

World War of the Ancients: Carthage in the Second Punic War

Chair: Hugo Rosen

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Letter from the Chair

Welcome to MUNE XV! I'm Hugo, a Junior studying History at Emory, and I'm excited to be your chair for this year's signature historical specialized committee at MUNE! I come from Washington, D.C., where I grew up among constant and energetic debates over which policies, values, and ideas should be allowed to dictate our nation's future. With a trip downtown planned for every weekend and an embassy around every other corner, I learned the value which bringing many different people and ideas into one place to fight it out can have in developing effective and widely beneficial policies.

Today's committee is set during an inflection point in ancient history. The Roman Republic entered the Second Punic War as an upstart regional player and emerged as the dominant superpower of the Mediterranean World. Carthage was sidelined from ancient geopolitics and later annihilated by Rome during the Third Punic War in retribution for the damage it had caused during the First and Second. Had things gone differently, the Roman Empire may never have existed and world history may have taken an altogether different course from that with which we are familiar.

Delegates are encouraged to immerse themselves in the cultures, politics, ideas, and practices of the Ancient Mediterranean World. Ask yourself: what was it like to be Carthaginian? How was their society different from our own? Why did Rome and Carthage go to war, and what factors dictated the result? Success in this committee will demand the same attributes which, as you will learn, made Carthage the behemoth it was: diplomacy, creativity, multiculturalism, and a firm dedication to the belief that there is no land too far to sail too and no people too unfamiliar to trade with. Best of luck, and don't forget your war elephants!

Sensitivity Statement

At MUNE XV, it is our responsibility to ensure that everyone feels safe and respected throughout committee. This committee involves the discussion of contemporary and relevant real-world issues, and delegates are expected to approach the committee with the proper level of respect that these topics require. As such, we request that delegates maintain proper decorum throughout the committee, and treat each other with the highest level of respect and kindness. We also request that delegates treat the dias and members of the MUNE XV secretariat with the highest level of respect and kindness.

MUNE XV maintains a strict zero-tolerance policy for bullying or discrimination in any form. Delegates are reminded not to engage in any rhetoric that may be inappropriate or offensive to others, including the use of language that may be racist, xenophobic, homophobic, transphobic, or ableist. This includes in speeches, moderated caucuses, unmoderated caucuses, and anytime else during the committee. If you do ever experience a problem, please raise it with your chair or co-chair and we will do everything in our power to help you.

Technology Policy

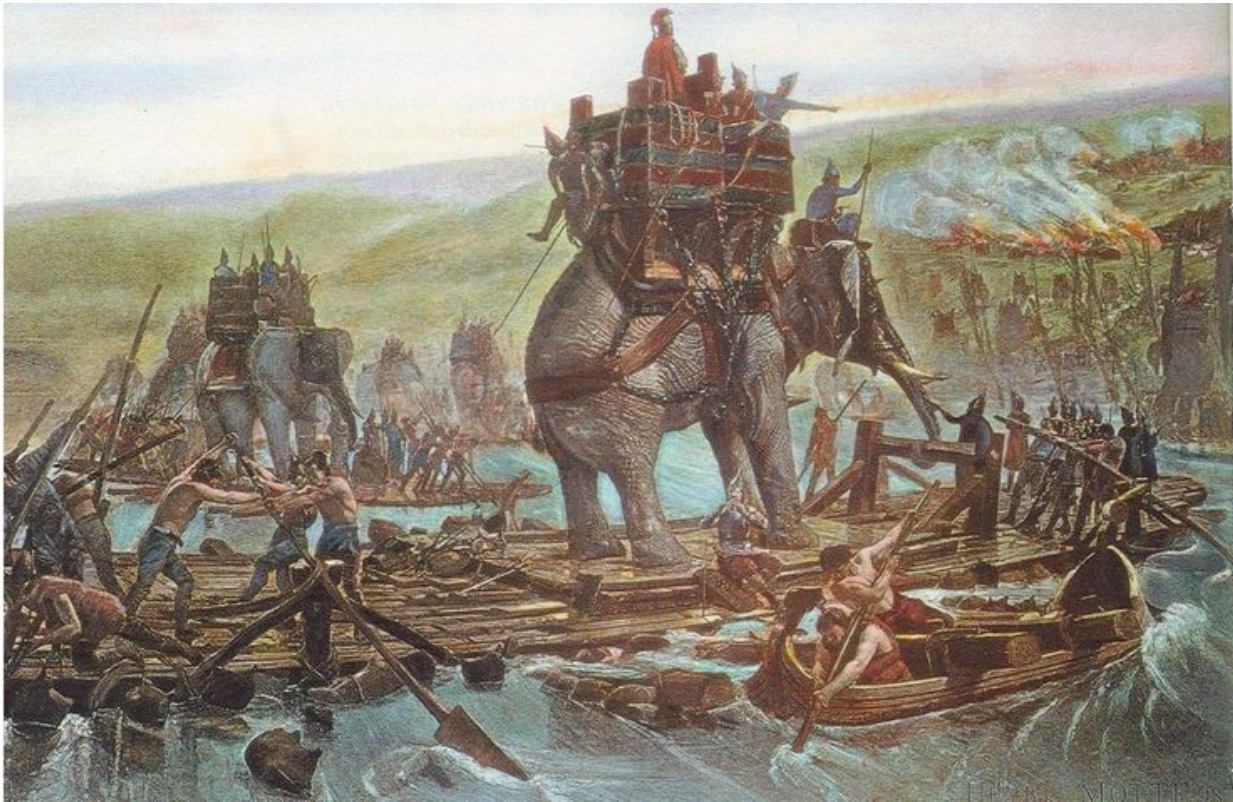
MUNE XV seeks to foster a fair, balanced, and competitive environment for delegates. Pre-writing or the use of plagiarism for working papers before or during committee is not permitted by the dias; similarly, the use of generative AI to write or assist in the writing of working papers or draft resolutions during committee is prohibited.

While the use of laptops and similar forms of technology will be permitted during unmoderated caucuses and/or resolution drafting periods, delegates are encouraged to refrain from the use of these technologies during moderated caucuses.

Committee Structure

The committee will act as an advisory body to the Carthaginian Senate with the power and expectation to issue a binding “Direct Resolution” once per committee session. Like Crisis, the content of each Direct Resolution will impact regular “War Updates” provided by dais at the beginning of the next committee session which will contain new problems and questions to be addressed in the next Direct Resolution. Direct Resolutions will combine elements of Crisis Directives and GA Resolutions according to the following rules:

1. Direct Resolutions will require a vote of at least $\frac{1}{2}$ of the entire committee to pass and only one Direct Resolution may pass per committee session.
2. Direct Resolutions should be longer and more detailed than crisis directives but shorter than GA resolutions given the shorter timeframe.
3. Direct Resolutions may be initially presented as “Working Resolutions,” similar to a working paper, or voted on immediately after the first presentation like a crisis directive depending on time and delegate wishes. In either case, standard GA Parliamentary procedure for the presentation and voting of working papers and/or Resolutions will be employed.
4. Delegates are expected to form different blocs each committee session to address the unique questions posed by war updates in a manner consistent with the overall positions they choose to take throughout the committee.
5. Delegates may alter these rules at any time and in any way by a $\frac{3}{4}$ supermajority vote.



Pictured: Ancient Warfare could change quickly based upon such factors as the health of an army's war elephants, requiring a fast and timely response.

Background: First Punic War

Entering into the Third Century BCE, Rome and Carthage were the two dominant powers in the Mediterranean World, an area which, along with China, comprised much of known civilization at the time. Both began as individual city states, with Rome being founded on the Italian Peninsula around 800 BCE.¹ by descendants of the Trojans, and Carthage around the same time by the commerce-oriented Phoenician peoples.² Broadly, the Romans were militaristic and expansionist-oriented, prosecuting a

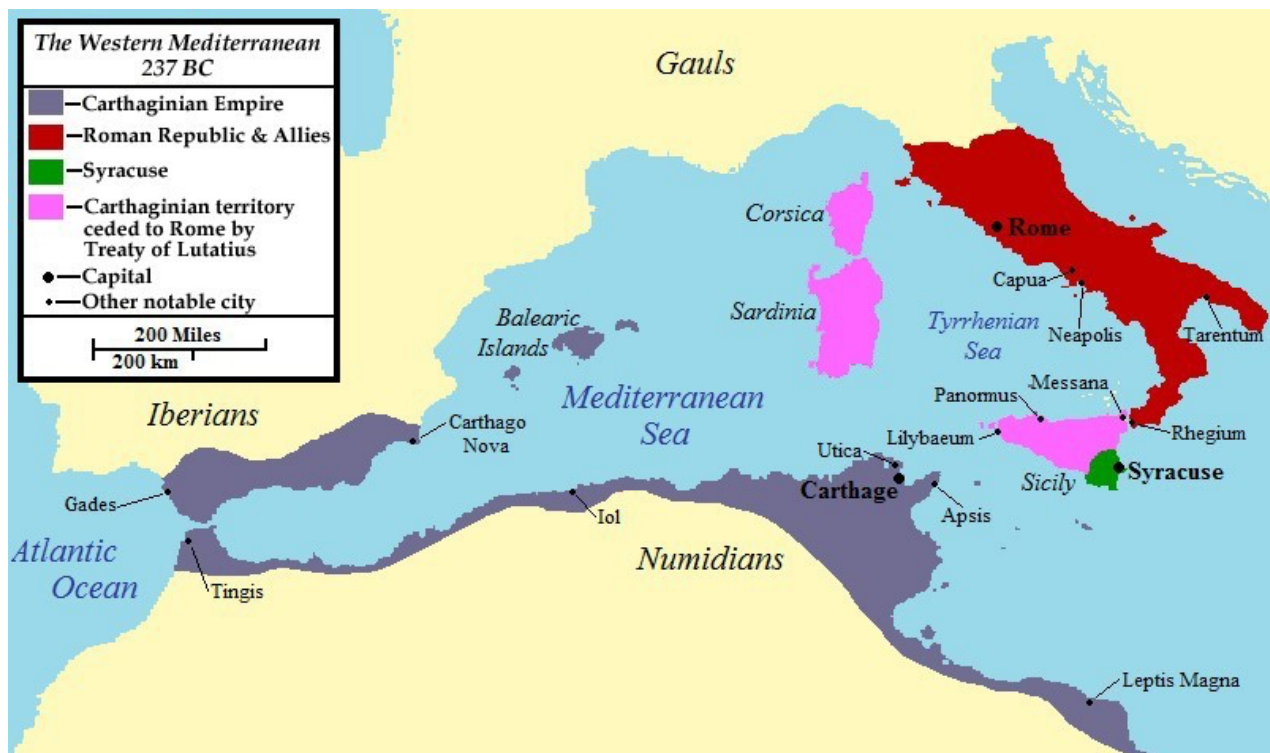
¹ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Rome/Administration-and-society#ref23912>

² <https://www.britannica.com/place/Carthage-ancient-city-Tunisia>

series of successful expansionist wars in the sixth, fifth, and fourth centuries BCE against Italic neighbors such as the Etruscans which expanded Rome's influence across the Italian peninsula. Carthage, meanwhile, relied heavily on trade and diplomacy to create a maritime trading empire in the Western Mediterranean which projected Carthaginian economic and cultural sway across North Africa, Iberia, and the broader Mediterranean region. The two behemoths first came into conflict over political disagreements concerning the Mamertines within the independent Sicilian kingdom of Syracuse, which quickly evolved into all-out conflict and the beginnings of the First Punic War.³ The First Punic War spanned multiple military theaters, involved numerous polities and millions of individual soldiers, and wreaked devastation across the entire Mediterranean World. After twenty-three years of conflict both sides were utterly exhausted, and yet it was Carthage, deprived of the funds and will to fight to a greater extent than Rome, who ultimately sued for peace. The Treaty of Lutatius forced Carthage to withdraw all claims from Sicily, cede the strategic islands of Corsica and Sardinia (the latter seized by Rome soon after the conflict), and pay a massive indemnity of almost 100 tons of silver to Rome over a period of decades.⁴

³ https://www.worldhistory.org/First_Punic_War/

⁴ <https://punicwars.org/first-punic-war/treaty-of-lutatius>



Pictured: Carthaginian territory before and after the First Punic War

Background: The Barciids, Spain, and a Revenant Carthaginian Superpower

After their surrender to Rome, the leaders of Carthage were immediately faced with a widespread revolt led by dissatisfied unpaid mercenaries, Libyans, and several prominent North African cities known as “The Mercenary War.”⁵ Hamilcar Barca, a leading general during the First Punic War, was recalled to Carthage to put down the rebellion, which he accomplished in good order within about four years. There followed a period of about twenty years of peace during which both Rome and Carthage recovered militarily and economically from what was at that time the longest war in ancient history. During that time, Hamilcar Barca led a successful campaign in Iberia (modern day Spain) in which he established Carthaginian dominion over many silver-rich areas. He brought with him his young son, Hannibal, and, in a moment which was to become well known to history, made Hannibal swear to him that he would never be a friend of Rome. After Hamilcar’s death, which likely occurred as a result of being thrown off of his horse while crossing a river, Hannibal assumed military command of Carthaginian Spain and initiated the siege of Roman-allied Saguntum in 219 BCE.⁶ Outraged at Hannibal's blatant violation of the Treaty of Lutatius, which forbade Carthage from attacking Roman territory, Rome demanded Hannibal be given up to them for punishment. Carthage declined, and Rome declared war in retaliation. The Second Punic War had begun.

⁵ https://www.worldhistory.org/Mercenary_War/

⁶ <https://history-maps.com/story/Second-Punic-War/event/Siege-of-Saguntum>

Politics, Society, and Religion of Ancient Carthage

Ancient Carthage was the undisputed superpower of the Mediterranean World for centuries, and in order to succeed in their conflict against Rome, delegates must understand Ancient Carthaginian society. The Carthaginian Government sat in the City of Carthage proper and, just prior to the Second Punic War, ruled significant areas of Northern Africa, Iberia (Spain), and the Mediterranean. As a trading empire, wealth was very important. Carthage relied heavily on paid mercenaries to fill its army and also recruited specialized units such as the Numidian Cavalry from areas under Carthaginian control.



Pictured: The Carthaginian domain prior to the Second Punic War

Carthage's government was centered around two annually elected magistrates known as suffettes, one of whom was expected to lead the empire's civil affairs and the other to conduct military operations, similar to the Roman Republic's consular system of the time.⁷ The Carthaginian Senate also had significant influence and power over military affairs, which it exercised often during the Second Punic War, and the ability to, along with a popular citizen assembly, settle disputes between suffettes.⁸ Carthaginian citizenship was largely limited to wealthy elites within the city of Carthage, with residents of nearby cities under Carthaginian control enjoying similar treatment under the law, but not citizenship. Unlike Rome, Carthage did not attempt to culturally assimilate many of its dominions, preferring instead to foster productive trading relationships.

The Carthaginians, like the Greeks, Romans, and many other ancient societies of the time, worshipped a polytheistic pantheon. Tanit, queen of the Carthaginian pantheon, goddess of civilization, crafts, rain, and fertility, was the patron deity of Carthage, and was worshipped widely along with her spouse Ba'al Hammon, King of the Gods and god of the fertility of vegetation. Other gods such as Melqart, the patron god of Tyre, were worshipped by prominent Carthaginians such as the Barciid family⁹.

Ancient Carthage, like ancient Rome or ancient Greece, was neither a country nor an empire, but rather a civilization. Many people under Carthage's dominion were ruled directly by local monarchs such as King Syphax of western Numidia¹⁰, who allied his kingdom to the powerful city of

⁷ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/consul-ancient-Roman-official>

⁸ https://www.worldhistory.org/Carthaginian_Government/

⁹ https://www.worldhistory.org/Carthaginian_Religion/

¹⁰ <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Syphax>

Carthage for economic and political reasons. Unlike Rome, which often conquered foreign peoples and assimilated them into the Roman system, Carthage generally used trade and diplomacy to bring new peoples into its political system, although use of force was not unknown. Thus, Carthage was a land of many diverse peoples brought together by the wealth and military might of Carthage itself, which heavily influenced and played an active role in the individual regions and kingdoms under its dominion.



Pictured: A modern artistic imagining of the ancient city of Carthage¹¹

The Second Punic War

In 218 BCE, General Hannibal Barca began the Second Punic War with a military operation that would go down in history. Evading the large Roman army sent to defeat him in Iberia, Hannibal

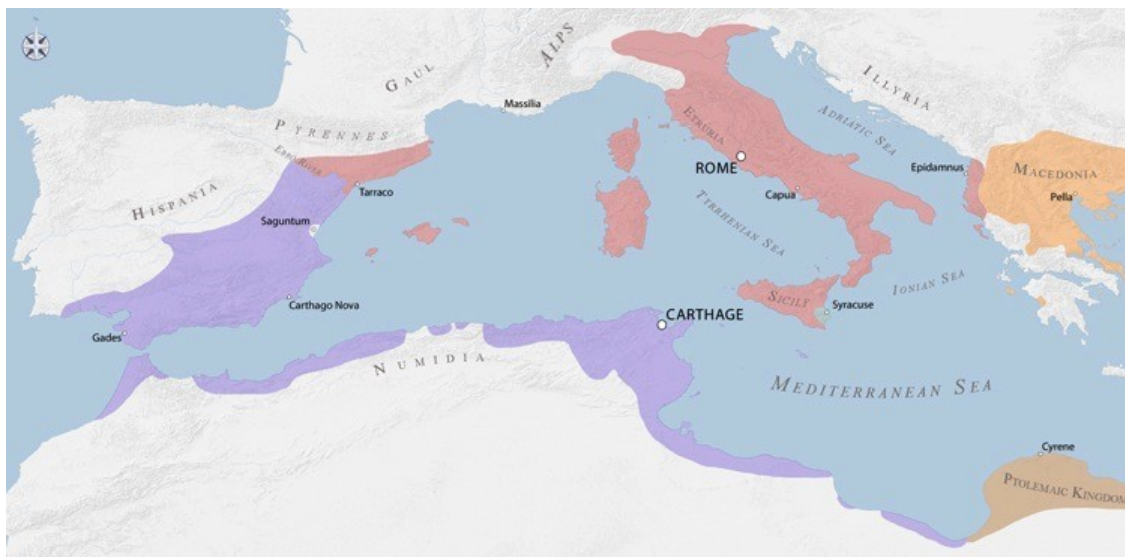
¹¹ <https://www.heritagedaily.com/2020/05/carthage-capital-of-the-carthaginian-empire/128149>

led his an entire force of 38,000 infantry troops, 8,000 cavalrymen, and 37 war elephants on a treacherous and grueling journey across the Italian Alps, costing the lives of about a third of the soldiers and most of the elephants but bringing a massive and intact Carthaginian army directly into the Roman heartland.¹² Hannibal then inflicted two tactically masterful and crushing defeats on separate Roman armies at Trebia in Northern Italy and Lake Trasimene in Etruria, inflicting at least 70,000 casualties and forcing the Romans to forestall their plans for an invasion of Carthage in order to defend their homeland. For their part, the Romans utterly refused to surrender or even negotiate with Hannibal and instead elected consul Fabius Maximus to the role of “dictator” in 217 BCE, granting him unlimited power to address the mortal threat which Hannibal posed to Rome. Maximus realized that Hannibal depended upon victory in order to secure essential soldiers, supplies, and loyalty from local Italian tribes, and thus set a policy of avoiding direct large scale military confrontation with Hannibal at any cost. This “Fabian” strategy succeeded in denying Hannibal victory but also allowed him to ravage across Italy unchecked, capturing towns and cities almost at-will. Thus, when Maximus’s dictatorship expired in 216 BCE, the two new consuls, Paullus and Varro, led about 80,000 soldiers organized into two separate armies to confront Hannibal head-on at the Southern Italian village of Cannae. Though outnumbered almost two to one, Hannibal pulled off one of the greatest military victories in history by achieving a complete encirclement¹³, leading to the complete annihilation of both Roman armies. Rome, whose society abhorred surrender and defeat, refused to surrender in the wake of Hannibal’s crushing victory, instead raising new armies and resuming the Fabian strategy of delaying Hannibal and avoiding outright battle. Thus, while controlling much of southern Italy, Hannibal was forced to divert much of his attention to supplying and holding his conquests. In 210 BCE, a young Roman patrician named Publius Cornelius Scipio the Younger was appointed to conquer

¹² <https://dcc.dickinson.edu/nepos-hannibal/second-punic-war>

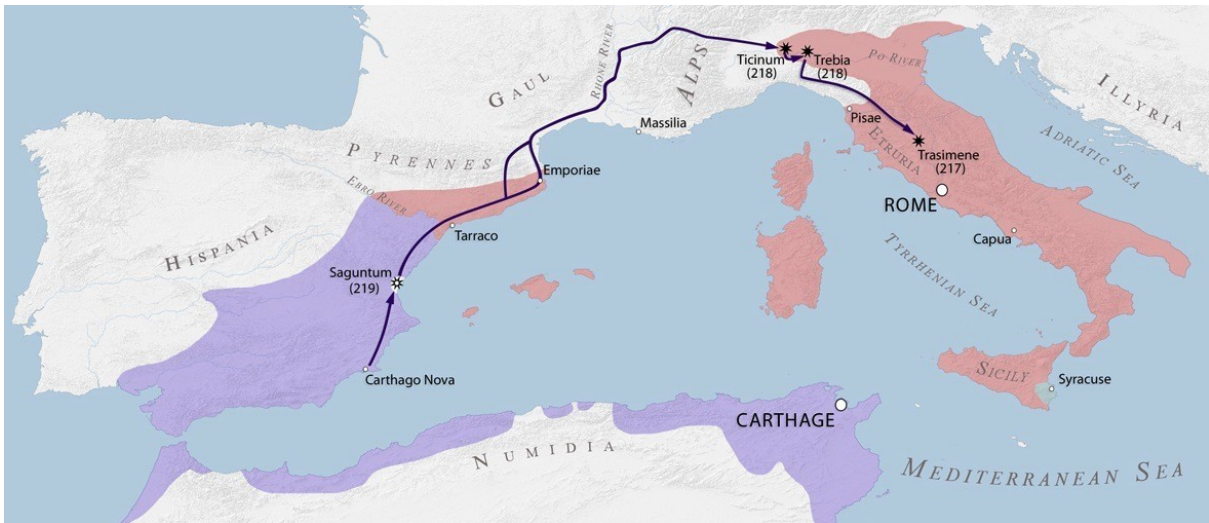
¹³ <https://ancientwarhistory.com/cannae-hannibals-tactical-masterpiece-and-the-encirclement-that-changed-militaryhistory/>

Carthaginian Iberia, which he successfully achieved. Years more of fighting ensued until 204 BCE when Scipio invaded Carthage, forcing the Carthaginian senate to recall Hannibal from Italy in order to defend his homeland. The Roman armies under Scipio and Carthaginian armies under Hannibal faced off in North Africa during an epic engagement known as the Battle of Zama¹⁴, from which Rome emerged victorious. After almost twenty years of fighting, Carthage surrendered and signed the Treaty of Zama, which mandated that Carthage give all territory outside of North Africa to Rome, agree only to wage war within the borders of North Africa and only there with Roman permission, and pay a massive indemnity of 5000 talents (hundreds of tons) of silver to Rome. The Treaty of Zama marked the end of Carthage as a major power, and about fifty years later, Rome would launch the Third Punic War, destroying the city and incorporating all of what had once been Carthage into Rome¹⁵.

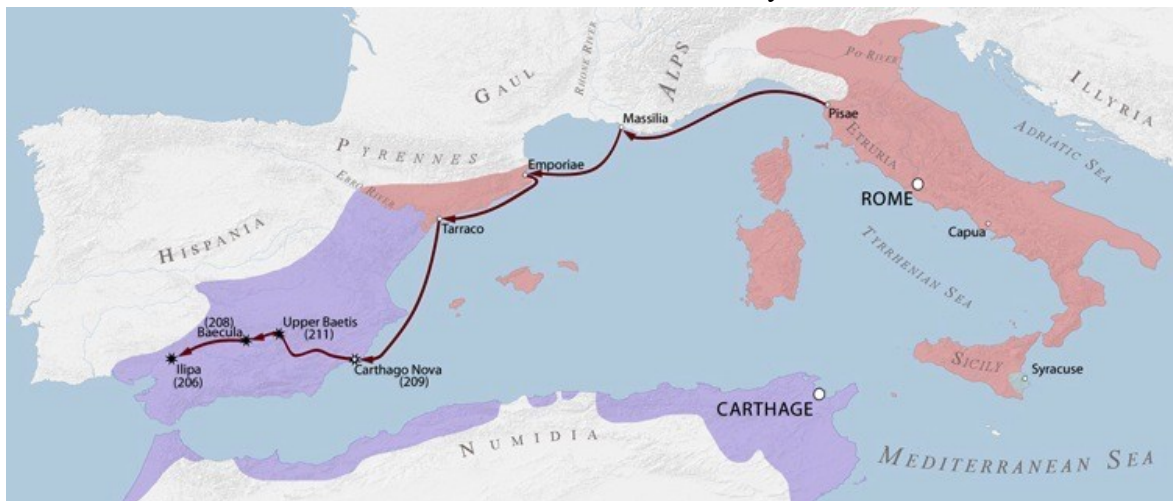


Pictured: Carthaginian and Roman Territory at the Beginning of the Second Punic War

¹⁴ <https://www.britannica.com/event/Battle-of-Zama-Roman-Carthaginian-history> ¹⁵ https://www.worldhistory.org/Third_Punic_War/



Pictured: Hannibal's Invasion of Italy



Pictured: Rome's Conquest of Iberia from Carthage



Pictured: Roman and Carthaginian Territories after the Treaty of Zama

Questions of Committee

The Second Punic War was one of the most well documented conflicts of ancient history, and yet, because majority of records on the conflict come from a limited number of sources (most notably Livy and Polybius), there is much that we don't know. The astute historian might ask:

1. What would have happened if Carthage had won the Second Punic War?
2. What if there had been a draw?
3. If Rome had lost, but only been forced to concede minor territories, would it have grown into the superpower it did?
4. Could Carthage have avoided war?
5. Should Carthage have avoided war?
6. How did the Second Punic War affect the histories of areas such as Egypt or the Levant (Middle East)?
7. Etc...

Delegates are encouraged to consider how the Second Punic War might have gone differently and what they, as their unique character, can do to effectuate those changes. As a specialized committee there will be no selection of topics, and delegates are instead encouraged spend the first session establishing their individual positions and working together to create the first "Direct Resolution" in response to the incipient conflict. Committee is set in 218 BCE, meaning that war has already been declared on both sides. Delegates may pursue peaceful and diplomatic resolutions to the conflict, but should be aware that sword and shield were the two of the primary instruments of Roman diplomacy,

and that most states who sought diplomacy with Rome without corresponding military deterrence often sooner or later found themselves ruled by Rome.

The Second Punic War shook the ancient world to its core. To the people of the time, it was an all-encompassing conflagration similar in scale and hardship to modern-day World War I. Carthage entered the conflict as a superpower of the known world and emerged as a Roman vassal who, 50 years after the Treaty of Zama, was able to do little to prevent its own annihilation at Roman hands. As the leaders of Carthage and the ancient world, you have the opportunity to change history and save not only a city but an entire civilization from its inglorious overthrow.

Although some Personal Directives will have impact, the primary focus of this committee is on diplomacy and unified, effective action. Delegates are expected to pass one detailed Direct Resolution per committee session and to form new blocs as committee progresses to address each novel challenge they will face. Delegates seeking a more detailed picture of the conflict than that provided in this document may wish to view a documentary by “Kings and Generals” available for free online and linked at the bottom of this page.¹⁵ Best of luck, and may Carthage never fall!

Character Dossier

A Note on the Gods

The ancient world was incredibly religious, with both sides placing great importance on omens. However, ancient pantheons were neither omniscient nor omnipotent. Divine characters will have some special powers over their respective spheres but should not be considered significantly more powerful than all other mortal characters.

¹⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZKcSWFYzBs>

Hannibal Barca: Son of famed general Hamilcar Barca, leading Carthaginian general/statesman and one of history's greatest military minds.

Hasdrubal Barca: Brother of Hannibal and leading Carthaginian General.

Archimedes: Polymath and genius inventor residing in the city of Syracuse. Loyal to Syracuse, which at this time is vacillating between Roman and Carthaginian allegiance but is currently loyal to Romans.

Hano II- Prominent Carthaginian Senator and opponent of the policy of war with Rome, as well as personal opponent of the Barciid family,

Massinissa - Numidian King with significant power among the tribes of North Africa. Originally allied to Carthage, he later switched sides to fight for Rome when the tides of war changed.

Mago Barca- Brother of Hannibal, son of Hamilcar, and prominent Carthaginian general.

Hasdrubal Gisco- Prominent Carthaginian General in the African and Iberian theatres

Syphax- Afric King of the Carthaginian-aligned Masaesyli tribe of western Numidia.

Ba'al Hammon - King of the Gods in the Carthaginian Pantheon. Weather god responsible for fertility of vegetation.

Tanit - Queen of the Carthaginian pantheon, and goddess of wisdom, civilization, and the crafts.

Sophonisba - Prominent Carthaginian noblewoman with significant influence over the North African political landscape.

Carthalo - Cavalry commander under Hannibal who was instrumental in the victory at Cannae.

Melqart – Ancient Patron God of Phoenician City of Tyre, Carthaginian God of heroes, death, and rising, patron God of Barciid clan.

Kusorit – Carthaginian goddess of intelligence

Epicyles – Carthaginian general and, along with his brother Hippocrates, Tyrant of Carthaginian controlled Syracuse beginning in 214 BCE.

Hippocrates - Carthaginian general and, along with his brother Epicyles, Tyrant of Carthaginian controlled Syracuse beginning in 214 BCE.

Hanno the Elder – Prominent Carthaginian Senator known for opposing the warlike Barciid faction during the Second Punic War.

Rb knhm – High Priest of the Carthaginian religion (note: Rb knhm is a title, not a name).

Bd - Male “Sanctuary Servant.” Oversaw Carthaginian religious rituals under the direction of the Rb knhm.

Bdt – Female “Sanctuary Servant.” Oversaw Carthaginian religious rituals under the direction of the Rb knhm.

Esmun - Carthaginian God of healing

Hampsicora – Landowner and political leader in Sardinia who led a revolt against Romans in 215 BCE.

Hasdrubal the Bald – Bald Carthaginian naval commander under Hannibal.