



CARTHAGE'S STRUGGLE AGAINST TIMOLEON

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Abstract: The aim of this study is to identify an important stage in the military history of Carthage in Sicily, where it faced the Corinthian commander Temoleon, after it fought fierce wars against Sicilian tyrants, from Gillon to Dionysius, as this conflict constituted a prominent event in the history of the Mediterranean region in general and the history of North Africa and Carthage in particular. It also shows the clear role of the Greek mother country in supporting the various military operations initiated by various Greek leaders against the Carthaginian army on the island of Sicily, and thus Carthage sought by all means to stop this campaign initiated by the Corinthian commander Temoleon in Sicily, and confront him militarily, starting in 343 BC. From the Battle of Crimissus in 339 BC to the peace treaty concluded between the two parties, Carthage always took advantage of the circumstances in which Syracuse was living in terms of turmoil and chaos, with its keenness to create strategic alliances, so what are the circumstances, causes, results and implications of this campaign on the Carthaginian-Greek conflict in Sicily.

Keywords: Sicily, Carthage, temoleon, tyranny, Crimissus.

LA LUTTE DE CARTHAGE CONTRE TIMOLEON

Résumé: L'objectif de cette étude est d'identifier une étape importante de l'histoire militaire de Carthage en Sicile, où elle a affronté le commandant corinthien Timoléon, après avoir mené des guerres acharnées contre les tyrans siciliens, de Gillon à Dionysius, car ce conflit a constitué un événement marquant de l'histoire de la région méditerranéenne en général et de l'histoire de l'Afrique du Nord et de Carthage en particulier. Elle montre également le rôle évident de la mère patrie grecque dans le soutien des diverses opérations militaires lancées par différents chefs grecs contre l'armée carthaginoise sur l'île de Sicile, Carthage a ainsi cherché par tous les moyens à arrêter cette campagne lancée par le commandant corinthien Timoléon en Sicile, et à l'affronter militairement, à partir de 343 avant J.-C. De la bataille de Crimissus en 339 av. J.-C. au traité de paix conclu entre les deux parties, Carthage a toujours profité des circonstances dans lesquelles Syracuse vivait en termes d'agitation et de chaos, avec sa volonté de créer des alliances stratégiques. Quelles sont donc les circonstances, les causes, les résultats et les implications de cette campagne sur le conflit gréco-carthaginois en Sicile ?

Mots-clés: Sicile, carthage, Timoléon, tyrants, Crimissus.

Introduction :

Seventy years after the famous battle of Himera, the confrontation and wars between the Carthaginians and the Greeks resumed, and Sicily was subject to regimes, most of which were tyrannical regimes, which increased the tension between the Greeks of Sicily themselves, and plunged the island into a spiral of conflict, after Gilon came Dionysius and then Temoleon, who tried to change the situation and establish a democratic system. It was natural that the Carthaginians would find an opportunity to take advantage of this conflict and the bad situation in Syracuse, benefiting from alliances that would serve them to confront the Corinthian leader Temoleon, the newcomer to Sicily.

1. Sicily :

The island of Sicily is the largest island in the Mediterranean Sea, it characterized by an important strategic location between Italy and north Africa and between east and west, the island has become a border area of warring states. It has been subjected to invasion violence, and exploitation by foreign power, as well as experiencing vivid periods of development and cultural prosperity (Dummett, 2010, XVII) in North Africa and the eastern Mediterranean (Finley, 1968, p20), the Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Roman, Goth, Byzantine, Arabes, Normans, Germans, Spaniard, And French have left their mark on it (Norwich, 2015, p.7-12), it is bordered to the north by the tyrannian sea, to the east by the Ionian sea, and the south by the Sicilian sea, and it is separated from Italy only 3 km through the strait of Messina, while on the western side it is only 160 km away from Africa (Finley, 1968, p.20).

2. Greeks and Carthaginians in Sicily

The appearance of the Greeks on Sicily was followed by the founding of a number of cities by settlers from different parts of Greece. Naxos was founded on the east coast below Taormina in 734 BC, the city of Syracuse was founded the following year by the Corinthians in 733 BC (Dummett, 2010, p.6-8). The importance of Syracuse made Thucydides say "And if this city is taken, the rest of Sicily falls, and Italy too in quick succession (Thucydides, 2009, 6,91).

On the other hand, the city of Carthage located on the northern coast of present-day Tunisia in the southern Mediterranean Sea, was founded in the 9th century by the Phoenician merchants who came from the city of Tyre (Keurs et al, 2015, p.11) Carthage grew rapidly on the back of trading skills as well as its outpost in the Mediterranean (Dummett, 2010, p.8). Carthage led the Punic bloc which included North Africa, Sardinia, and western Sicily, southern Spain, the Balearic Islands, and Malta, it becomes increasingly political and military especially in the island of Sicily, in their favor it had to send their armies there.

These projects on the island of Sicily in order to defend its interest and the interest of their allies, their especially those in confrontation threats the most powerful Greek city on the Island, Syracuse. Military action between two forces and their allies were interspersed period of the cold war in wish each side looked to each side hers with caution (Milles, 2011, p 35-37). At the end of the sixth century, Carthage appeared in ancient sources as a large Mediterranean forces, and began its activity and indicated in Sicily from the 5th century BC, during which time Greek Towns it was governed by a group of aspiring tyrants, who want to expand their territory (Amadazi, 2007, p.38). Mercenary often from Oscan speaking Italy ,entered the services of the tyrants (HOLLOWAY, 1991, p43). The ambitions of the Carthaginians were shocked by the Greek threats, starting with the tyrant Gilon in 490 BC, then Dionysius from 410 BC to 367 BC, and between 345 and 339 BC, Timoleon appeared and was summoned by Syracuse, as arrival to Cartage (GUZZO, 2007, p.43). These clashes ultimately had resulting in the establishment of a Carthaginian epkratia on the western Sicily, which would have resulted in regulation of maritime trade and by military hegemony strategic influence for the island growing little by little (KRINGS, 1995, p.444).

Syracuse was Carthage's biggest competitor in Sicily before Rome, and the confrontation between theme was inevitable, because in short, they were one of the richest cities in the central Mediterranean, for many years, Syracuse was the cite of domination that extended to a large part of eastern Sicily and parts of southern Italy. Carthage is on a large part of North Africa to the west of the fillan brother's area (HALL, 2023, p.27). The Carthaginians become masters in Spain and Sardinia. They mounted their first war of conquest in Sicily at the beginning of the fifth century but were turned back by the united forces of Syracuse and Acragas at the battle of Himera 480 BC. Actually it was the islanders were about to extinction on more than their one occasion, due to these conflicts, with the emergence of mercenaries and their support for tyrants, and the conflict between the Carthaginians and the Greeks continued through out the fourth and third centuries BC, until Rome entered the area of conflict in 264 BC (HOLLOWAY, 1991, p.43).

3. Carthage and Timoleon in Sicily

The death of Dionysius 1 brought chaos to syracuse and the greek cities of eastern Sicily, where he left behind a power vacuum, which a number of adventure exploited (DUMMETT, 2010, p.58), as for Carthage most of the sources that were written about the period of Timoleon's rule were all Greek. It is difficult to clearly define Carthaginian policy in Sicily (TALBERT, 1974, p.78). Timoleon of Corinth was the most enigmatic and elusive character that Plutarch presented

to us in his life, He described his political and military activities in such a confusing that it is doubtful whether they corresponded to reality. The three main sources that were written about him, Plutarch, Diodorus Siculus and Nepos, gave different information, and it's certain that Timaeus of Taurominium was their primary sources (TAGE, 2025, p.215).

In the same context, some researches indicated that the history of the period in which Timoleon was the central figure, was fraught with intractable problems caused by the flaws of the literary narrative. In the early stages of his mission, the evidence, while available in terms of volume, was not sufficient to answer the basic questions, while at the end of the period it became very meager (WESTLAKE, 1994, p.706). Those sources were intended to narrate Greek history, and incidentally dealt with some of the events witnessed by the Carthaginians, especially since they were involved in the conflicts between Timoleon and the tyrants of the Sicilian cities. Talber point out that discrepancies predominate in the accounts of Plutarch and Diodorus Siculus of Sicily, so we do not know any Carthaginian activity until shortly before Timoleon came to the Island. The period between its previous and Timoleon's arrival is unknown, and Carthage may have taken time to become a force on the island through its alliance with mercenaries who imposed their control over several Sicilians cities (Talbert, 1974, p.78-79).

On the other hand, the scene in Sicily did not deviate from the events that developed in Syracuse. After the death of Dionysius the elder, he was succeeded by his son Dionysius the younger, who was exiled by dion (Diodore de Sicile. 1848. XV,73. Plutarque,1830, Vie de temoleon.I.1), one of Dionysius the elder's counselors, whose biography is presented very differently by his interpreters Plutarch and Nepos (WESTLAKE, 1983p.161). Dion's downfall was ultimately precipitated by the collusion of circumstance between the Syracuse people, who considered him a new tyrant, and the mercenaries who after three years spent in his service, still had not shared the benefits of his victory (NOGUES, 1999, p.118). Ten year later, the young Dionysus was able to regain control of Syracuse, which was only stabilized after his return, but a group of aristocrats led by Hicitas, a leonine tyrant, sought to oppose him and save Syracuse (Plutarch, 2013, I).

4. Carthage's move to confront the new situation in Sicily

It was natural for the Carthaginians to find an opportunity to take advantage of this conflict and the situation in which Syracuse found it self. Carthage sent a force to Sicily, and quickly accepted the idea of an alliance offered by Hicitas ,who in turn was sent to Corinth to ask for its help in liberating Syracuse ,as they the same origin and she was credited with its foundation, or because of her positions in favor of freedom and against tyrannical regimes as

Plutarch claims(PLUTACH,2013,Timoleon.II).On the other hand Hoyos argued that Carthage could have waited a little longer, and watched the Greeks tear each other apart, and then had the opportunity to intervene and take control of the island with minimal effort(HOYOS, 2019, p.95).

We say The Greek mother land played a role in supporting the various military operations launched by Greek commanders against the Carthaginian army on the island of Sicily, so it is not surprising that surprising that support for the Greek forces stationed in Sicily continued from the first direct confrontation which the Greeks Hemera 480 BC, and throughout all stage of the conflict between the Carthaginians and the Greeks. Plutarch adds that Hicetas did not aim to liberate Syracuse as much as he wished to establish him self as a tyrant there, and he believed that the Corinthians would not help, and then he could utilize the Carthaginians against the syracusan forces (PLUTACH ,2013, Timolion II).

Its turns out Hécetas thinking was wrong, because Corinth responded to his request and sent commander Temoleon to carry out the mission (PLUTACH, 2013, Timolion. III), Corinth sent 700 men with him, as well as a number of triremes and others from leucadia and Corcyra, according to Diodorus of Sicily (DIOORE de Sicile, XVI. 66.2). Some researches told that this assistance was limited as it only included 7 ships and even the recruitment of mercenaries was done by Temoleon Himself (NOGUES, 1999. Pp.105-127) Faced this Corinthian advance in Sicily, Carthage endeavoured by all means to stop this campaign, not only because it rejected any foreign interference on the island, but also because it became difficult for it to replace Temoleon in Sicily (WARMINGTON, 1961, p.144). Therefore mit tried to prevent him From reaching Sicily and sent 20 ships to Region .AT the same time, Hicitas sent to the Corinthians asking them to retreat from their mission; claiming that the situation had become favorable and that the Carthaginians would not allow them to cross, but Temoleon managed to reach Taormina after crossing the city of region (PLUTARCHE, 2013, Timoléon.9-10).

When Temoleon ventured to Sicily in order to remove Dionysius the younger from Syracuse has realized that the island's history with tyrants required that he promotes himself as an anti-tyrant, he found a medium to do so through the ant tyranny language (DZARA, 2015, p.1)³³. The main aim of his mission was to fight Dionysius the younger and therefore to help the syracusans and Hicitas (NOGUES, 1999, p.121) ⁽³⁴⁾ Syracuse, events were developing rapidly, After Hicitas retreated to leontini with his army, the young Dionysius Pursued and attacked him, but he was able to repel him strongly and then continued to confront the city of Syracuse, taking control of parts of it (DIOORE, 18848, XV, 68)- After Temolion's intervention, he moved from Taormina to

Adranum, where he was able to defeat Hicetas and then proceeded to Syracuse, which became in more complicated situation divided into three parties, with Dionysius remaining in Ortega, Hicetas controlling some neighborhood and Temoleon controlling the remaining part of the city, while on the other hand the Carthaginians controlled the port with 150 triremes and 50,00 men on the shore (DIOORE, 18848, XV, 68-69).

Diodorus's account was not clear from the sequence of event he mentioned, and although this account is accepted by some scholars, it is clearly wrong according to Dickinson, (1952, p.18). Regarding the confrontation between Hicetas and Temoleon, Plutarch noted in his account that the two leaders travelled to Adranum and arrived at the same time. Hicetas had an army of 5000 men, while Timoleon, although his army did not exceed 1200, achieved a great victory, and Hicetas lost 300 of his soldiers, while Many where taken alive, many were taken alive (PLUTARCH, 2013, Timoleon, 12). However, what this historian said about this battle is exaggerated, how could the victory be for temoleon's army such a small number against Hicetas's forces, and therefore as swain pointed out that Plutarch in describing this battle was biased in favor of Temoleon, as he did not care about Hesitas's movements, while he employed a whole paragraph to show the help and care of the gods Adranus for Temoleon, and deliberately showed the leader Hécitas to be incompetent (SWAIN, 1989, p.321).

5. Carthaginian Leaders Confrontation. Timoléon

5.1 Magon

Carthage enter into an alliance with Hicetas to eliminate Temoleon and mobilizes an army led by Magon with 150 ships and 60000 men (PLUTARCH, 2013, Timoleon, 17). However, it is not clear that the numerical data provided by diodore of sicily when he spoke about Hannon and his arrival on the island of Sicily, and it can be noted that the accounts of Diodorus of Sicily and Plutarch are related to a single incident, although the name Hannon and Magon are different (GIANCONO, 2022, p.150) (41)

The army of Greek commander temoleon was trapped in Ortega suffering from a shortage of food and supplies, and tried to take advantage of supplies coming from the city of Catan, and after news of these supplies arrived, Hicetas and his armies and Magon rushed the city, leaving a larger part of Syracuse without which garrisons, whish the Corinthian commander took advantage of, and made a surprise attack in which he managed to control the Achradine neighborhood and secure grain and money(PLUTARCH,2013,Timoleon,18-19).

The alliance against the Corinthians appears to have failed because the Corinthians were able to regain control of strategic position to control the City,

as well as access to economic resources (GIANCONO, 2022, p.150). After Magon and Hicitas heard of operation, they rushed off without taking control of katana, and were also unable to retrieve Achradin (PLUTARCH, 2013, Timoleon, 18-20). As for the withdrawal of the Carthaginians from Syracuse, the difference between Plutarch and diodore of Sicily is clear, while Diodorus noted that the Corinthians sent military support to Temoleon in Syracuse, enabling him to capture it and recapture Messina, which was under Carthaginian control (DIODORE, 1848, XVI, 69).

The historian Plitarch's a different opinion about the withdrawal process. He said that Magon, after hearing the arrival of Corinthian reinforcements, was looking for an excuse to withdraw and thought he was less powerful than the enemy, so he returned to Africa and killed himself, while the Carthaginians were angry at the way the war was being conducted, and Temoleon, on the other hand, took control of Syracuse (PLUTARCH, 2013, Timoleon, 25). Here again, the difference between Diodorus of Sicily, who stated that the Carthaginians commander's retreat was to the Carthaginian province, and Plutarch, who referred to his return to Africa, after that, Carthage intended to send a new campaign to Sicily in 342 BC, but this did not happen because Carthage experienced an internal crisis represented by a coup attempt by the commander Hannon (GIANCONO, 2022, p.151).

5.2 Asdrubal and Amilcar, Battle of Crimissus (339 BC).

After these events, Carthage moved again with a military force, by Asdrubal and Hamilcar, to confront the Corinthian commander Temoleon near the Cremisus River on the island of Sicily (Belice). Plutarch spoke about the details of the battle, and mentioned that the Carthaginians entered Lilybaeum with an army numbering 70 000 men ,200 triremes and 1000 transports filled with provisions, war machines, ammunition and vehicles, and it seems that Carthage aimed to resolve the conflict definitively (PLUTARCH, 2013, Timoleon, 25). Didorus of Sicily does not give us information about this force, but Plutarch details in his book, and Talbert argue that these figures may be inflated due to Greek bias, as the Carthaginians may have merely wished to reorganize their presence in their subordinate areas on the island (TALBERT, 1974, p.82). Plutarch adds that these forces caused panic among the syracusans, which caused Temoleon to rebel, but this did not prevent the commander from marching towards the Crimissus river, where the Carthaginian army was encamped (PLUTARCH, 2013, Timoleon, 25).

The battle took place at the beginning of summer (early june), in 339 BC according to the account of Plutarch, the river separated the Greek army, which war positioned on a hill, and Carthaginian army, which was camped on a plain.

Suddenly, a dense fog covered the area and it became difficult to see the enemy, and the sound of the huge number of the Carthaginian army were loud, causing great panic among the ranks of the Temoleon army, and after the fog cleared, the Carthaginian army appeared with horse carts that were in the forefront, behind them a section of infantry, who were Carthaginian citizens, and behind the foreign troops (PLUTARCH, 2013, Timoleon, 27).

After praising Temoleon Plutarch give us some reasons for the defeat of the Carthaginians, which he attributed to the heavy armors of the army, the rainfall that hindered their movement, and the floods and torrents they caused in the plain. As a result of this battle, the Carthaginian army lost 10000 men, including 3000 Carthaginians (PLUTARCH, 2013, Timoleon, 28). On the other hand, Diodorus of Sicily gave different figures mentioning 2500 Carthaginians, 10000 other races, and 15000 prisoners (DIODORE, XVI, 80).

It is clear to us that Plutarch (PLUTARCH, 2013, Timoleon, 28-33) directed his attention entirely to praising Temoleon and the Greeks in general, when he mentioned this enormous number of Carthaginian losses, and emphasized that Carthage had never seen such losses in history: "Nor is it recorded that so many native Carthaginians ever perished in a single battle before, but they used Libyans for the most part and Iberians and Numidians for their battles, and thus sustained their defeats at the cost of other nations".

On the other hand, This text May be evidence that the absence of mercenaries in these events, especially the Libyans, were a strong reason for the decline in the effectiveness of the Carthaginian army, because the role of mercenaries had decisive factor on many previous occasions, especially during the reigns of Hannibal and Amilcar between 409 and 405 BC. We note that this victory was used for propaganda, with the message that it was the Corinthians and their leader Temoleon who liberated the Greek living in Sicily from the yoke of Carthage (HALL, 2023, p.80).

After the battle, Carthaginians summoned from exile Giscon son of Hannon and at the request of Hicitas and the tyrant of Catana, with a group of Greek mercenaries, Carthaginians forces reached Messina and annihilated Euthymus forces (PLUTARCH, 2013, Timoleon, 30). Its clear that the alliance between the Carthaginians and Hicitas was unsuccessful due to poor coordination and conflicting objectivism, as each side wished to achieve certain objective in Syracuse after the overthrow of Temoleon, which weakened the effectiveness of military operations, as they were only able to eliminate 400 member of Temoleon army at Messina (Talbert, 1974, pp.83-91).

Whereas, as noted by Plutarch Phoenician force, sent by the Carthaginians commander Gescon, was wiped out the edges of the Aboolus River, prompting the Carthaginians to ask for peace, which Temoleon would retain the areas

beyond halycus, leave individuals free to move to Syracuse, preserve their property, and not ally themselves with any kind of tyrannical regime (PLUTARCH, 2013, Timoleon, 34) Both diodore of sicily and Plutarch wanted to portray this peace as Temoleon's kindness to the Carthaginians, but Temoleon's aim may have been to put an en to Carthaginian expansion and give himself absolute freedom to confront his tyrannical enemies (TALBERT, 1974, p83). In the end, it can be argued that Plutarch information about Temoleon enemies is misleading in order to create a positive space for Timoleon as a protagonist (SWAIN, 1989, p.323) That appear in other sources, especially in Plutarch's biographic, which favorably recounts the work of Timoleon (FINLEY, 1968, pp. 104-105).

In this context, Mohamed tahar points out that analyzing the position of the Greeks vis-à vis the Carthaginians through Plutarch's life of Temoleon all allows to understand the process of presenting the Greeks as a rival people to the Greek moralists .This translator of biographies certainly reused the ideas of his predecessors, namely that the Carthaginians were enemies of the Greeks in describing the Carthaginian-Greek conflict, he wanted to emphasise the peculiarities of these parties in relation on the Greeks: courage, intelligence, love of freedom, while the Carthaginians: failure, barbarism, treachery and cunning (TAHAR, 2010, p.199). Thus, the study of the history of Carthaginian-greek relations during the period of the Corinthian tyrant and through the writings of Plutarch, although it provides us with important information about this relationship, it does not go beyond the framework of Hellenic propaganda that appered among many Greek thinkers and historians, which calls fo the need to study it carefully and cautiously.

Conclusion :

After the peace treaty with Temoleon, Carthage had no desire out, for confrontation, but only tried to counter the harassment of the Greeks and prevent the establishment of a tyrannical regime in the east of the island, but the peace did not last long, despite the fact that the treaty had been in force for a long time, as the emergence of the Greek commander Agathocles changed the course of events, not only at the level of Syracuse, but also at the level of the island in general, and especially the balance of relations between the Carthaginians and the Greeks.

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