

AU/ACSC/0387/97-03

THE CAMPAIGNS OF HANNIBAL AND SCIPIO:  
SEARCHING FOR CONGRUENCY

A Research Paper

Presented To

The Research Department

Air Command and Staff College

In Partial Fulfillment of the Graduation Requirements of ACSC

by

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March 1997

# REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved OMB No.  
0704-0188

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing this collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number. PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.

1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 01-03-1997	2. REPORT TYPE Thesis	3. DATES COVERED (FROM - TO) xx-xx-1997 to xx-xx-1997
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4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE The Campaigns of Hannibal and Scipio: Searching for Congruency Unclassified	5a. CONTRACT NUMBER
	5b. GRANT NUMBER
	5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER

6. AUTHOR(S) Johnson, Michael R. ;	5d. PROJECT NUMBER
	5e. TASK NUMBER
	5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER

7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS Air Command and Staff College Maxwell AFB, AL36112	8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER
--	--

9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME AND ADDRESS ,	10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)
	11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)

12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT  
APUBLIC RELEASE

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

14. ABSTRACT  
This paper analyzes the Second Punic War using the Contextual and Operational Elements found in the Campaign Planning Model to determine how Rome and Carthage conducted the war, and whether they maintained congruency as each respective country pursued their national objective. It examines how they selected their grand strategy, and how that strategy was interpreted and executed at the operational and tactical levels. The model highlights flaws in Carthage's formulation and application of its grand strategy which, combined with the lack of strategic insight at the operational level, kept them from satisfying their objectives. This paper also shows that Rome's formulation and execution of its grand strategy, even with several interim changes in operational strategy, flawlessly applied the tenets of the Campaign Planning Model and enabled Rome to always keep its strategic perspective firmly in view to secure eventual victory. This paper also recommends further study of Rome's operational strategy, in particular the campaign of its commanding general, Publius Cornelius Scipio. Scipio's campaign provides excellent examples of the principles of surprise and concentration, and demonstrates how innovation and mobility can produce an indirect strategy that can not only defeat a larger enemy, but also maintain flawless congruency with strategic objectives. Scipio provides an outstanding study in military genius, indirect strategy application, innovation, and statesmanship. He most closely embodies the soldier-statesman needed in modern coalition warfare.

15. SUBJECT TERMS

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:	17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT Public Release	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 46	19. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON Fenster, Lynn lfenster@dtic.mil
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a. REPORT Unclassified	b. ABSTRACT Unclassified	c. THIS PAGE Unclassified	19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER International Area Code Area Code Telephone Number 703767-9007 DSN 427-9007
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## *Acknowledgments*

I want to thank my Faculty Research Advisor, Major Mike Fiedler, for allowing me to indulge myself in a subject that truly interests me. He provided the inspiration that rekindled my interest in historical analysis. He has, as the saying goes, opened a can of worms this time. Fortunately for me, his love of history will keep him awake as he sifts through endless revisions of this paper looking for a pearl among the dross.

### *Abstract*

This paper analyzes the Second Punic War using the Contextual and Operational Elements found in the Campaign Planning Model to determine how Rome and Carthage conducted the war, and whether they maintained congruency as each respective country pursued their national objective. It examines how they selected their grand strategy, and how that strategy was interpreted and executed at the operational and tactical levels. The model highlights flaws in Carthage's formulation and application of its grand strategy which, combined with the lack of strategic insight at the operational level, kept them from satisfying their objectives. This paper also shows that Rome's formulation and execution of its grand strategy, even with several interim changes in operational strategy, flawlessly applied the tenets of the Campaign Planning Model and enabled Rome to always keep its strategic perspective firmly in view to secure eventual victory. This paper also recommends further study of Rome's operational strategy, in particular the campaign of its commanding general, Publius Cornelius Scipio. Scipio's campaign provides excellent examples of the principles of surprise and concentration, and demonstrates how innovation and mobility can produce an indirect strategy that can not only defeat a larger enemy, but also maintain flawless congruency with strategic objectives. Scipio provides an outstanding study in military genius, indirect strategy application, innovation, and statesmanship. He most closely embodies the soldier-statesman needed in modern coalition warfare.

## Chapter 1

### Introduction and Background

*You know, Hannibal, how to win a fight; you do not know how to use your victory.*

—Marhabal

Hannibal's victory at Cannae has been viewed throughout history as the perfect example of the principle of annihilation. Military planners in modern times have elevated Cannae to an almost mythical status in terms of successful battlefield strategy. Germany's Schlieffen plan to execute the invasion of France in World War I was modeled after the classic double envelopment designed by Hannibal in defeating the Romans in 216 B.C. Rommel's victory in Northern Africa over allied armor at Tobruk during World War II used the same vision of Cannae used by Hannibal. Despite its universal promise of a quick, complete victory, the glaring similarity between each of these operations is that they led to the defeat of the armies that employed them. None fully understood the political nature of war or the strategic implications resulting from force-on-force engagements. They didn't visualize how the result of these battles would break congruence with established strategic objectives and diminish the chances of a victorious end-state.

## **Significance of Problem**

History provides valuable lessons in the application of war—valuable strategies, operational tactics, and classic leadership. But if history teaches anything, it teaches change. Just as no historical analysis can be undertaken without a thorough understanding of the context of its time, likewise an historical analysis must be viewed in light of current realities and conditions prior to its adoption. In a world of nation-states, collective security pacts, and alliances, the decisive battle of annihilation can bring devastating political, economic and military recriminations to its prosecutors. This applies as equally today as it did during the Second Punic War. This paper will endeavor to reaffirm the importance of maintaining congruence between political grand strategy and the operational interpretation and application of that strategy, and the consequences of failing to clearly sustain that link.

## **Preview of Argument**

When an operational strategy is applied without fully considering the strategic implications of its outcome, the chances for ultimate victory are limited. Hannibal's lack of strategic insight during the conduct of his campaign led to his battles of annihilation, broken treaties, and disregard for sovereignty. It lost him valuable allies and eventually spelled the defeat of Carthage during the Second Punic War. This paper will examine how the grand strategies of Carthage and Rome were interpreted and transformed into operational campaigns by their field commanders. Next, the campaigns of Hannibal and Scipio will be analyzed from a strategic perspective to see who better established congruence with the grand strategies of their respective nations. Lastly, this paper will

demonstrate that the Roman general Scipio stands out as a better role model for the modern coalition warfighter—a military soldier/statesman who combined timeless principles of warfare to achieve remarkable operational success while maintaining congruency with grand strategy and international political realities.

### **Contextual/Operational Elements**

The campaigns of Hannibal and Scipio can be illustratively described by using the Campaign Planning Model.<sup>1</sup> This model examines campaign planning as an integrated process beginning with strategic objectives and carrying them through to fulfill the nation's desired economic, political and military end state. The process breaks down strategic objectives into military objectives using six contextual elements of campaign planning: politics, international relationships, sociocultural norms, economics, leadership, and environment. In turn, these military objectives are broken down into successful operational campaigns through a center of gravity analysis, and their further iteration into a practical tactical attack plan using six operational art elements: logistics, technology, information, targeting science, deception, and measurements of success. By identifying the critical links between strategy, operations, and tactics, it can easily be determined whether congruence was achieved by either Rome or Carthage.

### **Congruency**

Congruence is defined as conformance, or agreement; coinciding exactly when superimposed.<sup>2</sup> For the purpose of this paper, congruency is the successful interpretation, translation, and application of political grand strategy into military strategy. Once military strategy is developed, congruence is the further iteration of strategy into operational

campaign planning, and another iteration into tactical battle planning. Congruence, or the successful interpretation of higher-level direction, most often produces the desired political end state, but it is in no way a guarantee of victory.

### **Notes**

<sup>1</sup>Weaver and Pollack, *Campaign Planning for the 21st Century: An Effect-Based Approach to the Planning Process*, listed in the War Theory course book, pg. 35-41, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, AL. AY1997.

<sup>2</sup>*The American Heritage Dictionary*, Second College Edition, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1985.

## Chapter 2

### History of the Rome/Carthage Conflict

Rome and Carthage were allied as early as 508 B.C. At that time Carthage was the more powerful city, and established a treaty with Rome guaranteeing its right to exist though imposing strict limitations on Rome's ability to trade with its neighbors. (Durant, 43) Carthage was the richest city in the Mediterranean in the Third Century B.C., earning millions of dollars annually, mainly on the strength of its armies and substantial navy. (Durant, 40) The Carthaginian navy was very powerful and allowed its merchant class to roam without challenge throughout Asia, Europe, and North Africa.

Rome began as an agrarian society in central Italy, and until the First Punic War was primarily a land power, with no navy and few trading partners. At the onset of the First Punic War in 264 B.C., the Romans had just unified the peninsula through alliances of the city-states. Carthage invaded and occupied Sicily, which prompted the Sicilians to ask Rome for help in expelling the invaders. Rome, who did not want a Carthaginian influence that close to Italian shores, agreed to intervene. (Durant, 43)

While the topic of this paper is not the First Punic War, two significant events of that war affected the conduct and outcome of the Second Punic War some 46 years later. The first was Rome's transition from being a power solely on land to gaining mastery of the sea in only one generation.<sup>1</sup> (Polybius, 62) This Roman innovation and dedication to

purpose resulted in Carthage's defeat at sea, and led to the second important outcome of the war. The defeat of the greatest sea power in the Mediterranean and the extensive war reparations demanded by a nation only 20 years at sea was a humiliation that burned fiercely in the breast of the Carthaginian commander, Hamilcar Barca, who vowed eternal revenge against Rome. (Polybius, 188) It was from this base, and these small beginnings that Hamilcar's burning hatred of Rome would be passed to his son Hannibal, the antagonist of the coming Second Punic War.

### **Contextual Background of Carthage and Rome**

Examining the contextual elements of any state, be it city-state or nation-state, is an appropriate way to understand the disposition, character, or fundamental values peculiar to the culture of its people. It helps to bring into focus the ethos of a state, and provides the opportunity for objective analysis.

The official *political* voice of the Carthaginian government was its Senate. Its members were appointed for specific terms in a more or less democratic process, though the interests of Carthage's prominent families were always well represented. The Senate was also heavily influenced by its merchant class, whose regional business applications were the foundation and backbone of Carthage's economic strength. Rome's *political* institution was strong. Its political leadership was invested in a Senate, similar to that of Carthage. Where Rome differed slightly was the influence of the people, who could force the Senate to change its opinions by public demonstration, and whose direct influence upon the Senate was to have profound influence upon the conduct and outcome of the Second Punic War. (Polybius, 314-5)

An analysis of the *international* element at the time is revealing to the outcome of the Second Punic War. After the First Punic War, Carthage had much of its fleet confiscated, and had its economy severely disrupted. That left Rome, a largely agrarian society, possessing the largest naval fleet in the region. To the Carthaginians, this turn of events was unwelcome since the source of their power and influence came from the sea via trade. However, as a traditional sea power the Carthaginians realized they would need to turn many of Rome's land-based allies to their own cause to destroy Rome. They reasoned this would be possible because Rome had forcefully annexed large portions of Northern Italy and Spain. (Scullard, 204) Additionally, Rome at this time was engaged in fighting the Gauls of Northern Italy, and Carthage felt the Gauls would throw in with its forces given enough of an incentive. Rome had gradually expanded its *international* empire, setting up a series of military headquarters in its occupied territories, and governed in a more or less democratic fashion. In return for supplying Rome with goods and services, the occupied territories were provided a secure and stable lifestyle, with many of the benefits of Roman citizenry. (Scullard, 112)

The coming war, like many others throughout history, was about *economics*, and economics played a large part in Carthage's decision to re-engage with Rome after its bitter defeat in the First Punic War. Carthage built its empire on economic trade using the sea to distribute its goods. Rome now threatened to dominate the Mediterranean. Conversely, Rome was in excellent shape to fight the coming war. It possessed a robust economy, and its treasury was padded with Carthaginian gold. It supplied its military with modern equipment, and funds for training replacements.

The Carthaginian *leadership*, their Senate and the twin influences of the Merchant class and the Barca family, knew much about Rome and its leadership, and felt that they could take advantage of the inexperience of Rome's military leadership. While Carthage depended heavily upon mercenaries for its fighting forces, it took great care in the selection of the men who led their armies. Military leaders were selected by virtue of their past military achievements, men hardened in battle and proven in experience. (Scullard, 162) Where Rome differed greatly, and perhaps astonishingly, from Carthage was its method of selecting its military leadership. In a society where each male citizen was expected to serve in the military, it was surprising that the Romans selected their military leaders based upon economic and social standing—not upon proven military leadership. (Delbruck, 336) It was this factor that gave Carthage the early advantage in the war when Hannibal gained a series of impressive wins which were made possible and magnified by elementary blunders in Roman leadership. Conversely, what the Carthaginian leadership should have known by experience from the first war was that Roman resolve was strong, and that when pressed against the wall, they would do what was necessary to secure a victory.

The methods by which Rome and Carthage manned their military forces reflected their views on nationalism, and this difference in nationalistic outlook proved a major *sociocultural* difference that impacted the course and eventual resolution of the war. When Rome was in its darkest hour after the battle at Cannae, it was the strong resolve of a unified nation who had long since learned to share its burdens equally that pulled itself together and embarked on a radical change in strategy. When Rome felt its very existence threatened, it was a strong sense of nationalism that pulled it through. Carthage, on the

other hand, found itself hard pressed to retain its fighting forces when Fabian strategy denied its mercenaries a regular paycheck.<sup>2</sup> Many of its recently acquired allies defected back to the Romans, and many more deserted when the threat of imminent death overcame their lust for money. In the final analysis, it was the character and strength of the Roman people, who had long lived under the banner of service before self, that eventually prevailed in the war over the materially-minded mercantile class of Carthage. This *sociocultural* omission of underestimating Roman national resolve, combined with incongruent war strategy, fatally damaged Carthaginian chances of defeating Rome and its army.

The *environmental factors* faced by the Roman army during the war were the mirrored opposite of those faced by Carthage. Initially, Hannibal faced long lines of communication while he wreaked havoc in Spain and Italy, taking most of what he needed logistically from the local populace, and yet flourished due to his outstanding tactical skill, use of terrain, and the Roman's Fabian strategy of non-contact. The Roman army, while enjoying the benefit of shorter supply lines and familiar surrounding, suffered due to the lack of tactical skills by its military leadership and its failure to adjust its fighting style. As the course of the war turned with the selection of Scipio as the Roman commander, so did the fortunes of both opponents. Now, interestingly enough, as the Roman lines of communication lengthened as they attacked through Spain and eventually, boldly, to Africa, their success increased dramatically due almost exclusively to Scipio's tactical re-organization and his astute statesmanship. Conversely, Rome's audacity to attack Africa while Hannibal was still in Italy forced the Carthaginian Senate to recall Hannibal to defend his homeland. This move shortened the Carthaginian lines of communication but

took away Hannibal's freedom of movement and forced him to meet Scipio on terrain that favored the Roman's order of battle.

### **Carthaginian Grand Strategy**

The national objective of Carthage was to defeat Rome and restore Carthaginian naval and trade supremacy throughout the Mediterranean region. However, this objective was not supported by the entire Senate. Those with no connections to the wealth of the merchant class were against further war with Rome, as the country was still suffering from the results of the First Punic War. The mercantile middle class, however, had lost ports and markets as a result of Rome's victory and strongly wished to recover lost trade.

The Carthaginian grand strategy favored the military instrument of war over the economic and political instruments primarily due to their inferior position at the end of the First Punic War. The opposing center of gravity at which their war plans were aimed was Rome, but to reach Rome they felt they must first annihilate the Roman army.<sup>3</sup> Carthage's decision to make war upon Rome seems to have been made upon the greed of the mercantile class and the need for revenge by the Barca family. The long-term resolution of the conflict and the strategy for achieving their desired end-state of Rome's capitulation was not planned out in advance. This lack of grand strategy directly led to the war's course, duration, and outcome.

### **Hannibal's Campaign Strategy**

This paper will focus on Hannibal's campaign from the strategic viewpoint and discuss why Carthage, with Hannibal as its point man, failed to capitalize on its early gains over the Romans by pressing the attack on Rome after his victory at Cannae. It will also

question why, from its advantageous position, a peace wasn't negotiated that would have given Carthage mastery of the entirety of Spain and a large portion of Italy.

Hannibal's operational strategy began with the development of his forces. His preferred method of gaining allies was by defeating the enemy of the local tribes in return for men and supplies to continue his advance against Rome. While this worked in the short term, Hannibal found that mercenaries who fight solely for spoils can be purchased by anyone, and from anyone. He therefore had to resort to more impressive ways of keeping the loyalty of his mercenaries; by killing those who threatened to leave as a warning to others, and to arrange his mercenaries on the battlefield with his allies in front and his cadre in the rear so his allies had no choice but to stay and fight. When he attacked cities who would not abandon their alliance with Rome, he put the inhabitants to the sword to protect his rear areas. These examples of Hannibal's cruelty, though excessive (and illegal) by modern standards, were not unusual then and were extremely effective in the short term. But his actions produced a resultant disenchantment with Carthage among his allies that affected the chain of congruency between Hannibal's campaign and the Carthaginian war strategy. His actions reflected little understanding of how to ensure the desired end-state at conflict resolution and were incongruent with Carthaginian Senatorial direction.

The first official act of the Second Punic War with Rome, the trigger event, was the siege of Saguntum in 219 B.C. The Saguntines appealed for help to Rome, who in-turn used their political instrument via envoys to Carthage rather than sending a relief force to Saguntum. This lack of military support hurt Rome's prestige with its other allies and

must have bolstered Hannibal's confidence in his ability to roam unchecked through the Spanish countryside.

At this point, it will be instructive to examine Hannibal's major battles using the six Operational Arts elements of the Campaign Planning Model. This model will show if Hannibal used logistics, technology, information, deception, targeting science, and measurements of success to his best advantage during his campaign.

*Logistics* was a constant source of worry for Hannibal. To move and sustain an army totaling upwards of 100,000 men for 20 years is a feat achieved rarely in human history and ranks him as a logistical genius. Because it would have been impossible to sustain any significant amount of provisions from his lines of communication, Hannibal attacked and captured Roman grain storage and provisioning supplies to outfit his men. The siege of Saguntum and the capture of Clastidium accomplished just this end. (Polybius, 238) He stored the majority of this wealth at his Spanish logistical base at New Carthage, where he also maintained his lines of communication to Carthage via a sizable naval fleet. He used his new allies throughout Spain and Italy to supply him with replacement troops, goods and services in return for securing the allies freedom from their enemies. He wintered his troops, with rare exceptions, where they were safe from attack from the Romans, and trained his men with weapons captured from defeated enemies. This freedom of movement was due in part to Rome's Fabian strategy of harassing but not engaging the Carthaginian armies.<sup>4</sup>

Hannibal effectively used the most advanced *technology* of his day: the horse and the elephant. His Numidian cavalry was a constant thorn in the side of the Romans who relied on massed phalanx formations to press their attack. They suffered greatly at Ticinus,

Trasimenus, and especially at Cannae because of the superior mobility of Carthaginian forces against their slow moving formations. His use of elephants to break the Roman front lines was also effective early in the war because the Romans could not devise a plan to counteract their effect.

Hannibal was the unchallenged master of collecting, analyzing and using *information* on enemy leaders, armies, and movements. He made it a principle never to be drawn into a decisive engagement unless by deliberate choice. (Polybius, 238) He also had a well developed system of spies who accurately provided him with the ability to pick the time and place for nearly every battle, and he used this information to its best use. In preparation for the battle at Trebbia, he learned that the Roman commander Longus was impetuous and spoiling for a battle. Polybius described Longus as “spurred on at once by ambition and by a blind confidence.” (Polybius, 239) Using this information, Hannibal carefully selected an area well suited for an ambush to lure in and then trap the Romans.<sup>5</sup> Similarly at Lake Trasimenus, when Hannibal learned from his spies that the Roman commander Flaminius “possessed a rare talent for the arts of demagogy and playing to the gallery, but very little for the practical conduct of war, and yet was absurdly overconfident about his own resources,” he again devised a trap for the Romans.<sup>6</sup> (Polybius, 247)

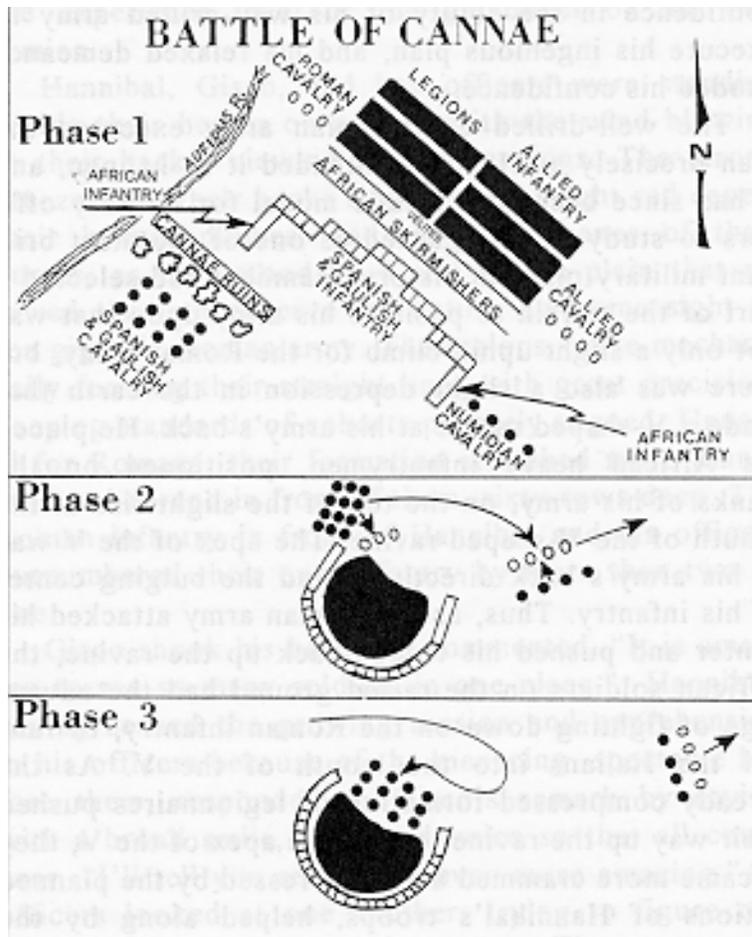
In each of his major battles, leading up to and including Cannae, Hannibal’s ability to lure his opponents into an ambush secured clear victories for his country. The resultant terror and panic in Rome at the news of the massacres acted as a force multiplier for the Carthaginian’s war effort. In this way the desired effect of his campaign, or *targeting science* element, was realized. The damage he had inflicted upon the Italian countryside

as he went was insignificant as crops and livestock can easily be regenerated. The cities and allies who survived his passage were not particularly worse off with their change in allegiance than they were under the Romans. Further, Hannibal had so far successfully wrested supremacy of a large portion of Northern Italy from Roman control. While his battles took a heavy toll on the Roman army, in each case prior to Cannae he either took prisoners or allowed a portion of the enemy force to escape. His habit of killing unarmed civilians in the cities he captured, however, seemed counter-productive if he wanted to maintain the voluntary allegiance of the cities after he left. (Polybius, 253)

What end-state did Hannibal have in mind for his war against the Romans and was it well-reasoned? So far he had succeeded in making critical alliances, capturing vast amounts of territory and wealth, and had the Roman army suffering from repeated defeats while his army and his reputation continued to grow in strength. How then did Hannibal go about *measuring success*? Clearly his objective was the capitulation of Rome, but as of yet he had neither the numbers of forces nor the logistics for an assault on Rome itself. But could Rome be defeated without actually attacking the city itself? It doesn't appear evident in the literature that he even seriously considered the option of switching from the military to the political instrument to achieve his goal. And yet this option should have been contemplated by the Carthaginian Senate when Hannibal sent messages by sea to Carthage after his victory at Lake Trasimene. (Polybius, 254) Alternatively, to sign an armistice with Rome at this point would give the Carthaginians mastery of Spain and much of Italy, and most importantly of all, time to establish the diplomatic and economic lifelines that would have solidified Carthaginian gains. It would have also given Hannibal time to build an army capable of successfully making the final push to Rome.

## **Hannibal's Tactics at Cannae**

Hannibal once again obtained excellent intelligence concerning the Roman commanders in preparation for the battle at Cannae. He discovered that the Romans had two commanders and that they led the army on alternate days (which is a practice that was politically expedient but militarily untenable). He further learned that the commander Varro had very little military experience and Hannibal felt that he could provoke him to such an extent as to draw him into a trap. So he once again sent out his cavalry as he had during previous battles to harass the Roman encampment. This caused Varro to assemble his force and march off to meet Hannibal at the place and time of the enemy's choosing. Of the battle itself much has been written,<sup>7</sup> but again the Romans blundered into a perfectly organized trap through the actions of an inexperienced commander who failed to perform even the most perfunctory intelligence assessment.



**Figure 1 The Battle at Cannae**

As the two sides faced off, Hannibal deployed his cavalry out to the flanks and had his lightly-manned allied center engage the Roman center. The superior Numidian cavalry quickly routed the Roman cavalry and swung around to attack the Roman rear. The allied center of Hannibal's force slowly retreated under the overwhelming force of the strong Roman center. As this happened, Hannibal's flanks held firm and the Romans found themselves advancing into a horseshoe shaped bowl. At no time did the Roman commanders appear to understand what was happening to them, and when they found themselves trapped from all sides, they were too compressed to fight effectively or to find a way out of their predicament. Suffice it to say the trap was brilliantly executed and more

than 50,000 Roman soldiers and allies were butchered without quarter. Hannibal's double envelopment was aided by the terrain, and by Hannibal sacrificing many of his allied troops in executing a collapsing center.

However glorious the tactical result, the strategic implications of this battle were devastating for the Carthaginians. Although the dominant force on the Peninsula, Hannibal felt they were too weak for an attack against Rome without command of the sea. But his strategy after Cannae for the defeat of Rome, that of slowly attriting Roman forces while siphoning off Italian allies, wasn't effective and wasn't congruent with the Carthaginian objective of defeating Rome. For the next 14 years Rome observed Fabian tactics which never allowed Hannibal another decisive engagement, and the Romans prevented his ever being routinely augmented from Spain or Carthage. (Delbruck, 311) In the long years to follow Rome found a General who would revive their fortunes, equip and train a new fighting force, and retake the offensive in the war with Carthage. The General was Scipio, and his innovative tactics would defeat Hannibal and the Carthaginian army, and would set the lines of military tactics for 2,000 years. (Delbruck, 374)

### **Roman Grand Strategy**

Rome's national objective was survival, and the grand strategy that flowed from that objective was the defeat of Hannibal. Although there existed many political differences within the Senate, and the well-connected families that influenced Senate affairs, these differences were subordinated to ensure the survival of the Republic. The Roman people were also united in this effort, despite increased conscription and an increasingly uncomfortable tax base. Although Rome continually sent political overtures to the

Carthaginian Senate, and despite the fact that Rome had captured most of Carthage's sea-going fleet and treasury after the first war, their grand strategy still rotated around the military instrument. Rome's military strategy designated Hannibal and his army as the center of gravity for its war effort, and the path they eventually chose to attack that center of gravity was an indirect strategy to draw Hannibal away from the Italian peninsula to a place of their own design. Rome's initial strategy from the Siege of Saguntum until the Battle at Cannae was one of engagement. After Cannae, Rome adopted its Fabian Strategy of attrition which essentially admitted that it could not defeat Hannibal militarily. It pursued a campaign of harassment and denial which served to cut Hannibal's lines of communication to Spain and Carthage, denying Hannibal the resources he needed for the assault on Rome. Finally, when Scipio was elected Proconsul to Spain, Rome returned to the strategy of engagement using Scipio's indirect approach of forcing Hannibal out of Italy by taking the fight to Africa.

### **Scipio's Campaign Strategy**

Scipio approached the war first and foremost from a strategic perspective. He understood that the Romans had for years been drawn into battles that favored Hannibal's forces and had as a result been defeated. Scipio reasoned that the best way to secure the Roman objectives of defeating Hannibal and winning the war was to force Hannibal to fight at a time and place dictated by the Romans. He decided the best way to defeat Hannibal was to take the war to Africa and provoke such havoc that the Carthaginian Senate would have no choice but to recall Hannibal to preserve their homeland.

Operationally, Scipio knew it would take time to build up his fighting forces, and to train them in a more mobile fighting style. His study of previous Roman defeats at the

hands of Carthage confirmed the value of the mobility which cavalry provided. He also saw that the Roman sword was inferior for this new type of fighting and trained his forces to use the Spanish sword. (Scullard, 227) He also trained his forces in the use of the javelin, and devised echelon tactics for greater maneuverability within the ranks.

His second objective was to augment his fighting forces, and he accomplished this task by swaying back former allies who had previously thrown their lot in with Carthage. Although Scipio was first and foremost a warrior, he was also a shrewd statesman who possessed the rare ability to make and then honor alliances. Scipio's integrity and nobility in keeping his promises to his newfound allies kept them from changing alliance again when the winds of fortune blew from the South. As with Hannibal, this paper will examine Scipio's campaign using the Operational Art Elements of the Campaign Planning Model.

Scipio was forced to recruit, train and pay many of the costs of his army when he deployed to Spain. This *logistics* burden, while not as severe as Hannibal's, still needed resolution before Scipio would be ready to take the war to Africa. He found his answer in the attack upon Hannibal's main logistical base in New Carthage. The equipment, weapons, and food secured enabled the Roman forces to roam throughout Spain unfettered by logistical concerns. It also raised the spirits of the Roman people, kept divisive elements in the Roman Senate quiet, and dismayed the Carthaginian armies who were forced to re-open lines of communication with Carthage at less desirable ports along the coast to obtain supplies.

Scipio's intelligence uncovered valuable *information* that the Carthaginian forces in Spain were divided in strength, and that none of the armies were closer than ten days

march from New Carthage. (Polybius, 408) Further, he discovered that New Carthage was lightly defended in manpower, but the city was walled and would require a lengthy siege unless he could find a quick way of breaching the walls. Scipio had studied the histories of Xenophon and knew that Cyrus had conquered Babylon by diverting the river that entered that city from its course and used the watercourse as his point of entry.<sup>8</sup> It seems likely that Scipio used this reasoning to formulate his plan of attack on the logistics base.

New Carthage was located on a splendid harbor on the sea, and while Scipio could not divert the Mediterranean, he inquired about the tidal properties of the lagoon that abutted an undefended section of the city wall. Local fishermen told him that in the evening the tidal flow left the lagoon shallow enough for men to walk through it. When the attack upon the city began, he threw a portion of his force against the main city walls to divert the enemy's attention, and when the tide went out, sent a force of men with scaling ladders to the unprotected walls to gain unopposed entry to the city. This force then opened the city gates to secure the Roman victory.<sup>9</sup>

Scipio's use of *technology* was demonstrated on several occasions during his campaign. As described earlier, he adopted the more modern and useful Spanish sword for his troops, trained his men in the use of the javelin and developed his much larger cavalry, using tactics based upon speed and mobility. Further, in his attack on New Carthage, he marched only a portion of his force into position in sight of the city walls, and maneuvered the rest on ships which arrived fresh for battle when the attack was to commence (an early example of jointness!).

However clever Scipio was in the other arts of war, it was his skill at *deception* that separates him from his historical rivals. B.H. Liddell Hart called Scipio a master of “the art of the indirect approach,” and his tactics at the later battles of Baecula and Ilipa were brilliant examples of his skill at deceiving his opponent as to his true intentions. (Liddell Hart, 63) Hannibal emphasized the defensive to protect his outnumbered forces by baiting his opponents into stumbling into carefully constructed traps. Scipio took the offensive, using indirect strategy to show his opponent one plan of battle, and then executing an entirely different order of battle.

Scipio’s campaign mirrored Roman Grand Strategy of defeating Hannibal and winning the war. Scipio’s way of achieving his desired effect, or *Targeting Science*, was to wreak such havoc upon Hannibal’s homeland so as to force the Carthaginian Senate to recall Hannibal to defend Africa. He methodically set about building and training his forces, provisioning his army by stealing the enemy’s supplies and logistics base, and building strong lines of communication from New Carthage to North Africa. He then rampaged across the African countryside destroying enemy logistics, capturing cities, and most importantly, turning alliances away from Carthage and toward Rome. Scipio did all of this according to the strategic vision laid out at the beginning of his campaign, and all of his actions complimented, and were completely congruent with, the Roman national objective. Along the way, Scipio constructed enduring alliances based upon mutual respect and integrity with the local tribes and Princes of Spain and Africa. He was careful to limit the killing to the enemy, and took special care to restore hostages to their former positions. He had the strategic vision to realize that once he won the war, the mutual

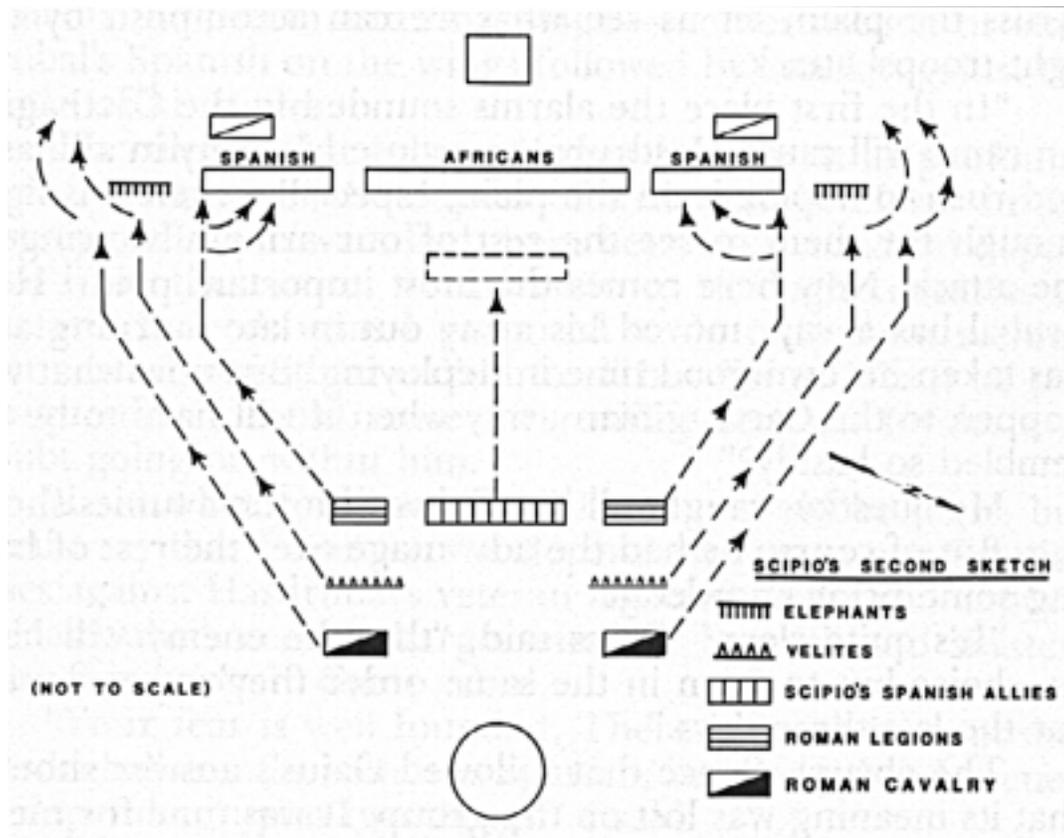
respect and understanding he brokered would solidify and sustain alliances in the peace that followed.

Unlike Hannibal, Scipio knew how to win a victory, and he knew how to use it. Scipio's *Measure of Success* was demonstrated by his understanding of conflict resolution, and of the position Rome wanted to be in at the conclusion of hostilities. In short, Scipio knew well the desired Roman end-state and his actions during every juncture of his campaign reflected this higher-order imperative. He neither went outside the bounds of his authority as a Roman Consul, nor change the direction of his effort to suit his own needs. His actions at all times were completely congruent with Roman grand strategy.

### **Scipio's Tactics at Ilipa**

At Ilipa, Scipio's army of approximately 45,000 men and 3,000 cavalry faced a battle-tested army in excess of 70,000, commanded by a seasoned veteran of many campaigns. The Army led by Hasdrubal had a formidable cavalry of 4,000 and 32 elephants. Each day prior to the actual battle, Scipio arranged his forces in nearly a mirror image of the enemy: Roman infantry in the center opposing African center, Spanish allies on the wings opposing Hasdrubal's Spanish allies. Knowing his forces were severely outnumbered, Scipio devised a bold, innovative plan to surprise the enemy and gain a tactical advantage.<sup>10</sup> He ordered his cavalry to attack the Carthaginian camp before dawn on the day Scipio selected to launch his attack. This served the twin purposes of confusing the enemy as to the Roman's intentions, and to force Hasdrubal to assemble his forces before his men had a chance to eat. This also ensured that they would take the battlefield in the same formation as each day previous. Scipio on the other hand, had completely changed his formation. He switched his Romans to the flanks and placed his Spanish allies in the

center against the Africans. He did this for two reasons: to place his strength against the enemy's weakest point, and to ensure his allies didn't defect over to their countrymen as had happened to the Romans at Cannae. He reassured his allies that they were a fixing force, and that the real battle would take place on the wings.



**Figure 2 The Battle of Ilipa**

When forces were in place, Scipio sent his cavalry and light infantry in an oblique maneuver beyond the Carthaginian lines where they were opposite the elephants. At Scipio's signal the warriors on the flanks began blowing bugles, yelling, and beating their shields as they began a cavalry charge at the enemy flanks. This commotion caused the elephants to stampede in all directions, and quite a number of them turned and stormed through the enemy's flanks, fouling their lines and creating terror among the Spanish.

This provided the Romans the advantage they needed to fall upon the weaker Spanish with the strength of the Roman army. The Africans in the center could not abandon the center to come to their aid because Scipio then instructed his Spanish center to engage. The classic double envelopment completed, it was merely a matter of time until victory was secured. At the end of the afternoon, a stunned Hasdrubal had lost upwards of 68,000 men while Scipio lost 2,500 men.<sup>11</sup> B.H. Liddell Hart, an unabashed admirer of Scipio, states that:

military history contains no more classic example of generalship than this battle of Ilipa. Rarely has so complete a victory been gained by a weaker over a stronger force, and this result was due to a perfect application of the principles of surprise and concentration, that is in essence an example for all time. (Liddell Hart, 62)

### **The Conclusion of the 2nd Punic War—The Battle at Zama**

Rarely do opposing generals of such historical significance as Hannibal and Scipio get the opportunity to meet on the battlefield to decide the outcome of a war. And as was the case at the time of the Second Punic War, the stakes were much larger than a tactical victory. This battle would decide which country, Carthage or Rome, would rule unchallenged throughout the empire. It is rare in history to find such a pivotal battle fought by two more remarkable men.

Hannibal possessed 80 elephants but once the battle began, the Romans duplicated their tactic at Ilipa by blowing bugles to frighten the elephants, and on this occasion left channels in their ranks for the elephants to escape. As it turned out, the elephants went wherever they could and caused much damage to Hannibal's front lines while causing minimal damage to their intended victims. At this point the Roman cavalry charged and

routed the Carthaginian cavalry. H.H. Scullard believes that Hannibal, knowing that he was inferior in cavalry, and wishing to neutralize the Roman advantage in this area, instructed his cavalry to depart the battlefield in hopes of luring the Roman horsemen with them. (Scullard, 237) Whatever the original plan, the purpose was served at first which left Hannibal with a small advantage. After that the fight was more or less a slugfest for much of the afternoon until the Roman cavalry returned to attack the Carthaginian flanks and determine the day for the Romans. Hannibal escaped the field with the loss of 20,000 dead and another 20,000 captured to plead with the Carthaginian Senate to sue for peace. Scipio on the day lost only 1,500 men and went on to hammer out a remarkably generous peace with Carthage.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>This amazing feat was pursued with extraordinary vigor by a nation that had heretofore had no skilled ship makers or shipbuilding tradition. In effect, the Romans used captured Carthaginian ships as their blueprint for their naval fleet, and set about building hundreds of these vessels. When they learned through initial defeats in naval battles that their navigation skills were inferior to their Carthaginian counterparts, they applied innovation to even their chances of victory at sea. They built 200 ships whose crews were rehearsed and drilled every day in the maneuvers that would be needed in battle. (Polybius, 105-6) They also employed the ‘raven’, which was a 24ft pole, 10” in diameter, which was erected on the prow of the ship. At the top of the pole was a pulley, and at its base a gangplank 36ft long. When the Roman ship charged an opponent, the ‘raven’ was embedded in the planks of the other ship and fastened the two ships together, allowing the Roman forces to gain access to the Carthaginian boat and employ its greatest strength—its soldiers! (Polybius, 64-5)

<sup>2</sup> Fabian Strategy was devised by Quintus Fabius after the battle at Lake Trasimene. It was a strategy which acknowledged that Rome’s forces were inexperienced and could not defeat Hannibal’s forces in a pitched battle, and so he fell back upon those resources in which Rome was superior. He kept his troops concentrated and strove to reduce Hannibal’s fighting strength by cutting them off from logistical re-supply. For a more detailed description of Fabian Strategy, see Polybius, pages 255-261.

<sup>3</sup> In the context of their time, however, nation-cities in general relied on force more than on modern methods of trade and politics. The reasons seem to indicate that the international system of trade and state’s relations weren’t developed sufficiently to produce the type of leverage necessary to influence a nation’s interests. Although the

## Notes

practice of sending envoys back and forth between warring states was widespread and encouraged, neither side expected a political solution to their disagreement.

<sup>4</sup> On at least one occasion when Hannibal was wintering at Gerunium, a city which he ransacked and whose inhabitants he butchered, he was surrounded by Roman forces. An impetuous subordinate of Fabius by the name of Minucius noticed that Hannibal's troops were widely scattered collecting stores of grain and livestock to bring into the city. Disregarding Fabius' order not to attack, Minucius ordered his men to attack the foragers with instructions to take no prisoners. He inflicted heavy casualties upon Hannibal's men and nearly stormed the Carthaginian camp before Hannibal was able to repulse the attack. And then when the enemy was surrounded, the Romans did nothing to either destroy the crops and livestock so necessary for Hannibal's survival, nor did they mount an attack upon the camp. Instead Hannibal was able to break camp the following day without Roman intervention.

<sup>5</sup> Hannibal sent his cavalry up to the Roman entrenchments early one morning to entice them into battle, at which time they would fall back into the ambush site. Longus took the bait by sending out an unsupported cavalry force to engage the Carthaginians and followed it up with his entire army without first feeding them. The Carthaginian horsemen lured the Romans across the freezing cold waters of the Trebbia (for this happened in December) to the area where Hannibal and his fully fed and rested troops awaited. Hannibal then employed his fresh troops to push the Romans back towards the Trebbia river and attack the Roman flanks. The Romans who had no time to properly set into their positions were routed and forced to cross the river again in an attempt to escape. An experienced Roman Commander would not have allowed himself to be easily lured into a trap of this sort when he had neither investigated the enemy strength, nor ensured his own men were properly organized and fed before battle. So while the brilliance of Hannibal is not in doubt in setting the trap, the incompetence of Longus contributed heavily to the defeat of the Roman force.

<sup>6</sup> Hannibal directed his forces to pass within sight of the Roman encampment, burning the fields of crops as they went. He correctly surmised that the Roman commander would take umbrage at this audacious move and set out in pursuit of the Carthaginian troops. Hannibal then led the Roman army to a pre-arranged area where his troops possessed all the advantages of terrain and environment. Flaminius, without any attempt at reconnoiter and against the advice of his lieutenants, led his force into a narrow passage flanked by higher ground on one side and Lake Trasimenus on the other. And to add to the sheer stupidity of the move, the morning mist from the lake lay heavily on the area so the Romans could only see the Carthaginians they were pursuing. Once the Romans were lured in place, Hannibal gave the order to attack and his forces surrounded the Romans from three sides at once. Many that weren't killed outright were herded into the freezing waters of the lake and killed at the Carthaginian's leisure. Once again, Hannibal proved the master of the ambush, but against an incompetent foe.

<sup>7</sup> There are several interpretations of the tactics, troop formations, and sequence of events depending upon the interpreter. One of the best comes from Hans Delbruck's *History of the Art of War, Vol. 1, Warfare in Antiquity*, pg. 315-333. University of

## Notes

Nebraska Press, Lincoln, Neb. This book was translated from the original German by Walter J. Renfro. Additional, H.H. Scullard in his book *A History of the Roman World* (see Bibliography) provides a contemporary interpretation of the battle.

<sup>8</sup> Machiavelli, Niccolo, *The Prince*. pg. 22,24. Translated by W.K. Marriot. University of Chicago, IL.: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1978.

<sup>9</sup>In another example of Scipio's use of information, he disrupted Carthaginian forces and lines of communication in Africa, near Utica. He learned that the Africans had built their winter camps entirely from wood, and devised a plan to defeat the superior force assembled there by setting fire to their camps at night. So successful was this measure that most of Scipio's enemy perished in the flames, or were slaughtered unarmed when they ran from their camps to escape the flames. (Livy, 622-5)

<sup>10</sup>The most descriptive and most entertaining version of the Battle of Ilipa is by Wood, W.J., *Leaders and Battles: The Art of Military Leadership*, pg. 150-174, published by Presidio Press, Novato, CA, 1984.

<sup>11</sup>The battle at Ilipa differs from Cannae in several ways. Hannibal at Cannae chose a defensive posture for his undermanned forces, luring his opponents into a preset trap which collapsed in the center to draw in the Romans. He then executed a close-order double envelopment with his flanks and had his cavalry close the box. Terrain played a significant part in limiting maneuverability of Roman forces before the trap was completely sprung. At Ilipa, Scipio boldly went on the offensive with a vastly undermanned force. He used surprise, maneuver, and innovation to give his force the advantage. His classic double envelopment was an extraordinary feat of leadership given the numbers of troops used, the distance traveled, and precise orchestration of timing and tempo. More remarkable was the fact that until the arrival of Scipio, the Romans were almost totally dependent on a massed phalanx for their offensive power.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Analysis and Implications**

#### **The Effects of Congruence on Rome's Grand Strategy**

Rome knew that the threat to their empire was real and set a realistic objective of defeating Hannibal to win the war. Although they changed their operational strategy three times during the course of the war, the changes were dictated by the circumstances of war. During the initial phase, the Roman army actively engaged the Carthaginian forces but the lack of military experience and the knowledge of the art of war by the politically appointed generals time and time again led the superior Roman forces into ambushes and traps arranged by Hannibal. Further, the Roman army lacked the mobility and flexibility necessary to counter Hannibal's Numidian cavalry.

After they were annihilated at Cannae, the Romans did not have the trained forces or the will to further engage Hannibal. They therefore adopted the Fabian Strategy of harassment and attrition warfare that effectively cut Hannibal's logistics and lines of communication to Africa. By refusing to engage Hannibal directly, it denied Hannibal the opportunity for another crushing blow to Roman morale, but also allowed him to roam unchallenged throughout Italy for several years. When Scipio was nominated to raise an army and establish his forces in Spain, Rome effectively went onto the third and final

phase of the war. Scipio wisely captured Hannibal's main logistics base at New Carthage and used the additional logistics to defeat divided Carthaginian forces in Spain and regain lost alliances with the Spanish. He then took the war to Africa in hopes he could wreak enough havoc that the Carthaginian Senate would have no choice but to recall Hannibal to defend his homeland.<sup>1</sup>

### **Scipio's Strategic Vision**

Scipio's operational strategy was completely congruent with, and perfectly complimented, Rome's grand strategy for winning the war. He was allowed to pursue the war in a manner of his own choosing so long as he got prior approval from the Senate and the people of Rome. On many occasions, when his plans were seen as too radical for the conservative factions in the Senate, he used the leverage of the people of Rome to secure his case. Scipio always knew where the final battles of the war would be waged, and he planned his campaign to achieve his vision. He knew the army must be equipped and trained to introduce mobility and flexibility into its ranks and he methodically set out to obtain the money and resources to enable this transformation. He knew alliances would be critical and so he displayed remarkable statesmanship to acquire those alliances. To the credit of the Roman Senate, he was given wide latitude to strike terms with the Spanish and African tribes and the Senate honored each of them.

### **The Effects of Incongruence on Carthage's Grand Strategy**

The national objective of Carthage was to defeat Rome in order to restore their naval and trade supremacy throughout the Mediterranean. But as mentioned earlier, this objective was not fully supported by the Senate. The great failing of the Carthaginian

Senate was its refusal to pursue serious diplomatic negotiations with Rome during the war. An established dialogue with Rome would have given Carthage valuable information concerning Rome's national state of mind during the various phases of the war, and might have enabled them to negotiate a favorable peace after Cannae. They could easily have kept control of Spain and much of Italy, where they could have cemented their alliances over time. They could have used this newly acquired territory as the recruitment ground and logistics base for a future push against Rome. Or they could have been satisfied with the supremacy over the region this territory would have provided them. The Carthaginian Senate's lack of direct involvement in the war put too much of an unnecessary burden upon Hannibal, whose lack of strategic vision eliminated the chance for victory when it was perhaps within his reach.

### **Hannibal's Tactical Vision**

Hannibal's aim was to win the alliance of enough of the Italian tribes to build a force large enough to defeat Rome completely and break up the alliance of city-states throughout the peninsula. However, for various reasons, this never came to pass. One reason was his inability to convince the Italian tribes that he had something better to offer. The Romans preferred to forge military-political alliances rather than conduct overt warfare, and this reasonable treatment kept many tribes from defecting to Hannibal. Further, Hannibal's severe treatment of his allies—allowing his forces to steal, rape and pillage from the homes and cities of those who chose to ally themselves with him—left many of them hoping for rapprochement with the Romans. But perhaps Hannibal's biggest failing was his inability to see the larger picture of the effect his invasion was having on Rome, and to offer peace terms to the Romans when he had the clear

advantage. Hannibal's shortcoming might have best been stated by his Lieutenant, Marhabal, who told Hannibal that he know well how to win a victory, but not how to use one. (Livy, 151)

### **Relevance to Modern Warfare and State Relations**

While it serves little purpose to compare the war between Rome and Carthage in the Second Century B.C. to wars of this Century except in the broadest of terms, 20<sup>th</sup> Century German military planners used the lessons from the Battle at Cannae as the unique inspiration for their grand military offensive in WWI. The classic battle of annihilation proved so tempting to Count Von Schlieffen that he made it the centerpiece of his country's offensive. Yet the execution of the plan so little resembled Hannibal's arrangement as to presume it was the thought of annihilating the enemy in a single battle that drove his passion. Germany's concentration upon the tactical and operational areas at the expense of the strategic considerations of sustaining alliances and determining what end-state they desired at the conclusion of the war left them woefully unprepared after their grand Cannae failed to materialize.

Likewise, Rommel's victory over allied armor at Tobruk in WWII was clearly patterned after Hannibal's envelopment strategy.<sup>2</sup> But Rommel's tactical victory at Tobruk and his subsequent rampage across Northern Africa went directly counter to Hitler's strategy for winning the war by expending valuable resources that were vital to the conduct of the main German war effort. Rommel's failure to understand or accept his place in the overall strategy of the war was detrimental to the German war effort.

In fact, many parallels between Carthage and Germany can be made with respect to a lack of civilian political involvement and direction of the war effort, the resultant effect of mistreatment of allies, and the lack of a clear, achievable end-state. However, the purpose of this paper is to convince military planners to never lose sight of their nation's grand strategy when developing a theater-level concept of operations. In that way, they will establish a strong, clear chain of congruence to guide joint force commanders in our nation's future wars.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>His vision was correct in this matter, and so it was Rome who controlled the time and place of the final battle of the war. Their victory at Zama cemented their claim to supremacy of the region. The complete unity which the Roman Senate, army, and public demonstrated throughout the war was remarkable. This unity of purpose was a perfect example of what Carl Von Clausewitz, in his seminal work, *On War*, referred to as the paradoxical trinity: the unity of a Government, its army, and its people. This unity of effort enabled the Romans to maintain their courage and fortitude in their Republic.

<sup>2</sup>Irving, David. *The Trail of The Fox*, pg. 94, 538. Avon Books; A Division of the Hearst Corporation, New York, N.Y. 1977. Although the map depicting the Battle for Tobruk provides sufficient similarity to the Battle of Cannae, the pages referenced give concrete evidence of Rommel's quest for a repeat of Cannae at Tobruk.

## Chapter 4

### Summary and Conclusions

#### The Reasons for Rome's Success

The reasons for Rome's success in the Second Punic War were many but included: the unwavering support of its people, Senate, and army; the loyalty of its Italian allies; its Fabian strategy of exhaustion, and a military genius with strategic and tactical vision. These were the links in the chain of *congruence* that successfully allowed Rome's grand strategy to be executed at the operational and tactical levels. Rome always kept its end-state clearly in mind, and always maintained its *strategic vision* even during its darkest hours after Cannae. Despite changes in operational strategy to cope with its changing fortunes, Rome maintained its character and moral courage until it eventually discovered a way to win the war. Scipio's innovative plan for winning the war demonstrated his complete understanding of Contextual and Operational elements of the Campaign Planning Model. Though not codified during his lifetime, Scipio nevertheless understood the timeless tenets that later became the model. Hannibal accomplished what few other men have done, and he did it without much external support. But modern military leaders are inexplicably tied to the civilian leadership of the nation to which they belong. They must understand grand strategy, they must understand the bigger picture of war that includes

maintenance of alliances, and they must understand the end-state to which they are directed. Because of these issues and others, a study of Rome's conduct of the Second Punic War is most instructive.

With respect to the Battles at Cannae and Ilipa, two things may be said with certainty. In the Westphalian world of interdependence where no nation is likely to go to war without allied assurances,<sup>1</sup> the classic battle of annihilation is an indefensible strategy. World opinion and the Cable News Network simply will not allow it to happen. Furthermore, the world's democracies will not stand by and allow genocide or senseless slaughter to occur—they will be prompted to intervene.

Second, Hannibal's tactics at Cannae were defensive in nature, and allowed the center of his forces (his Spanish allies) to be sacrificed in order to draw Roman forces forward enough to envelop them. Rommel's sacrifice of his Italian allies at Tobruk notwithstanding, it is unlikely that today's combined force commanders will be allowed to sacrifice their allies in such a fashion given the mobility and precision of modern weaponry. More appropriate to modern warfare is the surprise, concentration, and innovation displayed at Ilipa where the double envelopment was executed using speed and mobility, strength against weakness, and keeping allies involved in the battle and actively engaged in determining the overall victory. The analysis of the Battle at Ilipa alone would be instructive and would serve as a good research project for future Air Command and Staff College students.

### **Scipio—A Better Study in Military Leadership for Today's Warfighter**

For all of the reasons previously stated, Scipio makes a much better study in military leadership than Hannibal.<sup>2</sup> First and foremost was Scipio's strategic insight and his ability

to maintain congruence with his civilian leadership. His campaign strategy was carefully crafted to obtain Rome's strategic goal, and once ratified by the Senate, he never wavered from it. Second was his statesmanship. He carefully cultivated his allies, and never broke (nor allowed his men to break) faith with the terms of the agreements he made with Spanish and African tribesmen. At all times he recognized he was a spokesman for Rome and the ideals for which Rome stood.

The third characteristic which separated Scipio from other generals of his time was his willingness to break with tradition when circumstances dictated a change was required. He personally undertook the responsibility of training and equipping his forces in the use of the Spanish sword, and increasing their tactical mobility and maneuverability of the battlefield. The 'new look' Roman Legion was the decisive force at Ilipa and Zama, and Roman tactics developed by Scipio were the standard for the duration of the Roman Republic. The fourth characteristic worthy of study was Scipio's battlefield genius, in particular his indirect strategy. His ability to deceive his enemy as to his true intentions, and to keep his plans secret from even his own forces until the last moment, maintained the security he needed to execute his strategies. The element of surprise he employed at Ilipa is astonishing in its boldness, fully applicable to the 20th Century, and the mobility and accuracy with which Scipio's flanks were extended and then pivoted are worthy of much further study.

The final characteristic of Scipio worthy of study and imitation by today's warfighters is his personal conduct and behavior. Scipio fully typified the Roman subservience of the individual to the greater whole. Although offered a 'kingship' by the Spanish, and the award of supreme military dictator (the equivalent to a Caesar) by a grateful Rome after

the Second Punic War, he declined each in an extreme act of humility. He never allowed his success to go to his head, and he never broke faith with his men, his allies, the Senate, or the Roman people.

For all these traits, and for the fact that he was undefeated in battle—to include defeating Hannibal in head-to-head combat—Scipio deserves more attention by modern military warfighters. His example stands out in history as a military hero who produced exceptional operational results while remaining completely congruent with his nation's strategic wishes.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>The Peace of Westphalia established in 1648 set the stage for state dominance. The Treaty of the same name rejected political subservience to the pope and the Roman Catholic Church, and put in its place a new system of geographically fixed self-ruling political entities that accepted no higher authority than themselves. It effectively allowed rulers the freedom to maximize their power by whatever means they saw fit within certain international guidelines. Among the most important articles of this treaty were the concepts of legitimacy, sovereignty, and duty. Legitimacy said that all states have the right to exist, and that the authority of that state's ruler was supreme. Sovereignty was the accepted viewpoint that no authority higher than the state existed, and rejected external controls upon the state. Duty referred to rules between states concerning war, treaties and alliances, respecting other nation's territorial integrity, and generally provided an international forum for interstate protocols. The importance to this paper of the Westphalian model is to reinforce the importance of understanding its effects on the state during war. While the idea did not yet exist during the Second Punic War, it will provide a framework for understanding the critical nature of alliances and treaties upon the formulation of political grand strategy

<sup>2</sup>Many authors credit Scipio's study of Hannibal in explaining his tactical genius, and it is fair to say that Scipio thoroughly studied Hannibal's tactics in order to find his weakness. But Scipio also studied the campaigns of Cyrus of Persia, of Pyrrhus, and of Alexander. He studied widely in Greece and learned much about strategy and tactics. To imply that Scipio learned all he knew from a study of Hannibal would be as untrue as to say that Hannibal learned all he knew from Pyrrhus. Scipio may or may not have been Hannibal's tactical equal, but clearly Scipio was the finer strategist. And he was the clear and decisive winner in their head-to-head confrontation at Zama. In the final analysis, it was Scipio's strategy that determined the war.

## **Appendix A**

### **Key Events of the Second Punic War**

(All dates are B.C.)

221 Hannibal assumes command in Spain

219 Siege of Saguntum (Spain)

218 Hannibal crosses the Alps

Battles of Ticinus River and Trebia River

217 Battle of Lake Trasimenus

216 Battle of Cannae

210 Scipio arrives in Spain

209 Capture of New Carthage

208 Battle of Baecula

206 Battle of Ilipa

204 Scipio sails to Africa

202 Hannibal recalled to Carthage

Battle of Zama

End of the Second Punic War

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