

Hannibal's Journey: Ancient History, Material Philology, Medieval Illumination

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One of the miniatures in an early fifteenth-century manuscript at first looks like a familiar type: martyrs suffering in the flames, facing judgement, or led away to their fate, under the gaze of a presiding figure of authority (Figs 1–2). These elements also appear throughout the same illuminators' work in liturgical manuscripts: St John before the Latin Gate or Christ before Pilate, in books of hours (Fig. 3); and the roasting of St Lawrence, in a breviary (Fig. 4). But other aspects of the image seem unfamiliar and strange, and—at least at first—appear still stranger when one turns to the text.¹

¹ The miniature is from Cambridge, MA, Houghton Library, MS Richardson 32, vol. 2, f. 55. The other three are: St. John: the "Egerton Hours," London, British Library (hereafter BL), Egerton MS 1070, f. 92; Pilate: the "Strawberry Hours," New York, Morgan Library, MS M. 1000, f. 20v; St Lawrence: the "Chateauroux Breviary," Chateauroux, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 2, f. 270v. For a helpful discussion of the historiography of this stylistic group, the "Boucicaut Illuminators," see Christine Geisler Andrews, "The Boucicaut Masters," *Gesta* 41 (2002): 29–38. For the Houghton manuscript, see especially: Millard Meiss, *French Painting in the Time of Jean de Berry: The Boucicaut Master* (London, 1968), 56–58, 70, 80–81, 89, 142; Roger Wieck, *Late-medieval and Renaissance Illuminated Manuscripts, 1350–1525, in the Houghton Library* (Cambridge, MA, 1983), no. 5; Jessica Berenbeim, "Livy in Paris" (B.A. Thesis, Harvard University, 2003); *Imagining the Past in France: History in Manuscript Painting, 1250–1500*, ed. Elizabeth Morrison and Anne D. Hedeman (Los Angeles, 2010), no. 40 (entry by Anne Hedeman); *Beyond Words: Illuminated Manuscripts in Boston Collections*, ed. Jeffrey Hamburger et al. (Boston, 2016), no. 189 (entry by Anne Hedeman). For the London book of hours, see *Paris 1400. Les arts sous Charles VI*, ed. Elisabeth Taburet-Delahaye with François Avril ([Paris?], 2004), no. 165 (entry by François Avril); and *Royal Manuscripts: The Genius of Illumination*, ed. Scot McKendrick, John Lowden, and Kathleen Doyle (London, 2011), no. 44 (entry by Deirdre Jackson). For the New York manuscript, see the *Corsair* catalogue at <corsair.themorgan.org>, with links to extended curatorial description and full bibliography. For the breviary, see *Paris 1400*, no. 69 (entry by Inès Villela-Petit); *The Limbourg Brothers: Nijmegen Masters at the French Court, 1400–1416*, ed. Rob Dückers and Pieter Roelofs (Nijmegen, 2005), no. 118 (entry by Gregory T. Clark). Some of the research and arguments in this article were first presented in the unpublished 2003 thesis cited above, and revised during a research fellowship at the Warburg Institute. I owe particular thanks to the supervision and support of Jeffrey Hamburger, Richard Thomas, and Jan Ziolkowski; the examination reports of Kathleen Coleman and an anonymous reader; and the advice of Jaś Elsner, Anne Hedeman, and Gervase Rosser. Many thanks also to the anonymous peer-reviewers of this article.

In this case, the miniature accompanies a work of ancient history. It prefaces Book XXIV in a fifteenth-century manuscript now at the Houghton Library, with the text of Pierre Bersuire's French translation of Livy's *Ab urbe condita*. Books XXI–XXX, chronicle the events of the Hannibalic War, which came to play such a defining role in Roman self-conception.² Livy dedicates most of Book XXIV in particular to a detailed narrative of Sicilian politics in the years around 215 BC, and it is from the intrigues, betrayals, and tragedies of this narrative that the events depicted here are drawn. Completed in the 1350s, Bersuire's translation ultimately circulated in its initial, revised, translated, and derivative forms throughout Europe and the British Isles.³ As one can see in the Houghton manuscript, it identifies this book as *le quart liure de la seconde*

² In this article, quotations from the Latin are from the following editions: First Decade: Oxford Classical Texts: *Titi Livi Ab urbe condita*, ed. R.M. Ogilvie (Oxford, 1974–); Third Decade: Teubner editions: *Titi Livi Ab urbe condita libri XXI–XXV*, ed. Thomas Alan Dorey, vol. 1, *Libri XXI–XXII* (Leipzig, 1971) and vol. 2, *Libri XXIII–XXV* (Leipzig, 1976); *Titi Livi Ab urbe condita libri XXVI–XXVII* and *Titi Livi Ab urbe condita libri XXVIII–XXX*, both ed. Patrick G. Walsh (Leipzig, 1989 and 1986). English translations from the Latin are quoted (sometimes slightly modified) from: *Livy: The Rise of Rome: Books I–V*, trans. T.J. Luce (based on the OCT edition)(Oxford, 2008); and *Livy: Hannibal's War, Books Twenty-one to Thirty*, trans. J.C. Yardley (based on the Teubner editions), with introduction and notes by Dexter Hoyos (Oxford, 2006). Quotations from the French translation are from the individual manuscripts under discussion unless otherwise noted, and translated myself. In all transcribed texts, abbreviations have been silently expanded and line breaks are not noted.

³ For handlists of manuscripts of the translation, see: Charles Samaran, "Pierre Bersuire, prieur de Saint-Eloi de Paris," in *Histoire littéraire de la France* (Paris, 1733–), 39 (1962): 447–50; Frédéric Duval and Françoise Viellard, "Traduction de Pierre Bersuire," in *Miroir des classiques*, Éditions en ligne de l'École des Chartes, 17 <<http://elec.enc.sorbonne.fr/miroir/>> (including early printed editions). Samaran, 259–450, also gives a full account of Bersuire's life and work. The translation has been studied extensively and its history clarified by Marie-Hélène Tesnière, whom I would also like to thank for help in accessing some of the relevant manuscripts at the Bibliothèque nationale de France; among her many publications on the subject, for the earliest manuscripts and subsequent development of the translation, see especially: "À propos de la traduction de Tite-Live par Pierre Bersuire. Le manuscrit Oxford, Bibliothèque Bodléienne, Rawlinson C. 447," *Romania* 118 (2000): 449–98; "Les Décades de Tite-Live traduite par Pierre Bersuire et la politique éditoriale de Charles V," in *Quand la peinture était dans les livres. Mélanges en l'honneur de François Avril*, ed. Mara Hofmann and Caroline Zöhl (Turnhout, 2007), 344–51.

decade de titusliuius (f. 54v), as the lost original Second Decade was not yet known to have existed.⁴

Much else has also been lost or changed over time, and varies from manuscript to manuscript. However, even if the Houghton volume stands many degrees removed from its classical antecedent, and even though each medieval manuscript represents an independent material text, the substrate of ancient history is also still there. This essay follows one itinerary of Hannibal from *Ab urbe condita* through medieval manuscript culture. Although speaking of twisting alpine passes might perhaps push the analogy too far, it is true to say that the pathway is not at all straightforward. That itinerary, and this manuscript miniature in particular, can in fact exemplify both instability and stability, changes and continuities, variance and constancy. Hence the ways in which this discussion and its title draw from studies in both material philology and in the classical tradition, a synthesis not unlike that represented in and by the Houghton manuscript's strange yet familiar image.⁵

As if produced prophetically as an object lesson in the principles of material philology, this manuscript's visual instantiation constitutes its own strikingly distinctive text. Its interpretation is not only unique by definition, but conspicuously unusual.

⁴ For the transmission of *Ab urbe condita*, see recently Marielle de Franchis, "Livian Manuscript Tradition," in *A Companion to Livy*, ed. Bernard Mineo (Chichester, 2015), 3–23, with full bibliography to 2012. Only Bersuire's "*seconde decade*," originally Livy's Third, survives in this manuscript. Houghton MS Richardson 32, vol. 1, is the First Decade of a different manuscript; the two volumes were brought together by modern collectors. See most recently: *Beyond Words*, no. 188.

⁵ For material philology and its alter ego (sibling?), "New Philology," only the most selective list of references can be included here. Classic statements: Bernard Cerquiglini, *In Praise of the Variant: A Critical History of Philology* [*Éloge de la variante. Histoire critique de la philologie*, 1989], trans. Betsy Wing (Baltimore, 1999); *The New Philology*, ed. Stephen Nichols, special issue of *Speculum* 65 (1990). See especially Nichols, "Philology in a Manuscript Culture," 1–10, at 7–8, for discussion of the "different systems of representation" interacting on the individual illuminated manuscript folio. Recent reappraisals: Gabrielle Spiegel, "Reflections on *The New Philology*," in *Rethinking the New Medievalism*, ed. R. Howard Bloch et al. (Baltimore, 2014), 39–50; *Rethinking Philology: Twenty-Five Years after The New Philology*, special issue of *Florilegium* 32 (2015), in particular the articles by Markus Stock, "Philological Moves," Andrew Taylor, "Getting Technology and Not Getting Theory: The New Philology after Twenty-Five Years," and Julie Orlemanski, "Philology and the Turn Away from the Linguistic Turn," at 1–17, 131–55, and 157–81, respectively. Of particular relevance to this essay, see Stock, "Philological Moves," esp. 1, 4–5, 10–11, who comments on the chronology and shifting emphases of the terms "New Philology" and "Material Philology," elsewhere sometimes used as equivalent; and Orlemanski, "Linguistic Turn," p. 159, who notes that "philology" in the context of the *New Philology* special issue "did not refer straightforwardly to textual criticism. ... The term was a provocation, not a clear designator."

When confronted with the contradictions within and among Livy's History, its commentaries, and its translations, and the cacophony or counterpoint between them, the creators of other closely contemporary manuscripts made rather different choices. The particular image with which this essay begins—its initial ambiguity, and its complex history—opens a view into that distinctive artistic and intellectual logic. At the same time, the miniature's curious ambivalence is also emblematic of something profoundly rooted in the tradition of its text. Ambivalence is written into *Ab urbe condita* itself: Hannibal—great leader of Carthage, sworn enemy of Rome, prodigy of bravery, judgement, and cruelty—is always a puzzle. And however far removed from its ancestral text this image may be, some basis for its reading extends back through revision, translation, and commentary, back to the historical work itself. Despite this manuscript's exceptional expression of a highly interpretive translation, its illumination comes back to the History, as if pulled by the undertow of the text.

* * *

Hannibal's journey from antiquity to this particular fifteenth-century manuscript is complicated and multifarious. In the first instance, the transmission of *Ab urbe condita* itself down the fourteenth century is extremely complex. Bersuire then relied heavily on the Livy commentary of the English Dominican Nicholas Trevet, probably written in the years 1316 to 1319, for both his translation of the 1350s and its incorporated glosses ("incidences"). This initial translation was then significantly revised in about 1370, revision which included the design of its first really substantial programme of illumination, a programme that had many imitators.⁶ Finally, the Houghton manuscript was made at least forty years after that, and whoever commissioned, devised, and painted its miniatures knew this earlier programme. Three related elements of each stage of this journey are particularly significant here, for understanding the text's interpretive trajectory. Of these, the first is structure: to what degree is the Third ("seconde") Decade framed as a coherent whole, and how do internal divisions articulate its narrative? The second is exemplarity: in what way is the history offered as morally,

⁶ See de Franchis, "Tradition," for Livy. For Trevet, see Ruth J. Dean, "The Earliest Known Commentary on Livy is by Nicholas Trevet," *Mediaevalia et humanistica* 3 (1945): 86–98; Curt J. Wittlin, *Titus Livius, Ab urbe condita I.1–9. Ein mittellateinischer Kommentar und sechs romanische Übersetzungen und Kürzungen aus dem Mittelalter* (Tübingen, 1970), x, 2–27; A.H. McDonald, "Livius, Titus," in *Catalogus translationum et commentariorum*, ed. Paul Oskar Kristeller and F. Edward Cranz (Washington, D.C., 1971), 2: 331–48. For Bersuire's dependence on Trevet, see Jaques Monfrin, "Humanisme et traductions au Moyen Âge," *Journal des savants* 3 (1963): 161–90, at 171–72. For Bersuire's sources and the major revision of his text, see Tesnière, "Traduction" and "Politique éditoriale."

ethically, politically, or otherwise instrumental? The third is characterization: how are individual people and groups depicted—in particular, Hannibal and the Carthaginians?

Although there is some debate about its larger organizational principles, *Ab urbe condita* follows primarily a decade (ten-book) and, secondarily, pentad (five-book) structure, as evidenced among other things by dedicated decade prefaces like the one that begins Book XXI.⁷ The ten books that follow (the original Third Decade, on the Hannibalic War) constitute an especially internally coherent narrative.⁸ Furthermore, the division into individual books is original and authorial, “shaped according to artistic criteria, and not by arbitrary features such as the length of a papyrus roll or the number of years covered,” and vary widely in length.⁹ Livy’s conception of *Ab urbe condita* as an exemplary history runs throughout the History both implicitly and explicitly; in the latter case, most famously, directly stated in the Preface to the work as a whole: the study of history is salutary, because *inde tibi tuaeque rei publicae quod imitere capias, inde foedum inceptu foedum exitu quod vites* (“you may select for yourself and for your country what to emulate, from it what to avoid, whether basely begun or basely concluded,” Praef. 10).¹⁰

The Third Decade’s characterization of Hannibal and its exemplary implications are equally complicated. In an oft-quoted passage near the beginning of the Decade, Livy describes Hannibal this way:

numquam ingenium idem ad res diversissimas, parendum atque imperandum, habilis fuit. Itaque haud facile diserneres utrum imperatori an exercitui carior esset; neque Hasdrubal alium quemquam praeficere malle, ubi quid fortiter ac strenue agendum esset, neque milites alio duce plus confidere aut audere. plurimum audaciae ad pericula capessenda, plurimum consilii inter ipsa pericula erat. nullo labore aut corpus fatigari aut animus vinci poterat. caloris ac frigoris patientia par; cibi potionisque desiderio naturali, non voluptate modus finitus; vigiliarum somnique nec die nec nocte discriminata tempora... equitum peditumque idem longe primus erat; princeps in proelium ibat, ultimus conserto proelio excedebat. has tantas viri virtutes ingentia vitia aequabant: inhumana crudelitas, perfidia plus quam Punica, nihil veri nihil sancti, nullus deum metus,

⁷ See, e.g., P.A. Stadter, “The Structure of Livy’s History,” *Historia* 21 (1972): 287–307, repr. with addendum in *Livy*, ed. Jane Chaplin and Christina Kraus (Oxford, 2009), 91–117; D.S. Levene, *Livy on the Hannibalic War* (Oxford, 2010), esp. 4–5.

⁸ In one formulation, “the most remarkable and brilliant piece of sustained prose narrative in the whole surviving corpus of classical literature.” Levene, vii.

⁹ Stadter, 92–93.

¹⁰ See John Moles, “Livy’s Preface,” *Cambridge Classical Journal* 39 (1994): 141–81. Jane Chaplin, *Livy’s Exemplary History* (Oxford, 2000), explicates the role of exemplary history internal to the work.

nullum ius iurandum, nulla religio. cum hac indole virtutum atque vitiorum triennio sub Hasdrubale imperatore meruit nulla re, quae agenda videndaque magno futuro duci esset, praetermissa. (XXI.4)

Never was one character so amenable to the two extremes of obedience and command, and as a result one would have found it hard to tell whether he was better liked by the commander or by the army. There was no one whom Hasdrubal preferred to put in command when a gallant or enterprising feat was called for, while there was no other officer under whom the rank and file had more confidence and enterprise. Hannibal was possessed of enormous daring in facing dangers, and enormous resourcefulness when in the midst of those dangers. He could be physically exhausted or mentally cowed by no hardship. He had the ability to withstand heat and cold alike; his eating and drinking depended on the requirements of nature, not pleasure. His times for being awake and asleep were not determined by day or night... On horse or on foot he was by far the best soldier; the first to enter battle, he was the last to leave once battle was joined. The man's great virtues were matched by his enormous vices: pitiless cruelty, a treachery worse than Punic, no regard for truth, and no integrity, no fear of the gods or respect for an oath, and no scruples. With such a combination of virtues and vices, Hannibal served under Hasdrubal's command for three years, overlooking nothing needing to be done or seen by a man who was to be a great leader.

The standard critical premise, in very general terms, is that Livy develops Hannibal's personality through the interaction between direct and indirect characterization, tensions that can be resolved as expressions of "growing sympathy," complexity, moral ambiguity, or a different and historically specific conception of characterization altogether.¹¹ This depiction of Hannibal also appears within the context of a characterization of the Carthaginian people more broadly, and the representation of individual and group thus emerge in a kind of dialogue with one another.¹²

¹¹ See, e.g., P.G. Walsh, *Livy: His Historical Aims and Methods* (Cambridge, 1961), 103–105; E. Burck, "The Third Decade," in *Livy*, ed. T.A. Dorey (London, 1971), 21–46, esp. at 33; Dexter Hoyos, "Rome and Carthage in Livy," in Mineo, *Companion*, 369–81 ("vices go missing," 372); Levene, *Hannibalic War*, 166–73, 228; Eve MacDonald, *Hannibal: A Hellenistic Life* (New Haven, 2015), 4.

¹² For the depiction of Carthage as "other" more generally, see Corinne Bonnet, "Carthage, 'l'autre nation' dans l'historiographie ancienne et moderne," *Anabases. Traditions et réceptions de l'Antiquité* 1 (2005): 139–60; Levene, *Hannibalic War*, 216–28. For Livy's complementary character development of Hannibal and Scipio, see Andreola Rossi, "Parallel Lives: Hannibal and Scipio in Livy's Third Decade," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 134 (2004): 359–381.

Trevet's commentary, completed by 1319, covers books I–X and XXI–XXX of Livy's History, the original First and Third Decades.¹³ In introducing his commentary, Trevet describes the History as a work *de gestis Romanorum sive de rebus Romanis* and emphasizes the History's structure of discrete decades, to the extent that he describes each decade as having its own separate title; he also comments on the subdivision of the text into books: *distinxit autem hunc librum in duas partes quarum prima dicitur ab urbe condita ut ex titulo patet • secunda de bello punico • utraque vero pars in .x. libros distenditur* ("He also separated this book into two parts, of which the first is called *Ab urbe condita*, as is clear from the title, and the second *De bello punico*; and each part is divided into ten books").¹⁴ In addition to the structural distinctions introduced by Livy himself, the loss of the original Second Decade created an apparent rupture in the continuity of Livy's narrative that further emphasized the decade "*de bello punico*" as a self-contained work.

Trevet's commentary also conditions the reading of Hannibal's character. A manuscript of *Ab urbe condita* that once belonged to Petrarch has annotations throughout in an early fourteenth-century hand, inscribed before Petrarch acquired it; these annotations derive directly from Trevet's commentary.¹⁵ The annotator brackets the famous passage of Hannibal's direct characterization quoted above and writes, alongside Livy's *In Hasrubalis locum haud dubia* (XXI.3), the gloss: *vult hic dicere titus • in locum hastrubalis succedit hanibal & militibus & plebi acceptus & carus* ("Here Livy means that Hannibal succeeded Hasdrubal, having been approved and esteemed by both the army and the people").¹⁶ Livy's text places less emphasis on the event singled out by this intervention—Hannibal's accession doesn't feature as one of Livy's theatrical "scenes" or vivid set-pieces, and after Hanno's virtuosic speech against him, it follows almost as if an afterthought.

Like Trevet, Bersuire characterizes Livy's history as a work about Romans and their deeds, and like Livy, he presents it as an exemplary history—but with a different valence. In his translator's prologue, written in the 1350s, he dedicates the work to its patron King Jean le Bon; Bersuire then describes the Romans' virtuous deeds as the source of their political and military success and, consequently, as a source of examples for a prince to emulate:

Ce fut donc la cause, princes [*sic*] tres redoubté, que vous, qui certes entre les autres princes avés l'engien tres nobles, considerastes que le peuple romain, entre

¹³ See Dean, "Earliest Known Commentary"; Wittlin, *Mittelateinischer Kommentar*; McDonald, "Livius."

¹⁴ Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France (hereafter BnF), MS lat. 5745, f. 1.

¹⁵ Dean, "Earliest Commentary," 86.

¹⁶ BnF MS lat. 5690, ff. 169v, 169.

tous autres peuples qui par vertu de constance et de senz et par poissances de euvres chevaleureuzes ont leur armes portees en contrees estranges et conquesté empires et royaumes pour eux et pour les leurs, ont bien esté sour tous li souverain et li plus excellent, si comme assés appert en ce que eux qui au commencement firent une seule cité assés povre et petite, sceurent faire par armes vertueuses continuees et par sens et labours que il conquistrent la rondece du monde, et que pour ce a leurs fais merveilleus pueent tuit prince prendre exemplez notables es choses dessus dites.¹⁷

Hence the reason, most reverend prince, that you, who surely possess a most noble intellect among other princes, observed that the Roman people, among all other peoples who by virtue of perseverance and good judgement and through the power of chivalrous deeds bore arms in foreign lands and conquered empires and kingdoms for themselves and their people, were supreme and greatest of all, as is quite clear from the fact that those who originally were a solitary city, quite poor and small, knew how to use continual righteous warfare, judgement, industry, such that it conquered the circumference of the world, and that for this reason every prince can draw on significant examples from their astonishing deeds hereby related.

Whereas Livy's Preface alerted the reader to forthcoming examples both good and bad, of conduct both to emulate and to avoid, Bersuire's translator's prologue more strongly emphasizes virtues. And whereas Livy's expressed motivation was morally instrumental, Bersuire's is strategically instrumental. The virtue to be emulated is not an end in itself, but a means to an end—in other words, these virtues are themselves instrumental—for the virtues of the Roman people were critical to their imperial fortune. Text and translation also differ fundamentally in their implied audience, that is, to whom these exempla are ostensibly directed. Of course, the translation's wide circulation means that not only princes read it; a copy was produced for a non-royal patron at least as early as c.1380.¹⁸ The translator's prologue nevertheless affects the presentation of the text, whoever the reader may be; it shifts the emphasis to strategy rather than ethics, especially in the context of imperial rule.

¹⁷ Ed. by Tesnière from Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson C. 447; see "Traduction," 485–87. This is the text as initially written; as she notes, the manuscript has corrections in both a contemporary and a later hand, including the former's correction by expunctuation of *princes* to *prince* in the first line quoted here.

¹⁸ Tesnière, "Politique éditoriale," 349. The manuscript is Bordeaux, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 730, for which see André Masson, "Le *Tite-Live* de Bordeaux et l'atelier du 'Matire aux bouquetaux,'" in *Trésors des bibliothèques de France* 21 (1936).

Bersuire's work then underwent several revisions, and most surviving manuscripts have the version of c.1370.¹⁹ Among other changes, this later version incorporated marginal notes into the main text space, indicated by the rubric *Incidence* (e.g., Fig. 5, col. b). It also subdivided the text within each of the ten books in each decade into numbered, rubricated sections, which are then further subdivided into paragraphs. Finally, this revised translation integrated illumination. With some variation, the standard format would become a scheme of half-page miniatures at the beginning of each decade and column miniatures at the beginning of each book.²⁰

The new rubricated sections have nothing to do with the original divisions of Livy's text. To some extent they have the same conceptual basis as his authorial books, namely, uneven units that serve to emphasize particular points. These new divisions, however, have to contend with the pre-existing shape of the work. Meanwhile, the organization and hierarchy of Livy's own division into decades and books is delineated and further emphasized by the miniatures. So the structure that materializes through the manuscripts' formal character in fact derives from the intersecting structures of Livy's decades/books and Bersuire's sections, the former visually articulated by miniatures and the latter by rubrics. These sections also call attention to very different points, by splitting passages that in the Latin are continuous, or by highlighting or re-interpreting elements of the text. Also, much like Livy's book divisions, the rubrics are far from evenly spaced: sometimes they are only a few lines apart, sometimes a few folios, and they often seem to intervene *in medias res*. While individually they emphasize particular aspects of the History, collectively they summarize it, with a visual prominence that allows that summary to float on the surface of the text. The overall effect is that it is the miniatures and rubrics—the intersecting structures of the Latin

¹⁹ Only two manuscripts survive of the initial version: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson C. 447 and BnF MS nouv. acq. fr. 27401. See Tesnière, "Politique éditoriale," 345. Note that neither of these includes the Third (= "*seconde*," Hannibalic) Decade: the Oxford manuscript has only the First Decade, and the Paris manuscript has part of the First and the Fourth Decade.

²⁰ Tesnière, "Traduction," 449–57; Tesnière, "Politique éditoriale," 346, 348. For chapter division, see also A. Carlotta Dionisotti, "Les chapitres entre l'historiographie et le roman," in *Titres et articulations du texte dans les oeuvres antiques*, ed. Jean Claude Fredouille et al. (Paris, 1997), 529–45. On late-medieval textual division in other languages and genres, see: Malcolm Parkes, *Scribes, Scripts, and Readers: Studies in the Communication, Presentation, and Dissemination of Medieval Texts* (London, 1991); George R. Keiser, "Serving the Needs of Readers: Textual Division in some Late-medieval English Texts," in *New Science out of Old Books: Studies in Manuscripts and Early Printed Books in Honour of A.I. Doyle*, ed. Richard Beadle and A.J. Piper (Aldershot, 1995), 207–226; Jeffrey F. Hamburger, "Rewriting History: The Visual and the Vernacular in Late Medieval History Bibles," in *Retextualisierung in der mittelalterlichen Literatur*, ed. Ursula Peters and Joachim Bumke, *Sonderhefte der Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 124 (2005): 260–308, at 282.

work and the revised French translation—that weave together to create the principal “text” that meets the eye in reading an individual manuscript.

Bersuire’s translator’s prologue, the structure of the revised translation, and the miniatures in individual manuscripts, all bear directly on the characterization of Hannibal. Given the military overtones of the translator’s prologue, even the notoriously harsh passages of direct characterization read differently: Hannibal’s particular virtues take on new significance in the framework of Bersuire’s strategic exemplary history. The Carthaginian’s extraordinary heroism—explicitly acknowledged by Livy alongside even the more uncharitable descriptions of his temperament—are explicitly celebrated in the translation, especially in the revised version. Directly after Livy’s Third Decade preface, the translation incorporates the following commentary:

Incidence: Cartage estoit vne cite tresnoble et trespuissant assise en auffrique sur la mer (Fig. 5, col. b)²¹

Excursus: Carthage was a very noble and powerful city situated by the sea in Africa.

The structural division, rubrication, and translation of the “direct characterization” passage then all direct the reader toward Hannibal’s virtues while somewhat submerging his vices (Fig. 6).²² After the rubric *Comment hanibal sen ala avec son ost en espaigne* (“How Hannibal went with his troops to Spain”), follows a section of text that is particularly brief: ten lines in the Houghton manuscript. There the revision’s next rubric cuts the text off again in mid-flow, to insert another rubric right before the lines directly describing Hannibal’s character: *Ci dit des nobles vertus et du hardement darmes qui estoient ou noble jouuencel hanibal nouuel empereur*. (“This tells of the noble virtues and bravery in arms of the noble youth Hannibal, the new commander”). The descriptive section that follows then begins with a sentence not present in Livy’s Latin at all: *Les vertus hanibal furent moult merueiluses* (“Hannibal’s virtues were truly astonishing”). Only after this does the translation resume, at the beginning of the direct characterization passage. The most damning words of this passage are then buried in the middle of the section, where only the diligent reader would have found Livy’s denunciation of Hannibal’s *tricherie plus que punique* (his *perfidia plus quam punica*), and by extension that of Carthage; whereas the rubric-demarcated section concludes by relating that Hannibal served *sans trespassez aucuns chose faire ou empranre qui peust ou deust appartenz a homme qui ou temps auenir deust estre grant seigneur* (“without omitting

²¹ MS Richardson 32, vol. 2, f. 1.

²² MS Richardson 32, vol. 2, f. 2.

to do or to remark upon anything that could or ought to pertain to a man who in the future would become a great leader," i.e., Livy's *nulla re...*).

The complexities of Livy's text and the intervening layers of (sometimes conflicting) interpretation added by commentator, translator, and reviser therefore present the creators of an individual manuscript with a range of possibilities for articulating its structure, exemplarity, and characterization. Bersuire's translator's prologue both frames and in a number of respects works against the main text in its presentation of the Romans as models more exclusively of militarily strategic virtues. The revised translation, at least of the Hannibalic War books, results in a more inconclusive picture: Hannibal, the Romans' "greatest enemy," also embodied *vertus chevalereuses*. So the creators of the Houghton manuscript were working with an ambiguous and conflicting chorus of voices to begin with.

Starting with the manuscript's first and largest miniature, at the beginning of the decade, Hannibal's complex character emerges as broadly sympathetic (Fig. 5).²³ The scene of Hannibal's "coronation" does not figure in *Ab urbe condita*, yet, the image is a common choice of subject for illumination. The (quasi-)imperial crown, however, is not.²⁴ Given the exceptionally exoticized treatment of the other figures in the miniature, the palette and vocabulary of Hannibal's figure immediately stands out as relatively lacking in signals of alien status. One of the most extraordinary images in the volume depicts one of the Hannibalic War's greatest battles, either Lake Trasimene, Cannae, or a conflation of the two (Fig. 7).²⁵ Both of these battles were catastrophic for Rome, and the latter virtually extinguished her. Therefore, *pace* Bersuire's translator's prologue, it is Hannibal, as the miniature's victorious central figure, who embodies exemplary chivalric performance. As in each phase of the text, the visual characterization of

²³ MS Richardson 32, vol. 2, f. 1. This miniature is attributable to a different illuminator than the others in the volume, although with some shared vocabulary, interests, and approaches. For the historiography of the distinct style of this illuminator, called "Master of the Harvard Hannibal" after this manuscript, see especially Roger S. Wieck, "The Master of the Harvard Hannibal (MS Richardson 32)," in *The Marks in the Fields: Essays on the Uses of Manuscripts*, ed. Rodney Dennis and Elizabeth Falsey (Cambridge, 1992), 91–94.

²⁴ Compare, for example: BL Royal MS 15 D VI, f. 241; Geneva, Bibliothèque de Genève, MS fr. 77, f. 181; BnF MS fr. 267, f. 1; BnF MS fr. 259, f. 253. Meiss, *Boucicaut Master*, 150 n66 comments on the influence of Trevet here: "For the notion of Hannibal as an emperor, see the commentary on Livy by Nicholas Trevet kindly called to my attention by professor A.H. McDonald." McDonald's exact reference and comment aren't cited. Bersuire's translation does repeatedly refer to Hannibal—and Hamilcar and Hasdrubal before him—as *empereur*. However the shift in meaning seems as likely attributable to the designer or illuminator, as the first definition of *empereur* in Middle French is "commandant en chef d'une armée"; see *Dictionnaire du Moyen Français* (1330–1500), at <<http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/>>, sv "Empereur."

²⁵ MS Richardson 32, vol. 2, f. 18v.

Hannibal can also inform that of other Carthaginian people, a narrative pattern clearly perceptible in the miniature that opens Book XXIII. This image can easily be identified with an episode in the History, in which the rings of Roman knights slain in the Battle of Cannae were displayed to the Carthaginian Senate in a bid for further support for the war (Fig. 8).²⁶ The Carthaginian Hanno was unimpressed, and his powerful speech against the war proved prophetic.

Nowhere, perhaps, is the History's simultaneous distance and presence so powerfully expressed as in the image with which this essay began—which should now seem both less strange and more remarkable (Fig. 2). The mysterious miniature presents its concise synopsis of familiar 'medieval' elements, combining them in the same space, in a view that conveys the substance of sequential narration in the guise of a single integrated image: one figure holds a victim's arm as the unfortunate man hears his sentence, while a soldier leads a second victim away, in the direction of the flames, where two other men are stoking the fire. But the miniature's design combines these familiar elements with some less conventional choices. The illuminator pushes the most important figures—the arbiters of judgement and most of the victims—to the sides of the composition, while the figures at the center both turn their backs to the viewer, their faces mostly hidden. The character who presides over the scene sits to the extreme left, partially obscured by the column that frames the miniature, while the five figures in the fire are at the extreme right, framed by an open doorway as though just beyond it. This figure at the far left presenting his argument performs the central action in the image. He makes direct eye contact with the second victim, somewhat right of center, who turns back his head as he is led away.

This particular fusion of conventional and unconventional is what articulates perhaps the most significant aspect of the image: the ambivalence that has travelled with this text all along. The beautiful women in the fire are saint-like in their purity, and yet the man who passes so harsh a sentence against them is not a figure of obvious evil. He has none of the attributes that mark out the images of executioners, torturers, and tormentors in the illuminators' books of hours and breviary, among many other examples: dictatorial gesture, exoticized costume, and face marked by disfiguring

²⁶ MS Richardson 32, vol. 2, f. 37.

cruelty (Figs. 3–4).²⁷ Rather, he wears the distinguishing garments of a cleric, in red, blue, and white, and his rhetorical gesture seems more one of reasoned discourse than of command and condemnation, more like a master lecturing than a tyrant condemning (cf. Fig. 9).²⁸ And while the composition (literally) sidelines him, the figure closest to its focus—central yet hidden—conversely wears a yellow split belted robe, a drooping cap, and parti-colored hose; his colleague wears archaic armor and a stern frown. At the image’s actual center, a window ledge gives way onto open, receding space.

The scene depicted here appears in a number of other manuscripts, none of which however share the Houghton image’s evocative ambivalence; indeed, the subject looks quite different even in a miniature attributable to the same illuminators (BnF MS fr. 259, f. 318). The latter manuscript has a much simpler composition, both aesthetically and ethically: two figures stand at left, emphatic in their alterity—both wear turbans and long forked beards, and the one at left points down in an unambiguous gesture of command. At the center, an executioner faces the viewer, raising an axe above his head, about to strike an imminent victim, who kneels with hands bound in front of him. Another lies next to him, already decapitated, while two further figures sit at left, burning at the stake where a second executioner stokes the flames. Another contemporary copy of the translation depicts the subject in a similar fashion, in this case with the central executioner wielding a sword, commanded by two turbaned figures; at left four female figures perish in the fire (Fig. 10).²⁹ Yet another—in an illumination style that appears elsewhere alongside that of the main Houghton illuminators—presents a further variation on the same theme, with four blindfolded figures, either headless or about to be decapitated, and five women in the flames.³⁰

²⁷ In more general terms, compare the images reproduced in Ruth Mellinkoff, *Outcasts: Signs of Otherness in Northern European Art of the Late Middle Ages* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1993), vol. 2. See also discussions of “the drama of state-sponsored death [as] a form of *spectacle* [author’s emphasis],” in Mitchell Merback, *The Thief, the Cross, and the Wheel: Pain and the Spectacle of Punishment in Medieval and Renaissance Europe* (London, 1999), 18. For concepts of spectacle in Livy’s text itself, see Andrew Feldherr, *Spectacle and Society in Livy’s History* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1998).

²⁸ From Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, MS 251, a contemporary manuscript of Jean Corbechon’s French translation of Bartholomeus Anglicus’ *De proprietatibus rerum*, again in the same style of illumination; for recent research on this manuscript and further references, see *COLOUR: The Art and Science of Illuminated Manuscripts*, ed. Stella Panayotova, Deirdre Jackson, and Paola Ricciardi (London, 2016), no. 1.

²⁹ BnF MS fr. 267, f. 68.

³⁰ BnF MS fr. 30, f. 266. For the collaboration, on a book of hours, see reference to “Egerton Hours” at n1 above.

The subject portrayed in these miniatures is itself mysterious. A different strand of the illuminated French Livy tradition depicts a more clearly identifiable episode, from the beginning of the book: the siege of Locri, signaled by the initial rubric (Fig. 11).³¹ The Houghton manuscript has a similar rubric, *Comment ceulx de locres se rendirent aux penoys* ("How the Locrians surrendered to the Carthaginians," f. 54v), but this isn't the subject of the corresponding miniature. One catalogue entry identifies the subject as the "Massacre of the Family of Hiero II."³² To summarize that story briefly: when King Hiero II of Syracuse died, the throne fell to his adolescent grandson, Hieronymus, with power actually in the hands of his daughters and sons-in-law. Rebels then assassinated Hieronymus; his relatives and former regents seemed at first to survive the uprising, but in the end they also were murdered. Ultimately, the praetors of Syracuse issued an order that all members of the former royal family should be killed, culminating in a dramatic scene of Hiero's daughter Heraclia begging for her life, before having her throat cut in front of her own three young daughters, who were then killed in turn, just before an order of clemency could be conveyed.

These events are related in Book XXIV of *Ab urbe condita*, and chapters xii and xiii of the French translation, with the latter's rubrics rendered slightly differently depending on the manuscript. In the Houghton manuscript, they read: *Comment ceulx de siracuse occistrent Andronodorus*, and *De la mort de hircadie fille du Roy iheron* ("How the Syracusans killed Andronodorus," and "On the death of Heraclia, daughter of King Hiero," ff. 62v, 63). In its closest relative (BnF MS fr. 259), they appear as: *Comment les preteurs de siracuse occistrent Andronodorus et tous ceulx de la lyne Royal*, and *Cy parle de la miserable mort de hitradie fille du Roy iheron et ses ii filles* ("How the praetors of Syracuse killed Andronodorus and the entire royal family," and "This speaks of the miserable death of Heraclia, daughter of King Hiero, and her two daughters").

This identification fits in some respects. In others, however, these images make a number of extreme departures not signaled by the translation or its accompanying rubrics—it would mean that this group of miniatures all alter the story very significantly. Although the images capture the narrative of comprehensive slaughter, they re-cast it as ordered execution rather than chaotic extra-judicial killing. And in the text, both original and translated, no one dies either by decapitation or fire. These anomalies could be explained as creative departure from the text, particularly as the illuminations derive principally from the rubrics. It seems possible therefore that the

³¹ See Bibliothèque de Ste-Geneviève MS 777, f. 231 (c.1370). Other examples: Bibliothèque de Genève, MS fr. 77, f. 226 (c.1405); Troyes, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 179, f. 100 (1420s?). For a study of iconographic "families" in the illuminated French Livy, see Inge Zacher, "Die Livius-Illustration in der Pariser Buchmalerei (1370–1420)" (Inaugural-Dissertation, Berlin, 1971).

³² *Mandragore. Base des manuscrits enluminés de la BnF*, at <mandragore.bnf.fr>, entry for MS fr. 267.

subject of this image, at least in the simpler form in which it appears depicted in the manuscripts other than Houghton, represents a conflation of these two sections as conveyed in particular through their rubrics.

A final possibility is that the image represents a different episode in Book XXIV, one of the History's most vividly narrated, and an emblematic story in its characterization of Hannibal. In this passage, Dasius Altinius of Arpi steals into the Roman camp and offers to betray both the city of Arpi and the Carthaginian side in exchange for a reward. Hannibal learns of his betrayal, and then, *coniugemque eius ac liberos in castra accitos... satis cognitis omnibus vivos combussit* ("having summoned Altinius' wife and children to the camp... when he had satisfactory answers to all his questions, he burned them alive," XXIV.45). The Houghton manuscript's rubric renders this as *Comment dasius lenius [sic] rendi la cite darpes et comment hanibal ardi sa femme et enfans* ("How Dasius Altinius betrayed the city of Arpi, and how Hannibal burnt his wife and children," f. 68).³³ Perhaps most likely, this group of images for Book XXIV is an instance of imaginative cross-pollination among all three episodes. In the Houghton miniature, it is the story of Dasius Altinius that seems most prominent, while at the same time the image encapsulates complexities of character and purpose beyond that episode's particular moment. Although this identification shouldn't appear to "solve" the mystery of the image. Rather, what is especially significant about the manuscript is its resolution of interpretive tensions—indeed, the many layers of tensions accumulated at each stage of the journey—into a distinctive visual text, in which the ambivalent figure of Livy's Hannibal is at once so distant and so present.

³³ Note that the rubrics in the Houghton manuscript, although written in a fine, set hand, appear somewhat carelessly copied, frequently omitting section numbers. They skip entirely rubric xxi, which elsewhere reads *Comment les rommains creerent consuls et autres officiers* (BnF, MS fr. 259), and jump straight to the rubric for the following section, on Dasius Altinius' betrayal of Arpi; so the rubric for this episode prefaces the wrong text, and the actual section with this episode has the wrong rubric.