quos statuit terminos observat. “Ne transieris Hiberum! Ne quid rei tibi sit cum Saguntinis!” Ad Hiberum est Saguntum? “Nusquam te vestigio moveris!” Parum est quod veterrimas provincias meas Siciliam ac Sardiniam <ademisti?> Adimis etiam Hispanias, et, inde <si de>cessero, in Africam transcendes. <Transcendes> autem? Transcendisse dico; duos consules huius anni, unum in Africam, alterum in Hispaniam miserunt. Nihil usquam nobis relictum est, nisi quod armis vindicavimus.”⁹⁶

Rome, according to him, is demanding to establish borders for other peoples, but does not even respect them. The first border he refers to is obviously the river

⁹⁶ “They are a barbarous and high-handed nation; they want everything to be theirs and under their control. They think they have the right to decide with whom we are to be at war, and with whom to be at peace. They confine and restrict us, using mountains and rivers as boundaries that we are not to cross, but they themselves do not observe those boundaries that they have defined. ‘Do not cross the Ebro!’ they say ‘Keep away from the people of Saguntum!’ But is Saguntum on the Ebro? ‘Do not take a step in any direction!’ they say. Is it not enough that you have taken from me my oldest provinces, Sicily and Sardinia? Are you taking the Spanish provinces, too? And if I cede these as well, will you cross to Africa? Did I say ‘will cross’? I mean *have* crossed. They have sent out this year's two consuls, one to Africa and the other to Spain. We have been left nothing anywhere apart from what we may defend with our weapons”.

Ebro, which Livy has earlier defined, in 21,2,7, as *finis utriusque imperii*. However, the issue is wider, and concerns the Roman right to impose borders on the world. It is interesting to observe that this statement of Hannibal's sounds like an inverted version of the discourse of universal Roman rule mentioned above, which implied the notion that Rome's *imperium* was not constrained by any border.⁹⁷ What Livy's Hannibal is doing, then, is turning the very concept of Roman rule upside down.

How should we account for this? A first possible answer could be that, as it is the enemy speaking here – and not just an enemy among others, but the arch-enemy of Rome, and one who is going to be defeated in the end – such an insistence on the crossing of boundaries is nothing but a way of highlighting the fact that the Roman view of their own relationship to boundaries is the correct one.

This answer, however, is not a completely satisfactory one.⁹⁸ One may note, for instance, that Hannibal is right in at least one point. In 21,2,7 (cf. above) Livy, while describing the Ebro treaty between Rome and Carthage, had defined the position of Saguntum in the following terms: *Saguntinisque mediis inter imperia duorum populorum libertas servaretur*. This remark, which supports Rome's claim that Carthage was responsible for the war, is of course wrong from a geographical point of view, as Saguntum is well south of the river. Hannibal, on the other hand, is very well aware of this geographical inaccuracy (*Ad Hiberum est Saguntum?*), which he ascribes to the greed and the arrogance of Rome. Moreover, his speech before the Ticinus is more effective than Scipio's both because it is positioned after the speech of the Roman general and because some of Scipio's arguments are weak from a rhetorical point of view.⁹⁹

I think the answer to our former question lies, more properly, in the continuing tension between two views of Hannibal's journey – and of two ideas of “the world” (that is, of world rule) that can be observed underlying Livy's narrative of Hanni-

⁹⁷ Cf. Mehl (1994) and above, 133–135.

⁹⁸ On this point see the observations in Pausch (2011) 187–189: the German scholar criticizes the common view according to which criticism of Rome in speeches held by enemies who are going to be defeated is to be taken as a reaffirmation, on Livy's part, of Roman patriotic celebration; instead, he stresses the effect of such speeches in creating multiple perspectives, although in the context of a generally pro-Roman narrative. The insertion of powerful speeches delivered by enemies of Rome in Roman historiographical works was a well-established tradition. Greek historiography provided antecedents: cf. Rutherford (2010) 312–313. In Latin historiography the typical examples are Caes. *Gall.* 7,77; Sall. *Epist. Mithr.* (although this is a letter, not a speech); Tac. *Agr.* 32–33; *hist.* 4,14; *ann.* 14,35,1–2. For detailed treatments of the topic, with further bibliography, cf. Pausch (2011) 170–190; Adler (2011) 83–116 (on Livy in particular) and Adler (2012).

⁹⁹ Adler (2011) 87–93.

bal's march and the whole Third Decade. As I have shown in my analysis, every character in Livy's account – and the reader, too – has a clear idea of the world as arranged in a structure of “concentric circles”, with Rome as the political centre, Italy as its extension, and the external lands as areas on which Roman rule can be imposed. Hannibal, while recognizing such a picture, intends to subvert it, by breaching the boundaries that guarantee its existence, by turning the external lands into hostile places (this is the case with Gaul), and by proposing his own idea of universal conquest based on the parallel between himself and Hercules. His Roman opponents reply to his claims and reaffirm the notion of Rome's world power: Hannibal is depicted either as a barbarian or as a subject of Roman rule. One may note, however, that Scipio's and Varro's credibility as speakers is, at least in part, undermined by the fact that the former will be defeated at the Ticinus, and the second is depicted by Livy as the prototype of the reckless, selfish commander. Of course, Hannibal's credibility is undermined even more by his ultimate defeat.

Faced with this alternation of viewpoints, Livy's reader is both introduced to one of the main issues of the Third Decade – the establishment of Roman *imperium* as world rule – and invited to acknowledge how Roman *imperium* can be threatened by alternative claims to world domination.

6 Conclusions

Livy's account of Hannibal's march, although inaccurate as far as objective geography is concerned, conveys a precise idea of space, which will then be developed throughout the Third Decade, and which is closely connected to a meditation upon empire.

The space covered by Hannibal and his troops is assimilated to universal space through the comparison with Hercules' travels and through the stress placed on the western edge of the world as the starting point of the march.

By means of both narrative organization and the rhetorical elaboration of literary *topoi*, Livy divides the space of “the world” into what I have above called a “concentric-circle” structure. The logical and political centre (although not the geographical one as far as Hannibal's march is concerned) is Rome, surrounded by Italy, which is almost seen as an extension of the city, or, better, a larger city around the city: this representation of Italy is achieved by, among other things, the reworking of a well-known literary *topos*, that of the Alps as the walls, or gates, of Italy. The Alps, the most important landmark in Livy's narrative, divide Italy and Rome, on one side, from the rest of the world, on the other. Territories like Spain and Gaul, lying on the other side of the Alps, are seen, in the first place, as objects of conquest.

Hannibal's march represents a movement from the edges to the centre (the opposite of the logical radiation of power from the centre to the edges) and, at the same time, an attempt to supersede the centre, so subverting the very foundations of the arrangement of space we have described: Hannibal crosses boundaries imposed by the centre, turns barbarian lands against Rome, overcomes the Alps, and aims to destroy the tie between Rome and Italy. His march, then, also represents the attempt to establish an alternative view of the world and of universal empire.

It has also been noted that the two conflicting views of global space – the Roman and the Carthaginian – are discussed through a number of speeches that Livy puts into the mouths of his characters. The way characters speak about the march is a way of renegotiating some topics that concern the ties between space and empire. In particular, Hannibal offers an inverted definition of Roman *imperium sine fine*: he contests Rome's right to impose boundaries on the world and to exceed her own boundaries, and accordingly depicts his own march as the crossing of several natural boundaries. Roman characters answer his claims by casting him as a barbarian and a subject of Roman rule – that is, by reaffirming the Roman idea of *imperium*.

Through the presentation of conflicting points of view, readers can see Roman rule of the *orbis terrarum* reflected in the space of Hannibal's march. The opening book of the Third Decade thus sets the tone for the whole account of the Second Punic War and reminds us of what Livy's main interest is in describing the clash between Rome and Carthage: the origins and the growth of Roman imperial power, its limits and its dangers.

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