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The Grand Strategy: A Study on Hannibal's Stratagem During the Second Punic War

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<u>Abstract</u>

In this paper I sought to determine whether or not Hannibal Barca had a grand strategy to deal with the Romans during the Second Punic War. If Hannibal did have a strategy, I would try to determine what his strategy was and if it was actually feasible. I approached this question by looking into the background leading up to the Second Punic War, the primary sources explanation of Hannibal's strategy during the Second Punic War, the logistical feasibility of the plan, and Hannibal's movements throughout Italy during the war. In conclusion I decided that Hannibal did have a Grand strategy and that it was to alienate the Italian allied city-states from Rome in order to gain the logistical supplies and manpower to bring down Rome. In the end the reason that Hannibal lost the second Punic War is because he misunderstood the relationship that existed between the allied Italian states and Rome. This question is important because it sheds new light on the relations between Rome and its allied states. It also brings new questions to the foreground to try and explain what exactly was the relationship between Rome and its allies during this period.

<u>Acknowledgments</u>

I owe three groups of people a great deal for their help during this work. First, I would like to thank my parents for their support and encouragement throughout my college career.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In the spring of 216 B.C., Hannibal Barca engaged in one of the most famous battles in ancient Roman history at Cannae where he destroyed the full might of Rome in the field.[1] For two years he had fought and defeated Rome on the field of battle culminating in this ultimate triumph, leaving no legions standing between him and Rome. But Hannibal hesitated to directly attack the city and did not march on Rome, bringing a stalemate to the Italian Peninsula. In 203 BC Hannibal was recalled to Africa to defend Carthage against the Roman invasion led by Publius Cornelius Scipio and in 202 BC he was defeated at the Battle of Zama, effectively ending the second Punic War.[2] The great general Hannibal brought Rome to its knees but was unable to gain ultimate victory in the war. He won every major engagement and yet he was unable to force Rome to capitulate. History remembers him as the tactical genius that fought against the odds to defeat Rome only to find that he could not hope to match Rome's sheer manpower and logistical might. This paper will seek to further investigate Hannibal's strategy during the Second Punic War to determine if Hannibal was the military genius he is acclaimed to be or if his strategy was actually doomed from the start by fatal flaws. I will be examining closely what Hannibal's strategy actually was, the logistical factors that affected Hannibal's decisions, the troop movements of the Carthaginian army, and the cultural differences that may have influenced Hannibal's understanding of how he should conduct the war.

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[1] Nathan Stewart Rosenstein and Robert Morstein-Marx, *A Companion to the Roman Republic*, (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub, 2006), 152.
[2] Rosenstein, 153

The histories written by Polybius and Livy will be the primary lens through which I will examine the events of the Second Punic War and Hannibal's involvement.

The main sources that I will be using to examine the Second Punic War will be Livy's *Ab Urbe Condita,* The History of Rome, and Polybius' *Histories*. These texts are the closest books to actual primary sources available today. Livy was born as Titus Livius Patavinus in Patavium around the mid 1st century BC.[3] His only surviving work was the *Ab Urbe Condita* which covered the history of Rome from its founding up until the days of Livy's own lifetime, the turbulent period of civil wars and the rise of Octavian.[4] These books do not exist in their entirety, as some portions of the texts have been lost to time. They also need to be viewed with a measure of scrutiny by historians. Livy was not alive during most of the period that he covers, and his collection of books was written more than a century after the events of the Second Punic War.[5] There have also been assertions that Livy used his history as propaganda for Rome and to support the new rulers of Rome such as Octavian.[6] However, these texts are some of the only sources we have for the period other than those of the Greek historian Polybius.

Polybius was a Greek historian born around 200 BC who wrote his text the *Histories* that covered the events from around 264 BC and ended in approximately 146 BC.[7] He was from the city of Arcadia, which was under the control of the Achaean

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[3] Ronald Syme, "Livy and Augustus," Harvard Studies in Classical Philology, 64 (1959): 27-87, 28.
[4] Syme, 27.
[5] Syme, 27.
[6] Syme, 75.
[7] Polybius, F. Hultsch, and Evelyn S. Shuckburgh, *The Histories of Polybius in Two Volumes I* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962), ix.

League.[8] During the Macedonian wars he was sent to Rome along with other Greek nobles as political hostages to ensure the compliance of the Achaean League.[9] He lived most of his life in the city of Rome and while there he wrote the *Histories*. Polybius was one of the first historians to champion a factual, empirical approach to history but there are still problems with his text that must be accounted for by modern historians.[10] Like Livy, Polybius was not an actual witness to many of the events that he describes though he lived around the same period. He is also from Greece, which may not accurately account for some of the motivations of the Romans that he depicts. All in all these two texts are the best sources modern historians have on this period but the information gained from these books must be carefully reviewed to ensure factual reliability.

The literary sources supply numerous reasons for why Hannibal's invasion of Italy failed. The general consensus is that although Hannibal was a military genius he possessed a fatal flaw in his strategy or his character that prevented him from winning the war.[11] The three main theories to which scholars gravitate are that either Hannibal could not match the manpower and supplies of the Roman state; his plan to gain the support of Rome's allies was doomed to fail from the beginning because Hannibal did not properly incentivize the allied cities; or Hannibal either lacked the ability to see opportunities or he lacked the personal initiative to seize opportunities when they presented themselves.

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[8] Polybius, Volume I, ix.
[9] Polybius, Volume I, ix.
[10] Polybius, 1.4-6.
[11] John F. Shean, "Hannibal's Mules: The Logistical Limitations of Hannibal's Army and the Battle of Cannae, 216 B.C.," Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte, 45, no. 2 (1996): 159-187.

The idea that Hannibal was unable see critical opportunities dates all the way back to the original Roman accounts of Hannibal's conduct during the war. The Roman historian Livy believed that Hannibal could have won the war if he had immediately marched on Rome following the battle of Cannae. Instead, Livy thinks, Hannibal hesitated and missed his opportunity to end the war. Livy attributes a quote to a Carthaginian commander named Marhabal after the battle of Cannae who says to Hannibal *"Vincere scis, Hannibal; victoria uti nescis."* which translates as "You, Hannibal, know how to gain a victory; you do not know how to use it."[12] Livy believed that Hannibal could have won the war after the battle of Cannae if he had marched on Rome, but he was unable or unwilling to use the momentum of the victory to win the war. Livy and many scholars after him believed that if Hannibal had marched on Rome immediately after Cannae that he could have forced Rome to surrender.[13] But in recent years the consensus has been shifting away from this belief because many scholars have realized the answer is more complicated than they had first thought.[14] If Rome had not surrendered as they anticipated, Hannibal may not have been able to take the city by force of arms.[15]

G.H. Donaldson and other scholars viewed the outcome of the Second Punic war as an inevitable conclusion based on logistical problems that Hannibal faced. Hannibal was simply unable to match the sheer manpower and logistical capacity wielded by the Roman state. He writes "Hannibal was never given the opportunity of conducting a siege

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12 Livy,
13 Shean, 159.
14 Shean, 161-166.
15 Shean, 184.

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of Rome, because there was always a Roman army available to harass him if he settled down."[16] Hannibal was also unable to gather large numbers of new recruits or supplies because he was cut off from his normal supply route in Spain and North Africa.[17] Logistical capacity involves the ability of the state to maintain a steady quantity of food, weapons, and supplies to the army. Rome was able to recruit large amounts of troops and continually arm and feed them despite the large amount of casualties they suffered. Hannibal on the other hand was unable to match the Roman logistical capacity. These problems ensured that although Hannibal could win battles he could not end the war.

Other scholars such as Andrew Erskine focused on the cultural aspect of Hannibal's plan. He asserts that Hannibal planned to win the war by alienating Rome's allies through tactical victories. By winning on the field of battle Hannibal sought to prove that he could defeat Rome. He hoped that this, coupled with promises of freedom to the allies, would be enough to persuade Rome's allies to join him. After he detached them from Rome's control he hoped they would join his cause and supply the necessary men and supplies that he would need to defeat Rome. The flaw in this plan is that what Hannibal offered the allies was that he would free them from the clutches of Rome and give them autonomy.[18] What Hannibal did not understand is that the allies were not attracted by his offers of autonomy. Erskine also claims that this "Carthaginian propaganda had a basic problem: it was not easily comprehensible to the Italians at whom

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[16] G.H. Donaldson, "Modern Idiom in an Ancient Context: Another Look at the Strategy of the Second Punic War," Greece & Rome, 9, no. 2 (1962): 134-141, 140
[17] Donaldson, 138
[18] Andrew Erskine, "Hannibal and the Freedom of the Italians," Hermes, 121, no. 1 (1993): 58-62, 60.

it was directed. It would seem to have been singularly unsuccessful."[19] If the allies did not want what Hannibal offered then he could not break them from Rome. Hannibal did not have the manpower or support to defeat Rome without their support.

The events that led up to the Second Punic War portray a long and seemingly inevitable conflict reminiscent of the wars between Athens and Sparta in ancient Greece. Rome was a growing power in the Mediterranean and already controlled all of the Italian Peninsula except Cisalpine Gaul[20]. After bringing the Latin states into line during the Latin Wars in 338 B.C., the final defeat of the Samnite tribes in 290 B.C., and the fall of the Greek city-states in southern Italy in 275 BC Rome had eliminated all of its major rivals in Italy.[21] It's military was a land based army mainly comprised of heavy infantry and it was well trained. In comparison, Carthage was also a growing power that was based in North Africa and had possessions in Corsica, Sicily, Sardinia, the Balearic Islands, and parts of southern Spain. It dominated the Mediterranean Sea with a large merchant fleet and a powerful navy. Carthage relied heavily on its navy for protection against its enemies. Carthage did have a sizable army although it was heavily reliant on mercenary and foreign troops to bolster its ranks. Rome and Carthage quickly came into conflict as they both began to expand their spheres of influence into Sicily and Spain.

In 288 BC a group known as the Mamertines[22] were engaged in a war against the city-state of Syracuse in Sicily. The Mamertines had become a nuisance in the region due

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[19] Erskine, 60

[20] Cisalpine Gaul consisted of northern Italy in the area of the Po river valley.

[21] Harriet I. Flower, *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Republic*, (Cambridge UP, 2004), 23-27.

[22] The Mamertines was a mercenary group of Italian origin that had been hired and recruited in the Campanian region by Agathocles, the tyrant of Syracuse, to fight in

to their pillaging of the countryside and Syracuse had decided to deal with the problem once and for all. The ruler of Syracuse, Hiero II, defeated the Mamertine army near Mylae and the Mamertines, fearing annihilation, asked the Carthaginians for help in resolving the conflict.[23] However, the Mamertines were divided about whether they should ask Carthage or Rome for assistance. So they also appealed to Rome for assistance as well hoping that one of the major powers would come to their aid. Carthage quickly moved into action and successfully persuaded Hiero II to cease his attacks on the Mamertines. However, they demanded that a Carthaginian garrison be place in the city of Messana for their services. Rome in 264 BC, fearing Carthaginian expansion, dispatched an army led by Appius Claudius Caudex to Sicily to counter what was perceived as a growing Carthaginian threat.[24] In 263 BC the Roman consuls landed in Italy with their armies causing many Sicilian towns, including Syracuse, to ally themselves with Rome and started the First Punic War.[25] In 264 BC, Rome invaded North Africa in order to quickly end the war but its commander, the consul M. Atilius Regulus, was defeated and his army was destroyed.[26] The remainder of the war took place in naval battles in the Mediterranean or in the land campaign in Sicily. In 254 BC the city of Panormus fell after a prolonged siege. [27] Lilybaeum and Drepana, key port cities under Carthaginian

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the Third Sicilian War. Agathocles died in 289 BC that left the mercenaries unemployed. This group of mercenaries were allowed into the city of Messana but then turned on their hosts and captured the town which they made as their base of operations in Sicily. After they took the town they named themselves the Mamertines after the Oscan god of war.

[23] Rosenstein, 148.
[24] Rosenstein, 148.
[25] Rosenstein, 148.
[26] Rosenstein, 148.
[27] Rosenstein, 149.

control, were soon seeing heavy fighting as Roman land forces began to displace Carthaginian forces.[28] For most of the war the Carthaginian navy had been unmatched, but Rome soon began constructing its own navy. After suffering a series of defeats the Roman navy developed a new weapon called the *corvus*[29] that allowed them to board enemy ships rather than fight them in complicated naval maneuvers. After numerous set backs, including losing entire fleets to storms, the Roman navy began to gain ground against the well trained Carthaginian navy. In 241 BC a Roman fleet led by C. Lutatius Catalus defeated the Punic fleet around the Aegates Islands.[30] With this defeat the Carthaginian were unable to maintain their hold on Sicily and began negotiations for peace. Carthage accepted terms that forced them to evacuate Sicily, to return the prisoners it captured, to limit the size of its navy, to promise not to attack Roman allies, and to pay a massive indemnity to Rome much to the dismay of Carthage.[31]

During the interlude between the first and second Punic war both sides began to expand their respective territories. Rome began to solidify its holding in Sicily, took Sardinia from Carthage as a result of the Mercenary Wars (240-238BC), conquered most of the Gallic tribes in Cisalpine Gaul, and engaged in a series of wars in Illyria (229-228BC) to expand its hegemonic power.[32] Carthage, on the other hand, had been

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[28] Rosenstein, 149.

[29] Flower, 66. The *Corvus* was a large plank mounted on a swivel that was attached to the Roman ship. It had a large metal spike attacked to its end and it would be dropped onto the deck of an enemy ship. When the spike caught in the enemy ship it would form a bridge between the ships that would allow the Roman marines to engage the Carthaginian sailors in hand-to-hand combat.

[30] Rosenstein, 149.

[31] Rosenstein, 149.

[32] Rosenstein, 149-151.

embroiled in a devastating war with its own mercenaries.[33] With the conclusion of this

war Carthage began to look for new territories to expand and rebuild their power after

their defeat to Rome.[34] Hamilcar Barca was dispatched to Spain to build new colonies

and take land from the native tribesman. He was incredibly successful and built a

veritable empire in Spain much to the dismay of the Roman elite. On his death his son-in-

law, Hasdrubul, took command of the Carthaginian interests in Spain. In 225 BC Rome,

becoming wary of resurgent Carthaginian power, sent ambassadors to meet with

Hasdrubul to conclude an agreement between Rome and Carthage.[35] This agreement

made the Ebro Rive the effective boundary between Carthaginian Spain and Roman

Spain. However, the town of Saguntum, that was located well south of the Ebro, began to

form relations with Rome who in turn claimed that Saguntum was under Roman

protection.[36] Hannibal Barca, the son of Hamilcar, took command of the Carthaginian

forces in Spain after Hasdrubul was assassinated. The Saguntines ended up attacking a

city that had sided with the Carthaginians and Rome, fearing reprisal, sent a warning to

Hannibal not to attack Saguntum or risk war. Hannibal ignored the warning and marched

on Saguntum to siege the city.[37] Rome did not come to the aid of Saguntum because the

Senate was busy deliberating on what course of action they should follow and as a result,

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[33] Polybius, 1.65-88. The Mercenary War, or the Libyan War, was a war that occurred internally in Carthaginian lands. After the defeat of Carthage in the first Punic War the mercenary forces of Carthage came home to receive their due pay and go home. However, Carthage lacked the funds to pay them and coupled with a series of factors culminated in a revolt by the mercenaries. Carthage eventually put down the rebellion but Rome took advantage of the chaos to take Sardinia from Carthage.
[34] Rosenstein, 151.
[35] Rosenstein, 151
[36] Rosenstein, 148.
[37] Polybius, 3.17

Saguntum fell to Hannibal. Rome demanded that Hannibal be handed over to Rome as punishment for the sacking of Saguntum or they would declare war. The Carthaginians refused to turn over Hannibal and the Second Punic war was underway.

According to Livy, Hannibal's Iberian army had 90,000 infantry, 12,000 cavalry, and 37 elephants at the start of the war.[38] Hannibal left Cartagena and headed north along the coast of Spain in late spring. After crossing the Ebro River he began a campaign to subdue the Iberian tribes that populated the area where he suffered significant casualties. Hannibal left a garrison of 11,000 Iberian troops to garrison the newly conquered territory after they showed reluctance to leave their homeland. The sources say that Hannibal entered Gaul with 50,000 infantry and 9,000 cavalry left. He traveled inland to avoid Roman allies along the coast such as Massalia and was able to avoid conflict except for some brief skirmishes with the a Gallic tribe who attempted to ambush Hannibal's army at the Rhone River.[39] Meanwhile, the Roman army, led by Gnaeus Cornelius Scipio Calvus and Publius Cornelius Scipio, which had been dispatched to Spain received word that Hannibal was attempting to enter Italy by an overland route and moved to block him. A minor cavalry skirmish broke out when a Roman scouting party encountered 500 Numidian horsemen. The Roman scouting party defeated the Numidians and subsequently was able to locate the Carthaginian camp.[40] The Roman force marched upstream to engage Hannibal but he was able to elude them and by Autumn he reached the foot of the Alps.[41] He successfully settled a minor dispute in a local tribe, the

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[38] Livy, 21.23.1-3.
[39] Livy, 21.28.1-4.
[40] Livy, 21.29.1-4.
[41] Livy, 21.32.1-3.

Allobroges, who gave his army provisions for the crossing as their sign of gratitude. Thus the army was resupplied for the journey across the Alps.[42]

The exact route that Hannibal took in his crossing of the Alps is unclear though many have speculated on the matter. Regardless, a mountain tribe confronted Hannibal as he attempted to enter the Alps. The tribe had fortified the entrance to the pass in order to stop Hannibal's advance.[43] Hannibal lost a large number of pack animals that were carrying valuable supplies in addition to the casualties he sustained during the subsequent battle.[44] After defeating them Hannibal marched to their village and destroyed it, while gathering more supplies to aid the crossing. The weather conditions in the Alps were terrible during this time of the year. Hannibal's men suffered through the cold and many perished due to the harsh weather. The pass itself was also treacherous and many lost their lives through accidents along the march. Hannibal's army eventually made it to a small valley populated by another Gallic tribe. They offered their help to Hannibal and gave him gifts and supplies to help his crossing.[45] Hannibal was suspicious of their kind demeanor but he accepted the assistance that they offered.[46] When the army left they came upon a defile and began to pass through it. The tribesmen, as Hannibal had suspected, had laid a trap for Hannibal's army and when a significant portion of the army had made it through the defile they attacked. The fighting was heavy and Hannibal again lost a large number of Elephants and pack animals.[47] After fighting their way out of the

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[42] Livy, 21.31.5-9.
[43] Livy, 21.32-33.
[44] Livy. 21.33.10-11.
[45] Livy, 21.34.1-4.
[46] Livy, 21.34.4
[47] Livy, 21.35.1-5.

trap the Carthaginian army continued its trek across the Alps. Polybius states that when the army reached Italy that Hannibal stopped the army to give a speech. He is said to have gestured to Italy, the Po River Valley, and in the direction of Rome.[48] The army's five-month journey was at an end. The army descended the Alps into northern Italy and with them came destruction and strife.

[48] Polybius, 3.54

Chapter 2: The Grand Strategy

Hannibal had now marched his entire army overland from Iberia into northern Italy but now he faced a severe dilemma. The journey from Iberia had taken several months and the Carthaginian forces had been forced to deal with numerous problems such as uncooperative Gallic tribes and severe weather conditions. Ancient historians report that Hannibal set out from Iberia with over 90,000 troops and that they suffered upwards of 34,000 casualties over the long journey.[49] He had now put himself in a seemingly uneviable position because, although he was bringing the fight to Rome, he was cut off from his normal sources of supplies and reinforcements and was being forced to fight with a depleted and seemingly outmatched army. The question remains, did Hannibal have a grand strategy for dealing with Rome? If he did have a strategy, what was it, and was it actually feasible?

Throughout his campaign in Italy, Hannibal seems to have a very straightforward plan on how to deal with Rome. The sources state that since he did not have the resources to combat Rome directly Hannibal sought to dislodge Rome's allies from Roman control. After the Battle of Lake Trasimene, Polybius reports that "[Hannibal] distributed the Roman prisoners among the units of his army, for them to watch over, but he let all the allies return to their homes, free and unransomed. Before letting them go, he repeated his assertion that he had not come to fight the peoples of Italy, but to try to gain them freedom from Rome" and Livy mentions a similar speech[50] Italy at this time was not one

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[49] Livy, 21.38.1-5,
[50] Polybius, 3.35-36.

unified nation but rather a patchwork of cities with economic, political, and military ties

focused around the regional hegemony of Rome. This complicated system of alliances

was erected over centuries of conflicts between the city-states on the Italian peninsula.

Early Rome was not the great power that its legends suggested and that it would

later become. Archaeological evidence from the 7th and 8th century BC suggests that early

Rome was a typical town in comparison to its neighboring towns on the Italian

Peninsula.[51] Rome was always one step away from defeat due to its location on the

Italian Peninsula. It was surrounded by the cities of other ethnic groups, such as the

Latins[52], Etruscans[53], and Samnites[54] who could, and frequently did, attack the city of

Rome. Ancient religious annals indicate that Rome was almost always in a state of war

during these times though these "wars" likely consisted of raids rather than total war.[55]

These early raids became more common and more brutal as these towns grew larger and

expanded their influence. These developing towns and cities soon came into conflict with

one another because of growing interests and the lack of an institution to settle

grievances. Rome soon began an aggressive policy of both retaliation and expansion that

included subjugating cities and towns in the direct vicinity of Rome.[56] It had previously

maintained alliances as multilateral agreements between Rome and a collection of cities,

[51] T. J. Cornell, *The Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c. 1000-264 BC)*, (London: Routledge, 1995), 54-55.
[52] An Italian tribe that occupied the Latium plains located on the west coast of central Italy. They spoke the Latin language and Rome was considered to be a "Latin" city until its rise to dominance.
[53] The Etruscans were a tribe who occupied Eturia, located north of Latium, now known as Tuscany.
[54] The Samnites were a group of Oscan speaking hill tribes who lived in central Italy.
[55] Rosenstein, 138.
[56] Arthur M. Eckstein, *Mediterranean Anarchy, Interstate War, and the Rise of Rome*, (Berkely: University of California Press, 2007), 118-120.

most notably of these alliances was the Latin League. Many of the Latin cities

neighboring Rome became worried by these new aggressive policies and in 340 BC the

Latin League declared war on Rome. Rome eventually repulsed and conquered the Latin

League despite initial setbacks. Rome understood that by allying itself with a large group

of cities on a multilateral basis, the groups of cities would still have a powerful political

structure that could challenge Rome. It also set these cities apart from Rome, giving them

an independent identity. After this incident Rome began a policy of only allying itself

with individual cities which served to isolate the allied cities.[57] Rome began to spread its

sphere of influence to include the cities surrounding its borders. This system of individual

treaties then allowed Rome to expand rapidly. The system let Rome more closely regulate

the activities of each city and kept them from having a specific structure that could help

coordinate resistance against Rome

Rome was able to adapt quickly to different circumstances and took a variety of

approaches to dealing with other states. The harshest approach was for the army to

decimate the conquered population or sell them all into slavery and then personally take

control of the land. This was uncommon because this depopulated areas and forced the

Romans to spend money to directly control the newly acquired lands. Decimation was

unavoidable for enemies that Rome considered to be such a threat that they threatened the

safety of Rome or that they needed to be made an example of. Livy talks about the sack

of Veii, a constant enemy of Rome located directly north of the city by the Roman

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[57] Rosenstein, 138-139.

commander Camillus.[58] Livy writes that when the Romans entered the city "every hour was spent in the killing of Rome's enemies and the sacking of a wealthy city. Next day, all of the free-born townsfolk were sold, by Camillus's orders, into slavery."[59]

The most common practice was that the cities would either willingly join Rome through diplomatic processes by accepting a treaty with Rome, or they would be defeated in a war and then forcibly required to become an ally of Rome. Rome would then impose a set of requirements upon the subjugated cities. These treaties varied greatly between cities based on how they came into the alliance system, their previous actions with Rome, and how Rome viewed each particular city.

The most important feature of all of these treaties was Rome's demand that these allied cities provide the Roman government with troops as well as tribute. Rome also seized portions of land that belonged to the subjugated to establish *coloniae*, Roman colonies. An example of this behavior is seen after the defeat of the Latin federation in 338 BC. The treaties between Rome and the Latin cities following the war served as precedent for further expansion.[60] Rome forced the Latin cities to agree to individual treaties with Rome that stipulated that they would pay monetary tribute and supply manpower for Rome's military. The cities would lose their ability to dictate foreign policies but would be able to keep their domestic autonomy. This would prove to be essential to the expansion of Rome. The tribute provided by these cities allowed Rome to

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[58] Camillus was a near legendary Roman soldier and statesman. He was born into the patrician class. According to sources, Camillus had several triumphs, was declared dictator multiple times, and was honored with the title of Second Founder of Rome.
[59] Livy, 5.5.23.
[60] Rosenstein, 139.

fund its continuous wars of expansion and retaliation. It also allowed the Romans to field a larger army than they could on their own.[61] Other than these requirements, Rome allowed these cities to function as they previously had before their defeat. This system of alliances may have seemed precarious to a person outside the Roman system especially one from a nation like Carthage. The Roman state relied on a large group of semi-autonomous cities and towns that had been forced to take a subordinate position to Rome. Carthage dealt with other nations very differently by either conquering territory in its entirety, such as was the case with Spain, or dealing with them in a case-by-case basis as they did with their mercenary forces. It may have seemed like an easy task to break these Roman alliances when looking at the barest information available to Hannibal, but in reality the Roman state was much more complex than it may seem.

Prior to the Second Punic War the Romans had subjugated most of Cisalpine Gaul by defeating the various Gallic tribes that lived in the area. These Gallic tribes had been establishing diplomatic relations with the Carthaginians prior to the war in the hopes that they may be able to gain military assistance from Carthage. When the war broke out these Gallic tribes, led by the Boii and Insubres, revolted against Rome and joined forces with Hannibal in order to defeat their common enemy. Polybius writes about this betrayal, documenting that when Boii tribe learned that the Carthaginians were coming, "they rebelled against Rome, abandoning the hostages they had given at the end of the recent war, which I described in the previous book. They called on the Insubres, who were still angry at the way they had been treated."[62] This would be an easy way for Hannibal to

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[61] Rosenstein, 139.
[62] Polybius, 3.40.

replenish his ranks and Hannibal hurried to join forces with the Gaul's of the lower Po valley. He also wanted to have the remaining Gallic tribes of northern Italy join him in the war against Rome but many were reluctant for fear that Hannibal would not be able to defeat Rome. Hannibal had a chance to fight the Roman army under the command of Publius Cornelius Scipio in Gaul but decided to wait until he was in Italy to engage the Romans. He would be able to prove the Carthaginian military strength if he could defeat Rome in Italy thereby demonstrating his strength visibly to his would be allies.[63] Hannibal was able to alleviate this initial apprehension by defeating Scipio at the Battle of Ticinus.[64] After the defeat of the Roman army nearly all of the Gallic tribes in Cisalpine Gaul had joined Hannibal's army. This view of Hannibal's strategy appeared to be working and he accomplished many of his short terms goals through the alliance with the Gaul's. Hannibal had defeated the Roman military on the field of battle and as a result the Gallic tribes joined him in his fight against Rome. He also significantly replenished his supplies and manpower reserves.

Hannibal seems to continue along with his plan and engages the Roman army in two strategic battles that he wins handily. In 218 BC the Roman army under the command of Sempronius Longus was taunted into engaging the Carthaginian forces outside the town of Trebia, located in northern Italy.[65] The Roman army was soundly defeated and were forced to retreat back to the town of Placentia. The Battle of Lake Trasimene would also prove to be a major disaster for the Roman army. In 217 BC Hannibal tricked the consul Flaminius into pursuing him near Lake Trasimene. It is

[63] Livy 21.29.5-7.
[64] Rosenstein, 152.
[65] Polybius, 3.72.

estimated that only about one-third of the 30,000 Romans made it back to Rome.[66] These

military blunders had caused the deaths of huge numbers of Roman and allied soldiers.

Hannibal then marched into southern Italy and surprisingly did not attempt to lay siege to

Rome itself, despite having crushed all the Roman field armies in Italy. In fact, the

situation in Rome was so dire that they resorted to the old tradition of electing a dictator.

This dictator usually was appointed by a consul but due to the death of Flaminius and the

absence of Servilius the Senate elected Quintus Fabius Maximus to sole commander of

the roman military forces for a term of six months. Yet, despite these crushing defeats,

the Italian allies did not join forces with Hannibal against Rome and continued to supply

troops to fight against Carthage.

Fabius, the newly elected dictator of Rome following the disaster at Lake

Trasimene decided the Roman war effort must move in a new direction. Livy writes that

Fabius "advanced in the direction of the enemy, though resolved nowhere to commit

himself to fortune, except in so far as necessity might compel him".[67] He decided that if

Rome's army could not match the Carthaginians in the field then they would wear them

out. The Fabian strategy was to avoid direct engagements and harass the Carthaginians

through small scale skirmishes.[68] This strategy eventually hemmed in the Carthaginians,

depleted their supplies, and hampered Hannibal's ability to command. This strategy was

proving to be effective against Hannibal, yet there were downsides to this plan.

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[66] Polybius, 3.82-84.
[67] Livy, 22.12.3
[68] Polybus, 198-200.

Rome was impatient for a decisive victory and the soldiers were not pleased with the Fabian strategy.[69] Livy writes that "the Romans had finally chosen a military leader who waged war as reason and not as blind chance dictated- yet incurred the scorn of Fabius's fellow citizens, both soldiers and civilians,"[70] These were significant political and morale incentives for Rome to engage in a decisive battle and yet they were not tactically sound. The sources claim that eventually, Hannibal was forced to change his tactics.[71] Hannibal decided to begin pillaging the Italian countryside because he was unable to draw the Romans into battle and thus win tactical victories. According to Livy, he hoped that this would show that the Romans were weak and unable to defend their allies, or force the Romans to fight him on the field of battle.[72] Rome realized that they had to do something to ensure that the Allies did not desert them. Polybius writes that "[Hannibal] expected one of two outcomes. He would either compel the enemy to fight, or he would make everyone recognize that the Romans were ceding the countryside to him- in which case, he hope, the terrified cities would rush to rebel from Rome."[73] Despite their lands being pillaged and plundered the allies remained true to their alliance with Rome.

In 216 BC new consuls were elected and Fabius was removed from office. The twin consuls Gaius Terentius Varro and Lucius Aemilius Paullus resolved to finish off Hannibal once and for all. This would prove to be the most costly military blunder in recent Roman history. At the battle of Cannae Hannibal annihilated the Roman armies led

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[69] Flower, 66.
[70] Livy, 22.23.2-3.
[71] Livy, 22.23.1-2.
[72] Livy, 22.23.1-2
[73] Polybius, 3.90.

by the Consuls. Some estimates assert that about 100,000 men took the field and of those men about 50,000- 70,000 were killed or captured though these numbers cannot be confirmed and appear exaggerated.[74] Again Hannibal attempts to create a rift between the allies and Rome by using the battle to demonstrate his goodwill. Livy writes that Hannibal gathered the prisoners and after "dividing them into two groups, he addressed a few kindly words to the allies and dismissed them without ransom, as he had done previously at Trebia and Lake Trasimene."[75] This military disaster proved to be the last straw for some of the allies. Several southern Italian cities joined Hannibal, most notably Tarentum and Capua. These defections as well as the revolt of the Greek towns in Sicily shook the foundations of Rome. Polybius writes that "Tarentum surrendered straight away, Argyripa and some Campania towns approached Hannibal, and all the other cities inclined from then on towards the Carthaginian side."[76] It appeared that this grand strategy, attributed to Hannibal, was finally bearing fruit and that the system of alliances would unravel ultimately leading to Rome's downfall.

With these new allies under his command Hannibal had more troops under his command. But he also had land that he needed to defend in order to keep them under control but he also could not be everywhere at once. Rome could still field multiple armies with the support of the vast majority of allied cities. Due to this they began a strategy of grinding down the allies of Hannibal. Hannibal still won several victories in the field but was unable to protect his allies from the vast manpower of the Roman army. Livy writes about an incident where Hannibal traveled to join forces with an allied army.

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[74] Livy, 22.44.15-18.
[75] Livy, 22.57.1-3.
[76] Polybius, 3.118.

He says, "[Hannibal] found at Hamae a camp deserted by his enemies, and nothing but the traces of recent slaughter of his allies scattered everywhere."[77] With Roman victories in Iberia, Southern Italy, Macedonia, Sicily, and their subsequent invasion of North Africa, Hannibal was called back to Carthage to defend his homeland. His strategy had appeared, for all practical purposes, to have failed. But was this his actual strategy or a convenient explanation by Roman historians to explain Hannibal's defeat?

It seems likely that this strategy proposed by Roman historians such as Livy and Polybius was the actual strategy of Hannibal. Carthage had already lost to Rome before and Hannibal sought another way to break Rome's growing power over the Mediterranean world. At the outset, the plan seems to be entirely plausible and within his abilities to accomplish. The Roman state was built around a series of alliances that provided the manpower and money that Rome needed to conduct a war against Carthage. These city-states had been conquered by Rome and forced into Rome's system of alliances though they maintained a certain level of autonomy from Rome in domestic matters. Rome could easily field enough armies to fight multiple campaigns in Iberia, Italy, Sicily, and Africa. It also was able to gather entire new armies after seemingly crippling defeats such as Cannae. It also became clear that Hannibal was unable to gather enough troops to take the city of Rome itself. His strategy depended on him being able to win victories in the field and keeping the casualties of his troops to a minimum so that the allies would see Carthage's power and be willing to forsake their alliances with Rome. This was a major gamble because it required him to engage and win large pitched battles, which risked the manpower of his army. If he had even a single major defeat he would be

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[77] Livy, 23.36.3-7.

unable to maintain his position on the Italian peninsula. But if he could get the allies to betray Rome, who seemed to be independent city-states, than he would finally finish off Rome. He also proved to be an incredibly competent military commander capable of accomplishing tactical victories by winning multiple large scale engagements with minimum casualties that he would need to woo the allies away from Roman control. The Gallic uprising had also been an early indicator that this strategy could succeed. However, ultimately Hannibal's plan failed, and in the end Carthage was defeated. Why did this seemingly rational plan fail and was it actually feasible?

Looking back to the very beginning of the conflict, there were many problems with this strategy. The Gallic tribes had only been recently pacified by the Roman state and it appears be reasonable that these various tribes would jump at the chance to fight back against Rome. In fact many tribes did join Hannibal, most notably the Boii and Insubres. But many of the other tribes were hesitant to join Hannibal until after he had defeated the Roman military in the field. What would happen to those allies who had been apart of the Roman political system for significant amounts of time?

Nearly all of the Roman allies had remained firm in their loyalties for most of the war despite numerous disasters. Polybius writes that 'despite two Roman defeats, not a single Italian city had left them and gone over to the Carthaginians; they had all remained loyal, even though some had suffered a great deal."[78] The allies, by this point, were already heavily invested in the idea of the Roman state. Among other factors many of the nobility of the city had Roman citizenship, Rome provided a large amount of infrastructure such as roads that would not have been available otherwise, many shared

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[78] Polybius, 3.90.

the same language and religion as Romans, the allies served in nearly identical armies, and the use of Roman colonies contributed to their integration into the Roman system. They had gone through a cultural, social, and political transformation over the course of their partnership with Rome. This could mean that they identified themselves more closely as being Roman than the Carthaginians and even the Romans had calculated. The betrayals after the Battle of Cannae could be explained by several factors. To some extent the betrayal of several allied cities may show that despite their identity as Romans, or at least within the Roman system, some allies still harbored their own separate local and cultural ties with their regions that Romanization had not been able to completely stamp out. In addition some allies could simply no longer afford to continue this extremely costly war. Others, such as Syracuse and the Samnites, saw a chance to regain their former prominence and independence from Rome. However, the allies that did join him were not enough to tip the balance of power in his favor. Did Hannibal actually believe that his plan was feasible or did he underestimate the allies' resolve? Were there any other options from which Hannibal could have chosen?

Based on Hannibal's actions during the war it is likely that he believed that this plan was feasible. He was constantly trying to establish relations with allied states and get them to join him against Rome whether it is through dazzling victories and promises of freedom or threats of pillaging and destruction. Hannibal moves quickly to take Capua after he receives credible information that it would ally itself with him.[79] He also begins a campaign of destruction when the Roman army decides to rely on harassing tactics to

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[79] Livy 23.2-10

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defeat Hannibal.[80] He continued the war for years in Italy and there were very few changes in his approach to the war. Hannibal first begins the war by trying to win stunning tactical victories. After Hannibal gains a few allies, like Capua, he is forced to stay near them in an attempt to protect them while continuing to expand his group of allies. When he loses Capua and Tarentum he tries to regain lost ground by defeating Rome and gaining more allies but he is ultimately unable to do so.

Both Rome and Hannibal vastly underestimated the dedication of the allies to the Roman state. Hannibal may have thought that after a few victories the allies would flock to join him and desert Rome. The Senate of Rome believed that the allies would rebel against them if they were unable to defeat Hannibal. The Fabian strategy worked surprisingly well against Hannibal and yet Fabius was scorned by nearly everyone. The Senate, the citizens, and even the soldiers wanted a large, decisive victory against Hannibal to show the allies that they were still the leading power of the day.[81] Following the battle of Cannae, Hannibal had no enemies between him and Rome and many of his advisors wanted to begin a siege of Rome and yet he hesitated. He may have been unsure because relatively few Roman allies had defected to him despite his constant victories in the field. Perhaps he did not think that he would actually be able to take the city. Regardless, Livy writes about several of these cities that fell to the Carthaginians and their new allies. He says, "And Locri went over to the Bruttians and Carthaginians, the populace having been betrayed by the leading men. Regium alone in that region remained

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[80] Livy 22.13.1
[81] Livy 22.23.1-8

loyal to the Romans and to the very last independent."[82] It becomes clear however that many steadfast allied cities had been part of the Roman system for so long that they had become Romanized. They dealt with Roman colonists, they adopted Roman culture and religion, spoke the same language, and benefited from Rome's power. They saw themselves as Romans and had a vested interest in the survival of the Roman state. They enjoyed certain rights and privileges as well as greater wealth and infrastructure by being incorporated into the Roman state. In a sense, they considered themselves to be Roman even if Rome itself did not view them the same way. Yet Hannibal continued to pursue this strategy despite the fact that it did not appear to produce the results that he needed.

It is unlikely there were other options for Carthage that could have led to a Carthaginian victory in the Second Punic War. After the First Punic War, they no longer had an overwhelming advantage in naval combat. The Roman navy was now a significant presence on the Mediterranean Sea and there was a sizable fleet in service. The Carthaginian navy had been defeated and downsized according to the terms of the peace agreement following the First Punic War. The Carthaginian army had regained most of its strength but could not stand the sheer manpower that Rome could wield against them. Eventually Rome's vast resources would overrun them if they fought a defensive campaign. Therefore the best option would be to take the war into Roman territory. To overcome the logistical and military problems they would have to eliminate the allies as a factor in Rome's power.

In conclusion, Hannibal must have had a grand strategy for fighting against Rome during the Second Punic war. His plan was to dislodge the allies from the Roman

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[82] Livy, 23.30.8-9.

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political state to weaken Rome's power and then use the allies to finish the war and

Rome. This plan appeared feasible due to the expected precarious nature of a state built

on alliances but it was actually not possible because Hannibal underestimated the allies'

commitment to Rome. Despite this it seems that Hannibal crafted a calculated and

rational plan with the greatest possibility for success.

Chapter 3: The Logistical Gamble

The logistical support of any army is a critical component to the success of its missions and goals. Armies are dependent on their supplies and logistical support to continue their combat effectiveness. The military maxim that an army "marches on its stomach" was just as true in ancient times as it is in today's modern military. For the purpose of this chapter I will be investigating the logistics of Hannibal's army to reinforce the idea of Hannibal's grand strategy stated in chapter 2. It would be helpful to define what I mean by logistics. Logistics is the ability for the army to gather supplies, food, and manpower necessary for the continuation of the war or for ultimate victory in a war. To portray this facet of the war I will be looking at the two options that Hannibal probably considered at the start of the war. His two speculated options were to fight a defensive war in Spain or to try and invade Italy itself.

When Hannibal left Spain on his long march to Italy he left behind a strong base of operations that had been the logistical center of his military and the home of many of the troops serving in his army.[83] Instead of fighting on his home ground he opted to invade Italy. This cut Hannibal off from his primary supply lines in Spain and North Africa. This has raised questions about the practicality of his plan. However, many of these apprehensions seem to stem from a common misperception of how an ancient army operated and provided the supplies it needed to continue functioning. Modern day scholars emphasize how Hannibal was cut off from his supply lines, his apparent lack of

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[83] Richard Miles, *Carthage Must be Destroyed: The Rise and Fall of an Ancient Civilization*, (New York: Viking Penguin, 2011), 229.

siege equipment, or his failure to march on Rome following the battle of Cannae as reasons for why Hannibal failed.[84] The idea that logistics played a role in the downfall of Hannibal may be true but I, and several other scholars, want to point out that they may have been for drastically different reasons than many have asserted.[85]

The daily needs of any army are considerable especially when trying to supply armies consisting of tens of thousands of men. Donald Engel and John F. Shean wrote about ancient armies trying to calculate what the logistics of these militaries would look like. Engel wrote about the Alexander's Macedonian army, and Shean has converted the calculations to Hannibal's army due to the large similarities between the two armies.[86] They concluded that a "soldier required a minimum of 3 lbs. of grain and 2 qts. of water per day in order to maintain fighting effectiveness. A cavalry horse or a pack-animal (either a mule, horse, or donkey) would have similar nutritional requirements, namely 10 lbs of forage (straw or chaff), 10 lbs. of grain and 8 gallons of water per day."[87] These estimates can provide a reasonable answer when asking how much food Hannibal's army would need in order to continue the war. We also have some indication of the numbers of combatants that Hannibal had in his army at given points in times thanks to the works of Livy and Polybius but those accounts do not accurately depict the size of the army.

Ancient armies usually had a significant amount of non-combatants, commonly known as camp followers that would accompany the army to perform various services that the soldiers may have needed. These could include the family of the soldiers,

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[84] Shean, 159-187.
[85] Shean, 165-168.
[86] Shean, 167.
[87] Shean, 168.

servants, religious figures, and prostitutes.[88] It is uncertain what Hannibal's policy was on these camp followers but some accounts may indicate that families did not make the journey to Italy with the army due to the fact that Hannibal allowed his Spanish soldiers to visit their families before the march.[89] Engel concluded that a ratio of about one camp follower to every three soldiers was a reliable estimate for Alexander the Great's army.[90] For the lack of a better estimate I will use this ratio briefly to try and explain the logistical factors that Hannibal was facing.

The pack animals also pose a unique challenge to identify not only what Hannibal was using to transport his supplies but how many of them did Hannibal have at his disposal. Four common animals used to carry supplies were oxen, horses, donkeys, and mules.[91] Due to the rough terrain that Hannibal was often forced to go through, such as the Alps, it seems highly unlikely that Hannibal would have been able to use oxen or wagons extensively in his supply train.[92] They are also considerably slower than their counterparts, which would have hindered Hannibal's ability to remain mobile. Hannibal also needed to maintain a significant portion of cavalry in his army because many of his tactics relied on his cavalry forces. This means that horses would be unlikely candidates for beasts of burden except in extreme circumstances to augment the numbers.[93] The horses would more likely be sent to replace the mounts of soldiers who had lost horses in combat or as secondary mounts for messengers. This leaves us with either mules or

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[88] Shean, 169.
[89] Livy 21.21.3-9.
[90] Shean, 169.
[91] Shean, 169.
[92] Shean, 170.
[93] Shean, 170.

donkeys to populate the majority of the supply train of Hannibal's ancient army. A donkey could carry about 200 pounds of supplies, a mule about 300 pounds, and a horse around 400 pounds.[94] These animals would need to carry their own food as well as other critical supplies such as tools, medical supplies and tents.[95] Hannibal heavily restricted the amount of heavy equipment that he brought on the march because his army needed to cross harsh terrain at the beginning of the march such as crossing the Alps. Keeping in mind Hannibal's restrictions on heavy equipment it seems plausible that Engel's minimal ratio of one animal for every 50 men can be used to develop a rough estimate for these supplies.[96] Based on these numbers if Hannibal had an army of around 38,000 infantry and 8000 cavalry he would have around 61,000 people in his camp, 8000 horses, and 1220 pack animals for non-foodstuffs. The total weight in food for an army this size would be around 275,200 lbs. of rations per day, which would require an additional 1,448 pack animals to carry food for a single day and 14,818 pack animals to be able to carry enough rations for a week.[97] To maintain an army and a supply train of this size would be incredibly difficult for Hannibal. In Italy he did not have any allies to draw support from and he did not possess a seaport that would allow outside support. However, it remains to be seen if Hannibal would have been better off in Spain or in Italy.

Since the end of the first Punic War the Carthaginians had been expanding their control over the Iberian Peninsula. Under the command of Hamilcar Barca they had conquered significant portions of southern and central Spain, subjugating the various

[94] Shean, 170.
[95] Shean, 171.
[96] Shean, 171.
[97] Shean, 172.

tribes that lived there.[98] These new holdings brought about a revival of Carthaginian

power and wealth.[99] Not only was Spain easily able to support large armies agriculturally

it also had a large number of silver and gold deposits that could fund a large war. There

are no records of how much precious metal the Carthaginians mined but at one point

Rome had over 40,000 slaves working the mines and producing over 25,000 *drachmae*[100]

a day.[101] Spain was an easily defensible region because Hannibal would have local

support and knowledge of the terrain. Hannibal would have had easy access to food and

supplies through the various cities that were firmly under Carthaginian control. Through

these towns Hannibal would easily be able to supply food, weapons, medical supplies,

and other equipment that he would need for a campaign.

     Hannibal would not only be able to keep his army well supplied but he would also

be able to have a stable base of manpower for the war. Spain was an ideal place to recruit

men for the Punic army because of how Carthage employed troops. Carthage had been

founded as a maritime empire and therefore the vast majority of Carthaginian citizens

served in the navy rather than the army. Due to this distinction the Carthaginian army

heavily relied on mercenaries and foreign troops to fill the ranks of its armies.[102] He

would have had a steady stream of manpower reserves that he could recruit from the local

Celtiberian tribes for the duration of the war. At the start of his campaign he had a

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98 Livy 21.2.1-7.
99 Miles, 225.
100 The *drachma was* an ancient Greek denomination. The value of the coin is hard to
calculate in todays terms but it is said by sources to be equivalent to a skilled
laborers daily wage.
101 Polybius 34.9.8-11
102 J.F. Lazenby, Hannibal's War: A Military History of the Second Punic War,
(Warminster: Aris and Phillips LTD, 1978), 8.

massive army of over 90,000 foot soldiers, 12,000 cavalry, and 37 elephants, but following the invasion of Italy, his army would never again reach these kind of numbers.[103] Had Hannibal remained in Spain, his ability to resupply and recruit manpower would be vastly superior to the resources he could count on in Italy. This would have greatly improved Hannibal's chances at defeating invading Roman armies and keeping his army intact.

However, such a strategy would also have serious drawbacks for Hannibal's goals. By staying in his own territory Hannibal would be trapped into fighting a defensive war. He would be forced to defend his land and resources against attacks by the Roman army and would be limited on what kind of war he could conduct. There can be two problems with a defensive war. Hannibal was an excellent tactical field commander that relied on mobility and ambushes to engage the Roman army. If he were forced to defend towns or cities from a siege than he would be at a disadvantage. Siege warfare would turn the war into a battle of resources rather than tactics. If Rome had more manpower and resources to continue a long siege than the Carthaginians had to defend, the in time the Romans would starve them out in time. Hannibal also held a precarious grip on the tribes north of the Ebro River since he had just recently conquered them. With a Roman invasion these newly conquered tribes could have easily switch sides and become a dangerous threat by supplying even more manpower to the Roman war machine. Rome had proven time and time again to be able to recruit huge numbers of troops for its wars. They already had already raised two massive armies to invade Africa and Spain at the outset of the war. At the height of the conflict they had armies in Spain, Italy, Greece,

[103] Livy, 21.23.1-2.

and North Africa. Carthage on the other hand did not have quite the same access to manpower resources even in Spain. They were only able to field two effective armies in Italy and Spain during the war. With the invasion of North Africa they were forced to recall Hannibal's army in Italy to deal with the threat.

His own land, and therefore the base for his food supply, would also be under attack by Rome and vulnerable. As the Roman army took cities, foraged for food, or destroyed land the ability of the Carthaginians to supply their troops would diminish. Rome on the other hand would still be able to supply their armies easily from Italy and simply take what they needed from the Carthaginian territories.

The case that the invasion of Italy was a mistake for logistical reasons can be made. However, it is not for the usual reasons that many historians have made. As I have already shown it takes tremendous effort to supply and feed an army of that size. By invading Italy it could have been assumed that Rome would have pulled back its forces to defend Italy from the coming invasion. This would have left supply routes open for Hannibal to receive support from his bases in Spain either through the land route over the Alps or possibly by sea.[104] With supply routes open Hannibal would have had a much easier time maintaining his army during his campaign. Based on what I have concluded as Hannibal's strategy it is likely that Hannibal also expected to receive logistical support from the Gauls, who did contribute significantly, and the allies that he hoped to detach from Rome. With supply routes open and help from the allies, he hoped would join him; Hannibal would have solved his logistical problems in a quick and efficient manner. However the Gauls efforts were halfhearted at times, the allies did not desert in the

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[104] Shean, 174.

numbers necessary for his plan, and the Roman invasion of Spain cut Hannibal off from any significant support from his territories. Despite this, the idea that Hannibal needed a large supply train to supply the logistical needs of his army is false nor would it be practical. Many ancient armies did not rely on a large supply train and in many cases it would be impossible to fully provision the troops through one. For large armies, such as Hannibal's, the number of pack animals that they would need to fully supply the army was staggering. Most of the time these armies would never have near enough pack animals to hold enough food for any extended period of time. The more animals that they had to hold supplies also meant that the army would need even more supplies to feed the animals themselves. Instead it is more likely that they foraged for food from the surrounding countryside and stole or paid for what they needed from the locals.[105] Hannibal's route during his campaign in Italy clearly shows that the army usually traveled through areas that were very fertile and known for food production. Hannibal mostly maneuvered along the coastal plains, which were the biggest places of agricultural production in Italy. He has a key interest in the Campania region as well because Campania was the largest producer of cereal crops in Italy at the time.

It has been hypothesized that one of Hannibal's greatest failures was that he was unable to bring siege equipment with him on the campaign, and this made it impossible for him to capture heavily fortified towns but this notion is also false.[106] The ability to manufacture siege equipment is not an impossible task for any army given that the

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[105] Shean, 174
[106] Shean, 163.

material for its construction is available.[107] Wood and other materials needed for the construction of siege equipment was easily accessible for Hannibal and in several cases the sources state that he did employ them on several occasions. For example, during the siege of Locri, Hannibal had his men build ladders and other siege equipment on site in order to assault the city.[108]

Hannibal also needed to maintain a steady supply of manpower to replenish the troops that he lost in combat against Rome. If supply routes remained open between Hannibal and Spain he would be able to draw on the vast manpower reserves of his power base. He also heavily recruited from Gallic tribes that supported him especially those tribes that inhabited Cisalpine Gaul. When Hannibal was successful in detaching allies from Rome he could draw from their manpower reserves as well. With all of these places to supply his army with fresh recruits Hannibal may have been very confident in his success during the Second Punic war.

In retrospect an invasion of Italy could have had a severe impact on the ability of Rome to supply its own troops. If Hannibal's strategy had worked, he would have directly damaged Rome's ability to raise troops, equip them for combat, feed them, and even pay them simply by detaching allies from Rome.

Hannibal's plan was defeated before it even began through a series of devastating setbacks. Rome had sought to field two massive armies to invade Spain and Africa. With Hannibal in Italy, the Senate called back the army that had been assembled for Africa to defend Italy and the army intended for Spain went as planned to invade the Iberian

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[107] Shean, 164-165.
[108] Livy, 29.7.4-6.

Peninsula.[109] This effectively cut Hannibal of from any logistical support that he had

been expecting from Spain. The Gauls also proved to be disappointing as many of the

tribes were hesitant about supporting him against Rome. Some were even bold enough to

attack him as he passed through their territory. On his march through the Alps, Hannibal

came under attack multiple times, including a rather large attack that occurred in a

narrow defile. During this attack Hannibal not only lost a significant amount of troops but

he also lost a large number of pack animals and supplies.[110] Although the Gallic tribes

would be one of his main sources of supplies and manpower they did not contribute as

much as Hannibal had hoped. The allies also proved to be more loyal to Rome than he

had first believed. Despite numerous victories very few would end up joining his cause.

With these setbacks plaguing Hannibal's plan it was up to him and the army to procure

what they needed from the countryside.

Although foraging for food is a possible way to maintain an army it is never an

ideal situation to rely only on foraging for a large invading army. Without some sort of

consistent supply lines to support the army Hannibal would have been forced to strip

regions bare of their supplies to feed his large force. With this would come the need for

Hannibal to remain mobile and continuously moving from region to region in order to

logistically supply the army.[111] By doing this he would have been forced to make several

tactical sacrifices to maintain a highly mobile army. This seems to be the major factor

with two glaring problems with Hannibal's campaigns including his minor use of siege

weapons during his ten-year war and his decision not to march on Rome following the

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[109] Livy, 21.44.7-8
[110] Polybius, 3.52.8 – 3.53.10
[111] Shean, 179.

Battle of Cannae. To maintain mobility Hannibal would be unable to continue to transport heavy siege equipment over his long campaign. Any siege equipment would have to be built on an ad hoc basis if Hannibal intended to lay siege to a city, and he did on several occasions including the construction of a siege tower during the siege of Cumae.[112] It also would be incredibly difficult for Hannibal to engage in the siege of a city, even Rome, despite his victory at Cannae. The distance between Cannae and Rome is almost 250 miles and would take about two weeks to reach Rome if the army could maintain a pace of 20 miles per day.[113] Even this speed would be unlikely given the slower elements of the army, such as pack animals and camp followers, as well as the high probability of Roman forces delaying the army.[114] This would also mean that the army's foraging capabilities would be drastically reduced if they tried to force march to Rome. Either they would show up without proper supplies to siege the city or the army would take too long, allowing Rome to prepare itself for a siege. A siege of a large city could last months under certain circumstances. During the siege Hannibal would have to rely on forage from the surrounding area but if his army was static for a long period of time such as a siege they would soon deplete the resources surrounding the city. And this assumes that the defenders had not already taken or destroyed the supplies in the nearby vicinity. It seems that Hannibal would be hard pressed to conduct any long-term siege of a city without a steady source of food and supplies, which could explain his decision not to attack Rome.

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[112] Livy 23.37.2-3
[113] Shean, 166.
[114] Shean, 166.

Hannibal also could not replenish his troops very effectively in his invasion of Italy. With his pool of recruits cut off in Spain and the allies proving to be far more reluctant to join Carthage Hannibal was unable to maintain the number of men he had at the start of the war. His main source of manpower would come from Gallic tribes and the occasional rebellious ally of Rome. This severely hampered his ability to conduct an effective war as he could not afford to lose too many of his troops in any engagement while Rome could continue to field large armies even after sustaining what appears to be crippling numbers of casualties.

As I discussed in the last chapter, Hannibal was unsuccessful in cutting off many allies from Rome. Not only was he unable to secure their help logistically for his own purposes but also he could not stop them from supplying Rome with the support they needed to maintain the Roman legions. Despite his own foraging efforts on the Italian Peninsula it seems to have little to no impact on Rome's logistical support. They continued to field large armies capable of exceeding or at least rivaling Hannibal's own and they could have multiple armies at any given time as seen by the Roman army that operated in Spain for the duration of the war. During the dictatorship of Fabius, Hannibal even attempted to show his superiority and scare Rome's allies into joining him by ravaging the countryside while the Romans did nothing to stop him. This also had little to no effect on the Roman war effort because most of the allies remained loyal to Rome. Therefore the Roman war machine continued to thunder on with the support of its allies.

This evidence seems to point to my assertion that Hannibal did have a grand strategy. Hannibal's strategy for the Second Punic War was to win the war by breaking the system of alliances that protected Rome. Rather than an unplanned assault of Rome,

Hannibal seems to have come up with a methodical way of trying to deal with the might of Rome. He could not defeat Rome if he did not break the allies from Rome and he could not accomplish this without directly invading Italy. If Italy were threatened he would free up his own power base to continue the war effort and supply his forces. In the short term he could remain mobile and forage for the supplies to maintain his army. He also did not need siege equipment for his short-term goals if he planned to win tactical field victories in order to win over the Roman allies. When he had won over enough of the Roman allies he would be able to supply his army and deny the same support to the Roman forces. Hannibal would then be able to build the necessary siege equipment and would not be restricted to a mobile war dependent on foraging. Then it would have only been a matter of time before Rome either fell or capitulated to Carthage.

The glaring problem with this hypothesis is that this plan never came to fruition. It seems unlikely that a man so adept at reading his opponents in warfare was so wrong in reading the sentiment of the allies so much so that he campaigned in Italy for ten years and was unable to garner enough support.

The logistical problems that Hannibal faced in the Second Punic War drastically dictated the way that Hannibal would be forced to fight and would be a key factor in his inability to defeat Rome. Despite a seemingly methodical plan for the destruction of Rome, Hannibal was unable to meet his objective of destroying the system of alliances that protected Rome. Contrary to many scholars the reasons that the logistics played a role was not because Hannibal did not have siege equipment or that he failed to march on Rome. Logistics played the deciding factor because, although the plan was methodical and seemingly sound, it relied on one deciding factor that was the defection of Rome's

allies to Carthage. Without their support Hannibal could only focus on completing his short-term logistical problems and this dictated the tempo that he could fight his war. Despite his brilliance for tactical maneuvers he could not break away from fighting a war of mobility for risk of losing the war. He also could not capitalize on his successes even if he wanted to, because logistically he could not sustain what needed to be done, the siege and sacking of Rome.

Chapter 4: Hannibal's Troop Movements

I have asserted in this paper that Hannibal Barca did have a grand strategy when he embarked on the Second Punic War. Hannibal wanted to win tactical victories that would allow him to coerce Rome's allies into deserting Rome. By destroying the power base that Rome had built itself on he would finally bring down Rome and Carthage would have its revenge for the first Punic War. In this chapter I will be reviewing the movements of Hannibal's armies throughout his campaign in Italy to see if there is either an indication of his strategy or a lack thereof. Hannibal's movements before he gained Italian allies, after he gained some measure of allied support, and the time near the end of his campaign seems to indicate that at the outset of the war Hannibal had a clear strategy, but as the war continued, he may have become unable to achieve this strategy.

For the purposes of continuity I have decided to use one primary source with as little reference to other primary sources as possible. Both Livy and Polybius provide a long account on where Hannibal is during the Second Punic War. However, to use both sources to review Hannibal's movements could cause discrepancies due to minor difference. In mapping out Hannibal's movements I used Livy's histories to locate the places that Hannibal went to during his campaigns. By using Livy I hope to gain a relatively accurate account on where Hannibal's moves and the possible reasons for his movements.

Before I show my analysis of Hannibal's movements it would seem prudent to give a brief description of the areas that Hannibal would frequent during the Second Punic War. This will also provide insight into the possible reasons that Hannibal may

have chosen to enter certain regions and not others. The first area that Hannibal entered into after crossing the Alps was Cisalpine Gaul, located in northern Italy. Gallic tribes who had been recently subjugated by Rome after the First Punic War populated Cisalpine Gaul. This area, although not as developed as other regions, was very fertile particularly in the Po river valley region. The Po River ended in a delta that emptied into the Adriatic Sea. These areas were very fertile due to the large silt deposits that would come down from the Alps.[115] This region could serve as a good base of operations for Hannibal but the Gallic tribes were notorious for being fickle in their allegiances to foreign powers.

Etruria was a region located along the west coast of central Italy and was populated by the Etruscan peoples. The Etruscans had once been a powerful rival of Rome early on in history but after a series of wars had been reduced to a position of subordination under Rome. Southern Etruria also had a decent amount of arable land that was used extensively for farming.[116] However, many parts of Etruria were located on badlands[117], which were unsuitable for farming.[118] The Apennines made life more difficult for farming but it was not impossible. In the mountain ranges there was arable land in the valleys and some may have been able to cut terraces out of the hillside.[119] In other the upper regions the inhabitants relied on a more pastoral lifestyle that included the raising of livestock. Animals like sheep, goats, and cattle could be raised in the rugged

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[115] A.T. Grove and Oliver Rackham. *The Nature of Mediterranean Europe: An Ecological History.* (London: Yale University Press, 2003), 340-341.
[116] Flower, 214-215.
[117] Badlands are characterized by harsh terrain. They consist of chasms, jagged cliffs, steep ridges, and plateaus making it a difficult to inhabit. Most are in arid areas though some have been known to have vegetation.
[118] A.T. Grove, 278-279.
[119] Fernand Braudel, *The Mediteranean World in the Age of Philip II*, (Berkely: University of California Press, 1995), 42.

conditions of the mountains.[120] The mountains also contained an abundance of natural resources such as timber, stone, and other resources.[121] However, the Etruscans were known for having abundant mineral resources and advanced skill with metallurgy.

The region of Umbria is located in central Italy and was named after the Umbri tribe that had populated the area. These tribes had been defeated and integrated into the Roman system earlier than many of the other regions due to their close proximity with Rome. This region was not specifically know for fertile lands and was not one of the major coastal plains, where many of the most fertile lands were, but they did have some measure of agriculture. The fertile lands that Umbria did have were usually nearby the rivers that came down from the Apennines Mountains and carried fertile silt along with them.[122]

The Samnium region was located in central and southern Italy, mainly along the Apennines Mountains. These mountain tribes had several wars with Rome before being defeated and integrated into the Roman system. Due to their location in the mountains in Italy, the land they inhabited was not suited for farming.[123] Instead, they had more of a pastoral society and raised livestock. Like the Etruscans, they raised goats, sheep, and cattle in the rugged mountain terrain.

Apulia was located along the eastern and southern coasts of southern Italy. Greek peoples who had colonized the area before the rise of Roman regional hegemony inhabited the region. These colonists had fought against Rome in several recent wars

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[120] Braudel, 42.
[121] A.T. Grove, 338-339.
[122] A.T. Grove, 338-339.
[123] Flower, 217-218.

before being forced to submit to Roman authority. The region was not known for abundant agricultural production although there certainly were fertile regions along the coastal plains. They typically raised cereal crops such as wheat and barley. The area was also known for raising livestock and horses in the more mountainous regions.[124]

Campania was a region located on the western coast of southern Italy. It was inhabited by a series of people groups including Greeks, native Italians, and other tribes that had become known as the Campanian peoples. The region was known for its abundant agricultural production in grains as well as fertile pasturelands.[125] It became a important region in the Roman system due to its ability to produce vast quantities of food. They grew large quantities of like barley, wheat, and other types of cereal crops. Pliny the Elder describes Campania in his Natural History as being incredibly fertile. He also mentions that there are large amounts of livestock and an abundance of rivers and water.[126] Campania gained influence as they were increasingly relied upon to supply foodstuffs to the people of Italy.

Latium was located in central Italy and was the main power base of Rome. Rome and the other Latin cities had been integrated long before any other areas and therefore had been mainly romanized by this point. Rome itself was located in Latium along the Tiber River. The Tiber river and its delta had fertile and arable land but it is clear that this amount of land was insufficient to even provide for the Rome because city soon was forced to depend on food imports from places like Campania and Sicily, later Africa and Egypt would serve as the grain basket of Rome. The rest of Latium also had some

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124 Flower, 217-218
125 Flower, 214-215.
126 Pliny the Elder. *Natural History*. (London: Folio Society, 2012.), 3.5.

farmlands that it could count on for agricultural production.[127] Latium began to focus on

the production of luxury goods such as olive oil, wine, and other agricultural products

that were not able to sustain a large population. However, the ecology of Latium was

very diverse and included both arable and non-arable regions.[128]

The Brutii lands were located in the most southern extremity of Italy and were

inhabited by a mixed group of peoples who became known as the Bruttians. They did not

have many resources in the region but they did command a geographically important

position with their vast coastline and proximity to Sicily. Sicily was also one of the great

producers of cereal grains that Rome relied on to feed its population.

These maps show where Hannibal moved during his long campaign in Italy and it

is possible to glean valuable information by cataloging where he goes. However, his

reasons for movements are also critical to understanding whether or not Hannibal had a

grand strategy. I have decided to focus on three reasons that Hannibal moved his army.

The reasons that he moved his army are based on military necessity, logistical necessity,

and movements that advanced his overall strategy for the campaign. Hannibal had a

smaller and yet more mobile army that he used to devastating effect on the Roman army.

His ability to gain victories on the field often directly stemmed from his ability to use

terrain to his advantage. He could not afford to lose large numbers of troops in battles he

was not certain he could win. Therefore he often had to make movements that would not

have been ideal to outmaneuver or escape from the Roman army.

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[127] Flower, 214-215.
[128] Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell. *The corrupting sea: a study of Mediterranean history*. (Oxford: Blackwell Publisers, 2000), 59-61.

As I stated in chapter 3, it would have been nearly impossible to rely entirely on a baggage train to supply the needs of his soldiers. Therefore some of his movements must have been based on how he would be able to keep his troops supplied in order to continue the war against Rome. He would need to move from region to region in order to ensure that he did not leave his army in an area that had already been completely stripped for two critical reasons. In the short term the army would run out of food if they stayed in one region while relying mainly on foraging. In the long term if he continued to devastate one area he would completely destroy that regions ability to produce goods and supplies as well as alienating the people that he is trying to recruit to his cause. This would have rendered the region useless to him and his goals.

Lastly, I would contend that the other movements he made were based on his continued strategy to recruit allies from Rome. When Hannibal saw an indication that an ally was interested in switching sides he often moved quickly to receive their surrender. After recruiting allies he would need to stay nearby to defend them from Rome's retaliation. This inevitably tied Hannibal down in particular regions and limited the range that Hannibal could move in order to gain more allies. I think that by looking at the movements of Hannibal and the probable reasons for these movements, they indicate that Hannibal did have a strategy to defeat Rome.

The movements of Hannibal follow a series of patterns and the description given by ancient historian sheds light on to the purposes of the maneuvers. The patterns exist not only from year to year, but it is curious that drastic changes in movement occur at three stages during the campaign. These stages are the outset of the war prior to the Cannae, the several years following Cannae, and the last years of the war following the

fall of Capua to the Romans. At the outset of the War, Hannibal had no allies in Italy

though he could count on some assistance by the Gallic tribes of Cisalpine Gaul who had

already tried to establish relations with Carthage prior to the war. In figure 1, his

movements consisted primarily on locating food and military actions against the legions

sent after him. Livy makes a point to note that Hannibal hit various Roman grain depots

and supply magazine at the villages of Clastidum, Placentia, and Vietumulae. Livy writes

that Hannibal was worried following the Battle of the Ticinius "as he advanced through

hostile territory without having anywhere arranged beforehand for supplies. In the village

of Clastidum the Romans had got together a great quantity of corn. Thither Hannibal

dispatched some soldiers who were making preparations to assault the place."[129]

Hannibal deliberately moved his army to Clastidum to gain supplies for his men.

Evidence that his army moved to forage in figure one comes when Hannibal began to

plunder lands around the city of Arretium. Livy writes that this "district was one of the

most fertile in Italy, for the Etruscan plains between Faesulae and Arretium abound in

corn and flocks and all sorts of provisions".[130] We also see depictions of movements

based on military necessity as when Hannibal's armies went through the marshes

surrounding the Arno river to bypass the Roman armies blocking the roads.[131] In figure

one Hannibal's army takes a very clear route south and skirts around territories like

Umbria and Latium that were the main power base of the Roman state. Instead he stayed

in territories like Cisalpine Gaul, Samnium, Etruria, Campania and Apulia where Rome

has a weaker grip. He also showed a keen interest in the Campania region in particular

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[129] Livy 21.45-47
[130] Livy 22.2-3
[131] Livy 22.2-3

218-217 BC

Figure 1

Figure 1. 218 BC
1. Hannibal enters Italy through the Alps[132]
2. Hannibal engages the Consul Scipio at the Battle of the Ticinius river. He defeats Scipio and injures him during the course of the battle forcing Scipio to join forces with his co-consul Sempronus Longus.[133]
3. Hannibal takes the village of Clastitium. It served as a granary and the Romans had stockpiled large amounts of corn that the Carthaginians took.[134]
4. The consul Longus engages Hannibal at the Battle of the Trebia River. They are defeated and forced to retreat.[135]
5. After defeating the Roman army Hannibal moved to secure supplies by attacking the supply magazines in Placentia and Vietumulae. Despite stout resistance, these magazines are captured by Hannibal and provide the necessary supplies for his army.[136]

217 BC
6. Hannibal attempts to cross the Apennines mountains and enter Etruria. However, bad weather stalls his army and causes chaos in his soldiers.[137]
7. Hannibal returns to Placentia to rest his army after the storm. He ends up in small engagements with the remnants of consul Longus' army[138]
8. Hannibal marches through the marshes around the Arno river to avoid Roman forces that were trying to trap him. He loses men, baggage, and one of his eyes during the trek but successfully eludes the Roman forces.[139]
9. After exiting the marshes he begins to head towards the city of Arretium. He then begins to forage and plunder the lands of Etruria between the towns of Faesulae and Arr. These lands are said, by Livy, to be one of the most abundant districts in Italy and have large amounts of corn, livestock, and other provisions that Hannibal's army would need.[140]
10. Passes through the are surrounding the city of Arretium
11. He also pillages the lands between the town of Cortana and Lake Trasumennus.
12. Consul Flaminius tries to catch Hannibal near Lake Trasummennus but is ambushed and defeated by Hannibal.[141]
13. Hannibal enters the district of Umbria and captures a unit of 4,000 cavalry.[142]

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132 Livy 21.37.5-9
133 Livy 21.45-47
134 Livy 21.48.8-10
135 Livy 21.54-56
136 Livy 21.57.5-14
137 Livy 21.58.1-11
138 Livy 21.59.1-10
139 Livy 22.2-3
140 Livy 22.3.1-2
141 Livy 22.4-6
142 Livy 22.8.1-3

14. Hannibal continues to march through Umbria, pillaging and foraging as he goes. He goes as far as the town of Spoletium but is repulsed when he attempts to take the town.[143]
15. Hannibal enters Picentine territory and again begins to forage and pillage. This land is said by Livy to be very fertile and abounding in supplies.[144]
16. Hannibal continues to forage and pillage around the town of Praetution and the Habrian fields.[145]
17. The lands of the Morsi, Marrucini, and the Paeligini are also attacked.[146]
18. His raiding parties get as far south as Arpi and Luceria in Apulia.[147]
19. Hannibal enters the lands of the Hirpini.
20. Hannibal leaves the lands of the Hirpini and heads into the Samnium territory where he ravages Beneventum and captures the city Telesia.[148]
21. Hannibal asks to be taken to Casinum but is accidently directed by the towns of Allifae, Caiatia, and Cales to the city of Casilinum by a guide who misunderstood his intention.[149]
22. He ravages the Falernian countryside and attacks as far as the town of Sinuessa.[150]
23. Hannibal sets up camp beside the Volturnus River.[151]
24. Hannibal escapes a trap set by the Dictator Fabius and enters the district of Allifae.[152]
25. Hannibal again outmaneuvers Fabius and enters the lands of the Paeligni where he continues to pillage the countryside.[153]
26. He marches to Apulia and takes the town of Geronium that had been abandoned by its inhabitants.[154]

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[143] Livy 22.9.1-4.
[144] Livy 22.9.4-5
[145] Livy 22.9.5
[146] Livy 22.9.5
[147] Livy 22.9.5
[148] Livy 22.13.1
[149] Livy 22.13.5-9
[150] Livy 22.13.9-11
[151] Livy 22.14.1
[152] Livy 22.17.7
[153] Livy 22.18.5-6
[154] Livy 22.18.6-9

due to its vast agricultural capabilities. He continued his movement in southern Italy and decided to winter his army in Apulia. When spring came he marched his army to the village of Cannae and annihilated the armies of Rome thus changing the game altogether.

After Cannae there is a curious shift in the movements of Hannibal's army as his grand strategy begins to make its appearance. He received word that several towns in Samnium would like to rebel against Rome and he immediately marched to accept their surrender and support. On of these first rebelling allies was the town of Compsa that can be seen in figure 2.[155] The major Campanian city of Capua also rebelled against Rome and was eager to join Hannibal along with several Campanian towns and cities. As the major agricultural center in southern Italy this acquisition becomes vital to Hannibal's war effort. Campania also had a coastline with several port cities that were of great interest to Hannibal. He quickly sought to reestablish some measure of supply lines in figures 2 and 3 as he continued to attack seaports in Campania like Neapolis.[156] Capturing a port city would allow him to possibly gain access to overseas supply lines. However, we see a curious lack of movement with the sole intent on securing supplies for the army in figures 2 and 3. This can most likely be attested to the rebelling allies supplying Hannibal's army with the food and other equipment that he needed to continue the war. His warfare also changes drastically as we see a sharp decline of pitched battle and an increase in siege warfare as Hannibal tried to force the remaining loyal towns in

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[155] Livy 23.1.1-4
[156] Livy 23.1.6-10

Figure 2

Figure 2. 216 BC
1. Hannibal wintered in Apulia at the town of Geronium.
2. The consuls Paulus and Varro move to gain a decisive victory of Hannibal near the town of Cannae. However, Hannibal annihilates the Roman legions at Cannae leaving Rome in a state of Panic. [157]
3. Stays around the city of Canusium where the defeated Roman army has retreated.[158]
4. Hannibal moves into Samnium territory assurances of new alliances with Samnite towns. The town of Compsa surrenders and allies itself with Hannibal.[159]
5. Hannibal enters Campania with hopes of capturing Neopolis, a seaport that would potentially give him access to supply lines with Carthage. He decides not to assault the city after seeing the walls.[160]
6. Heads towards Capua after receiving promises of surrender and alliances. They surrender to Hannibal and is the first major city to ally itself with Hannibal.[161]
7. Hannibal enters the territory of the Nola hoping to turn the town to his cause but he is thwarted when Roman reinforcements enter the town.[162]
8. He again visits the area around Neapolis in hopes of capturing it but again leaves without attempting to attack the port.[163]
9. Sacks the city of Nuceria but shows mercy to the inhabitants in hopes of currying favor with the locals.[164]
10. Attempts to capture Nola where the inhabitants seem to want to switch sides. The Roman forces stationed in the city hold Hannibal back and he is ultimatly unable to take Nola.[165]
11. Hannibal attacks the city of Acerrae after attempts to coerce them fail. The citizens end up fleeing the city in the middle of the night due to the lack of resources and Hannibal takes the city.[166]
12. Hannibal begins the siege of Casilinum but is unable to take the city before winter.[167]
13. Hannibal makes winter quarters in Capua but leaves troops to continue the siege of Casilinum.[168]

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[157] Livy 22.44-50
[158] Livy 22.50.10-12
[159] Livy 23.1.1-4
[160] Livy 23.1.6-10
[161] Livy 23.2-10
[162] Livy 23.14.10-13
[163] Livy 23.15.1-2
[164] Livy 23.15.2-4
[165] Livy 23.16.1-16
[166] Livy 23.17.1-6
[167] Livy 23.17-18
[168] Livy 23.18.9-16

215 BC

Figure 3

Figure 3. 215 BC

1. After the winter passes Hannibal leaves Capua and returns to Casilinum
2. Casilinum falls to Hannibal after a prolonged siege.[169]
3. Mount Tifata
4. Moves to Hamae to meet up with some allied recruits only to find that they had all been killed,[170]
5. Hannibal moves his army back to Mount Tifata to assess the situation.[171]
6. Moves to attack the port city of Cumae because he had been unable to capture Neopolis. He fails to capture the city despite several attempts to storm the city.[172]
7. Moves back to Mount Tifata after the defeat at Cumae to plan his next moves.[173]
8. Attempts to take the city of Nola again but is thwarted by the Roman and local garrison.[174]
9. Travels to Apulia and establishes winter quarters near the city of Arpi.[175]

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[169] Livy 23,19.1-18
[170] Livy 23.36.1-5
[171] Livy 23.36.6
[172] Livy 23.36-37
[173] Livy 23.37.9
[174] Livy 23.42-46
[175] Livy 23.46.9

southern Italy to surrender like Neapolis, Nola, and Casilinum.[176] In figures four and five

Hannibal received indications that the major city of Tarentum in Apulia would likely

rebel if he were to go to the city. He spent two years remaining near the city in hopes that

it would join him and during this time there is another sharp increase in the amount of

foraging operations that occurred as he was forced to stay in the region before it has

switched sides.[177] Then Hannibal continued operations in Apulia, Campania, and Brutii

lands as he attempted to take over smaller cities and beat back Roman incursions. In

figures 2 through 6 he stayed in close proximity to his allies as he continues to defend

them. In figure 7 after Capua came under siege by Roman forces, Hannibal marched back

to Campania to try and lift the siege to no avail and then made a feint to attack Rome

hoping to relieve the siege.[178] After failing to lift the siege of Capua Hannibal continued

operations in Campania and southern Italy until Capua falls marking the end of the

second pattern of movements.

The third stage is a desperate attempt to stave off the inevitable defeat of

Hannibal's forces in Italy. Figures nine through twelve show that Hannibal is relegated to

the Brutti regions and Apulia as he fought near Tarentum and outlying cities in an

attempt to make up for the loss of Capua and Campania. He never leaves these two

regions as Roman forces continually attack him. However, he is unable to do beat back

the Roman army and eventually loses Apulia and Tarentum to Roman treachery.[179] With

Brutii regions as his only remaining outpost of allies he took the city of Croton but this

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176 Livy 23.17-18
177 Livy 25.1.1-3
178 Livy 26.7-9
179 Livy 27.15-16

214 BC

Figure 4

Figure 4. 214 BC

1. Leaves his winter quarters at Arpi towards Capua
2. Camps on Mount Tifata in order to engage the Roman forces in Campania.[180]
3. Moves to Lake Avernus on his way to attack Puteoli and is met by several young Tarentine nobleman who ask him to come to Tarentum and take the city.
4. Moves to Puteoli as planned but are unable to surprise or defeat the Roman garrison.[181]
5. Moves to the land around Neopolis and ravages the countryside.[182]
6. Moves to Nola after being promised that it will surrender to him. However, the Roman consul Marcellus had anticipated the move and sent more troops to hold Nola. After brief fighting Hannibal gives up on capturing Nola.[183]
7. Moves to Tarentum after several young nobleman say that they will help Hannibal capture the city if he should come. However the city does not surrender and Hannibal leaves without attacking, fearing he might estrange his supporters if he did.[184]
8. Hannibal marches to the town of Salapia. There he forages near the town that is reported to be rich with grain.[185]

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[180] Livy 24.12.3-4
[181] Livy 24.13.7
[182] Livy 24.13.7
[183] Livy 24.17
[184] Livy 24.20.9-15
[185] Livy 24.15-16

213 BC

Figure 5

Figure 5. 213 BC

1. Leaves his winter quarters in Sallapia
2. Hannibal spends his year in the Sallentine region because he desperately wants to capture Tarentum. Several cities in the region did join Hannibal's forces.[186]

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[186] Livy 25.1.1-3

212 BC

Figure 6

Figure 6. 212 BC

1. Leaves the Sallentine region and heads north.
2. Hannibal moves to Tarentum and captures the city with help from forces inside the city. However, the citadel remains under the control of pro-Roman forces[187]
3. Moves to the region of Benevetum[188]
4. Heads to Capua to try and break the Roman forces besieging the city but neither side defeats the other as the Romans march away.[189]
5. Heads the Lucanian region where he defeats a small army of new conscripts.[190]
6. Moves to Herdonea in Apulia and defeats another small army.[191]
7. Returns to Tarentum in hopes of finally capturing the citadel but does not make any serious attempts.[192]
8. Heads to Brundisium to try and persuade the city to join his cause but ultimately fails.[193]
9. Returns to the city Tarentum for winter.

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[187] Livy 25.9-11
[188] Livy 25.18.1
[189] Livy 25.19.
[190] Livy 25.19.9-17
[191] Livy 25.21.1-10
[192] Livy 25.22.14
[193] Livy 25.22.14-15

211 BC

Figure 7

Figure 7. 211 BC

1. Leaves his winter quarters at Tarentum
2. Enters the lands of the Brutii.
3. Heads to mount Tifata to set up a military camp and assaulted the Roman fort of Galatia.[194]
4. Hannibal tries to defeat the Roman forces sieging Capua but is unable to break their grip on the city.[195]
5. Passes the town of Cales heading towards Rome in an attempt to force the Roman armies to move to stop him from attacking Rome[196].
6. Takes the Via Latina north through Suessa, Allifae, Casinum, Interamma, Aquinum Fregellae, the districts of Ferentinum, Anagnia, Lobici, mount Aligdus, Tusculum, Gabii, the pupinian district and crosses the Anio where he engages Roman forces outside of Rome.[197]
7. Hannibal crosses the river Tutua and heads to Mount Soracte in Southern Etruria.[198]
8. Moves past the town of Reate as he retreats away from Rome.
9. Passes the town of Cutilae
10. Passes the town of Amiternum
11. Hannibal heads back south towards Regium in the Brutii region abandoning Capua to its fate.[199]

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[194] Livy 26.5.1-6
[195] Livy 26.5-7
[196] Livy 26.7-9
[197] Livy 26.9-11
[198] Livy 26.11.8-10
[199] Livy 26.12.1-9

210 BC

Figure 8

Figure 8. 210 BC

1. Leaves his winter quarters in Regium
2. Heads to Herdonia where he engages Roman forces who were attacking the town where he defeats them in battle.[200]
3. Goes to Numistro where he again engages Roman forces where nether side is able to win a decisive victory and Hannibal escapes in the night.[201]
4. Engages forces near the town of Venusia where the Roman forces won a series of minor skirmishes.[202]
5. Enters the Apulian region followed by the pursuing Roman forces.[203]

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[200] Livy 27.1.6-15
[201] Livy 27.2.1-9
[202] Livy 27.2.9-11
[203] Livy 27.2.12

Figure 9

Figure 9. 209 BC

1. Leaves his winter quarters in the Apulian region.
2. Engages Roman forces near Canusium where he is defeated in a minor battle.[204]
3. Heads to Brutii territory to escape from the Roman army that he had engaged at Canusium.[205]
4. Hannibal moves to Caulonia to defeat the forces that are besieging the city.[206]
5. Hannibal races back to Tarentum in an attempt to defeat the besieging forces but he arrives too late and Tarentum falls to the Romans.[207]
6. Hannibal ambushed Roman units near the town of Metapontum with some success.[208]

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[204] Livy 27.12-14
[205] Livy 27.15.1
[206] Livy 27.15.6-8
[207] Livy 27.15-16
[208] Livy 27.16.12-16

208-207 BC

Figure 10

Figure 10. 208 BC

1. Leaves Metapontum
2. Heads to Lacinium to continue fighting the Roman army.[209]
3. Moves to the Apulian district.[210]
4. Engages Roman forces near Petelia and defeats a small Roman force.[211]
5. Heads to the town of Salapia and tries to take the town with deception but his ruse is discovered and he is defeated.[212]
6. Heads to Locri to defeat the Romans besieging the city.[213]
7. Goes into the land of the Brutii for the winter.[214]
   207 BC
8. Enters Sallentine country.[215]
9. Moves to the city of Tarentum
10. Enters Brutii territory.[216]
11. Sieges the city of Grumentum in Lucania but failed to recapture the city.[217]
12. Heads back to Brutii country after his failed siege.[218]

[209] Livy 27.25.12-14
[210] Livy 27.25.12-14
[211] Livy 27.26.5-6
[212] Livy 27.28.1-17
[213] Livy 27.28.13-17
[214] Livy 27.29.1
[215] Livy 27.40.10
[216] Livy 27.41.1
[217] Livy 27.41-42
[218] Livy 27.51.12-13

205 BC

Figure 11

Figure 11. 205 BC

1. Moves to protect the town of Locri from the Brutti region
2. Hannibal is defeated by Roman forces at Locri.

203 BC

Figure 12

Figure 12. 203 BC

1. Engages Roman forces outside the city of Croton.
2. Hannibal is recalled to Africa to face the Roman invasion.

cannot turn the tide of war in his favor. With the invasion of Africa Hannibal was called back to Africa to defend Carthage.

These movements seem to be consistent with the idea that Hannibal's plan does exist and that it is to detach the allies from Rome. Before he has any allies he conducts his movements in a particular pattern by focusing on foraging and military goals. He also avoided the regions that have a strong Roman presence instead preferring to enter regions that are more willing to betray Rome. After he gained allies, most notably Capua, there is a sharp decrease in instances of foraging and pillaging. Hannibal also seemed to be quite capable of maintaining sieges near his controlled territories. He also almost exclusively remained near his allies unless he sees an opportunity to recruit more allies like his movement to Tarentum. However, after the loss of Capua Hannibal became unable to maintain his position in Italy and was slowly pushed south causing another rise in foraging missions while he continued his attempts to gain allies. Then Hannibal was recalled to Africa to defend Carthage, which he is ultimately unable to accomplish.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

In conclusion I believe that by analyzing Hannibal's stated plan through the feasibility of the plan, the ability of the army to facilitate its own logistical support, and the armies movements through Italy that it is clear that Hannibal had a grand strategy. It also seems clear that many scholars have underestimated Hannibal's ability to conduct the war by emphasizing certain points as the reason for his defeat, such as the lack of siege equipment. Hannibal's actions and the literary sources make it very clear that he is fighting this war to defeat Rome, not Rome's allies. The sources report Hannibal as saying multiple times that his plan was to free the people's of the Italian Peninsula from Rome and with their help he would bring an end to Roman hegemony. Polybius says that "[Hannibal] distributed the Roman prisoners among the units of his army, for them to watch over, but he let all the allies return to their homes, free and unransomed. Before letting them go, he repeated his assertion that he had not come to fight the peoples of Italy, but to try to gain them freedom from Rome."[219]

To answer whether or not Hannibal had a grand strategy and if he did have a strategy what was it, I had to back track in order to prove that what the sources said about Hannibal's plans. The sources claimed that his plan was to detach the allies from Rome in order to use their power to defeat Rome. To accomplish this I looked into proving if it was possible for the plan to succeed, or at least if it would seem likely to succeed. Rome was built around a system of alliances with the other cities on the Italian Peninsula. These cities had been forced or coerced into a position of subordination by Rome after a series

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[219] Polybius, 3.77.

of wars that left Rome as the regional hegemon of Italy. However, Rome relied heavily on its allies for resources, supplies, and manpower to conduct their policies. The system of alliances seemed to be in a precarious position that, if upset, could be turned into a useful tool for the destruction of Rome rather than a hindrance. Carthage had been unable to match the resources that Rome could field during the first Punic war but it seemed a relatively straightforward task to Hannibal. If the allies were forced into a position of subordination against there will than it may have seemed logical to Hannibal that many of these allied cities would be discontent with the current situation. Thus giving him leverage that he could use to turn the allies against Rome. If he could turn them against Rome then he would gain valuable resources to be used in the destruction of Rome. On paper this plan seems very feasible but could his army function long enough to gain allied support?

In my third chapter I visited the idea on the feasibility of logistics for an army the size of Hannibal's to operate in Italy and I have also concluded that is was very feasible. Due to Hannibal's invasion of Italy he was completely cut off from his normal supply routes from Spain and Africa. He also would never be able to gather and furnish a baggage train big enough to keep his army sufficiently supplied. However, in the short run, Hannibal would not need to rely on these methods to maintain his army. Instead he could rely on foraging from the countryside or taking Roman supply depots to ensure his army was well fed. This would mean that he would have to stay mobile, moving from region to region to ensure his men didn't strip the region before they were able to get to another region. He also would be unable to carry large pieces of siege equipment, as this would hinder the mobility of his army and he could not afford to stay in place long

enough to conduct a siege. In the long run, when Hannibal had gained support from Roman allies he would be able to keep his army supplied without the need of foraging. This would allow him to divert the army's entire attention to defeating Rome, keep his army supplies, deplete Rome's supply, and would allow him to make siege weapons to then assault other cities. So the plan seems feasible both in its design and logistical capabilities. Next, I had to prove whether or not Hannibal actually acted on these plans.

Hannibal's movements were consistent with the idea that a master plan did exist and that its objective was to detach the allies from Rome. Before he has any allies he conducts his movements in a particular pattern by focusing on logistical and military necessity. He conducted a large number of foraging operations and moved tactically to engage Roman forces in advantageous positions to achieve stunning victories. He also avoided the regions that have a strong Roman presence instead preferring to enter regions that would be willing to betray Rome. After gaining allies, most notably Capua, there was a sharp decrease in reports of foraging and pillaging by the sources. Hannibal also seemed to be quite capable of maintaining sieges near his controlled territories and he does siege quite a few cities. He also almost exclusively remained near his allies unless he saw an opportunity to recruit more allies like his movement to Tarentum. However, after the loss of Capua Hannibal became unable to maintain his position in Italy and was slowly pushed south causing another rise in foraging missions while he continued his attempts to gain allies. Then Hannibal is recalled to Rome to defend Carthage against a Roman invasion, which he is ultimately unable to do.

Therefore I assert that if the sources say that Hannibal stated his plan, that the plan seems possible based on the nature of the alliance system, that the plan was

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logistically feasible, and his movements and actions are consistent with this plan than Hannibal's plan must be what was stated. Hannibal's plan during the second Punic war was to get Rome's allies to desert to his side to bring down Rome.

This study sought to prove that Hannibal had a grand strategy during the second Punic war but this leaves us with several questions concerning the larger implications of this topic. The first reason I would state is that the reasons commonly attributed to Hannibal's downfall do not quite explain the outcome of the Second Punic War. The claim that Hannibal did not have the siege equipment to take Rome that resulted in Hannibal's defeat is preposterous. Siege equipment did not need to be carried from battle to battle but could be constructed on site. There are multiple instances of Hannibal conducting sieges from Nola to Neapolis and so forth, which the sources explicitly mention towers and other siege equipment used by Hannibal that an army may need to take a city. The logistical problems that Hannibal faced were also not as dire as many have claimed. He was able to keep his army supplied by foraging or receiving aid from the allies he manages to recruit. The fact that he was able to stay in Italy for so many years also attributes itself to this fact. The idea that Rome was simply to powerful to defeat does not quite explain the outcome either. The power of Rome was directly related to the ability of Rome to keep its allies within the system. If the allies had deserted Rome they would have been defenseless. Lastly, the idea that Hannibal was unable to capitalize on his victories is also just another incomplete answer to the question. Hannibal was unable to capitalize on his victories because there simply was little to nothing to capitalize on. He managed to annihilate Roman armies in three crushing victories at Trebia, Trasimene, and Cannae yet the allies showed very little inclination to revolt. The

idea that following the battle of Cannae Hannibal could have taken Rome is impossible. At that point he had no allies or ways to supply himself other than foraging that would allow him to conduct a siege. He would be forced to lift the siege due to his own food shortages long before Rome would have needed to surrender. All of these problems are but a small portion of the reason why Hannibal and Carthage lost the Second Punic War. The overarching question is why did the Allies not revolt against Rome when they had the opportunity?

Both sides clearly thought it was possible that the allies would revolt against Rome if they were given the chance. One of the reasons Rome was so anxious to win a decisive victory over Hannibal was that they were afraid that the allies would desert them. They were also afraid that the Fabian strategy would also cause the allies to rebel because Rome would be seen as weak and unable to protect its own allies. In the end Rome did not view the allies as anything but foreign cities that had been forced into the system of alliances by Roman power. Most of the residents of other cities did not have Roman citizenship, did not serve in the all-Roman legions, and did not have the same rights as a Roman citizen. To the eyes of Rome it was clear that Rome and its allies were completely separate entities, each with their own identities and ideas about their citizenship and loyalties held together by the system of alliances and Rome's power. Yet despite all of the hardships and disaster during the war nearly all of the Allies remained loyal to Rome.

Carthage on the other hand also seems to have assumed that these cities forced into the Roman alliance system through force or coercion would revolt if they were given the chance to join someone more powerful than Rome. It is not unlikely that the

Carthaginians had similar thoughts about the allies based on interactions with trade. Carthage had primarily been a maritime empire that relied heavily on trade to gain its vast wealth and it seems likely that trade may have forced interactions between Carthage and Rome that may have led to this conclusion. I also think the cultural aspect of the Carthaginians may have played a heavy role in their idea that the allies could be coerced to desert Rome. Carthage had different ways of dealing with foreign powers including completely conquering them or using them on an ad hoc basis like the mercenary personnel in their armies.

In the end I think the reason that Hannibal lost the second Punic War is because he, and even Rome itself, misunderstood the relation between the Allies and Rome. Despite the fact that Rome and Carthage did not perceive the Allies as Romans I think it is a safe bet to say that most of the allies saw themselves as Romans. Despite the catastrophic defeats most of the Allies stayed loyal to Rome. They had adopted Roman customs, religion, and traditions. They fought for Rome in legions of identical makeup as Rome. The allies believed that they were Roman and were invested in the survival of the Roman state that, although they were placed in a subservient position, gave them numerous benefits in the all aspects of life such as roads, infrastructure, and trade. Later, many allies would revolt against Rome during the Social Wars in an attempt to gain what they saw as rightfully their own, full Roman citizenship. The allies were the linchpin in the war yet both side misunderstood their intentions and this fact compiled with the other smaller reasons caused Hannibal to lose the Second Punic War.

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