

THE PUNIC WARS

HIS 207

Oakton Community College

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OVERVIEW

- Three Punic Wars
 - 265-146 B.C.E.
 - Carthage destroyed
 - Rome defeats only serious rival'
 - Rome is master of the west
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- Wars are a formative experience
 - Rome becomes an empire

CAUSES

- ⊙ Rome and Carthage cooperated until the 260s
- ⊙ Causes?
 - First:
 - Rome controls South Italy
 - In contact with Sicily
 - Carthage wary since the defeat of Pyrrhus
 - Second:
 - 265 B.C.E. Rome intervenes in Sicily over Messana
 - Mamertines - Italian mercenaries
 - Syracuse attacks Messana
 - Mamertines appeal to Rome and to Carthage and both respond
 - Mamertines accept Rome, Carthage allies with Syracuse

NATURE OF THE WARS

- First Punic War 264-241 B.C.E.
 - 255 - Roman army in Africa defeated
 - Rome and Carthage lose fleets
 - Roman fleet sunk in storm with loss of 95,000 men
 - 253 - new fleet loses 150 ships in second storm
 - 249 - loss of over 200 more ships
 - But does Rome give up?
 - 243 both combatants in sad shape
 - Carthage deactivates remainder of its fleet
 - Rome, however, builds another 200-ship fleet

TRIREME WITH CORVUS



END OF FIRST PUNIC WAR

- ◉ Carthage reactivates fleet
- ◉ Sues for peace
- ◉ Loss of Sicily
- ◉ Indemnity to be paid over ten year period
- ◉ Consequences:
 - Rome dominant in Sicily
 - Carthage has lost territory
 - Unpaid soldier rebel
 - Rome seizes Sardinia and Corsica
 - Carthage rebounds
 - Builds land empire in Spain



SECOND PUNIC WAR

218-202 B.C.E.

- Hamilcar Barca moves Carthaginian army into Spain
- The Barca family
 - Hamilcar
 - Hasdrubal succeeds his father-in-law
 - Built New Carthage (Cartagena)
 - Hannibal
 - Succeeds Hasdrubal at age 25
 - 221 B.C.E.
 - The oath

SARGUNTUM

- ◉ Rome and Carthage agreed that the Carthaginians will not move north of Ebro R.
- ◉ Saguntum is south of the Ebro
- ◉ Rome allies with Saguntum and warns Hannibal off
- ◉ Hannibal takes Saguntum in 219
- ◉ The reaction of the Senate?
 - Mixed but the Cornelius Scipio clan was for war

SAGUNTUM, SPAIN



STRATEGIES AND THE WAR

- ◉ Rome - deprive Carthage of new empire
- ◉ Carthage - disrupt the Italian confederacy

- ◉ Carthage wins in the early years
- ◉ Rome hangs in because:
 - Hannibal never really goes after Rome
 - The central Italian allies do not defect
 - Rome had more fighting men

- Fabius Maximus, once opposed to war, commands Romans
 - Delays
 - Scorched each
 - In Spain, the Cornelius Scipios (2) kept reinforcements from reaching Hannibal
 - Scipio brothers killed in Spain in 211
- Publius Cornelius Scipio
- P. Cornelius Scipio Africanus
- 202 - Zama

CROSSING THE ALPS

- Elephants crossed the Rhone River on rafts
- Mountains inhabited by hostile tribes
- Arrived with 26000 men and 24 elephants

TREBBIA RIVER, LAKE TRASIMENE

- ◉ Trebbia River, early 217 B.C.E.
- ◉ Proclaimed liberty of Gauls; few joined him
- ◉ Both consuls sent with armies of 20,000 each
- ◉ Tricked Romans into crossing the river by appearing to retreat
- ◉ Withheld cavalry and troop for a trap
- ◉ Of 40,000 Romans, 10,000 returned to Rome
- ◉ Gallic tribes now join Hannibal
- ◉ Rome prepares second army
- ◉ At Lake Trasimene, Hannibal won again

CANNAE



CANNAE

- Fabius Maximus assumes control of army
 - Appointed dictator
 - Avoided battles, courted the allies
 - Many disenchanted with tactics, new consul
- 216
 - Consular army doubled to 40,000 men
 - Two consuls - 80,000 men
 - Once again, Romans are out maneuvered
 - Feigned retreat
 - Counterattack
 - Consul Paulus killed - again 10,000 survive

BATTLE OF ZAMA



CONSEQUENCES OF 2ND WAR

- Overseas empire gone
- Most territory in North Africa gone
- Carthage restricted to a small portion of what is now Tunisia
 - Even is neighbors (Roman allies) attack

THIRD PUNIC WAR

- 149-146 B.C.E.
- Carthage delendo est
- Carthage destroyed