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## Appian, The Punic Wars 27

**Appian of Alexandria (c.95-c.165):** one of the most underestimated of all Greek historians, author of a *Roman History* in twenty-four books.

Although only Appian's books on the *Roman Civil Wars* survive in their entirety, large parts of the other books, devoted to Rome's foreign wars, have also come down to us. The parts on the **Punic wars**, the **wars in Iberia**, and the **Mithridatic Wars** are very important historical sources. This is also true for Appian's account of the Third Punic War, the second part of the book presented on these pages, which is one of our main sources for this conflict.

Because these texts have to be reconstructed from several medieval manuscripts, not all editions of Appian's account of Rome's foreign wars are numbered in the same way. On these pages, the separate units of a book are counted strictly chronologically.

The translation was made by Horace White; notes by Jona Lendering.

### The Third Punic War (cont'd)

[131] Thereupon **Hasdrubal** secretly presented himself to Scipio<sup>note</sup> bearing an olive branch.<sup>note</sup> Scipio commanded him to sit at his feet and there showed him to the deserters. When they saw him, they asked silence, and when it was granted, they heaped all manner of reproaches upon **Hasdrubal**, then set fire to the temple and were consumed in it.

It is said that as the fire was lighted the wife of Hasdrubal, in full view of Scipio, arrayed in the best attire possible under such circumstances, and with her children by her side, said in Scipio's hearing, "For you, Roman, the gods have no cause of indignation, since you exercise the right of war. Upon this Hasdrubal, betrayer of his country and her temples, of me and his children, may the gods of **Carthage** take vengeance, and you be their instrument."

Then turning to Hasdrubal, "Wretch," she exclaimed, "traitor, most effeminate of men, this fire will entomb me and my children. Will you, the leader of great Carthage, decorate a Roman triumph? Ah, what punishment will you not receive from him at whose feet you are now sitting."

Having reproached him thus, she slew her children, flung them into the fire, and plunged in after them. Such, they say, was the death of the wife of Hasdrubal, which would have been more becoming to himself.

[132] Scipio, beholding this city, which had flourished 700 years from its foundation and had ruled over so many lands, islands, and seas, rich with arms and fleets, elephants and money, equal to the mightiest monarchies but far surpassing them in bravery and high spirit (since without ships or arms, and in the face of famine, it had sustained continuous war for three years), now come to its end in total destruction - Scipio, beholding this spectacle, is said to have shed tears and publicly lamented the fortune of the enemy.

After meditating by himself a long time and reflecting on the rise and fall of cities, nations, and empires, as well as of individuals, upon the fate of **Troy**, that once proud city, upon that of the **Assyrians**, the **Medes**, and the **Persians**, greatest of all, and later the splendid **Macedonian** empire, either voluntarily or otherwise the words of the poet escaped his lips:

The day shall come in which our sacred Troy  
And Priam, and the people over whom  
Spear-bearing Priam rules, shall perish all.<sup>note</sup>

Being asked by **Polybius** in familiar conversation (for Polybius had been his tutor) what he meant by using these words, he said that he did not hesitate frankly to name his own country, for whose fate he feared when he considered the mutability of human affairs. And Polybius wrote this down just as he heard it.

[133] Carthage being destroyed, Scipio gave the soldiers a certain number of days for plunder, reserving the gold, silver, and temple gifts. He also gave prizes to all who had distinguished themselves for bravery, except those who had violated the shrine of Apollo.<sup>note</sup> Probably the Carthaginian god that is called Apollo was Rešef.}} He sent a swift ship, embellished with spoils, to Rome to announce the victory. He also sent word to **Sicily** that whatever temple gifts they could identify as taken from them by the Carthaginians in former wars they might come and take away. Thus he endeared himself to the people as one who united clemency with power. He sold the rest of the spoils, and, in sacrificial cincture, burned the arms, engines, and usem ships as an offering to Mars and **Minerva**, according to the Roman custom.

[134] When the people of Rome saw the ship and heard of the victory early in the evening, they poured into the streets and spent the whole night congratulating and embracing each other like people just now delivered from some great fear, just now confirmed in their worldwide supremacy, just now assured of the permanence of their own city, and winners of such a victory as never before. Many brilliant deeds of their own, many more of their ancestors, in Macedonia and Spain and lately against **Antiochus the Great**, and in Italy itself, had they celebrated; but no other war had so terrified them at their own gates as the Punic wars, which ever brought peril to them by reason of the perseverance, skill, and courage, as well as the bad faith, of those enemies. They recalled what they had suffered from the Carthaginians in Sicily and Spain, and in Italy itself for sixteen years, during which **Hannibal** destroyed 400 towns and killed 300,000 of their men in battles alone, more than once marching up to the city and putting it in extreme peril.

Pondering on these things, they were so excited over this victory that they could hardly believe it, and they asked each other over and over again whether it was really true that Carthage was destroyed. And so they gabbled the whole night, telling how the arms of the Carthaginians were got away from them and how, contrary to expectation, they supplied themselves with others; how they lost their ships and built a great fleet out of old material; how the mouth of their harbor was closed, yet they managed to open another in a few days. They talked about the height of the walls, and the size of the stones, and the fires that so often destroyed the engines. They pictured to each other the whole war, as though it were just taking place under their own eyes, suiting the action to the word; and they seemed to see Scipio on the ladders, on shipboard, at the gates, in the battles, and darting hither and thither. In this way the people of Rome passed the night.

[135] The next day there were sacrifices and solemn processions to the gods by tribes, also games and spectacles of various kinds. The **Senate** sent ten of the noblest of their own number as deputies to arrange the affairs of Africa in conjunction with Scipio, to the advantage of Rome. They decreed that if anything was still left of Carthage, Scipio should obliterate it and that nobody should be allowed to live there. Direful threats were leveled against any who should disobey and chiefly against the rebuilding of Byrsa or Megara, but it was not forbidden to go upon the ground.

The towns that had allied themselves with the enemy it was decided to destroy, to the last one. To those who had aided the Romans there was an allotment of lands won by the sword, and first of all to the **Uticans** was given the territory of Carthage itself, extending as far as Hippo. Upon all the rest a tribute was imposed, both a land tax and a personal tax, upon men and women alike. It was decreed that a **praetor** should be sent from Rome yearly to govern the country.

After these arrangements had been carried out by the deputies, they returned to Rome. Scipio did all that they directed, and he instituted sacrifices and games to the gods for the victory. When all was finished, he sailed for home and was awarded the most glorious triumph that had ever been known, splendid with gold and gorged with statues and votive offerings that the Carthaginians had gathered from all parts of the world through all time, the fruit of their countless victories. It was at this time also that the third Macedonian triumph occurred for the capture of Andronicus, surnamed Pseudophilippus, and the first Grecian one, for Mummius. This was about the 160th **Olympiad**.

*This page was created in 2005; last modified on 16 July 2020.*

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